

## **UCC Program Review Committee - Summary of Review**

**Program** – Electronic Media (RHE Lancaster, Southern, Zanesville)

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- A.A.S. in Electronic Media

### **Recommendation**

This program is found to be viable, with the exception of the Zanesville campus which is In Jeopardy. See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

**Date of last review** – ?

**Date of this review** – AY 2018

This review has been sent to school director and the dean, their joint response is attached.

## **REVIEW OF THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA PROGRAM**

Internal Reviewers: Robin Muhammad and Scott Sparks

External Reviewer: Jeffrey Demas – Otterbein University

The external reviewers report is appended to the internal reviewers report and begins on page 4.

### **Internal Reviewers Report**

#### **1. The program as a whole:**

**a. Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the Department (Teaching; Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Service).**

The Electronic Media Program on the Lancaster, Zanesville, and Southern campuses have 2 Group I faculty, 3 Group II faculty, and 7 Group III Faculty to deliver the program. On the Lancaster campus, the only full time faculty member is set to retire in one year and will leave a void to fill. Likewise, the Zanesville campus is losing one of its full time faculty. Lancaster and Zanesville share one of the Group II faculty members. One of the Group I faculty members also serves at the overall Program Coordinator and is located at the Southern Campus. All of these faculty members are over-extended in teaching and service. Deans at the campuses cite the small number of students and the fact that this is an AA program only as reasons there is some concern about adding faculty.

**b. Is the level of the Department's RSCA appropriate for the program given the size of the faculty and the resources available to the Department? Is the Department's level of external funding at an appropriate level?**

Since the EM program is located on three separate regional campuses, each has a unique niche in the EM field. Lancaster is focused on production and online media. The Zanesville campus has a focus on radio, and Southern has a focus on television production. As noted above, the Lancaster campus will soon lose its only full time faculty member, the Dean has indicated that the position will probably be filled with a full time group II faculty. This program has shown significant improvement since the last review and has shown evidence of growth. The program is being supported by a very good computer lab with brand new equipment. In Zanesville, where a loss of a group I faculty has created significant concerns, there is still one Group I faculty available and a very enthusiastic Group II who is shared with Lancaster. The radio focus of the Zanesville campus has fallen into disarray. Radio is not as relevant in media as it once was and there is a reluctance on the part of the program coordinator to evolve into more modern technologies. There have been few if any attempts to secure grants or outside funding to support this program and the enrollment is extremely limited. On the other hand, the Southern campus has an exemplary program in television production and a very strong outreach to the community. At Southern, several grants have been secured to buy equipment for the EM program. This campus could provide assistance to the Zanesville campus to update their

offerings. The program coordinator at Southern is a Group I faculty and has a very heavy load, this should be reduced.

**c. Is the level of service, outside of teaching, appropriate for the program given its size and the role that it plays in the University and broader communities it interacts with? Is the Department able to fulfill its service mission?**

The electronic media program on all three campuses have important outreach goals with the broader community. This can range from Awards ceremonies, recruitment efforts, and developing promotion materials for other departments and agencies. It was learned that much of the recruitment and other outreach activities are most often done at the charity of the faculty. They do most of this work for free. Generally, the program is meeting its service mission.

**d. Does the Department have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?**

Because Electronic Media is a small program and only offers a AA degree, it is difficult to adequately staff and fund. The Southern campus is definitely the flagship in this regard with it's own facilities, adequate equipment, and own facilities. The Lancaster campus is improving in the resources area with new computer equipment and other media equipment that students can access. The Zanesville campus is in serious need of upgrading equipment but financial resources are extremely limited and there seems to be a lack of leadership and enthusiasm in securing outside funding. As noted earlier the Zanesville campus was a model for radio production, but has not embraced more modern technologies and has fallen into disrepair. This is keeping it from fulfilling its mission.

