

Georgia Film Academy Academic Advisory Council Meeting

Via Microsoft Teams

November 19, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Welcome: Dr. Kevin Demmitt, Chair, gave a welcome to the Advisory Council and proposed an amendment of the agenda to skip introductions. The amendment was approved.

State of the Georgia Film Academy: Mr. Jeffrey Stepakoff noted that the state of the Georgia Film Academy is strong with 24 Georgia institutions participating and over 8000 students served. Despite unprecedented disruption due to Covid 19, nearly 100% of Georgia IATSE workers will be back to work in December. The free, GFA Covid Compliance Course is enormously successful with over 13,000 registrations thus far. Mr. Stepakoff further noted that the future of production strong in the state of Georgia and that the GFA is a big part of it. The vertical pipeline of GFA classes/programming is being built out, including a new MFA at UGA, new Nexus Degrees, and Esports and gaming courses.

Technical College System of Georgia Update: Mr. Joe Don Baker reported TCSG is pleased with successful partnership with USG in workforce development for expansion of Georgia film industry. Dr. Kevin Demmitt noted that GFA is perhaps the most successful partnership ever between USG and TCSG.

Spring Semester & Internships: Ms. Wendy Quin Guttin noted that spring 2021 registration was open and running strong. The hybrid model with D2L has worked very well and will continue spring 2021 and beyond. A remote system for the Avid editing classes will allow for ongoing remote training. GFA 1000 will probably continue in hybrid format post-Covid. Internships will return in spring and the application process is open. Students who completed coursework online must complete set-ready assessments to qualify for internships. Eventually, set-ready assessments will be offered for all online students.

Fall Semester Recap: Mr. Dan Kelly reported on the highly successful fall semester that included safe, hands-on training of practical skills in a controlled environment combined with video lectures by industry experts. Programming also included synchronous discussions as well as D2L assignments and asynchronous discussions. Students had opportunity to complete in fully online mode as necessary with completion of additional assignments. Covid compliance was central to success and was enforced by trained, student compliance monitors, who are now being hired in industry because of strong training. Student engagement was high in remote environment because of cross-institutional collaboration.

GFA Academic Items and Updates: Ms. Wendy Guttin presented GFA enrollment data documenting large spring 2019 to spring 2020 growth. After pandemic, summer and fall enrollments were stable. Ms. Guttin discussed new certification pathways (Post Production and Esports) and highlighted new upper division coursework. Dr. Demmitt reminded members that new classes must be approved through institutional processes. Syllabi will be available in January.

Mr. Jon Sizemore presented on assessment. GFA coordinates course-level SLO information and institutions are responsible for assessing program outcomes. GFA will partner with eCampus for delivering assessment data services. SLOs will be condensed and data will presented via factbook similar to eCore model. Faculty evaluation data will also be collected and distributed.

Dr. Rebecca Corvey presented on lecture vs. lab hours. Except for GFA 2000 and 4000 courses, all GFA courses are in lecture format. Dr. Corvey emphasized the need for institutions to review their catalogs for uniformity and correctness in handling lecture and lab hours.

University System of Georgia Update: Dr Tristan Denley commended the GFA for its outstanding response during the Covid pandemic and noted the excellence of the Covid compliance course. Dr. Denley praised growth of GFA programming, noting the new Savannah hub, the UGA graduate program, and the Esports certification pathway.

USG/CSG Required Trainings: Mr. Ian Feinberg reported that GFA member institutions are only responsible for academic oversight – not training, since instructors are not employed by institutions. Cooperative academic arrangements should satisfy training requirements. Future follow-up with Human resources may be needed.

Savannah Hub Update: Mr. Jeff Stepakoff reported that Savannah is the #2 region in the state for film/tv production but has not yet reached its full potential. GFA is working to build an academic collaborative in the region to support industry. The goal is creation of a full production hub.

GFA Programmatic Updates: Ms Wendy Guttin discussed launch of Nexus Degrees and minors with upper division coursework; the launch of the UGA MFA; and build out of a graduate consortium model. Member institutions were asked to encourage qualified candidates to apply to the UGA MFA program.

Mr. Josh Lee gave an update on Esports and gaming development programming, including a discussion of GFA 5300, a course designed to train professionals to work in Esports and gaming industry. Build out of Esports certificate is coming. Mr. Lee also discussed training and programming for high school teachers, including 9 units of GA DOE – approved curriculum for high school teachers. High School teachers are being certified in Avid and bringing it back to their schools. A new HS writing curriculum for Film, Television, and Theatre was approved. GFA is working on creation of a summer camp.

GFA Website Updates: Mr. Josh Lee presented the new GFA website (georgiafilmacademy.edu) with “We Make Makers” theme. Institutions should follow Website landing pages template to design their own pages.

General Discussion: Membership discussed how to fit 18 hours into existing program curriculums. Minor and Nexus options were discussed as options. Possibility of expansion of new GFA pathways across institutions was discussed, and Ms. Wendy Guttin indicated this had not been fully explored yet. Membership discussed the need for development of PLA pathways for students who take non-collegiate courses. Membership discussed how students could use work from GFA 1000 to build a portfolio. Students can’t use internship work for portfolio because of proprietary issues.

Breakout Session: Members of graduate curriculum leadership and other interested members were invited to attend a breakout section following the Academic Advisory meeting.

Closing and Adjournment: Dr. Demmitt closed the meeting at 11:30 am.