REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAM CONTROLS

The justification presented for limiting enrollment or raising admissions/graduation standards in a program are generally based on two claims:

(1) students must perform to a certain level academically in order to succeed professionally

and/or

(2) faculty resources cannot support existing demand without the students' experience suffering in a variety of ways.

Requests for academic program controls undergo a thorough review process and approval by several governing bodies. Requests for Academic Program Controls must be received by the Undergraduate Council Chair no later than October 1 in order to be approved in time to announce the changes in late spring of the following year for fall admissions. Please forward requests to:

Attn: Undergraduate Council Chair
c/o Patti King
Curriculum Office
PO Box 210073, CCIT 337
CAMPUS

Directions:
1. Provide information regarding the program controls in the format requested on the attached pages. Respond to each item individually using “not applicable” where appropriate.
2. Obtain signatures of the proposing unit administrator and department or committee head and college dean.

Initiating college, department, or committee:

Department of Media Arts

Title of this proposal: Request to restrict admissions in Media Arts minor

Unit Administrator: (title) Al Tucci, Department Head

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

College Dean: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

(Signature)
ACADEMIC PROGRAM CONTROLS JUSTIFICATION

Requested academic program control (please check all that apply):

_____ Implement or raise admissions requirements for students in a college/major/minor; may also include creation of a premajor

_____ Implement or raise advanced standing requirements for students in a college/ major

_____ Implement or raise graduation requirements for students in a college/major

____X__ Restrict admission to a college/major/minor/upper-division course(s)

_____ Close an existing minor

Describe Objective(s) & Desired Learning Outcomes: (e.g., limit the number of students in a college/major/minor/upper-division course(s); enhance academic experience or quality of students in program, etc.)

Admission to the Media Arts minor has been suspended since 2003/2004, as part of a multiyear process of 1) redesigning our undergraduate programs, and 2) implementing a holistic admissions process for enrollment management in the major. The request detailed below seeks permission to extend a modified version of this holistic admissions process to prospective Media Arts minors as well. Specifically, we plan to redesign and then reinstate the minor in Media Arts, and hope to implement a selective admissions process which will allow us to offer a rigorous minor without undermining the high quality of the redesigned major.

Instituting a selective admissions process for the minor will enable the Department of Media Arts to achieve the following objectives and learning outcomes:

Objectives:

• enable undergraduate majors to graduate in four years, by assuring regular offerings of all required courses, and enough seats to accommodate student demand

• continue mandated reduction in enrollment, eventually stabilizing Media Arts majors at 300-325.

• stabilize enrollment in the minor at approximately 80 (20 students/year = one section of our large lecture, multi-section foundations courses), allowing us to deliver the coursework they need in a timely fashion

• continue to reduce reliance on adjunct instructors

• assure our declared minors sufficient seats in required courses

Learning Outcomes

• Retain high quality of professional preparation for Media Arts majors (reasonable class sizes, some limited by equipment and facilities, 49 units of Media Arts coursework in BA programs, 79 units in BFA, required internships and upper division production experience for all majors)
• Create a more rigorous minor that offers students our entire complement of foundational courses (15 units) plus 9 units of focused upper division experience. The new 24-unit minor cannot offer the same degree of professional preparation as the 49-unit BA major, but will provide a solid grounding in the field.

Please provide a detailed plan for achieving the objective(s) & desired learning outcomes:

Background

Student demand for Media Arts courses has been very high since the Department’s inception in the 1980s, and for many years Media Arts has struggled with lopsided student/faculty ratios, large class sizes, and over-reliance on adjunct instructors. In peak years, undergraduate majors numbered over 800, while the number of tenure-line faculty has never exceeded 15. In the 1990s the Department implemented an Advanced Standing policy, which offered a modest gate to enrollment in upper division courses (2.5 overall GPA, with a minimum of 45 units completed). An admissions portfolio was introduced for the BFA program, allowing the Department to control enrollment in that degree, but no comparable admissions procedure was available for BA students or minors, and Media Arts continued to struggle to meet demand for its courses.

The External Review Report for the Department of Media Arts 5-year Program Review in 2002 made several key recommendations for systematic reorganization of the program, focusing on redesign of the undergraduate curriculum and limiting enrollment: “There is a concern that the student to faculty ratio impairs the pedagogy and learning in certain areas, especially those dependent on hands-on practice and technique…Any plan of reorganization must address faculty to student ratios at all levels of the curriculum in order to assure the appropriate pedagogical and learning environment.” (External Review, June 5, 2002).