**2. Areas of Concern:**

1. Retiring faculty staffing at Lancaster: At the Lancaster campus, the current faculty member will be retiring in one year. The position needs to be filled for the continued stability and potential growth of the program.
2. Declining enrollment at Zanesville and related closed program at Zane State: The current faculty member at the Zanesville campus appears to have stalled in his ability to maintain the program.
3. Out-of-date program name and lack of cohesive identity across all three campuses: There are logistical and communication challenges for this program since it is spread over three campuses. A lack of a coherent identity that links all three campuses while retaining their respective distinctiveness: multimedia-computer applications; multiple-platform contention creation; audio production

### **3. Recommendations:**

1. Identify new leadership at Zanesville campus: There are two options to reinvigorate the Zanesville campus. One plan would involve phasing in new leadership with one or more of the existing faculty from other campuses. In the alternative, the current Zanesville director should step aside immediately while a new director is identified or hired from the outside.
2. Plan for securing external funding for all three campuses (use Southern's model): In lieu of ongoing budgetary restrictions, the EM program should think long-term about securing external funding. A plan for reviewing budgetary needs
3. Institutionalize alumni and donor relations: An overreliance on professional contacts with current faculty makes connections for funding and student job networking vulnerable. A regular speakers series could regularize student-to-professional mentoring and be relatively inexpensive to maintain.
4. Develop a long-term plan (with inventory) of equipment life-span and replacement: Currently, old equipment is either not replaced and is left inactive on some campuses. By establishing an inventory and projection of replacements, the program could optimize funding set aside for equipment maintenance.

### **4. Commendations:**

1. Southern campuses provides a model for how students and community can be well-served. This can assist in supporting positive changes in other campuses.
2. Recovery of Lancaster campus since the last program review. Excellent work by Keith Campbell and the Lancaster team in turning this division of the program around.
3. Program has responded well for the most part to changing demographics, learning styles, and funding sources over the years. The committee recognizes that creating an vibrant learning environment in specific locations while keeping the lines of communication open across faculty and staff lines will continue to be a strength of the program.

### **5. Overall judgment:**

The committee finds the Electronic Media Program viable overall with the exception of the Zanesville campus which is In Jeopardy.

## **External Reviewers Report**

### **Ohio University Regional Campus**

#### **Electronic Media Program**

#### **External Review, April, 2018**

##### **Lancaster Campus**

Please note that the guidelines and questionnaire regarding Electronic Media are not particularly appropriate because of the nature of this program. The terminal degree is an associate of arts, and thus the typical requirements of the faculty, both full time and part time, are anomalous to other programs. That being said, this report will address the loads, service and extracurricular duties of the personnel involved. Electronic Media will be henceforth referred to as EM.

The Lancaster program has seen a resurgence under the leadership of Keith Newman. It has taken a direction that is suited to his areas of expertise, but because his expertise is salient and he continues to produce work in the field, this is a good thing. The students are producing in the field, which means their emphasis is on video and single-camera production. Given the nature of the industry, this emphasis will serve them well in pursuing careers.

Eight students met with the reviewers and offered considerable insight into the efficacy of the program. It was encouraging to see that by a show of hands the majority intend to pursue baccalaureate degrees. Their interests are diverse, but all were confident that they were in a program that would lead them toward those goals.

The most positive comments they offered about Mr. Newman's instruction were his vast experience and his ability to engage students in conversation rather than lecture. One student noted with a smile that "he has an anecdote for everything." From the brief observation of his classroom teaching, that was evident. He discussed clearance and permission, and appropriation of likeness with the students, while encouraging their participation in the thought process. He appears very frank with the students when addressing their comments and questions. (For what it's worth, it should be noted that several students straggled into the class at various times.)

Overall, the students appear to be receiving sound instruction from Mr. Newman. One particularly bright spot has been the addition of Emily Long as an adjunct. Ms. Long is a whirlwind of excitement and enthusiasm and appears genuinely to enjoy her role with the students. Her specific expertise in multimedia platforms is invaluable to this program. The multimedia sequence is where the majority of students should be pointed, because it is the present and future of this industry. Ms. Long also teaches at the Zanesville campus, making her indispensable. Additionally, she visits high schools and tech prep schools without compensation

to tout the programs at Lancaster and Zanesville. Every effort should be made to increase her role at one or the other of the campuses. She would make a strong leader and advocate for the EM program.

