

**Proposed MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts
Department of Art
Youngstown State University**

Response Document (second round) to PDP for the MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts

We would like to thank the Institutions that responded to our revised PDP for the MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts specifically Akron University, Ohio State University, University of Dayton and Wright State University. While Akron and Wright State felt they did not have the expertise to respond, the University of Dayton review was very supportive and we welcome the proposed opportunity to work with them.

The Ohio State University had some further concerns that we address below.

Responses to Issues Raised by Ohio State University to YSU's Proposed MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts

(Responses Indicated in Italics)

1. It is unclear how the new MFA deepens or develops concepts and practices of Interdisciplinary beyond the BFA.

There is a distinct difference in the depth and breadth of the proposed MFA in comparison to the BFA concentration in Interdisciplinary Art. The MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts is exclusively dedicated to cross-disciplinary practice across all media (2D, 3D and 4D) and openly receptive to collaboration with disciplines outside of the visual arts thus reflecting the hybrid thinking practices of contemporary art and culture. This collaboration with other disciplines allows for a higher level of critical and aesthetic discourse by providing the expertise and support of faculty outside of the arts to augment, extend and strengthen the scope of individual conceptual goals. Students in the BFA program, while combining two or more artistic media are limited to a selection of approved General Education courses leaving little ability for deepening the understanding and sophistication of concept.

In addition the MFA Seminar provides a forum for the active exchange of ideas in the continually evolving frontier of artistic diversity within Interdisciplinary Visual Art. The BFA program does not provide a similar opportunity to engage and focus on contemporary readings and practices nor does it have required courses such as Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice I and II (Art 6994 and 6995), dedicated to the exploration of strategies for developing, inventing and refining hybridized forms of contemporary creative practice.

In short the MFA is a professional, advanced, and focused program that one enters knowing that they will be exploring the convergence of multiple media while the decision to focus on a BFA in Interdisciplinary Art is often arrived at after taking various courses.

2. The scope of the program is small with potential students coming from the existing BFA and the surrounding region.

In an earlier response to Ohio State University we touched on this issue ... "we hope to attract applicants from a broad geographic range. The recruitment of students beyond our region has been a priority for the Department of Art for several years. Our proposal merely reflects the results of our survey."

Interdisciplinary as a means of connecting and integrating diverse media and distinct creative methodologies, is a defining characteristic of contemporary art practices. A growing number of students find working within a single medium restricts their ability to respond to and reflect contemporary culture. There is a need for a program that addresses Interdisciplinary Art in NE Ohio, West Virginia, the Western portions of Pennsylvania and New York,

and we expect students from this area to apply, however we have no intention of limiting the pool of applicants and we aspire to attract highly qualified students with varied backgrounds and experiences from a national pool.

Our intention is to keep the program relatively small and in line with our faculty and facilities. We feel this will contribute to a more personal, rich, creatively fertile, and mutually satisfying relationship and experience for both student and faculty without the need for additional resources. As noted in Appendix F we are requesting additional funding for Graduate Assistantships. The University, YSU Graduate Council and Board of Trustees have unanimously supported the proposal including the Projected Budget Analysis (Appendix F). In anticipation of additional responsibilities and workload for full time faculty we included an increase in the adjunct budget to cover courses if needed.

3. Sequencing of courses is not adequately addressed.

The Description of the Proposed Curriculum and Requirements on page 4 and the Course Descriptions listed in appendix A on page 10 is the culmination of extensive research by multiple faculty and outlines our intended sequence. The sample syllabi are samples only and meant to indicate the mutability of projects and readings in response to contemporary issues and the interests of the student body and faculty teaching the course. In particular the Strategies (Art 6994, Art 6995), and Seminar (Art 6996, Art 6997 and Art 6998) were designed to complement each other and augment connections, approaching new and appropriate topics each semester. The goal of Strategies in Interdisciplinary Art I and II will be to introduce and expand methods of generating ideas that have no allegiance to particular disciplines or materials in a creative and supportive environment. With a relatively small projected enrollment it is expected course content will adapt, transform and morph to extend and reflect the research concerns of current students as well as remain responsive to the fluid nature of Contemporary Interdisciplinary practice,