Four-Year Interim Report
School of Media Arts & Design

Submitted by: Steven D. Anderson – Director
I. Status of the Program
A. Compare the number of students served by the academic program currently to the number during the previous APR, including each of the areas below:

1. Student enrollment
SMAD continues to be a managed enrollment program based on our curriculum, facilities and staffing. The number of students admitted to SMAD must depend on the number of faculty and resources available. SMAD’s current admissions process was reviewed by the JMU Restricted Programs Advisory Group and was approved in February 2012. Admissions numbers are a good indicator of the number of students enrolled in our program.

While the number of students admitted each year has varied some, the number of admitted students has remained fairly constant. Since our last APR in 2008, we have had a fairly significant increase in the number of students accepted into the SMAD major. Table 1 and Graph 1 show the number of students who have applied and the number accepted over the past thirteen years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Applied</th>
<th>No. Accepted</th>
<th>Accepted Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>75.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>73.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>65.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicate we are a selective major and routinely accept between about two-thirds to three-quarters of all students who apply. However, since 2005 we have allowed a higher percentage of students into the major.
The 2012 admissions class represents an increase of 55 students when compared to the 2005 group. Since the year reported in our previous APR (2007), we are currently admitting approximately 35 more students to the major each year. The quality of our applicants remains high. In the spring of 2012, the average GPA of those accepted into the major was 3.28. In one concentration (Converged Media), the average GPA of students accepted was 3.34.

**Statistical Summaries**

The annual statistical summaries also indicate that we have an overall increase in the number of full-time undergraduate majors. Between the fall of 2006 and spring of 2011 there has been an increase of 76 students in the SMAD major. From a low of 677 majors in Spring 2008, there has been an increase of 105 majors representing a 15.5% increase in the number of majors between Spring 2008 and Spring 2011. Table 2 and Graph 2 show the trend of increasing majors over this period of time.

**Table 2 – Full-Time Undergraduate Majors in SMAD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Majors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>706.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>715.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>716.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>677.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>708.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>717.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>741.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>768.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>770.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
<td>782.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graph 2 – Full-Time Undergraduate Majors in SMAD**

![Graph showing the trend of increasing majors over time](image-url)
2. Graduation rates
According to the JMU Office of Institutional Research, graduation rate data is difficult to obtain. According to Peter E. De Michele, Assistant Director of Evaluation and Survey Research, “The problem with individual majors is that about half of JMU undergrads switch majors at least one time during their stay at JMU. So tracking who _is_ part of the cohort (and who is _not_ part of the cohort) for the denominator is not something we have done.” (October 23, 2012 email).

Data on degrees conferred by major are available and show the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Majors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 - 2010</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 - 2011</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 - 2012</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the students who graduated in 2009 – 2010 were probably admitted to the SMAD major in the spring of 2007. Given we admitted 191 students in 2007 and 161 students graduated in 2009 – 2010, that would indicate that about 84% of all admitted SMAD majors followed through with our major and graduated. Applying the same logic to the 2010 -2011 class the figure would be 84.5% and for 2011 – 2012 would be about 79%. This appears to be much higher than the university average.

B. Compare the current resources to the resources from the previous APR, including:

1. Instructional Resources
(See below, “Facilities”)

2. Facilities
Since 2007, SMAD has added a new computer lab and a new photography studio and we now maintain a facility that includes:
- Television studio and control room, with auxiliary support facilities (servers, computers, control devices)
- HD Video Editing Lab
- Converged Media Lab/Newsroom (new facility)
- (2) General Purpose SMAD Labs
- Video Field Production Equipment
- Resource Room/Lab
- Magazine Production Lab
- Photography Studio (new facility)
- Faculty Media Production Lab
- (2) Mobile Teaching Labs (Each with 20 computers on a cart)
- (4) Lecture Classrooms

We are fortunate to have a high quality and extensive technology inventory, but maintaining this facility is one of our greatest challenges. When it was installed in late 2007, our television studio complex came in at approximately $1.77 million. As this equipment starts to age, repair and replacement are taxing our ability to keep up. With four computer labs, where we purchase computers and software out of our operating budget, it’s difficult for us to provide students with the latest hardware and applications necessary.

