

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

HOCKING TECHNICAL COLLEGE Associate of Applied Science in Digital Game Design Technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

**This program clearly meets Regent's standards for associate degree programs.
There were no serious concerns raised in this review.**

Request: Hocking Technical College proposes an Associate of Applied Science degree in Digital Game Design Technology in response to the growing need for trained digital game technicians.

Electronic gaming is one the fastest growing industries in the United States. Over 75% of US households play or watch computer or video games on a regular basis. The demand for even more sophisticated, interactive and faster games is creating the need for additional digital game designers and technicians. This need is expected to grow further given the proliferation of interactive computer and video games that are being used for educational purposes in healthcare, schools and the military.

Representatives from the College's Information Technology Advisory Committee visited several digital game businesses in Ohio to document the need for the proposed program and to determine the knowledge and skills needed by students interested in this career field. Students enrolled in the proposed program will learn to design and create computer games and simulations, test prototypes, follow computer design standards and policies, and use design tools of varying complexities. Career opportunities for students graduating from the proposed program include computer game designer and tester, game animator, 3D artist/modeler, computer programmer, computer and video game journalist, and other industry related positions. The entry level wage for this career field in southeast Ohio ranges from \$44,000 to \$52,000 a year, and with some experience it could increase to \$65,000-\$72,000 a year.

Program Purpose/Mission: The purpose of the proposed program is to provide students with the opportunity to obtain a degree that can be used in the rapidly growing digital game design industry and to provide the region with a pool of individuals trained to work in the field.

The College is a member of the Information Technology Alliance of Appalachian Ohio (ITAAO), whose goal is to improve and grow the competitiveness of South East/South Central Ohio's information technology industry. ITAAO is a member of Ohio's Information Technology Alliance, a statewide network of six regional organizations that concentrates solely on the development of information technology in Ohio. As a member of ITAAO, the College networks and meets with employers to determine specific employee education and training needs, and also to provide assistance for the attraction and recruitment of new businesses to southeast Ohio.

Recently, Destineer Studios, a leader in the development of computer games, contacted Hocking Technical College and Shawnee State University to convey that the company planned to add an additional 100 jobs and was interested in filling some of the new positions with digital game design graduates from both institutions. Destineer Studios is also discussing the possibility for students to complete an internship at the company prior to graduation, with the potential for employment with Destineer Studios after graduation.

Enrollment: The proposed program is already attracting interest based on the number of student inquiries the College's admission office continues to receive. The College is projecting an enrollment of 20 full-time and 2 part-time students, beginning January 2009. The College further projects that student enrollment will grow to 25 full-time students in 2010, with the potential for growth to 30-35 students in 2011.

Curriculum: The curriculum incorporates a cognitive learning environment for the general education requirements and offers specialized, hands-on experiences as students learn the technical skills needed for designing and creating new digital games. Students will be involved in an off-campus internship, which will give them the opportunity to use their education, training and artistic abilities to design, test and monitor computer and video games in a work environment.

Hocking Technical College and Shawnee State University are currently working on an articulation agreement that will give graduates of the proposed program seamless articulation into Shawnee State University's Bachelor of Fine Arts with a Concentration in Gaming and Simulation program. Hocking Technical College is also exploring an articulation agreement with Ohio University, so that students could articulate into that University's bachelor's degree program in Digital Media: Special Effects, Games and Animation.

All three institutions (Ohio University, Shawnee State University and Hocking Technical College) are committed to the advancement of higher education in Southeastern Ohio and are interested attracting and recruiting non-traditional students, place bound students and adult learners to higher education opportunities. The development of these collaborative partnerships and articulation agreements fosters the economic development efforts in this region and assures current and future employers that there will be a trained workforce for them in Appalachia, Ohio.

Faculty/Resource Needs: Hocking Technical College is financially prepared to operate this program. The proposed program will be part of Hocking's New College, which is the incubation college for new program development. Program direction and oversight will be the responsibility of the College's Provost/Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Full-time faculty members will be used to teach the required general education courses and the technical courses needed for the program. Because the College is anticipating high student interest in the program, it is financially prepared to hire additional full-time faculty as needed.

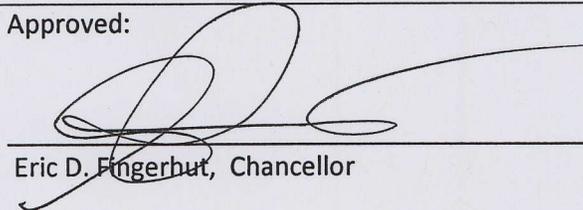
The College currently has the classrooms and labs needed for the proposed program as it plans to share computer and learning labs with its existing Interactive Media program. Additional equipment may be added that will allow students to more extensively test their games and computer software.

Program Duplication: Columbus State Community College, located more than 60 miles from Hocking Technical College, offers a One-Year Technical Certificate in 3D Visualization and an Associate Degree in Graphic Communication. Hocking Technical College is willing to share best practices and resources with Columbus State Community College and other institutions interested in developing this or similar programs.

End of Comment Period: November 13, 2008

No Comments Received: Recommend Approval

Approved:



Eric D. Fingerhut, Chancellor

12/13/08

Date