

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

**Program:** Media Arts and Studies

**Date of last review:** AY 2014-2015

**Date of this review:** AY 2021-2022

The program offers the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Ph.D. in Mass Communication and Journalism (dissolved in 2020)
- M.A. in Communication and Development Studies
- M.A. in Media Arts and Studies
- B.S.C. Media Arts Production
- B.S.C. in Media and Social Change
- B.S.C. in Music Production and Recording Industry
- Minor in Screen Writing
- Undergraduate Certificate in Social Media Studies
- Undergraduate Certificate in Podcasting

**Recommendation:** This program is found to be viable.

See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

The report was forwarded to the school's director and the college dean. Their responses are attached.

The Graduate Council's comments are included as well.

# **Ohio University School Media Arts and Studies Seven-Year Review – Fall 2021**

## **Program Review**

### **Review Team**

1. Internal Reviewers: C. Scott Smith, MM, Associate Professor of Horn and Theory, Ohio University School of Music; and Elizabeth Godke Koonce, PhD, Associate Professor of Instruction, Ohio University English Department.
2. External Reviewer: Marcus Thomas, JD, Associate Professor, Chair, Music and Performing Arts Management, The Hartt School of Music, Dance, and Theater, and University of Hartford.

### **Executive Summary**

The review team visited the School of Media Arts and Studies (School or MDIA) on the Athens campus November 4 and 5, 2021. Most of the faculty were interviewed in person and others participated virtually through Microsoft Teams. Included in this visit were the required tour of all facilities housed in Schoonover Center, Radio, TV, and Communications Building (RTVC) and Scripps Hall (classrooms, studio/lab/equipment rooms) and separate meetings with tenured, probational and instructional faculty, undergraduate and international graduate students, and the Dean of Scripps College and Communication.

The School has 17 faculty members distributed as follows: 11 tenured faculty, 2 probationary faculty, and 2 instructional faculty. Additionally, the School employs 20 adjunct faculty (including graduate students) and one visiting faculty member. The School offers the following certificates, minors, and degrees:

- Podcasting Certificate
- Social Media Certificate
- Screenwriting Minor
- Bachelor of Science in Communication in Media and Social Change (B.S.C.)
- Bachelor of Science in Communication in Media Arts Production (B.S.C.)
- Bachelor of Science in Communication in Music Production and Recording Industry (B.S.C.)
- Bachelor of Science in Communication in Games and Animation (B.S.C.)
- Master of Arts in Communication and Development Studies (MA)
- Master of Arts in Media Arts & Studies (MA)
- Doctor of Mass Communication and Journalism (PhD)

Prior to the visit, the committee received the School of Media Arts & Studies 2021 Self-study Report from the School including, program data, enrollment figures, and a list of adjuncts and visiting faculty. The committee offers the following recommendations to guide the School along a sustainable and successful course.

## **Overall Judgment**

After reviewing 7 academic programs, 1 minor and 2 undergraduate certificates, the committee enthusiastically commends The School of Media Arts & Studies faculty for their exemplary teaching methodologies and dedication to delivering impactful learning experiences to their students. Furthermore, the committee finds that the faculty have shown themselves to be skillful and contemporary practitioners who regularly commission their talents in the service of Ohio University, the Athens community, and faculty members' respective professions.

Accordingly, the review committee deems all programs, minors, and certificates viable.

## **Commendations**

The review committee finds that the School is strong in the following areas:

- **Excellence and dedication of the faculty:** The committee found ample evidence that faculty members are highly qualified researchers and producers of academic and creative works that positively advance their fields of study. Faculty members remain as professionally active practitioners of their respective crafts who import current industry knowledge and processes into their classrooms to the benefit of their students.
- **Commitment and compassion of the faculty:** The committee found compelling evidence of faculty involvement in service such as student advising and serving within professional organizations. Faculty members support students' development of similar values through service-learning courses such as Media Production for the Community.
- **Diverse experiential learning opportunities:** The School excels at immersing students into unique and proprietary learning experiences. Novel examples include frequent in-class, laboratory experiences (including opportunities to be mentored at OU by nationally known music producers), hands-on masterclasses in commercial recording studios located in major metropolitan centers, local projects like the 48-Hour Shootout, student film projects with local non-profit agencies, and regular comedy sketch show films, as well as Global Opportunities study away projects, like OU-in-L.A., Screenwriting in Spain, Storytelling in Theme Parks, and participating in the annual South by Southwest Music festival and the annual Ohio University Music Industry Summit.
- **Innovative and modern curriculum:** The committee found strong examples of innovative curriculum designed to encourage broadened cognitive abilities in students. Students are not only challenged to be competent in their chosen crafts, but they are also challenged to develop compassionate intellectual curiosity to analyze systems and social issues. The Media and Social Change degree program

