Digital Information Design: An Interdisciplinary Curriculum Plan

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Abstract - **Winthrop University is offering a new Bachelor of Science degree in Digital Information Design now in its second year. This interdisciplinary program is unique in its organization that spans four departments and three colleges. The four departments include Mass Communication from the College of Arts and Sciences, Design from the College of Visual and Performing Arts, Computer Science and Marketing from the College of Business. It is unique in that students select a track of study that combines a shared core of courses and specialty courses in Digital Mass Media, Interactive Media, Web Application Design and Digital Commerce. The core courses consist of one or two introductory courses from each specialty. In addition, a freshman seminar helps students understand the different specialties, a later seminar introduces cutting edge topics in the field, and a senior seminar requires synthesis across the disciplines. In the latter students will work in teams to solve a problem for a local company or nonprofit. The ideal team will be four students, one from each specialty.**

The specialties integrate with current course offerings and a student body following a "traditional" program in their home departments. Students must meet the requirements of these classes as any other student following a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, for example.

The core courses are highly integrated, as they build on each other (except the first, of course) requiring one or more of the others as prerequisites or co-requisites but taught by any of the four contributing departments. There is also substantial overlap among the specialties. We expect assessment criteria will ensure that this degree of integration is maintained over time.

This paper includes a detailed description of the program, a summary of its origins, (largely industry driven) and a description of the assessment criteria, and its development process.