



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS
Substantive Program Modification Form

Use this form to request minor changes in existing programs (majors, minors, certificates, or specializations).

UNIVERSITY:	Northern State University
CURRENT PROGRAM DEGREE:	AS
CURRENT PROGRAM MAJOR/MINOR:	Digital Media
CURRENT SPECIALIZATION (If applicable):	
CIP CODE:	500409
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	ART
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	NART
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE:	School of Fine Arts
BANNER COLLEGE CODE:	5F

University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this proposal, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

Erin Foubert

 Vice President of Academic Affairs or
 President of the University

2/3/2026

 Date

1. This modification addresses a change in (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

<input type="checkbox"/> Total credits required within the discipline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Total credits of elective course work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program name <input type="checkbox"/> CIP Code <input type="checkbox"/> Modification requiring Board of Regents approval <i>Must have prior approval from Executive Director or designee</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total credits of supportive course work <input type="checkbox"/> Total credits required for program <input type="checkbox"/> Existing specialization <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain below)
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2. Effective date of change: July 1, 2026

3. Program Degree Level (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

Associate Bachelor's Master's Doctoral

4. Category (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

Certificate Specialization Minor Major

5. If a name change is proposed, the change will occur (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

On the effective date for all students
 On the effective date for students new to the program (enrolled students will graduate from existing program)

Proposed new name: Art and Digital Design

Reminder: Name changes may require updating related articulation agreements, site approvals, etc.

Is the program associated with a current articulation agreement? (Yes or **No**)

a. If yes, will the articulation agreement need to be updated with the partner institution as a result of this minor program modification? Why or why not?

6. Primary Aspects of the Modification (add lines or adjust cell size as needed):

Existing Curriculum

Proposed Curriculum (highlight changes)

Pref.	Num.	Title	Cr. Hrs.	Pref.	Num.	Title	Cr. Hrs.
FYS	101	First Year Seminar	2	FYS	101	First Year Seminar	2
ART	111	Drawing I	3	ART	111	Drawing I	3
ART	121	Design I 2D	3	ART	121	Design I 2D	3
ART	113	Introduction to Digital Media	3	ART	113	Introduction to Digital Media	3
				ART	123	Three Dimensional Design	3
ART	231	Graphic Design I	3				
ART	241	Animations & Visual Effects	3				
				ART	270	Photography Techniques I	3
ART	333	Game, App, and Web Design I	3				
ART	334	Digital Imaging I	3				
ART	335	Digital Illustration I	3				
ART	337	Podcasting and Sound Design I	3				
ARTH	211	History of World Art I	3	ARTH	211	History of World Art I	3
				ARTH	212	History of World Art II	3
ARTH	312	History of Graphic Design	3				
				ARTH	311	History of World Art III	3
		Art Elective	1			Art Electives	10
		General Education Requirements	24			General Education Requirements	24
Total number of hours required for major, minor, or specialization			36	Total number of hours required for major, minor, or specialization			36
Total number of hours required for degree			60	Total number of hours required for degree			60

7. Explanation of the Change:

We are proposing to change the AS to a more expansive program reflecting the needs of our students and structure of our program. One change is to require all foundations courses instead of only Digital foundations, allowing students to enter into additional pathways if they wish. Another change includes opening up additional ART elective credits, allowing students to gain more experience in the advanced courses they want to take. The largest change focuses on shifting from Digital only courses to all Art courses, including Digital Media, Studio Art, Art Education, Art History, or Art Management. This change aligns with the needs of our students, allowing for greater choice in the classes they take, increasing inclusive programs, and meeting the need for additional degree options. These changes also allow students to more quickly enter into the BFA program if they wish.

For substantial modifications requiring Board approval, complete the items below.

References to external sources should be documented with a footnote (including web addresses where applicable).

8. Date of approval from the Executive Director or designee.

9. Identify the program modification requested.

Change the degree from an Associate Degree (AS) in Digital Media to an Associate Degree (AS) in Art and Digital Design.