as well as the newly created Media and the Civil Rights Movement course are substantial examples of program innovations.

- Effectively designed curriculum: The committee found precise evidence that each program is built upon thoughtfully integrated program learning outcomes that are directly achieved through scaffolded courses featuring appropriate pedagogical activities and assessments of individual student learning outcomes.
- State-of-the-art facilities and industry standard technology: The committee found convincing evidence of modern and field-proven technologies used during instruction. The School has several state-of-the-art audio studios to develop students' skills in recording, mixing, mastering, and post-production. The SMART Lab is an impressive research and collaboration classroom that enables the School and its students to partner remotely with international institutions on real-time, project-based learning exercises. Additionally, the School boasts elaborate virtual and augmented reality studios and classrooms where students work with emerging, cutting-edge technologies.
- Satisfaction and engagement of students: The School has a devoted group of engaged students, all of whom offered extraordinarily positive comments on how devoted they felt their professors are. Students in production programs also praised the School's flexibility during the pandemic, including creating a Virtual Recording Studio option, and allowing students to reserve critical equipment for home use in efforts to mitigate negative impacts on student learning that could have occurred due to lack of access to campus facilities.
- Perceived professional preparedness of students: All students interviewed responded affirmatively and enthusiastically that they felt their instructors and course of study have equipped them with the necessary knowledge and in-demand skills to enter the job market immediately upon graduation.
- International stature of graduate programs: The School's graduate programs draw many interested scholars from around the world. The committee found evidence that the reputation of graduate faculty and alumni have directly contributed to the allure and popularity of the graduate programs, which has enhanced the School's global stature.
- Resourcefulness in faculty fundraising efforts: Though the budget for the School was cut 22% the past year, the MDIA faculty have successfully solicited grants and donations from alumni and other sources to supplement the available funds remaining after the mandatory reductions. The committee finds faculty fundraising efforts to be extraordinary.
- Leadership and vision of the school director: Students, faculty, and college leadership unanimously express full faith and confidence in the abilities and stewardship of the School's director. The committee found unmistakable evidence

of progress and continued momentum fostered by the shared vision and mission between the director and faculty.

### **Areas of Concern**

- Vulnerability of core instructional mission to budget reduction: Due to budget reductions and voluntary faculty retirements, available teaching faculty have been reduced to dangerously inadequate numbers. The remaining faculty members are stretched and the student to faculty ratios in all but one program (Media and Social Change) are precariously above levels that would be considered desirable and most conducive. What follows is a list showing the faculty-to-student ratios in each undergraduate major track:
  - **Animation:** 82 undergraduate majors; 3 faculty (27.3:1)
  - **Media Arts Production:** 254 undergraduate majors; 3 faculty (84.6:1)
  - **Music Production & Recording Industry:** 130 undergraduate majors; 2 faculty (65:1 ratio)
  - **Media and Social Change** 8 undergraduate majors; 7 faculty<sup>1</sup>
- Lack of dedicated equipment room manager: All faculty cohorts and undergraduate students independently mentioned significant and persistent challenges associated with not having a trained equipment room manager. Faculty members, in particular, feel burdened by the assumption that “they’ll just go in and fix equipment” even though they’re already teaching full time.-The equipment room is currently in disarray with several broken or unreliable pieces of equipment.-Currently, students manage the equipment room and outside contractors must be hired to conduct specialized repairs. The absence of a regular equipment room manager frequently hampers progress on projects, as there is often a delay as to when needed equipment will be functional. Additionally, hiring outside contractors to regularly fix equipment and conduct routine maintenance may be less cost-effective than making a dedicated hire.
- Consistent and transparent communication from the dean’s office: MDIA graduate faculty reported being excluded from meetings related to the disbanding and restructuring of the School’s current PhD programs. Additionally, several faculty members feel that some recent faculty appointments and promotions have been inequitable.
- Acknowledgement and support of faculty accomplishments: Faculty members feel they are not fully appreciated for the tremendous work they are doing. They noted that the Dean’s Office has failed to attend film openings and has not sent emails of thanks or acknowledgment to individual faculty about achievements. This creates a feeling of disconnection between the faculty and upper administration, and, in some cases, with the university.
- Reduction in faculty research monies: Cuts in faculty research grants have reduced opportunities for faculty to present at conferences and have increasingly

