ICT and Digital Media Los Angeles Region
California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Department of Economic and Workforce Development
Information Communications Technology & Digital Media Sector

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Dr. Chui L. Tsang
President/Superintendent
California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Sacramento, CA

Re: CTE Programs for Santa Monica College

Dear Dr. Tsang:

This is to confirm that the proposed BA Degree program, Interaction Design, for Santa Monica College is strongly recommended for approval based on real world job needs in the Southern California area. Graduates of the program will be "interaction designers" who are qualified to work in a number of different employment sectors including but not limited to:

* Graphic Design * Web Development * Software and Application Development
Game Design * Industrial Design *Mobile Phone Design *Motion Picture/Television Art Department Leads and Crew

Because Interaction Design crosses virtually all industries, it includes on the periphery, diverse fields such as medical, agriculture and entrepreneurial small business. The timing for this could not be more relevant: Santa Monica College is one of the partners in a California AB86 Career Pathways Grant, LA Hi-TECH, which offers an integrated approach from grades 9-12 into the community college in the computer science and digital media areas. With the new BA, these students would be ready to graduate directly into the workforce.

Labor market information is often challenging to quantify based on the fact that many positions in ICT are often "bundled" with other skills: often employers look at these skills not as individual jobs but as part of an overall portfolio that is used for new hires/recruits. For example, we have found through advisories with small businesses, staffing organizations (such as Apple One and Executive Temps) that these skills are often included in occupations, such as "assistant" or "marketing associate." However, a degree in these fields could result in a higher starting pay with greater opportunities for upward mobility.

Additionally, this is a field that is underserved. The only other programs in interaction design in the Southern California area are provided by the Art Center College of Design; California College of the Arts; UCLA Extension and California State University Fullerton.

Sincerely,

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