10. Provide justification for the desired modification.

Changing the AS in Digital Media to an AS in Art and Digital Design is a strategic decision that will broaden the program’s appeal, strengthen retention, and better serve students’ academic and career goals. The current AS in Digital Media has historically had low enrollment due to its narrow focus and restrictive course options. The revised program expands access to the full suite of foundational art courses, enabling students to explore multiple creative disciplines rather than being confined to digital-only coursework. This broader foundation more accurately reflects the structure of the department and better aligns the associate-level curriculum with the needs and interests of incoming students. This change will also strengthen the pathway from the AS to the BFA at NSU. The revised curriculum mirrors the BFA’s foundational course sequence, allowing AS students to complete the same initial 24 credits as BFA students. This alignment makes it significantly easier for students to transition into the bachelor’s program, enhancing both recruitment and long-term student success at NSU.

11. Would the requested modification require a change to the catalog description and/or the program learning outcomes? If so, describe.

Yes, the catalog description will be changed as well as the learning outcomes.

Updated Catalog Description

NSU offers a two-year associate degree in studio art and digital design. This degree program offers an introduction to various studio and digital mediums, encouraging a range of historical, critical, and theoretical approaches to the discipline. Our curriculum encourages students to investigate aesthetic and historical discourse as they develop their artistic practices. Basic instruction will include drawing, design, color theory, digital software, and art history, with options for some advanced coursework.

Updated Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will acquire and demonstrate understanding and proficiency with fundamental concepts of visual art and design. (*Cross-curricular Skills: Critical and Creative Thinking; Problem Solving*)
- Students will acquire and demonstrate understanding and proficiency with fundamental precepts in art and design history. (*Cross-curricular Skills: Critical and Creative Thinking; Information Literacy; Intercultural Knowledge*)
- Students will acquire and demonstrate understanding and proficiency with professional methods of practice. (*Cross-curricular Skills: Critical and Creative Thinking; Information Literacy; Problem Solving*)

12. Indicate the number of students currently enrolled in the program.

1 student currently enrolled in the AS.

13. Describe the real impact to students.

The proposed degree and curriculum change will have a positive and meaningful impact on students by providing greater flexibility, clearer pathways to advanced degrees, and broader academic and professional opportunities. Under the new structure, students will no longer be limited to a narrow set of digital-only courses; instead, they will gain access to the full range of foundational art and design classes offered in the department. Requiring the full foundations

curriculum enables a seamless transition into the BFA program should they choose to continue. Many students previously found the AS in Digital Media too restrictive, which negatively impacted enrollment and retention. Additionally, the expanded elective options allow students to build stronger portfolios, gain more hands-on experience, and pursue advanced courses that align with their intended career paths. The broader program title more accurately reflects the curriculum and signals to students, employers, and transfer institutions that the degree encompasses a wide range of creative competencies.

14. Describe the real impact to the university.

The transition to an AS in Art and Digital Design enhances the university's ability to recruit and retain students by providing a more comprehensive and accurately aligned introductory program in the visual arts. By broadening the curriculum to include full foundational coursework, the university positions the degree as a clearer entry point for multiple academic pathways, thereby increasing its appeal to prospective students with varied interests in art and design. This modification improves the program's competitiveness and marketability, expanding its reach to students seeking preparation for careers in creative fields beyond digital media alone. It also strengthens alignment with regional workforce needs by supporting the development of versatile design and visual communication skills. The updated curriculum streamlines advising and program administration by creating a unified foundation shared with the BFA. This reduces confusion regarding academic progression, improves internal transfer efficiency, and supports more effective resource planning within the department. By modernizing the degree to reflect current trends and student expectations, the university reinforces its commitment to academic relevance, student success, and sustained program viability.

15. Describe any cost associated with the program modification.

None. The courses are already active; no additional faculty required.

16. Describe any risks and unintended consequences associated with the program modification.

As with any curriculum revision, transitioning from an AS in Digital Media to an AS in Art and Digital Design may require adjustments in advising, recruitment messaging, and course scheduling. Some current and prospective students may need clarification regarding the expanded curricular focus, particularly those familiar with the narrow Digital Media degree, but this presents an opportunity to improve communication and ensure that students fully understand the broader academic pathways now available to them. The expanded range of course options could subtly shift enrollment patterns within the department, with some students opting for more traditional studio courses rather than strictly digital offerings. By proactively addressing these considerations through clear advising, targeted marketing, and coordinated planning within the department, the university can mitigate potential disruptions and ensure a smooth transition. Overall, any risks associated with the modification are manageable and outweighed by the long-term benefits of a more inclusive, flexible, and academically aligned program.

17. Would this modification be effective for current and future students, or only students who enroll following the change?

This modification would be effective for current and future students.