required faculty to use private funds to complete creative projects. The trimming of college support for faculty research has a disparate impact on probationary faculty. Additionally, at least one faculty member was unaware that faculty research grants existed.

- Lack of clear P&T guidelines for both IF and TTF: Several MDIA faculty have no clear guidance as to what metrics they are expected to meet to be promoted. Messaging about the timeline and processes required to earn P&T in the School has been unclear.
- Mentorship opportunities are not evenly cultivated: Whereas some faculty members expressed strong relationships with mentors, other faculty report being completely without mentorship for professional development. The review committee believes a faculty mentorship program would assist school cohesiveness.
- Lack of faculty diversity: Among the 17-area faculty, there are three members who identify as BIPOC. However, there are no faculty members who identify as African American (the committee is unsure about faculty who may be from Indigenous populations). A lack of representative diversity is problematic for academic programs as it deprives current students of the benefits of interacting with teachers who come from cultural backgrounds different than their own. Additionally, a lack of representative diversity makes recruiting students from historically underrepresented groups more challenging.
- Lack of undergraduate student diversity: The School's most recent self-study does not report the race and ethnic identity of students, although this data is collected at the university level. However, it is stated that in 2018 The Scripps College of Communication admitted 79 students who identified as Black or African American. Of these, 10 accepted and enrolled. For the same year, MDIA admitted a total of 129 students. It is unknown how many of those students admitted are identified as Black or African American.
- Representation and inclusion among graduate students: Graduate student diversity is promising but not representative of BIPOC populations. The graduate students the committee met were mostly from African countries. While this represents racial and cultural diversity, it may not be representative of the BIPOC populations in Athens and the state of Ohio, more broadly. Also, the graduate cohort whom we interviewed reported feeling culturally isolated and not completely appreciated and integrated into the Ohio University campus culture.
- Low enrollment in one undergraduate program: The Media and Social Change program currently has eight students enrolled with one full-time faculty member dedicated to the major and another six who have shared appointments. Nonetheless, the program is a very admirable course of study and area faculty commented on their students' propensity for social engagement in meaningful and

demonstrable ways. However, since undergraduates are more likely to be concerned about hard skills and immediate job prospects, the program may be a tougher sell than others. The program learning outcomes may be better effective as either an emphasis for another major, a certificate program or the current program can be further developed into a graduate program. Consolidation of this program may also serve to reduce some of the current faculty resource strain. Courses associated with the major (and the Social Media certificate) are typically full, so there is considerable student interest in the subject area.

- Reliance on instructional faculty: Several areas of growth and emphasis are led by instructional faculty who are not job secure. Major sections of Media Arts Production and Communication and Development Studies greatly depend on the successful contributions of extraordinary instructional faculty. Institutional uncertainty as to the future of these faculty members introduces uncertainty and potential instability to these critical programs.
- Inequitable service requirements: Some instructional and probationary faculty report high levels of service (albeit always voluntary) to the School. Expecting or accepting inequitable service performance from instructional faculty may not be the fairest arrangement without additional consideration. With regards to probationary faculty, heavy service requirements may impede their ability to engage in superior teaching and scholarly activities.
- The current Ohio University proprietary rules restricting equipment purchases to a limited list of vendors hampers the School's ability to best serve students; this holds true both in the production and Media and Social Change tracks; the time lost by faculty members having to advocate for workarounds is also a problem.
- The PhD cohort the committee interviewed – all of whom are international students – feels abandoned by a program that no longer gives them any opportunity to earn funding after their third year in the program. This contrasts with the Communication Studies PhD program, which allows its students a fourth funding year's funding; the dearth of funding is especially problematic, as they are all international students who cannot legally earn income from anywhere but on campus. The committee heard several reports of homeless fourth-year students in this program. The lack of a fourth year's funding also impacts PhD students' ability to develop a research profile, as they must rush through the program.