In response to this review, the Department embarked on an extensive strategic planning process that culminated in an Action Plan document, endorsed by the Provost in Fall 2003. The Action Plan has since then served as a blueprint for revising our undergraduate programs, designing and implementing a holistic admissions process for enrollment management, and guiding other aspects of departmental reorganization and refocusing.

The Action Plan summarizes the changes to our undergraduate programs:

A new curriculum has been designed to provide a sound fine arts undergraduate education for its majors and has been embraced enthusiastically by the faculty. It allows for far greater articulation among the three areas within the department than had previously existed. Moreover, the department’s new curriculum creates an overarching programmatic cohesiveness that is consistent with membership in the College of Fine Arts. The department will define the University of Arizona as regional center for making, producing, and studying the visual arts of film and television.

To be in line with undergraduate degrees offered within the College of Fine Arts, and to meet NASAD accreditation requirements, degree paths within the department will increase their number of units from 34 to 48 for the B.A. [note: the final version of the new B.A. degree options are both 49-unit programs] and from 60 to 78 for the B.F.A. [the new B.F.A. is now a 79-unit program]. Media Arts accomplished this expansion of units through a process of integration, streamlining, and consolidation of its curriculum so that its
offerings now reflect an arts-based orientation and afford undergraduates more specialized knowledge and experience in the artistic fields of study.

Curriculum changes have occurred throughout the B.A. and B.F.A. degrees. There is new coursework, which emphasizes practices and theories of art, style, narrative, genre, history, and representation in film and other visual media.

All in-coming (new majors, freshmen, transfer, and readmitted) students begin their studies with 15 units of Media Arts Foundations. These courses serve as the basis for the new curriculum in the B.A. and B.F.A. degrees. Basic knowledge for success in the department’s degree programs is built into the foundations courses for the undergraduates. (Action Plan, 2003)

The Department now offers three distinct degree paths:

*The BA in Aesthetics and Criticism emphasizes depth and breadth of knowledge of the history, aesthetics and criticism of film and television as forms of art and entertainment. The program is designed to create well-rounded, competitive students in preparation for entry-level career positions involving media research and reviewing, script analysis, festival and public arts programming, film and television distribution and media education, or for entry into graduate school in a range of academic and professional programs.

*The BA in Producing prepares students for careers in the creative, organizational and legal aspects of film and television. This program offers a professional school approach to the media industries, providing an overview of the contemporary practices of the film and television industries as well as a Senior Capstone involving a scholarly seminar and an applied producing experience gained through a production and/or an internship with a local or national media organization.

*The BFA in Production offers students an intensive experience in the production of film and video, coupled with a strong foundational understanding of media industries, aesthetics and criticism. The goal of the degree is to help students develop their own personal voices in the production of narrative and documentary film projects. BFA students graduate with a set of skills and creative experiences that will allow them to secure positions in the entertainment industry and/or independent production communities.

The new degree programs became effective as of the 2004 catalogue. To implement the new programs over the past three years, Media Arts has created at total of 24 new undergraduate courses, processed 15 course modifications, deleted 33 obsolete courses, and transferred 4 computer animation courses to the School of Art. The first class of seniors to have completed the new curriculum (i.e., those who switched to the new catalogue as sophomores or juniors) will graduate in May 2007.

In order to implement the new programs while honoring our commitments to the many majors and minors in the “old” programs of previous catalogues, the Department has suspended admission to the minor since Fall 2004. The last large cohort of majors and minors from prior catalogues will graduate in May 2007.
The other crucial rationale for suspension of new minors was to implement the holistic admissions process for majors, and not undermine this “rightsizing” mandate by allowing the minor to serve as a backdoor floodgate for additional students:

The short-term plan must result in mechanisms to reduce the number of majors to a more manageable number (e.g., 350), a long-range goal that was to be achieved already by this time. The long-term plan must focus mission objectives strategically and realistically with respect to resources. (Financial Bulletin #22: January 22, 2003)

The Office of the Vice Provost for Instruction has approved an extension of this policy of suspending new minors through August 2007. The Department of Media Arts plans to introduce a 24-unit minor as soon as 2007/08, but requests permission to institute an application process identical to the one currently employed for IDS students wishing to include Media Arts as one of their three areas of study. This application process is the same as the one used for prospective majors, minus the letters of recommendation. This process will allow us to allocate programmatic resources most strategically, by optimizing major and minor enrollments, and matching student interests and aptitudes to appropriate programs.