The equipment that the students are using for the visual components of the program is adequate. DSLR cameras are a staple of the video production industry and students declared that they have no problem procuring them when needed. One issue that needs to be addressed, and may already be, is the video editing lab. Students complained that it is virtually impossible to edit on the Macs, and most of them edit on their home computers and software. The dean mentioned that computers in that lab are due to be replaced, so it is hoped that that will alleviate the problem. The other student complaint was that more equipment and instruction needs to be dedicated to audio. Although audio careers are not as available as video careers, it is nevertheless part of the curriculum and should be. An additional audio production course is something to consider at the next curriculum revision, or at the very least incorporating more audio theory and practice into other courses. Adjunct faculty with audio experience should also be considered in the hiring process.

Although the staffing at the Lancaster campus appears to be adequate, there are caveats to be addressed. Mr. Newman expressed concern that for many of the students he is virtually the only voice they will hear during the two-year program. This report must echo that concern. It is not pedagogically ideal for students to be exposed to a single voice. Budget constraints have caused all three campuses to operate at a bare bones level of staffing, but at the very least, numbers and diversity of adjunct faculty should be increased wherever possible. This leads to the second caveat. Mr. Newman was called out of retirement to lead this program and his contract will expire at the close of the 2019 school year. The choice of his replacement will be crucial to drive this program forward. The following are recommendations for the new hire to lead this program.

The program director should be a Group II hire at minimum. A Group I is not essential but would certainly add to the stability of the position. Considering the salary to be offered, it may not be reasonable to expect a long-term hire, but the essential component will be for this person to be invested in the community. The duties of this job extend far beyond teaching. To keep the program moving in the right direction, the PD must be active in recruiting, increasing the program's value to the university, and seeking external funding sources. This has been modeled at the Southern campus, which will be evident later in this report. Even though Mr. Newman expressed concern about being the only voice, the director of this program is the *essential* voice. That person should be available on many nights and weekends, and that should be made clear in the job description. It would not be feasible to demand that the hire live in the community, but a constant presence is necessary for the program to grow.

One of Mr. Newman's self-admitted shortcomings is the administrative component of this position. The next candidate must have a strong commitment to the administrative side, because this program operates autonomously for the most part. With that hire, the EM department can

begin producing promotional audio and video for the campus (saving money on the outsourcing of such projects) and can produce media works for the community (earning external funding for the program). All of this will hinge on the quality of work produced by the students, but this model has been successful at many other campuses.

The overview is that this program is viable for the foreseeable future. Dean Smith indicated that the number of EM students has been fluctuating between 20 and 25 students, and his level of comfort would see that number reaching 30 or above. With strong leadership, that number is absolutely attainable in Lancaster. It is vital that the EM program stay connected with the administration and the other departments on campus. It is vital that they work especially well with admissions and marketing to recruit the right students and to explore the possibility of being a recognizable program among businesses and people in the Lancaster community. If EM works with the campus and community instead of as a separate entity that no one knows about, the program will flourish.

### **Zanesville Campus**

There is no need to mince words here. This program is in trouble. It did not take long to assess the dire needs of this program, and they are numerous. It is probably best to begin with the culture and atmosphere on campus. Dean Webster has only been at his position for ten months, but the history of the EM program that brought it to its current state goes back years, even to the previous program director.

There is an obvious disconnect between the EM program and the rest of the campus, regardless of whom you talk to. Again, budget constraints are at the heart of the problem, but when that occurs the consensus seems to be to cut the most expensive programs, in this case EM. Indeed, that would be a solution, but it is more complicated than it sounds, and should be considered as a last resort. There are alternatives to consider, but they require drastic measures, immediacy, and money.

Ken Collins is in his 19<sup>th</sup> year at Zanesville, the last nine as Director of EM. As stated, the problems began before he inherited the directorship, but they have not improved. The program receives a scant budget, and perhaps more importantly, little to no support. The director and the new dean have barely met and have certainly had no serious talks about the program. Dean Webster indicated he was waiting to see the results of this report before delving into talks.