## **Recommendations**

- Conduct a national search for new faculty member devoted to audio-post-production in the MPRI track, since the recently renovated state-of-the-art post-production studio (\$12,500 in updates) is currently underutilized and a major area of audio education expansion is unrealized. Use best efforts to attract a diversity hire. It would be beneficial if the new hire had technical expertise to maintain and

repair equipment and this service could be performed in lieu of a teaching load reduction.

- Hire a full-time equipment room manager with the necessary expertise to fix equipment germane to the MDIA major programs (in the absence of a line to hire the audio postproduction faculty member listed above). This would enable the School to better achieve its educational mission and should prove to be more efficient and cost-effective than hiring outside contractors.
- Regularly acknowledge faculty achievements and make best efforts to attend and publicly support faculty events. This should lead to an increase in faculty morale.
- Restore funds for faculty research and professional development. This support is critical for probationary faculty who are most in need of opportunities to create and present their works for promotion and tenure purposes.
- Establish mentorship opportunities to foster development of junior faculty. This will lead to stronger cohesion among the various faculty cohorts.
- Revise the promotion and tenure manual to better explain guidelines for advancement, promotion, and tenure. A clearer P&T manual will enable junior faculty to better focus their professional activities and reduce anxiety.
- Follow through on equitably reclassifying and/or promoting Instructional Faculty. This will serve to further stabilize several program areas currently led by Instructional Faculty.
- Further diversify undergraduate and graduate student bodies through intentional recruiting efforts in Ohio metropolitan areas and beyond. Consider expanding School presence in Ohio high schools with large BIPOC populations through strategic partnerships. Develop additional scholarships aimed at attracting BIPOC students.
- Strengthen communication between the dean's office and the faculty. Establish accessible methods of bottom-up communication. Establish transparent processes for consistent top-down communication. This will enhance confidence in School processes.
- Provide the opportunity for current PhD students to have a fourth year's funding.
- Involve the faculty in key curricular decisions and new faculty searches. This will yield higher quality outcomes and increase support for necessary decisions.
- Examine ways to leverage the strong student interest in social media to increase enrollment into the Media and Social Change major.

- Allow flexibility beyond proprietary software and hardware purchase options for this School, as its learning objectives are often hampered by such restrictions.

## **Program Overview**

As stated in the most recent self-study review: “The School of Media Arts & Studies (MDIA) has an extensive and rich history at Ohio University, tracing its origins to a postwar growth of academic interest in popular culture and broadcasting.” MDIA has grown to meet the needs of international global media industries through new degree programs, facilities and technologies while providing students with a liberal arts-based education.

The review committee finds that the School successfully fulfills its stated mission.

## **Faculty**

- a. **Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the unit (Teaching; Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Service)?**
  - Though the current faculty members are managing their responsibilities (indeed, going beyond), there is inadequate support for them administratively and with technical equipment). Even so, the number of faculty members is not enough. Some faculty members feel that they do not have as much time as they would like to devote to Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity.
  - Reduced faculty numbers, specifically in production, currently impact the number and variety of course offerings. In addition, the state-of-the-art audio post-production studio is underutilized, because of insufficient faculty coverage. Although the School of Media Arts & Studies Director has indicated trying to recruit adjuncts to teach in this lab, he has been unsuccessful in recruiting individuals who can teach the specialized content, as well Ohio University’s distance from metropolitan areas where such professionals typically work.
- b. **Is the level of the unit’s RSCA appropriate for the program given the size of the faculty and the resources available to the unit? Is the unit’s level of external funding at an appropriate level?**
  - The School of Media Arts & Studies faculty RSCA output is impressive.
  - The level of external funding for RSCA needs improvement. Some faculty members feel that more financial support is needed for them to be more productive; this would include funds needed for equipment for research, travel, and other expenditures. Indeed, faculty members are often required to cover an inordinate share of these expenses out of their own pockets; this results in them feeling unsupported in these efforts.

