NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL:                   ACTION               Agenda Item K-5a
AFA IN DIGITAL CINEMATIC ARTS            Agenda Item K-5a
BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE  June 12, 2015

Recommendation
That the Board of Regents approve an Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) in Digital Cinematic Arts, for
Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) to be implemented in Fall 2015.

Rationale
• The proposed AFA degree is consistent with the missions of the Kentucky Community and
Technical College System (KCTCS) and Bluegrass Community and Technical College and
supports the statewide postsecondary education strategic agenda and the statewide strategic
implementation plan.
• Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) is currently approved to offer a
certificate in Filmmaking - Script to Screen and has the facilities, equipment, and faculty
available to support the addition of the AFA program.
• Bluegrass Community and Technical College is already in discussion with Asbury University
and Eastern Kentucky University regarding transfer opportunities for a Bachelor in Fine Arts
(BFA).
• Local businesses, including Trigger Happy Productions, Video Editing Services, and The
Prosper Media Group, have shown interest in providing internship opportunities for the AFA
in Digital Cinematic Arts students enrolled at BCTC.
• Partnerships with local entities, such as Ale-8-One and the Lexington Fayette Urban County
Government – Division of Police, provide real world opportunities for students to enhance
their experience in the digital cinematic arts.
• House Bill 340, which provides tax incentives to Kentucky-based film companies and
additional incentives to film within an enhanced-incentive county, will be put into place by
the end of 2015. This new legislation will provide more opportunities for the film industry in
Kentucky.
• In central Kentucky there are currently nineteen production companies within a 90 mile
radius of Bluegrass Community and Technical College, six of which are within 30 miles. The
median wage level for digital media careers in Kentucky averages $38,000, which is higher
than the $34,750 that is averaged in other states.

Background
According to the Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Policy and Framework for
Institution Diversity Plan Development, Ashland Community and Technical College has
automatic eligibility.

An executive summary of the proposal is attached. A copy of the full proposal has been
forwarded to each member of the Board’s Academic Affairs and Curriculum Committee.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Associate in Fine Arts in Digital Cinematic Arts

Bluegrass Community and Technical College

A Proposal for Initiation of a New Degree Program

Centrality to the Institution’s Mission and Consistency with State’s Goals

The Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) in Digital Cinematic Arts degree program is designed for students who plan to transfer to a college/university to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Digital Cinematic Arts and/or a career in film-related areas requiring pre-professional credentials. The program includes general education requirements and digital cinematic arts foundation courses in screenwriting, digital media design, camera/lighting, audio/music for film, acting, and editing. Students will focus on the application of skills in the direction and production of several, complete short films. The Digital Cinematic Arts program will provide multiple ways of understanding and communication along with critical competencies such as creative problem solving, collaboration, time management, and critical thinking.

The AFA Digital Cinematic Arts program serves the needs of Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) students and their community. Continuing work with the BCTC marketing department to advertise the academic programs offered and continuing partnerships with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government – Division of Police to promote their efforts for the city of Lexington, highlight the programs commitment to the local community.

The AFA program and projects listed above support the institutional mission and strategic priority of the Council for Postsecondary Education (CPE) and Kentucky Community and Technical College (KCTCS) in a number of ways. The program will provide a ready-to-work or a transfer-ready education for Digital Cinematic Arts students, decrease financial barriers by providing high level jobs for students completing the AFA degree, and provide a challenging and rewarding learning environment that prepares students for the film industry.

The AFA in Digital Cinematic Arts will work to improve the quality of life and employability of students by preparing them to enter the workforce in key roles in film making such as director and/or producer, and preparing students to transfer to 4 year institutions, such as Asbury University and Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), to further their skills and knowledge. The transfer opportunities that are currently being discussed with Asbury and EKU work toward Goal 5 of House Bill 1 by providing a pathway for KCTCS students.

The AFA program meets CPE Strategic Policy Objective 4.1 regarding high-quality, low-cost education for jobs that are competitive with university level graduates. The AFA program is designed such that students graduating with an AFA in Digital Cinematic Arts will be competitive with four year students for jobs such as producer or director. This will
allow AFA graduates to work in the field while completing a BFA degree, and simultaneously provide on the job experience that adds to their value as prospective employees.

The Digital Cinematic Arts program also meets Policy Objective 4.2 by providing filming projects that will result in scholarships being awarded to students or prospective students. For example, BCTC is currently working with Ale-8-One on a project where students create a commercial for the company and the winner would be provided a partial scholarship to attend the Digital Cinematic Arts classes. In addition under Policy Objective 4.6, BCTC is in discussion with local businesses regarding internship opportunities. Internships are currently being discussed with area businesses such as Trigger Happy Productions, Video Editing Services, and The Prosper Media Group. The opportunity for students to work in the field alongside industry leaders will improve the overall student experience.

The AFA in Digital Cinematic Arts is designed to meet the KCTCS strategic objective to increase student access, transfer, and success. It would provide a creative, experiential-focused degree option that is convenient, economical, and academically sound for students seeking to transfer into a bachelor degree program or to concentrate their studies toward a specific area in the digital cinematic arts field.