This program has a different flavor than either Lancaster or Ironton, largely reflected by the director of each. Although the emphasis here is audio, a tour of the studios revealed that even those facilities are woefully out of date. The audio/radio studios contain turntables and reel-to-reel tape decks, which are only of use as museum pieces. There is no practical benefit for students to be operating in an analog, vinyl world. The facility has a radio station that is streaming, but there is virtually no content. Students used to program some pieces for WOUZ, an arm of Athens' WOUB network, but that now serves as a relay station. There is a television

studio that is operating with a Grass Valley 110 switcher that is about 25 years old. The studio appears to be used very little. Mr. Collins informed us that many of his students are musicians who are interested in the audio side to record and mix for their bands. Finally, the soundproofing is inadequate so that students may not play music or recordings very loud because there are classrooms and offices in the building.

The program only has 16 students, and those numbers have been steadily declining for years. If a major overhaul of this program does not occur immediately, those numbers will continue to dwindle. There is a much more viable market for video and multimedia production than there is for audio. Employment in radio in particular is nearly impossible, because local programming has largely been taken over by conglomerates who use one personality to voice track for multiple stations. This program needs to alter its emphasis to survive.

We only met one student at Zanesville, compared to eight in Lancaster and six in Ironton. Furthermore, the student was not a typical associate's degree candidate. He already works at a radio station group in Cambridge and is simply looking to augment his knowledge base through courses. He indicated that he was happy to have hands-on experience and access to the equipment. He also indicated that the equipment was antiquated. He said there is little use of the streaming and no podcasting or other modern forms of distribution of content. He said that faculty, and particularly the director, have become less accessible to him.

Mr. Collins teaches a full 12-hour load each semester, and said he feels the pressure because his teaching and administrative duties keep him busy without the added pressure of the publishing requirement. He is the only Group I faculty and as is the case with all three directors stretched pretty thin in his duties. He is assisted by Charles Dembecky and Charles Savage, both of whom also have backgrounds in music and audio production. The video and multimedia training again comes mostly from Emily Long.

Following conversations with several administrators, it is apparent there is a long history of issues with this program. The previous director apparently lost interest in the program. Several of the interviewees have said that Mr. Collins does not offer the leadership necessary to turn the program around. Faculty and staff in other departments have echoed those thoughts.

There are a couple of things needed to turn this program in the right direction, but again it will require money and a considerable restructuring. Although several people on campus have suggested new leadership is essential, the current director of the program is tenured, and that means that he would need to be reassigned or consider early retirement. Many people, including all three reviewers, see Emily Long as having the skills and desire to lead a program like this. She, however, would also require the support of administration and access to funds. This could be achieved through grants, as the Southern Campus has done, sponsorships and donations, or from additional internal funding as well. A combination of all three is probably the ideal solution.



If this option is not deemed feasible, the second recommendation would be to terminate the program. It will continue to cost the campus money and could potentially damage its reputation through the students. This would also be a drastic measure, and not the ideal outcome, but if things do not improve in the next few years, it may be the only outcome.

Personal note: I reviewed the EM program about ten years ago, and Lancaster was in a similar situation to Zanesville. I am happy to note that that program survived and is now headed in the right direction. I say this to emphasize that a program like this has value and relevance to students if it is run properly. Saving the program would always be my first choice.

### **Southern Campus**

The tour of the Southern campus revealed a wealth of equipment and space that provides a learning atmosphere in all phases of audio and video production. Director Don Moore explained that much of the equipment was obtained through grants and corporate donations and sponsorships, as well as fundraising. The campus has a sizeable studio equipped with LED lights, the industry standard, and three aging cameras that still shoot in standard definition. Mr. Moore explained that he intends to upgrade those cameras with the help of current grant money he has been awarded. The television control room is state of the art and heavily soundproofed. The EM department streams a radio station that is run by faculty member Brian Corea. The station is piped into several areas of the campus, including the rotunda, where students often gather to study and relax. This creates a presence on campus for the EM program. Students participate in many remote productions, including parades and sporting events. The department also operates a public, education and government channel out of Ashland, KY, telecasting via Spectrum Cable. Recently, the EM program became involved in the launch of ESPN-3, which telecasts many sporting events. All of this provides constant activity for the EM students.