- 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 unit able to fulfill its service mission?**
- In general, the level of service within School sufficiently fulfills its service obligations. However, there appears to be an inequity in the amount of time some faculty members within the School serve in comparison to others.
  - The committee would like to recognize that there are several types of service. Some service being currently conducted by faculty members in the School seems well beyond typical faculty job duties. This includes having to spend time making equipment repairs just to teach or get their creative work completed.
- d. **Does the unit have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?**
- The School's overall health and pedagogical effectiveness would benefit from a dedicated staff person to conduct regular testing and maintenance of equipment. In the absence of a dedicated technician, the School needs enhanced funding to ensure expedient repair of worn equipment. The technical and creative needs of Media Arts change rapidly. As such, the School must remain responsive to the needs of a continually changing field.
  - However, the School has sufficient physical facilities and technology needed to fulfill its curricular mission.

## **Undergraduate Program**

The undergraduate programs within MDIA prepares students to be productive according to each discipline: Music Production and Recording, Media Arts Production, Media and Social Change, etc.

- a. **Is the unit fulfilling its service role, adequately preparing non- majors for future coursework and/or satisfying the needs for general education?**
- The School provides multiple learning opportunities for non-majors, including certificates in Podcasting, Social Media, and a Minor in Screenwriting & Digital Storytelling. The Social Media Certificate has the second-largest certificate enrollment on campus.
  - The School currently offers 16 courses which fulfill Tier I, II and III and requirements in the outgoing General Education curriculum, 12 of which are open to non-majors. These include 4 J-Comp. courses, 1 CC, 1 FA, 5 SS and 6 Tier III options.

- The School currently offers 8 courses in within the new BRICKS General Education curriculum and has 2 more courses under development. The School is especially strong in the Bridges category.
- b. **Is the program attracting majors likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of majors appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**
- MDIA is tremendously successful at recruiting students, both locally and nationally. These efforts are connected to the School’s solid reputation within the field and in the region. MDIA makes itself known within the community, as students participate in projects like the 48-Hour Photo Shoot and film projects connected to local charities. An on-campus summer high school “film boot camp” has also been successful at attracting local students into the School.
  - The School has been successful in recruiting some students from underrepresented populations into MDIA. However, both the School and University could still do more to attract additional students from diverse populations.
- c. **Does the undergraduate curriculum provide majors with an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers or graduate work following graduation?**
- All strands of the MDIA curriculum are designed intentionally, with a clear focus on experiential learning, as well as providing students with opportunities to network directly with production professionals outside of the University. The learning outcomes for the courses in all four majors are well-supported by types of coursework offered within.
- d. **Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the undergraduate program?**
- The current MDIA faculty have managed to keep their curriculum going, despite the heavy major recent losses in faculty associated with the 2021 Voluntary Separation & Retirement (VSRP) buyout. However, the heavy loss in faculty numbers associated with three of the four undergraduate major programs (Animation, Media Arts Production, Music Production & Recording Industry) has impacted the variety of course offerings that can be provided by those teaching in these tracks. As such, the faculty-to-student ratio in three of the four undergraduate majors is currently higher than it should be. The committee is concerned that this situation might lead to burnout. Having too few faculty members serving in these key programs leaves them less flexible, especially when several of these faculty members also shoulder considerable service loads (two of the three faculty members in Animation hold significant administrative roles, one of the two faculty members in MPRI is the Media Arts & Studies School chair).

- The numbers of students and faculty in each of the major strands, as well as the faculty-to-student ratios are listed below:
  - **Animation:** 82 undergraduate majors; 3 faculty (27.3:1)
  - **Media Arts Production:** 254 undergraduate majors; 3 faculty (84.6:1)
  - **Music Production & Recording Industry:** 130 undergraduate majors; 2 faculty (65:1 ratio)
  - **Media and Social Change** 8 undergraduate majors; 7 faculty<sup>2</sup>
  
- e. **Are pedagogical practices appropriate? Are program learning outcomes adequately assessed?**
  - The committee is confident that the current course sequence in all four major tracks fulfills the stated MDIA learning outcomes.
  