Provide the academic justification for this request:

1. If current admission standards are not high enough to ensure adequate student performance in the major, or in the post-graduate market, what evidence supports this claim? Document the performance of less prepared students.

   N/A this proposal concerns only the minor.

2. What evidence supports the belief that raising standards will enhance students’ experience?

   The benefits of our new admissions policy are clear: Retention rates have increased, while the number of students on probation has decreased. We fully expect that our minors would display the same improvement.

   The education, training, and student-centered outcomes for professional schools, such as those in the Arts, require holistic admissions to ensure the success of undergraduate majors entering highly competitive and selective careers in the arts. Minors will be placed into classes already populated with majors who have been selected for their aptitude, talents, and promise of success in Media Arts; hence, for minors to be successful will require an admission process that corresponds in kind to the gate for undergraduate majors.

3. If requesting implementation of minimum criteria for admission to the major, please describe what other alternatives have been explored (e.g., gateway courses in the major, stricter enforcement of prerequisites, sequencing of courses within the major, etc.).

   N/A

4. Indicate any applicable timeframes/deadlines for admission (e.g., must be admitted by: beginning of junior year, prior to completion of 64 units at UA, etc.) and/or maximum number of attempts allowed before student is transferred out of college/department/premajor.

   N/A

5. Please provide information on comparable admission standards in similar programs at peer institutions?
Very few of our peer or aspirational programs in media arts or film production offer an undergraduate minor. Temple University, Columbia University, Columbia College in Chicago, San Francisco State University—none of these programs offers a minor.

The USC School of Cinema and Television, one of the foremost programs in our field, is one of the few to offer a minor in Cinema-Television, and admission is by application only. USC’s application, similar to the one we propose, includes transcripts and a Personal Statement “explaining how you plan to use Cinema-Television courses to enhance your major course of study.”

To be competitive regionally and nationally with peer institutions, we must maintain our selective admissions for minors and restrict the number to those whom we evaluate as having the talent and skills for success.

Describe any resource shortages that are motivating this request:

6. Academic restrictions or higher standards for admission and/or graduation should reflect the rigors of the program of study, not a lack of faculty resources committed to that program.

7. Enrollment caps are but one element of a complex solution and should not be used unilaterally to deal with resource problems.

The proposed 24-unit minor is the minimum number of credits with at least 9 units of upper division courses that will provide adequate exposure to and training for our highly competitive field.

8. If resource shortages exist, please provide quantitative measurements of these shortages.

*GTAs available to teach sections. We hope to have 13 graduate students in Fall 2007. Two plan to graduate in December. Each GTA teaches two sections, but not all of them can be assigned to teach large lecture classes.
*MAR 210, Introduction to Production Practices, is limited by equipment and facilities to 20 students/section.
*Upper division. Due to staffing limitations, several courses are available to majors only; minors will select from a specific menu of upper division options. (refer to the list of courses as mentioned above.)

9. Provide research on how the proposed reduction in the undergraduate teaching load of the program will serve students' needs.

The changes in curriculum and the holistic admissions policy have not entailed a reduction in teaching load but rather a redeployment of our instructional resources. The new 49-unit BA degree and 79-unit BFA, in accordance with NASAD (write out the whole name for those who aren’t familiar) accreditation guidelines, require 20-25% more coursework in the major, per student (equivalent to having that many more majors). Several new required courses have been added to the curriculum, and must be taught on a consistent, predictable basis to allow students to graduate in 4 years. These accreditation guidelines reflect the level of academic and professional training required for regional and national recognition of our department, and the realities of the marketplace for placing our graduates in entry level positions in highly
competitive career paths. All of these factors have necessitated the increased number of units for the BA and BFA degrees, which will be reflected in the proposed 24-unit minor.

Are there NASAD guidelines for minors? If so, you could include that here.

10. Please provide five years of data for number of applications, number of declared majors, graduation rates, and retention rates.

Is this about the major or the minor?? Is this the place to include the bulk of info about admissions, # of majors, suspension of the minor? Christina, Mary Repola for data

If you could provide numbers of past minors – before the suspension – and how that impacted the department and then show current numbers of majors and proposed number of minors that would be helpful.

11. What is the current FTE for the department? How many tenure/tenure-track faculty? How many lecturers/instructors/clinical instructors? How many adjunct faculty? Please give the FTE teaching load for each of these categories in your department, and for your college. What is the mean FTE student load carried by individuals in each of these categories?

