Technological meets creativity

INTEGRATIVE MEDIA PROGRAM GRADUATES ITS FIRST STUDENTS

By Cindy Taren

“Technology is everywhere. The way music is made on a computer allows for things that we never could have imagined,” says Justin Rogers, of Dayton, N.J., now plans to pursue a master of fine arts degree in computer graphics and then join the industry in either movies or advertising.

“I hope to one day be a lead supervisor for a major motion picture and post-production company, and eventually freelance my abilities to different motion pictures.”

The integrative media curriculum blends technology and design training to prepare students for careers in feature film, broadcast, independent production companies, interactive media, corporate and government environments. It started in 2001, when a group of faculty led by Darin Fields, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, developed a new program to target students with the most success in the job market were those with training in multiple disciplines. “To prepare yourself to dive into the job market, it’s optimal to have a highly versatile range of skills, as well as the capacity for collaboration.”

The recently completed IM Studio houses systems and software comparable to the best facilities worldwide and simulates an environment supportive and critical to the process of visual content creation. Ruggiero explains. The major blends a design and technology curriculum with one or more minors in art, computer science, entrepreneurship, business, communications and English. Students within these specialties might fill artistic or business positions such as production manager, producer, director, art director, editor, motion designer, writer, interactive guru, coder, animator or special effects artist.

Eric Ruggiero, director and co-founder of the integrative media department, says faculty observed that graduates with the most success in the entertainment industry in either movies or advertising.

“Having always been a big movie and technology guy, the major seemed to better fit my interests,” the major’s first graduate says. “I didn’t want to sit behind a desk for the rest of my life coding languages for computers. This program will help me to get into a field where creative minds come together to create unique experiences and products.”

Ruggiero says, “encouraging students to come up with ideas, either on their own or working with a group.” Students graduate with professional portfolios, as a freelance Web site designer for a local accounting and management firm. The ideal intern has an eye for art, as well as knowledge of computers, video, audio and editing.”

Berkman used his degree in graphic design to start a career in the television industry. “I had to gain the experience needed for my current profession from working in the field over several years and job changes. The (integrative media) major definitely gives graduates an advantage because they will have the skills to get a better job straight from college.”

For more information on the program, see www.wilkes.edu or e-mail Ruggiero at eric.ruggiero@wilkes.edu.