

OPDD Program Meeting(s)

2 December 2024

(10:30am, JQL)

In attendance: Jim Arnold, Julie Lamarra, Mark Larese-Casanova, Dave Gibson, Chase Anderson, Barbara Baird, Mark Kovin, Sean Michael, Andrew Deceuster, Keith Christiansen

*This document represents a series of short weekly “standing” meetings throughout November as well.

Facilities, Classrooms, & Labs

We decided to transition the KLIM lab space from textile only (joining) tools to include physical form development tools such as cutting, abrading, and forming tools. Ideally, we will create a new course to add to our curriculum that is called Form Development. We can use this lab space to teach in. We do not currently have the ability to teach this content in our facilities so transitioning the KLIM lab in this direction will ultimately benefit the students.

We want to use the KLIM donation money to buy equipment for this improved lab and improve the West area of the ground floor of the JQL to include ideation/flex space.

Curriculum and Courses

We have considered and brainstormed how to improve the OPDD curriculum and other opportunities for growth. We have charted (both analogue and digitally) out the current curriculum and degree requirements which has helped us observe opportunities for improvement. The bulk of our meetings have been to discuss this opportunity, problem solve, and create more vision for the program. Several issues have been noted that we must address:

- We need to allow more students/recruits into the program while maintaining rigor and benefits for continuing to degree completion in OPDD.
- We need to retain more of our students and provide more content in our upper division courses, so they stay with OPDD and complete the degree. We have comparatively few required core courses in the upper division curriculum.
- We will open enrollment into several courses that have previously been limited to OPDD degree students only (OPDD 1000 and OPDD 1050).
- We have noticed that the 3 track OPDD format has not been serving our students and graduates as well as they could. Mainly the PLM and Development tracks need to be adjusted because they both have low interest and less job preparation benefits compared to the Design Track.
- We will restructure the curriculum to create a degree that provides a better unique and focused professional degree preparation.

Our culminating thoughts to improve the OPDD curriculum and degree requirements is to focus on improving the OPDD undergraduate degree by:

- Combining the Design and Development tracks into one track. We have very low student interest in the Development track currently and industry professionals are telling us that designers make better developers. This track would simply be called the “Outdoor Design Track” emphasis.
- Enhance the PLM track by including merchandizing courses and calling it the “Outdoor Product Management Track” emphasis. Merchandising and outdoor marketing is a skillset that we have observed, and advisory board members have suggested, could be of more benefit to graduates of our program than what the current PLM track offers.
- We would maintain a professional program advancement/matriculation process for each of these two tracks with the addition of a separate or modified application for each.
- We will increase the number of students allowed into the Design Track and possibly have a similar capacity in the Outdoor Product Management (OPM) Track if there is interest.
- We want to provide the OPM students with a Capstone (and possibly collaborative) experience comparable with what the current Design Track students enjoy in their Senior Studio projects.
- A standard pre professional/pre matriculation curriculum for both professional degree tracks would be enhanced at the Freshman and Sophomore level.

For our next meeting, we will consider a sketched-out version of the OPDD curriculum and begin refining it. Our goal is to have a solid plan and courses ready for approval in Cirriculog by February 2025. We will resume weekly meetings in Spring semester 2025.

Program Issues and Opportunities

ASTE has taken steps to improve the TEE 1010 Graphic Communication course that our students mainly fill. If the course does not improve, we will create our own version of this, taught by our own instructor(s).

Recruiting

Jim visited the Utah Arts Academy on November 8th and conducted a workshop for recruitment.