We met six students currently involved in the EM program. Their interests ranged from gaming to filmmaking to on-air talent to sports. The students all said they were attracted to the hands-on opportunities and the variety of programming options available to them. Most said they were impressed by the amount and the nature of the equipment available.

Dean Pennington said EM is a signature program for the campus. In addition to all they offer the students, the program delivers content to the university in the form of commercials, promotional videos, and how-to videos for various departments. She said when budgets began to tighten, she too was hit with suggestions about cutting EM or Equine, because they are the costliest programs. It should be especially noted that by EM producing videos for the campus, it saves the campus tens of thousands of dollars in outsourcing that video. Many universities, especially larger ones, employ that approach. The quality of student work at Southern is so high that the campus can take advantage of professional productions.

The three people from Student Resource Commons were extremely impressive. They have an extraordinary relationship with Mr. Moore and seem to understand the nature of the EM program very well. Ms. Murray said she communicates with Mr. Moore on a regular basis, enabling her to market the value of the program very well to prospective students. Ms. Bailey said that Mr. Moore will come to her and discuss struggling students early in the process, before the trouble becomes serious.

This EM program is extremely sound and viable, even though the number of students took a dramatic drop in 2012, as it did most everywhere. The numbers have since stabilized and are expected to grow in the near future. This program could serve as a model for the other two campuses. Its director is heavily imbedded in the community, works tirelessly to keep equipment up to date and keep students involved in a myriad of production activities. The directors of the other campuses would benefit from a visit to the Southern campus to see how the operation is run. Dean Pennington is correct in her assessment of Electronic Media as a signature program on the Southern campus.

Nothing is perfect, however, and there is an issue to be addressed. Although he did not complain, Mr. Moore admitted that his multitude of duties did keep him going many hours a day through the week and weekends as well. It is my belief that he risks burning himself out if he cannot slow down the pace without sacrificing the efficacy of the program. Whatever help in whatever form that can be provided to him will serve the students and the EM program well. He has solid help in Brian Corea, but the retirement of Dave Surgalski without replacement could make things difficult. Mr. Surgalski was responsible for the operation of the cables channels, and that part of the program should not suffer. Mr. Moore mentioned that the addition of Ernie Hall, a graduate of the EM program who works half time in the department now, has been a vital piece. Mr. Hall apparently welcomes students into his facility any time to watch and/or assist him with editing. He and Mike Donley interviewed with us as well, and both appear to be valuable assets to the program, even though Mr. Donley is now employed by instructional technology.

### **The Electronic Media Program**

The curriculum of the program seems to be addressing the needs of students who wish to work in the industry or continue their education. The program seems to mesh well with the two plus two offering of Media Arts or Visual Communication on the Athens campus. Students who have an interest in gaming or filmmaking can continue their education in these departments. The internal reviewers will expound on the nature of the curriculum.

All three campuses seem to be experiencing more gender diversity. The number of females is now larger than the number of males in the EM program. People of color and other minorities are not well represented, but that is a difficult task given the locations of the campuses. It is hoped that these programs will continue to address that issue.

The recurring theme on all campuses is that the moniker of Electronic Media is problematic for students and admissions. Prospective students do not necessarily understand the term electronic media. Admissions personnel also have a difficult time explaining it. This is not unique to the regional campuses. Universities nationwide are struggling with naming their media programs. Perhaps something like Media and Visual Arts would be more recognizable and tie-in more readily to the Athens programs. At any rate, a name change should be considered.

## **RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA PROGRAM BY RHE**

### **Areas of Concern Noted By Reviewers:**

1. Retiring faculty staffing at Lancaster: At the Lancaster campus, the current faculty member will be retiring in one year. The position needs to be filled for the continued stability and potential growth of the program.
2. Declining enrollment at Zanesville and related closed program at Zane State: The current faculty member at Zanesville campus appears to have stalled in his ability to maintain the program.
3. Out-of-date program name and lack of cohesive identity across all three campuses: There are logistical and communication challenges for this program since it is spread over three campuses. A lack of coherent identity that links all three campuses while retaining their respective distinctiveness: multimedia-computer application; multiple-platform contention; audio production

