

INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND THE UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR:
ACADEMIC CAPITALISM AT THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSITY

by

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(Under the Direction of Sheila Slaughter)

ABSTRACT

The rise of interdisciplinarity in research is fairly well understood; it represents a shift over the past few decades to problem-based rather than discipline-based inquiry, and it is also a response to increased resource dependency of universities. As public sources of funding continue to shrink, the burden of financing higher education is shifting toward tuition-paying students. Universities are thus developing academic programs in response to environmental and industry demand, seeking out new markets of students, and developing problem-based curricula that promise return on investment in the form of a job.

This dissertation examines the growth and development of one such interdisciplinary program, Screen Arts and Cultures at the University of Michigan. The driving research questions address how and why the program was developed, and its implications for students, faculty, shifting resource streams, and the disciplines. This study draws on a number of interrelated literatures: the history and typologies of academic disciplines, interdisciplinarity, and the department; theories of institutional change and restructuring; resource dependency and academic capitalism; and the rise of

pre-professional fields, the decline of the humanities, and the new sociology of knowledge that explores the nexus of intellectual and financial power.

Several key findings emerge from this study. Screen Arts and Cultures serves a mediating function in the student marketplace, both creating and responding to student demand. The patterns of authority that shape the status of faculty are bifurcated, with tenure-track “studies” faculty members participating in one set of power dynamics and lecturer “production” faculty members in another. Resource streams at the University of Michigan have shifted toward Screen Arts and Cultures, as evidenced by growth in faculty lines, student enrollments, space, equipment, and budget allocations, and institutional investment in development and career service supports. These institutional investments have helped to generate external resources, even as those external resources leverage institutional investments.

And finally, regarding interdisciplinarity as a form of restructuring: there is productive tension between interdisciplinarity and claiming a disciplinary space; interdisciplinarity is an important strategy for engaging in academic capitalist behaviors; and, in the humanities, interdisciplinarity – enacted largely in the form of joint faculty appointments – is cheap.

INDEX WORDS: interdisciplinarity, undergraduate, film studies, humanities, academic capitalism, faculty, restructuring

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DEDICATION

To Doug Toma, whose love and encouragement continue to sustain me. And to our son Jack, who brings me joy: Dad would be proud of us both!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND ACADEMIC CAPITALISM

The rise of interdisciplinarity in research is fairly well understood; it represents a shift over the past few decades to problem-based rather than discipline-based inquiry, and it is also a response to increased resource dependency of universities, that shift their resources and program emphases toward sources of funding. As public sources of funding for higher education continue to shrink and research resources are becoming ever more limited and competitive, the burden of financing higher education is shifting toward the students and their families who pay tuition. Academic programs – majors, degrees, certificates, executive programs, professional masters degrees – are changing to reflect some of the same strategies that have already shaped interdisciplinarity in research. Universities are developing academic programs in response to environmental and industry demand, seeking out new markets of potential tuition-paying students, and developing problem-based curricula designed to integrate more fully with the workplace so as to promise return on investment in the form of a job.

What constitutes knowledge, as institutionalized and packaged by universities, has always been in flux. New disciplines, institutions, sectors, and credentials have emerged throughout the history of higher education. The pace of change, however, has accelerated in recent years. The influence of private funding in public institutions is at a high point as the rhetoric and practices of higher education move away from the ethos of the public good toward the promise of private benefit. Further, the flow of resources –

within the university, in terms of budget allocations, faculty lines, or space, for instance; and beyond the university, in terms of tuition revenues, grant dollars, or state allocations – shifts along with the shifts in academic offerings. There are unprecedented incentives and rewards for entrepreneurial academic programs in market-friendly, problem-based interdisciplinary fields; yet, the implementation of interdisciplinary programs is fraught with complications and administrative and conceptual barriers.

The present study seeks to understand more fully the mechanisms by which interdisciplinary undergraduate programs get established, and the implications of such programs for faculty and students, academic departments and disciplines, and institutions. I am especially interested in the ways such programs explicitly connect interdisciplinary study in humanistic fields with professional opportunities for students; this is better understood in pre-professional and STEM fields, but less so in humanities disciplines. This work will expand on current understandings of interdisciplinarity in undergraduate instruction, as well as the strategic and market-based imperatives that shape program development in response to opportunities and pressures in the environment.