- f. **Are students able to move into discipline-related careers and/or pursue further academic work?**
  - Students who graduate from the School of the School of Media Arts & Studies obtain jobs in their fields at a higher average than university graduates in general.

## **Graduate Program**

As stated on Page 77 in the Self Study:

For the period of Aug 2014-Aug 2021, the School of Media Arts & Studies (MDIA) has offered the following graduate programs:

- (i) Master of Arts in Communication and Development Studies, jointly administered with the Center for International Studies
- (ii) Master of Arts in Media Arts & Studies
- (iii) Ph.D. in Mass Communication and Journalism, offered jointly with the School of Journalism, but independently administered by each School.

- a. **Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of students appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**
  - The Communication and Development Studies (Comm. Dev) Master's program (offered in conjunction with the Ohio University Center for International Studies) seems to be thriving; it draws upon long-term international relationships developed over years. Most students in the Comm. Dev. Program come from other nations; as such; this program has done an excellent job attracting diverse students.

- The Media Arts PhD program has also been similarly successful in attracting engaged, diverse, and competent graduate students, most of whom are international; the students in this program often enter the PhD program after earning the Comm. Dev. M.A.

The committee cannot comment on the M.F.A. program (or on the diversity of this cohort), as we did not meet any of these students.

**b. Do the students achieve discipline-related careers following graduation?**

- Yes.

**c. Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**

- Yes. The graduate students in this program speak highly of their faculty mentors.

**d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program?**

- Though less than the School would like, current resources and faculty numbers are sufficient to support the graduate program.

**e. Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?**

- The graduate students in the Comm. Dev. M.A. and PhD tracks need more financial support. Many are struggling to survive, and because all these students are international, they cannot legally earn income from other sources.

**f. Are program learning outcomes adequately assessed?**

- Yes.



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SCRIPPS COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION  
SCHOOL OF MEDIA ARTS AND STUDIES

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## **Director response: 2021 School of Media Arts & Studies Program Review Report**

On behalf of myself and our entire department, I would like to extend my gratitude to the reviewers for their dedicated and comprehensive work on this report. Across all areas, they managed a substantive schedule of meetings with faculty, students, and administrators and spent hours learning about the strengths and needs of our program. I can confidently say that their report accurately reflects the continued viability and promise of our school, as we as the obstacles we are encountering as we seek to enrich and expand curricular opportunities and experiential education.

As noted in the commendations, the faculty in the School of Media Arts & Studies exhibit excellence in several areas. To quote directly: "The committee found ample evidence that faculty members are highly qualified researchers and producers of academic and creative works that positively advance their fields of study. Faculty members remain as professionally active practitioners of their respective crafts who import current industry knowledge and processes into their classrooms to the benefit of their students."

Additionally, the review team identified the innovation we have pioneered in several areas: industry experiential learning opportunities and curriculum, the launch and operation of state-of-the-art facilities, access to industry-standard technology, and resourcefulness in our fundraising and grant efforts. Perhaps the greatest, and most important, achievement noted in the report is student satisfaction with the work and care of our faculty. As noted, "the School has a devoted group of engaged students, all of whom offered extraordinarily positive comments on how devoted they felt their professors are."

In reviewing the areas of concern, I would like to state that not only are the faculty aware of these issues, but we voice agreement in addressing these concerns with tangible responses. With that in mind, I would like to respond directly for how we are/have been attempting to address the areas identified in the report, much of which will echo the recommendations provided by the committee in their report:

1. ***Faculty and Equipment support needs*** – We have been petitioning for key faculty and support hires in the face of immense loss. We represent one of the largest schools in the university, as well as one of the most innovative, and yet we are increasingly challenged to teach the courses we offer with existing faculty. With the loss of faculty, and now grad students, we are heavily reliant on G3 faculty hires to teach existing courses for our majors, as well as in courses being designed for growth areas in creative industries. This correlates with the committee's concern regarding ***reliance on instructional faculty***.

Our faculty-to-student ratios are abnormally out of balance, and in some cases, are even worse than shared in the reviewer's report (For instance, in the Animation major one of the three faculty members is only teaching part-time; there are functionally only 2 full-time faculty).