Media Arts FTE: 26.53 State funded, 1.0 Other funded
12 tenure/tenure track faculty (does not count dept head)
1 professor of practice
1 visiting professor
8 adjuncts

FTEs for a professional school and its hands-on, conservatory-model approach to instruction cannot be readily compared to other departments. This is an issue throughout CFA, not just in Media Arts. Holistic Admissions acknowledges a different scale for evaluating CFA FTE, as passed by ICPC and the Faculty Senate. We do offer General Education course(s) to assist the university which have high FTE for faculty. Out FTEs are in keeping with the Action Plan for the BA and BFA in Media Arts, and the additional FTEs from General Education courses(s) exceed the expectations of the Action Plan.

12. What programs outside of the department/college are dependent on courses from this discipline? Please describe whether these courses will be restricted to majors/minors within the department and, if so, how units outside of the department/college will meet the need for these courses if restrictions are approved.

N/A

13. What courses, if any, are required in the major/minor from outside of the discipline? If adding new course requirements from outside of the discipline please include a letter of support from the department and college affected demonstrating support for and availability of courses to non-majors/minors.

N/A

14. If requesting closure of a minor, does the department require a minor for students in the major?

N/A

15. Has the department explored options within the college such as offering an interdisciplinary major that would distribute the teaching load across the departments within the college more equitably?

MAR already participates in IDS. The future of the Fine Arts Studies degree (analogous to
The creation of the thematic minor is currently under discussion by film studies faculty from MAR, WS, Engl, German Studies. Such a minor would provide another focused but flexible option for students interested in film studies. Include number of potential students and the impact on MAR courses – majors and minors.

16. What steps have been taken to enable the college to respond to shifting student demands for programs?

We are working to reinstate the minor in Media Arts. The CFA Dean and Associate Dean recently presented the case for holistic admissions throughout the college to ICPC and the Faculty Senate; both passed the process and accepted the concept of student demand being aligned with resources and with professional standards to ensure that CFA provide nationally recognized training in the arts and make possible entry into highly competitive careers in the arts.

17. If requesting implementation of admissions criteria that ultimately caps enrollment, what is the plan for reviewing and adjusting the caps from year to year?

Monitor our enrollments in the major, faculty and GTA resources, demand for the minor and determine whether we can accommodate more (or fewer) minors.

Please describe any unique aspects of this program:

18. Is this a professional or performance program?

The major in Media Arts offers two professional training programs: the BFA in Film & Video Production, and the BA in Film and Television Producing. The minor provides a rigorous introduction to the field, including pre-professional training, but should not be considered a professional program.

19. What, if any, external demands (e.g., an accrediting or certifying body, national standards, etc.) dictate academic program controls? What are the acceptable standards?

NASAD requirements for accreditation of BFA; result: increased # of units, kinds of courses, etc.—relevant to the minor?

20. Explain any unique programmatic needs that require smaller class sizes, higher minimum grades/GPAs, etc.

Mar 210 limited by equipment and facilities. How many sections/year? Rigorous Producing curriculum—several requirements limited by how many sections of that course can be offered.

Please describe how students not currently in the major will be impacted:

21. What is the timeline for implementing the restrictions and the plan for communicating these changes to currently enrolled students? future students?

We are applying to reinstate the minor—good news.

22. Will students from outside of the college/major/minor/interdisciplinary studies majors be allowed to enroll in upper-division courses in the discipline?

Current policy: summer only. We will continue this.
23. Will the minor and/or upper-division courses be restricted in any way? If so, please describe.

This is the focus of the whole application.

24. If approved, what impact if any would this have on transfer students? How would this be communicated to community college students who plan to transfer to the UA after the restrictions or higher standards have been implemented?

Same as for the major (we have 3 years experience w/holistic admissions now)

**Please describe the advising plan:**

25. Please describe the current advising available to students who are admitted to the college/major/minor.

Orientation, prof advisor, etc—very good advising resources available. These would be extended to minors as well, even though minor advising normally handled by the major advisor

26. Provide a detailed plan for advising students who are admitted to college but not to the major/minor of their choice. What are the plans for exit advising from the department and college? Will students be transferred out of the college/department/premajor? If so, please provide letters of support from the accepting college indicating the plan for follow-up advising/support and availability of resources to carry out the plan.

27. If the restriction is approved, what opportunities will be available for students who are not admitted to the college/major/minor to explore this discipline?

Summer at UA; some courses at Pima

28. What alternative routes might a student pursue to achieve his/her academic and professional goals?

Holisitic Admissions sets out standards for entry into the academic and professional field; there are no alternative routes.