ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation	☐
Decision	☒
Discussion/Direction	☐
Information	☐

DATE: 23 January 2021

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Major Program Modifications – Bachelor of Bachelor of Information Technology in Game Development and Entrepreneurship

COMMITTEE MANDATE:
In accordance with the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) Terms of Reference, USC has the responsibility "to examine proposals for new undergraduate degree programs and major changes to existing programs and to recommend their approval, as appropriate, to the Academic Council".

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:
That, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approve the Major Program Modifications to the Bachelor of Information Technology in Game Development and Entrepreneurship, as presented.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:
The Faculty is proposing to change the name of the program from Game Development and Entrepreneurship to Game Development and Interactive Media. In addition, several changes are being made to the courses and structure of the program:

- Game Development Workshops will be changed from 0-credit to 3-credit hour courses
- Re-definition of the core courses with a clearly defined and strengthened core
- Increased Flexibility with electives allowing students maximum flexibility in the courses to allow deeper knowledge
- Increased discipline depth with Game Electives - enables students to take more courses in the discipline they are most interested in pursuing
- Addition of courses to focus on depth in specific disciplines - increase competitiveness in the workforce
- Editorial modifications to the program learning outcomes to be specific and measurable, and aligning the program learning outcomes more effectively with program content

This modification is the result of a thorough internal and external review of the program. The proposed changes will strengthen the core of the program and provide students with flexibility so

they can increase the depth of their understanding in Game Development disciplines. This will enable students to choose courses that fit their interests, more effectively strengthening their knowledge in these areas and allowing them to self-specialize in areas such as (but not limited to) Game Design, Game Programming, Technical Art, Serious Games & Simulations, or Game User Research. This will further enhance their ability to get jobs in the industry as their depth of knowledge will be greater than the current offerings. Furthermore, adding Game User Research options will allow students who wish to continue on to graduate studies in this area the opportunity to enhance their analytics and research skills.

There is currently a College-University Pathways Bridge program associated with the Game Development and Entrepreneurship program. The Faculty will suspend admissions to the bridge to allow the new program to be well underway before changes can be made to the bridge and admissions re-opened.

In addition, the Game Development Minor programs will be removed (Game Production Management, Game Programming) and the Marketing for IT and Operations Management minor options will no longer be available for Game students: Minors are redundant in the proposed approach.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:
The changes will not require any additional physical or non-academic human resources than used in the current program. In the short term there are no funding requirements for these proposed changes. A request has been made for 1x Teaching Focused faculty position in the next 4-5 years to focus solely on the new Game Development Workshop structure. The FBIT Dean has agreed to support the faculty requirements stemming from the anticipated program's growth with a new TF. However, without additional funding, the program will still be able to run in the new format, with a more limited amount of electives offered. Average first year retention in the existing program was 60-75% and with the new structure is expected to increase to 75-90%. This is expected to result in an additional $285,000 per year in tuition (at today's rate) which should cover an additional TF and TA support for elective courses to be taught annually instead of bi-annually. Initially the program would offer the new elective courses bi-annually to provide choice in a resource-constrained university. Additional information is provided in the attachments to the proposal, linked below.

TRANSITION PLAN:
- Beginning in Fall 2021, the Faculty will begin rolling out the modified program map for incoming students. The Program Name change will occur for these students on their parchments
- The current students who have started in (or prior to) Fall 2020 will continue on the existing/current program map until they graduate. The program will work with Advisors to ensure that the roll out of the new program map has no impact on students' graduation dates. Students who are off-map will be provided with alternative courses to those no longer offered or additional technical electives to choose from to gain these credits without sacrificing core learning outcomes of the program
- Removal of Minors: students enrolled in the Game Development & Entrepreneurship program as of Fall 2020 will not be affected by this change. Students entering in Fall 2020 must complete their minors prior to the end of the Summer 2024 term.

Additional information is provided in the attachments to the proposal, linked below.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:
USC: January 19th, 2021
Faculty Council: December 15th, 2020
Curriculum Committee: December 1st, 2020

The restructuring has been done in consultation with many groups and stakeholders across the university: current students, student groups, alumni, faculty within the program, faculty outside of the program, Program Advisory Committee (PAC) with industry and academic representation, the FBIT Dean and Faculty Leadership Team (FLT), and CIQE. All comments/concerns have all been integrated/addressed throughout the process.

NEXT STEPS:
- Pending the approval of Academic Council, this change will be included in the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- Major Program Modification Proposal – Game Development and Entrepreneurship
  - Files - GDIM-TRANSITION_PLAN_DraftTeaching.xlsx
  - Files - GDIM-TRANSITION_PLAN.pdf

- Major Program Modification Proposal – Removal of Game Production Management Minor

- Major Program Modification Proposal – Removal of Game Programming Minor

- New Courses
  - INFR 1110U, INFR 2020U, INFR 2100U, INFR 3250U, INFR 3390U, INFR 4120U, INFR 4440U, INFR 4445U, INFR 4460U

- Course Changes
  - INFR 1030U, INFR 1100U, INFR 1315U, INFR 1395U, INFR 1396U, INFR 2310U, INFR 2350U, INFR 2395U, INFR 2396U, INFR 3110U, INFR 3350U, INFR 3380U, INFR 3395U, INFR 3396U, INFR 4395U, INFR 4396