December 1, 2021

To: All CAM Faculty and Staff
From: Larry Kaptain, Dean
Subject: Dean's message

Colleagues,

The notion of a degree program(s) in video game design and production has been socialized (extensively), a talented faculty group put forward a strong programmatic and curricular proposal, and now comes the fun part--planning and making it happen, by Fall 2023 (Class of 2027). I want to thank the faculty who put time in to make an initial proposal: Michelle Carpenter, Richard Strasser, Jeff Merkel, Howard Cook, Bryan Leister, Brian DeLevie, and Travis Vermllye. Their proposal "Game, Art and Story" will help launch this next phase. Michelle Carpenter, Jeff Merkel, Theo Edmonds, Alumna Colleen Fanning, and I travelerd to the Rochester Institute of Technology for a very fulfilling and informative visit.

To be successful as a college—we need to include all of our faculty and staff and assure that their talents are being unleashed in the best manner possible. The same goes for our units. Any competition for SCHs is largely a moot point, as the successes and shortcomings in revenue generation affect the entire college. In the development of this new program, I want to assure that it is truly drawing on the expertise of all of our faculty, and addressing industry needs. And yes, there is scholarly and research work in video game design and production. It's one of the broadest areas in the creative industries.

For CAM to advance, enrollments need to grow and there need to be fresh offerings that will attract new students while visibily and tangibly supporting the Strategic Plan 2030.

Here are some FAQs and rough/DRAFT timelines:

1) Why here and why now? David Epstein's book "Range" cites a cultural and societal change of employabililty of a workforce that can work across disciplines and curricula—as well as in those areas. Note: We have evidence of CAM grads who are working across music, film & TV and all areas of visual arts.
2) Culturally—this program of video game design and production will be aligned to support the 5 goals of the Strategic Plan 2030 and, the important contributions that CAM will make in this program.
3) CU Denver is very cautious when introducing new programs and curricula. I'm looking for 500 new majors by 2030—and an entering (Class, '27) of 50-100. We have commissioned a custom study by Hanover Research of the national (and international) environments for video game design and production that will provide us with baseline data to appropriately allocate resources and move forward in planning and executing.
4) There has been on going conversation about balancing the computer programming elements and artificial, technical and creative elements. Perhaps there can be 2 tracks—BFA (more creative/art-based) and a BS with the computer science skills + art and design that are needed by the industry. Perhaps even an entrepreneurship angle with the Business School.
5) The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance has suggested that we assign a faculty member to coordinate the formation of a program and curricula development, search for and hire a full-time director (search in Spring 2022, they start in July 2022), and a program assistant. The Executive Committee will weigh-in on all aspects of developing a program that provide international leadership.
6) The Office of the Vice Chancellor also strongly suggested that this degree(s) be located centrally, and not with any single unit. The mechanics of that are yet to be determined.

Stay tuned!