**Program Quality and Student Success**

The program includes general education competencies required for a student to be general-education certified in addition to a series of technical competencies that will ensure their success in the field of digital cinema. This depth of knowledge provides a quality workforce for digital cinema positions in the state of Kentucky.

The digital cinematic arts foundation courses in screenwriting, digital media design, camera/lighting, audio/music for film, acting, and editing allows students to focus on the application of skills in the direction and production of several complete, short films. The Digital Cinematic Arts program will provide multiple ways of understanding and communication while including critical competencies such as creative problem solving, collaboration, time management, and critical thinking. Students will be prepared to transfer to BFA programs and/or go directly into the workforce.

**Program Demand/Unnecessary Duplication**

The AFA degree in Digital Cinematic Arts is a dual-purpose degree that can either transfer into a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) program or provide a direct pipeline for students to pursue a career in digital cinema. Providing multiple pathways will allow students to enter the field of digital cinema, but also will support them should they decide to complete a BFA can open additional doors for the future.

Letters of support are available from area businesses, including Prosper Media Group, Video Editing Services and Trigger Happy Productions, expressing interest in hiring the students as possible interns but with the eventual goal of adding them as full time employees. Also available are letters of support from area universities, including Asbury University and
Eastern Kentucky University. Each letter addresses the articulation agreements that are currently being discussed and their support for the proposed curriculum.

This curriculum proposal is coming at a crucial time for Kentucky as state legislators are currently reviewing House Bill 340, which proposes tax incentives to Kentucky-based film companies and additional incentives to film within an enhanced-incentive county. This bill will be put into place by the end of 2015. The existing Filmmaking certificate, Filmmaking: Script to Screen, was created in response to plans proposed by the Kentucky Film Office several years ago. This AFA broadens that scope and will address needs for the growing film industry in Kentucky that, with the new bill, will only continue to grow. According to the Kentucky Bureau of Labor of Statistics 2012, art, media, and entertainment jobs are projected to increase by 11.59% in Kentucky and are projected to continue to grow.

As an occupation, a professional in digital cinema can work in numerous fields such as a Videographer, Video Tape Operator, TV/Film Production Assistant, Production Assistant, Assistant Director, Photographer, Motion Picture Photographer, Lighting Tech, Medical Photographer, Sound Mixer, Film Editor, Editor Assistant, Film Media Technician, Grip, Cinematographer, Camera Operator, Boom Operator, Director for Film and TV, Editor for Film and TV, and many other jobs in film media careers. In central Kentucky alone the need is met by nineteen production companies within a 90 mile radius of BCTC, six of which are within 30 miles. The median wage level for digital media careers in Kentucky averages $38,000, which is higher than the $34,750 that is averaged in other states.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2012, there were 49,500 film and video camera operators and editors, and 103,500 Producers and Directors in film and television in the state of Kentucky. With the growing film industry in Kentucky, there will be a number of freelance jobs and it is expected there will not be qualified individuals to fill them. This program will qualify Kentucky residents for the projected openings in the film industry.

Cost and Funding of the Proposed Program

Bluegrass Community and Technical College has the facilities, equipment, and faculty available to support the program. No additional funding is required for the AFA program implementation. Current equipment at the college is part of the Filmmaking: Scrip to Screen certificate program this will now be embedded in the AFA. The certificate program was approved for pilot in Fall 2007 and for full implementation in Spring 2008. The classes required for the certificate have been taught each semester since implementation.

Program Review and Assessment

Bluegrass Community and Technical College’s annual review and assessment of the AFA in Digital Cinematic Arts will include, but not be limited to, the following.

- Graduation/completion rate data.
- Graduate transfer/employment data.
- Individual class performance scores.
• Assessment of student learning outcomes.
• Production/performance/evaluations by a production group, responders, and/or professional staff.
• Student satisfaction surveys.
• Employer satisfaction surveys.
• Advisory board and/or institution feedback.
• Internal peer review.

The data will be used to provide program effectiveness including the success of student learning outcomes. The program coordinator and Assistant Dean of the Division, in partnership with Institutional Research, will work to evaluate the success of the program. At that point if there is any need for program improvement or increased performance, it can be addressed and a plan made for the following academic year. Bluegrass Community and Technical College follows strict policy regarding program review processes and this program will be held to the same standards.

As a new degree program, the results of the annual college program review will also be forwarded to the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) staff for review after three years. Upon a successful Council review, the program will be placed on the regular five year CPE institutional program review cycle.

**Conclusion**

The proposed AFA in Digital Cinematic Arts program is consistent with the missions of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System and Bluegrass Community and Technical College and supports the strategic agenda and implementation plan of the Council for Postsecondary Education. The curriculum has been approved by the College and system-level curriculum committees and supports the growing digital cinematic arts workforce needs of the city of Lexington and the state of Kentucky. The program will be a welcome addition to the choices offered to students in a low-cost, student-friendly collegiate environment.