As well, we have identified areas of immediate and largely unmet need in full-time audio instruction and facilities/equipment support that continue to place a strain on existing resources; a situation that increasingly creates impediments to students in core major courses. We have been appealing for our G2 audio position to be replenished since our instructor left for another position in Fall 2019. Audio is an area of unprecedented market growth, representing an industry space with multiple career options. And yet, we can't even provide a single full-time instructor. I strongly advocate for the committee's recommendation that a national search for this position be done immediately.

We are approaching **an impending cliff in instructional resources due to the dissolution of the MDIA PhD program and the limitations of attracting/retaining talented adjuncts within driving distance of campus**. With the graduation of the last “full” cohort from our former PhD program, instruction in primary courses (such as popular areas like social media), as well as long-used TA support for large enrollment MDIA courses, will no longer be available. Additionally, we are anticipating the loss of two additional G1 faculty in 2022 to VSRPs. This has impacted another area of concern from the report: **lack of faculty diversity**. Our only BIPOC faculty took a VSRP in 2020, as did one of our few female faculty members. As we pursue new faculty hires, we plan to explore ways to take advantage of the Diversity Opportunity Hire Fund to help encourage recruiting. In the meantime, we continue to navigate alternative avenues to attract diverse instructors. As an example, I have recently created two new short-term Visiting Professional contracts for Spring 2022, attracting both a BIPOC industry leader (who also happens to manage one of music’s biggest hip-hop duos) and a female mastering engineer (particularly notable, as only 4% of the music engineering community is female).

2. **Lack of clear P&T Guidelines for both IF & TTF:** An extensive overview and revision of the school’s document is planned for Spring 2022. This also connects to the concern of **inequitable service requirements**. Along with this document revision, I plan on working with the P&T Committee to ensure that we solidify and maintain equitable distributions of service across all MDIA faculty.
3. **Mentorship opportunities are not evenly cultivated:** This will be a topic of discussion and action for our administrative committee in Spring 2022.
4. **Lack of undergraduate student diversity/Representation and inclusion among graduate students:** We absolutely support and agree with the need to broaden the diversity of our students. We began an effort to this effect in AY20-21, with a complete overhaul of our website and social media output to help highlight our student diversity to prospective students. Additionally, our Outreach Coordinator has begun to work with our college and the university admissions office to broaden efforts to attract students in areas with larger BIPOC student populations.
5. **Low enrollment in one undergraduate program:** An extensive revision and re-alignment project across all four of our primary majors began last year under my direction, in the following order: MPRI, MAP, Animation, and Media & Social Change. As such, the Media & Social Change major was already slated for renewed development and strategy for Spring 2022. The concerns here will be addressed accordingly, especially given the amount of faculty in this major and the strong interest in our social media certificate. However, it should be noted that the two G1 faculty taking VSRPs in 2022 are in this major area, which includes one of our female faculty members.
6. **The current Ohio University proprietary rules on vendors:** We largely have no control over this, though we can help provide faculty guidance to appropriate administrative support in the college.
7. **The PhD cohort feeling abandoned:** Our assessment is that this is the heartbreaking fallout from the dissolution of the MDIA PhD program in 2020. We have tried to provide as much support as possible to our 4<sup>th</sup> year students, but with our own budget being cut by 22%, we simply lack any meaningful ways to assist students that were not provided funding beyond 3 years.

Again, I want to thank the committee for its intensive work and empathetic approach to gathering valuable feedback about our school. Please feel free to reach out if I can provide anything further.

Sincerely,



Josh Antonuccio  
Director, School of Media Arts & Studies



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Scripps College of Communication

December 12, 2021

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TO: Bärbel Such, Chair UCC Programs Review Committee  
FR: Scott Titsworth, Dean, Scripps College of Communication  
RE: School of Media Arts & Studies 7-Year Review

As Dean of the Scripps College of Communication I had the opportunity to meet with the review team for the School of Media Arts & Studies, review the self-study created by the school, and also to review the response written by the school (from Director Josh Antonuccio). I agree with the overall conclusion that MDIA is a **VIABLE** program. In this memo I provide additional information highlighting my perspectives on the school and also discuss ways in which the Scripps College Dean's office will work with the school in support of strategic objectives.

