

TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN COMMUNICATION DESIGN AND A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ART HISTORY, THEORY, AND CRITICISM AT METROPOLITAN STATE COLLEGE OF DENVER

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I. SUMMARY

This consent item recommends approval of Metropolitan State College of Denver's (MSCD) proposal to offer a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Communication Design and a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Art History, Theory, and Criticism separate from the already approved Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from MSCD's proposal:

MSCD is presently approved to offer a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art. Within this degree, there is a concentration of Communication Design. This is one of the largest concentrations within the program. MSCD is proposing to create a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication Design. It is desirable from many different perspectives to be able to offer this degree. It defines the area as a program; it allows students to more readily identify a significant area of study; and, it sets itself apart from other concentrations in the department through its unique offerings and philosophical positioning among studio art concentrations. All of the courses in the Communication Design program have been either completely rewritten, modified or updated to reflect a more contemporary approach to the teaching of three areas of content: 1) core/foundational design experiences; 2) cross media, interactive and time-based experiences; as well as, 3) issues of innovation, theory, history, strategy and business concepts in design. As a concentration, the program forged and utilized strong ties to design firms and industry leaders in the community, so many professionals in the field are in close contact with the program. This community connection is an essential part of the Metro State mission, along with preparing students professionally and engaging them in scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and application of knowledge

In this same approved BFA degree explained above, MSCD offers a concentration in Art History, Theory and Criticism. MSCD is also proposing to offer a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Art History, Theory and Criticism. This degree is designed to allow students to earn an undergraduate degree in a specific discipline. The degree will have more prestige for students attempting to gain employment in the field or entrance into graduate school and will clarify for current and prospective students that they can major directly in the field. This program fulfills MSCD's mission to prepare students particularly for successful post-graduate education and lifelong learning in a

multicultural and global society. Students in the major will be required to study art from across the globe and gain an understanding of the breadth of production across time and geographies, as is appropriate for undergraduate education. This provides students with a foundation of knowledge so that they can further specialize in graduate studies, or use those fundamental skills for a variety of careers.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports the role and mission of MSCD. The statutory mission states:

There is hereby established a college at Denver, to be known as Metropolitan state college of Denver, which shall be a comprehensive institution with modified open admission standards at the baccalaureate level; except that nontraditional students at the baccalaureate level who are at least twenty years of age shall only have as an admission requirement a high school diploma, a GED high school equivalency certificate, or the equivalent thereof. Metropolitan state college of Denver shall offer a variety of liberal arts and science, technical, and educational programs. The college may offer a limited number of professional programs. In furtherance of its role and mission, Metropolitan state college of Denver may offer master's degree programs that address the needs of its urban service area C.R.S. 23-54-101

EVIDENCE OF NEED

Prompted in part by comments received from accreditation reviewers for the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and in part by ongoing concerns among the faculty regarding enrollment management and academic quality, the proposed changes in the Art program are designed to better serve the broad range of MSCD students in the program. The overall goal is not growth but a better alignment of the academic programs with the professional field and with student interests and abilities.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 23-5-129 (6)(b), department staff finds that MSCD's proposed Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication Design and Bachelor of Arts in Art History, Theory and Criticism degrees are consistent with MSCD's role and mission.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve Metropolitan State College of Denver's proposed Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication Design and Bachelor of Arts in Art History, Theory and Criticism.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs office and are available upon request.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-5-129

(6) While operating pursuant to a performance contract negotiated pursuant to this section, the governing board of a state institution of higher education:

(b) Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. Institutions shall submit information to the department demonstrating that the creation or modification of an academic or career and technical education program is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override the creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.