3. Support Services (i.e., administrative assistance, technology support, etc.)
SMAD is fortunate to have two office administrative staff and three others who serve in support of our equipment and facility. Without their work, the department would be in desperate shape. Our staff includes:
- (2) Office Administrative Staff
- (1) Technology Manager who also oversees...
There have been no additions to our support staff since 2007, but we feel the current technical staffing is adequate for our needs. We could use a full-time assistant to better serve the advising needs of our department. We are the second largest majors in our College and better advising is critical. An advising staff person could help advise both SMAD-Declared and SMAD Fully-Admitted students.

C. Compare the status of program graduates to those from the previous APR, including:

1. Employment
Each year, we have two sources of information about the employment of our graduates, a survey conducted by the Cox Center at the University of Georgia and an alumni survey conducted by the JMU Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Assessment and Research Studies.

University of Georgia Study
The Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates is designed to monitor the employment rates and salaries of graduates of journalism and mass communication programs in the United States, including Puerto Rico, in the year after graduation. In addition, the survey tracks the curricular activities of those graduates while in college, examines their job-seeking strategies, and provides measures of the professional attitudes and behaviors of the graduates upon completion of their college studies.

Each year over the past several years, JMU’s School of Media Arts & Design has been included in the survey. I have provided the survey team with the names and mailing addresses of graduates from the previous spring semester. I also provided an endorsement letter that was sent along with the survey to SMAD graduates. The survey is conducted in October and results are made available the following year. The University of Georgia reports results for participating institutions, as well as national aggregate data. This allows us to compare the employment rates and salaries of SMAD graduates with a national sample.

2007 SURVEY
Certainly, in 2007 the general economy was in much better shape than it is today. A high percentage of recent graduates found employment within 5 months after graduation. Survey data from 2007 indicated the following.

Full-Time Employment Status of Bachelor's Degree Recipients Who Looked for Work (As of Oct. 31, 2007)
JMU-SMAD: 78.9%
Nationally: 63.3%

Overall Salaries
JMU-SMAD: $35,000
Nationally: $30,000

2011 SURVEY
While the overall percentage of SMAD graduates employed 5 months after graduation was lower in 2011 than in 2007, the percentage is still significantly higher than when compared to other schools in the same time period. With regard to salary, JMU SMAD graduates made, on average, the same amount as others with our region. The most recent data (from majors surveyed in October 2011) shows the following results.

Full-Time Employment Status of Bachelor's Degree Recipients Who Looked for Work (As of Oct. 31, 2011)
JMU-SMAD: 68%
Nationally: 61.8%
Overall Salaries
JMU-SMAD: $30,000 (South Region)
Nationally: $31,000
South Region: $30,000

JMU Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Assessment and Research Studies
Beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, the JMU Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Assessment and Research Studies have included SMAD graduates in an annual alumni survey. The Alumni Survey was sent to Media Arts & Design alumni that graduated from James Madison University (JMU) in the academic year two years prior. Results indicate that for 2010-2011 72% of alumni were employed full-time. In 2011-2012, that number increased to 78%. SMAD graduates acquire entry level of jobs such as: copywriter, sales assistant, web analyst, web developer, marketing and communication specialist, news reporter, video editor and search engine marketer. As is typical for our industries, few had a job when they graduated (21% in 2010-2011, 17% in 2011-2012). An extremely high number of students say they would recommend JMU to a colleague, friend or relative and in both surveys 94% of respondents said they would recommend the SMAD major to someone they know.

2. Certification Pass Rate
N/A

3. Graduate School
Several of our graduates go on to graduate school upon graduation and schools include JMU, UVA, GMU, VCU, Pittsburgh, University of Richmond Law School, University of Georgia and the University of North Carolina.