The School of Media Arts & Studies is a model school in how it has integrated vibrant industry connections with academic curriculum. Notably, the Ohio in LA program is one of the strongest experiential learning programs at Ohio University based on student demand and multiple examples of success for students transitioning from academic to career placement. In addition to that program, MDIA offers multiple other programs ranging from master classes in New York to attendance at South by Southwest and several international learning opportunities led by faculty. In short, I perceive that the School of Media Arts & Studies has excelled in the area of experiential learning, which has tremendously benefitted students. The college has already supported MDIA with additional funding for several of these activities (e.g., funding for the Music Industry Summit) and will continue to do so as possible. We have already seen how our investment in these activities in MDIA has prompted other schools in the college to explore similar opportunities, such as the Ohio in Washington DC program jointly ran by the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism and the School of Visual Communication.

The self-study, review team report, and Director Antonuccio's response highlighted a significant area of concern surrounding faculty numbers in certain areas. In my opinion, the student-to-faculty ratio in both audio production and media production are critically low (and unacceptable). Last Fall I approved a request for an instructional faculty member hire in the area of audio and forwarded that request to the Provost's office. I have yet to be given approval for that hire to move forward but will continue to advocate for the position. Moreover, I am committed to advocating for other faculty hires (or promotions) in critical areas of growth and student demand including, but not limited to, video production and media studies (including social media). While the university budget constraints have impeded faculty hires at the moment, I agree that the school will need support in critical areas once we are given the ability to do so. Director Antonuccio and I have had discussions on how to best prioritize those hires (starting with the previously mentioned Audio hire).

I am very supportive of the school's commitment to revisiting the existing Promotion and Tenure Document and its desire to improve faculty mentoring. Other schools in the college

have undertaken similar objectives and can be helpful to MDIA as they develop and implement these plans.

In terms of equipment and support of faculty/academic facilities, the college office worked with MDIA to obtain funding for significant upgrades to the Bob Lyon Studio and also worked with MDIA to create (and fund) a new animation studio. The college also supported MDIA in its efforts to upgrade video production to digital cinema cameras. I am enthusiastic about these efforts and am confident that, once finalized, these facilities and resources will be tremendous assets to the program. We continue to work with the school to ensure that the equipment room runs smoothly. In response to some concerns raised with the review team about inoperative equipment, I asked the equipment room manager to create a report on maintenance activities that can be reviewed with the school's leadership. Through that discussion we will be in a better position to understand what areas of maintenance need further attention.

Finally, I am fully supportive of the school's efforts to elevate diversity, both in terms of faculty and students. As I mentioned to the faculty and to the review team, other schools in the college have had success in this area by intentionally blending diversity with other substantive areas of need. So, when we do hire the audio position, are there ways to foreground aspects of diversity in the expertise required by the new hire? By intentionally integrating diversity, equity, and social justice issues into job descriptions, faculty hired will have strong support as they integrate those topics into their courses and the school's curriculum.

In closing, I reiterate that the School of Media Arts & Studies is an academic unit that has significant strengths and remains a viable program. The academic programs offered by the school are exceptionally strong, and are growing. I am thankful for the leadership of the faculty in support of students in the program and am hopeful that we will soon be able to address critical areas of need for additional faculty support in critical areas of the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Titsworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Scott Titsworth, Ph.D.  
Professor and Dean

**From:** [Charlotte Elster](#)  
**To:** [Such, Barbel](#)  
**Subject:** comments from the GC Program Review Committee  
**Date:** Saturday, January 22, 2022 6:35:06 PM

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**NOTICE:** This message was sent from outside Ohio University. Please use caution when clicking links or opening attachments in this message.

Hi Baerbel:

The Graduate Council reviewed the following programs on Jan. 21, 2022:

3. School of Media Arts and Studies

We concur with the finding of the review committee that the School is viable and successfully fulfills

its stated mission. We concur with the review's concerns and recommendations, and want to add the School may want to prioritize recommendations and address those of lesser financial impact in a timely fashion.

---Charlotte

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