

Mary Lou Stewart, Chair and Associate Professor, Art  
Lynn Hill, Associate Professor, Art

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**Departmental Initiative Proposal:  
Continued commitment to emerging digital media artforms**

The Art Department proposes to use grant funds to purchase digital video cameras for student use in all levels of digital studio courses.

**Rationale:**

The Art Department has made a commitment to digital media and emerging art forms. This is taking tangible form in a variety of ways:

- In May 2001 the department approved a long-range action plan that addressed issues of curriculum development, studio space, recruitment, and alumni. The eight-year plan reiterated the departmental commitment to traditional media, emerging media, and hybrid media forms. A previous Departmental Initiative partially funded the integration of technology across a variety of media by allowing the purchase of equipment necessary to work with evolving hybrid printing processes.
- The art department is cognizant that many of our current and future students see some aspect of digital media as a viable career choice. Therefore, the art department continues to re-evaluate course offerings in the digital studio courses as technology advances. Digital studio courses offered:
  - fall 1996, 3 total
  - fall 1998, 4 total
  - Fall 2000, 10 total. (Addition of the multimedia concentration to the art major. 5 new courses, 3 reconfigured existing courses, practicum, internship.)
  - fall 2003, 14 total
- The department is creating an alternative gallery space on the EC campus. A creative vision and grant funding are combining to allow EC students to exhibit alternative and technology-based art forms, a possibility that has not existed previously. This is an invaluable addition to the life of the department as students will be able to exhibit the types of work they are creating in our expanded course offerings.
- Technology is expensive and because of its progressive nature, is a "moving target". The department operates a state-of-the-art graphics lab and is a very good steward of the resources delegated to it. We currently have hardware and software in our lab that would have been unthinkable three or four years ago. Consequently, we also have educational opportunities and creative possibilities available for our students that we also would not have imagined a few years ago. Those possibilities can be exploited to the fullest with the addition of specialized equipment such as the digital video cameras that are the focus of this proposal. Although there are many ways in

which additional funding could be used, we believe that the purchase of digital cameras would have the widest impact upon the students. One hundred fifty students per academic year would have reason to use these cameras for course work. It offers the most "bang for the buck". It is unrealistic to assume that all costs for equipment can be borne by the college's technology budget or the yearly departmental budget.

**Budget:**

\$2500 to be used as follows:

(4) Canon ZR40 digital video cameras	4@\$550ea. = \$2200
(2) spare batteries for the above	2 @\$100 ea. = \$200
(2) firewire cables	2@\$50 ea. = \$100

**Benefits to students:**

- There is currently one digital video camera on campus. It is jointly owned, half by the Art Department and half by Instructional Media. Due to the value and delicacy of the camera, access has been restricted to instructors. Therefore, the camera has been used to demonstrate possibilities without allowing student access to experimentation with those possibilities in their own work. We can now purchase cameras with the same image quality for a less than half of what we paid for our existing camera. The current models are very reliable, easy to use and interface very simply with our current hardware and software in the graphics lab. This is not an experiment. We know these cameras do exactly what we need them to do.
- These cameras would be used by students in many of the digital studio courses, including: Art 113 Intro to Multimedia, Art 200 Digital Game Design, Art 236 Web Design, Art 300 Intermediate Digital Game Design, Art 336 Intermediate Web Design, Art 413 Advanced Multimedia, Art 490 Capstone, Art 492 Independent Studio. Digital video cameras are absolutely integral to processes to be presented in the 200 & 300 level Stop Motion Animation courses to be offered in Jterm 2004.
- Students will be capable of producing portfolio quality work in a media previously unavailable to them at EC. This is important in light of the competitive nature visual arts positions.

**Benefits to faculty:**

- Faculty teaching digital studio courses would be able to fully exploit the capabilities of hardware and software already in place.
- The department intends to modify the focus of the Art 217 & Art 317 video courses and switch content from analog video to digital video. These cameras would be integral to that change.
- One faculty member could stop loaning her own (new) dv camera to students.

**Benefits to the college:**

- Recruitment: The most commonly asked questions by potential art majors relate to the digital studio course offerings and equipment available. These cameras are an integral component to the evolution of these courses.
- The college's commitment to professional preparation will be apparent as the department is able to offer students experience with industry standard equipment of the caliber they will be expected to use in careers in the visual arts.
- These cameras have been chosen because they give quality results and interface very simply with existing equipment. There is no additional cost involved. These are virtually "plug and play". These cameras have a proven track record, are durable and reliable and are will serve the college well.