II. Status of Progress on APR Recommendations
A. Review of Recommendations from the previous APR
The external site team that visited in 2007 made the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for the SMAD program.
Recommendation 2: Revise the SMAD mission statement
Recommendation 3: Develop formal goals and objectives and an annual action plan.
Recommendation 4: Schedule a pre-accreditation visit from ACEJMC.
Recommendation 5: Put major curriculum changes on hold until a strategic plan is in place.
Recommendation 6: Modify the program admissions process.
Recommendation 7: Establish a peer-advising system.
Recommendation 8: Increase career-related advising and support activities.
Recommendation 9: Help students to support and maintain student clubs and organizations.
Recommendation 10: Form a student advisory council.
Recommendation 11: Revise assessment tools for assurance of learning.
Recommendation 12: Clarify service expectations and reduce the size of internal committees.
Recommendation 13: Clarify expectations with regard to tenure and promotion criteria.
Recommendation 14: Increase collaboration with JMU and community partners.
Recommendation 15: Increase development efforts.
Recommendation 16: Institute a systematic process for updating program technology.
Recommendation 17: Pursue expansion of existing facilities.

1. Based on the action plan created as part of the previous APR, evaluate the success of the action plan-related objective (from the Planning Database).
The recommendations above were discussed by the faculty and in many cases recommendations were either previously addressed, made into more specific action items, dismissed as no longer relevant or put on hold due to budget cuts or
for other reasons. Below are some of the action items and Planning Database objectives we’ve been working on.

- Schedule a pre-accreditation visit from ACEJMC.

A site visit by a pre-accreditation team from ACEJMC was conducted in March of 2010. Upon their departure, the faculty met to discuss the possibility of accreditation from the organization. It was decided not to pursue accreditation from ACEJMC due to several factors. First, ACEJMC does not really fit a program like SMAD. As one of the visitors stated, ACEJMC does not accredit fiction-based programs, such as our Digital Video & Cinema concentration. The organization is primarily in the business of accrediting journalism programs. While Journalism is one of the four concentrations in SMAD, it is only a part of our larger program and our program is, in many ways, unique. Second, accreditation seems to provide us with few tangible benefits. Many programs seek accreditation to better promote themselves to prospective students. SMAD has no problem attracting quality students, as seen in our admissions numbers and the average GPA of those admitted.

- Modify the program admissions process.

SMAD instituted a new admissions policy for transfer students during Fall 2012. The policy was created to better serve transfer students who would ordinarily have had to wait until January to apply to the major and the wait until the following fall semester to take classes in SMAD beyond SMAD 101. The new September application process is only for new transfer students matriculating to JMU in the fall semester who have declared the SMAD major. These students must be officially admitted to JMU as transfer students for the fall semester and must have earned at least 30 hours of JMU approved post high school college credit. They must be degree-seeking students and must be enrolled in at least 12 hours at JMU during the fall semester. The application is due on Friday of the second week of the fall semester. This fall, we admitted six (out of 15 applicants) transfer students to the major. These six students were made fully-admitted SMAD majors are now able to register for SMAD classes beginning with the spring semester. The new policy makes it possible for transfer students to complete their degrees at JMU in a timely fashion. Those not accepted for admission this fall can apply again in January.

- Help students to support and maintain student clubs and organizations.

Back in 2007, there were no active students clubs or organizations in SMAD. Two organizations, SISGRAPH and the Society of Professional Journalists, had been minimally active in prior years, but were largely dormant by 2007. Since 2007, three new and very active students organizations provide opportunities for SMAD students to develop their skills, leadership and connections to the professions. SMAD Club is an organization that represents the entire program and is involved in bringing speakers to campus, organizing field trips, sponsoring film festivals and promoting the department. SMAD Club leaders attend special events, such as open houses and choices, and organize sessions for our annual alumni day (SMAD Day) in the spring. The Society of Professional Journalists has engaged in similar activities for Journalism concentrators. They have attended regional and national meetings as well. Madison AAF (American Advertising Federation) is a newer club engaged in similar activities and is mainly for students in our Corporate Communication concentration. The main activity of this organization is to compete in a national student advertising campaign competition sponsored by the American Advertising Federation. Student involvement in the life of the organization has increased dramatically since our last APR.