### **Recommendations by Reviewers:**

1. Identify new leadership at Zanesville campus: There are two options to reinvigorate the Zanesville campus. One plan would involve phasing in new leadership with one or more of the existing faculty from the other campuses. In the alternative, the current Zanesville director should step aside immediately while a new director is identified or hired from the outside.
2. Plan for securing external funding for all three campuses (use Southern's model): In lieu of ongoing budgetary restrictions, the EM program should think long-term about securing external funding. A plan for reviewing budgetary needs
3. Institutionalize alumni and donor relations: An overreliance on professional contracts with current faculty makes connections for funding and student job networking vulnerable. A regular speakers series could regularize student-to-professional mentoring and be relatively inexpensive to maintain.
4. Develop long-term (with inventory) of equipment life-span and replacement: Currently, old equipment is either not replaced and is left inactive on some campuses. By establishing an inventory and projection of replacements, the program could optimize funding set aside for equipment maintenance.

### **Overall Judgment by Reviewers:**

The committee finds the Electronic Media Program viable overall with the exception of the Zanesville campus which is in jeopardy.

### **Response by RHE:**

Based on the review findings, the Regional Campus Deans of Lancaster, Southern, and Zanesville met with Executive Dean Willan and Assistant Dean Anderson to discuss strategies to address the concerns and recommendations set forth by the internal reviews. Prior to this formal review process, the program coordinators at each campus offering the EM program had been meeting with RHE Assistant Dean Anderson to begin thinking of how to make programmatic improvements. Now that the review has concluded, progress can be made in making these needed changes. In accordance, it was agreed that a full curriculum revision with name change be conducted. This curricular change should align with majors

in Scripps College, creating 2+2 arrangements for students as well as with RHE bachelor degree completions. As such, this curriculum revision will result in a more coordinated academic program among campuses with shared courses. The goal for full implementation of a curriculum revision is AY 2020.

More strategic sharing of courses via online and on the Ohio University Learning Network will reduce the need for additional resident and adjunct faculty members as this was addressed as an area of concern. Faculty will deliver theory courses across the campuses instead of having to have multiple faculty members for each campus. This will resolve in having to have additional adjunct faculty as well resulting in a more efficient delivery model.

Equipment purchased with grant funding may be able to be shared across campuses. As new grant opportunities, there will be a focus to secure funding for those campuses lacking equipment. As indicated by the reviewers, the Southern campus has been successful in obtaining equipment grants. This approach can be duplicated by the other campuses offering the program. Equipment can also be shared among campuses with a maintained inventory list with a structured schedule for equipment replacement. A structured equipment replacement cycle resulting in a more consistent year-to-year replacement costs will also help administration in determining adequate operating budgets. These strategies will improve overall efficiencies of the program.

It is noted and recognized that there are issues with the current program leadership at the Zanesville campus. Pending the program's curricular revision, Dean Webster is prepared to make necessary staffing changes to ensure effective leadership which should result in an increase in program enrollment at the Zanesville campus. The system coordinator, Don Moore (Southern campus), is willing to provide mentoring to help improve the situation at Zanesville. Following the last program review, this strategy was used at the Lancaster campus to move the program there from jeopardy to viable status. In addition, there is a commitment by each campus to ensure that there are effective program coordinators at each location. In addition, Dean Smith at the Lancaster campus will be replacing the position of the retiring faculty member to ensure adequate program staffing.

In regards to a curriculum and name change, there is a need to modernize this degree to make it more relevant to the current industry. With industry changes, there is a need to broaden the degree approach beyond just radio and television. While job placement has not been an issue for recent graduates, this curriculum approach will result in graduates having more employment opportunities. The current curriculum has multiple tracks. A new curriculum should be stream-lined to include the same content for all of the major courses resulting in a more integrative degree. Therefore, all students will be receiving the same content and not having to choose between tracks in a 60-credit hour curriculum. This degree will be a comprehensive multi-media degree program including a more balance of content for radio, television, corporate communications, recording studios, production houses, advertising agencies, newspapers, government communications, event productions-concerts, sporting events, etc. As noted in the recommendations, a speaker series can be embedded into the curriculum to not only improve donor and alumni relations, but to also facilitate effective networking between future graduates and potential employers.