- Increase development efforts.

SMAD has greatly increased development efforts, primarily through our Alumni/Professional Advisory Council which we formed in 2008. The majority of the funds raised were for scholarships. Thanks primarily to the chair of our SMAD Alumni/Professional Advisory Council, Dean Leipsner, three new scholarship categories were established with six new scholarships given out. Mr. Leipsner personally committed $100,000 over 5 years to fund scholarships in the names of retiring professors Charles Turner and John Woody, as well as two scholarships in the name of our advisory council. The SMAD Alumni/Professional Advisory Council also established another endowed Foundation account with the commitment of another $25,000 for the purposes of faculty development. It will be fulfilled
over a five-year period by annual payments of $5,000. Besides the effort of the SMAD Alumni/Professional Advisory Council, we were able to have the JMU Office of Annual Giving put their phone solicitation center to work on behalf of our School. Over a period of four nights in April, call center staff solicited gifts for our Charles Turner and John Woody scholarships that resulted in approximately $1,800.

- Clarify expectations with regard to tenure and promotion criteria.

- Increase collaboration with JMU and community partners.

SMAD has reached out and cooperated with a number of JMU and community partners. Most often, this has been to co-sponsor speakers on campus, but quite often it has meant film screenings from outside filmmakers or screenings of films and documentaries produced by SMAD faculty.

We continue to work on many of the other recommendations.

2. What were the main concerns raised in the previous APR?

It would be hard to characterize any concerns as main concerns. The External Review Team wrote: There are many reasons at this juncture to celebrate the success of the SMAD program and to congratulate its faculty on creating and maintaining a quality academic experience for students. The key strengths of the SMAD program are all directly tied to the program’s commitment to providing a curriculum that is anchored in the traditional foundations of communications and journalism, yet flexible enough to stay current with the rapid evolution of process and technology associated with the communications discipline and field. The program has done an admirable job managing a tremendous amount of change since its inception; using change as a means of moving the program forward rather than allowing the program to become disjointed or lose focus. Strengths of the current program include an innovative curriculum, state of the art technology, high quality student-centered faculty members, highly capable and motivated students, and a strong national reputation for excellence.

3. What steps have been taken to address them? How successful have they been?

NA

III. Modifications to Strategic Plan

A. Evaluation of current and future needs

The greatest needs in SMAD include support of our facility and equipment, along with ongoing software updates.

1. What are current issues facing the program?

(See above)

2. What new issues do you anticipate the program to encounter before the next external review?

Our television studio/control complex equipment is aging and we will need to replace equipment that will cost much more than any one year’s budget can cover.

3. Need for External Review

1. Identify two to three areas (in rank order) in which external consulting could benefit the
program. These should not be generalities – the program must identify specific needs that will result in measureable outcomes. For example, the program may need assistance in developing a master’s program, managing enrollment or developing hybrid-type instruction. List the areas and provide a brief (two to three paragraphs) justification for each.

1). Operating Equipment Funds Account:
SMAD often has big equipment needs that cannot be met via its yearly operating budget. Our portion of Equipment Trust Fund money is helpful, but often fails to cover the entire cost of computer lab equipment or software needed in a given year. In future years, our television studio complex will need replacement of cameras or other major components such as the switcher, character generator or audio board. The costs of these items will exceed our ability to pay. Some consideration needs to be given to a separate SMAD budget account to cover these larger items. This separate account could have funds placed into it each year for several years, as long as the money can be carried over and used in the year it is needed, or it could be funded once every several years.

2). Development:
SMAD would benefit from a alumni and donor management system that will allow data entry, tracking and contact through email and social media outlets such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. As of now, we manage a large database of alumni emails in an Excel file. A better system would allow alumni to keep in touch with us, update their own contact and professional information and give to SMAD. It would also allow us to keep in touch about departmental news and send out fundraising messages. Of course, this might best be created at the University level, but management should be done by departments.

C. Review of Additional Areas (Optional)
1. The Provost Office, with input from the supervising vice provost and deans, may select specific areas to address in a full report.