An in-depth case study of the Screen Arts and Cultures department at the University of Michigan provides a heuristic device through which to explore these issues. An interdisciplinary, humanities-oriented program that has steadily grown from its modest beginnings in the 1970s as the Film and Video Studies Program, the Screen Arts and Cultures department was renamed and awarded departmental status in 2005. According to its website description, the undergraduate concentration (the Michigan term for “major”):

offers a well conceived integration of critical studies and creative production that examines American and world film, video art, television, and digital media, as well as the development of particular genres and the careers of individual artists. We also offer our undergraduate students exceptional practical experience in filmmaking, video, television, digital media, as well as a challenging merit-based sequence of screenwriting and TV writing courses to qualified students. (“About Us,” n.d.)

The program explicitly seeks to connect humanistic inquiry to burgeoning industries in film and video production and digital media – and to connect students with jobs.

Moving toward the market is a central feature of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997, Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). The pursuit (by individual faculty as well as higher education institutions) of federal grants and contracts, technology transfer and licensing revenues, industry partnerships, and revenues from intellectual property of all kinds represent perhaps the most visible aspects of academic capitalism – and also those most inaccessible to the humanities, which have no comparable sources of external funds to pursue. But Slaughter and Rhoades extend the theory to incorporate the development of academic programs that draw student tuition revenues to the institution – a strategy that is in theory available to all disciplines, though still most evident in pre-professional and STEM fields. Screen Arts and Cultures is one instance of the latter, an academic program that attracts students and connects them to the workforce through the integration of curricula from multiple humanities-oriented disciplines. Yet Screen Arts and Cultures also engages in a number of other dimensions of academic capitalist behavior as articulated by Slaughter and Rhoades: It participates in and helps to shape

“new circuits of knowledge” (to use their terms) in the parallel development of the discipline and the media industry, both revolutionized by digital technologies – and it trains the workforce for that knowledge-based industry. It starts as an “interstitial organization,” an interdisciplinary program existing in the spaces between departments, and moves from the margins to the center in becoming a department – a move facilitated by the “intermediating organizations” of the emergent disciplinary association as well as alumni groups. Faculty members, and sometimes students as well, function as “entrepreneurs” placing their creative productions into the market. And the university becomes the “marketer” of the program and its products, to students, donors, industry leaders, and other resource-bearing audiences (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). How this happened, and more importantly, why, is the focus of this study.

Research questions

The overarching question my study seeks to address is this: why does a leading public research university deploy an interdisciplinary, humanities-oriented academic program in a move toward the market? The case of Screen Arts and Cultures at Michigan provides a fertile landscape for exploring two sets of questions that inform that overarching issue.

First, operational questions shed light on the mechanics of such programs; these might be considered “topical information questions” in Robert Stake’s formulation (1995, p. 25):

- How are new interdisciplinary programs conceptualized, and by whom?

- What is the faculty's investment, incentive, or reward for initiating or implementing such programs? And who are the faculty: tenured, adjunct, contingent?
- What or who is driving the establishment of these programs: e.g., senior administration, legislatures, disciplinary or industry organizations, departments, deans, individual faculty members, student demand?
- What infrastructure – budgetary, human resources, policy, or other – facilitates their implementation?
- Where are such programs housed in the institution: e.g., extension, continuing studies, professional schools, traditional colleges, distance learning offices?
- To what extent have enrollment patterns shifted, if at all, in response to new interdisciplinary offerings?

And second, conceptual questions shape my analysis and help to situate my findings in relevant literatures (“issue questions,” to use Stake’s terminology once again (1995, p. 20)):

- In what ways are new interdisciplinary undergraduate programs responding to and/or helping to create their own markets?
- How do these programs affect the status of faculty – e.g., faculty entrepreneurs who benefit from the market; faculty as a means of production of benefit to the institution; shifts in proportions of tenure-stream vs. contingent faculty?
- How have resource streams shifted in response to these interdisciplinary programs? What are the levers that faculty and administrators have at their disposal to move their disciplines closer to market?

- What do new interdisciplinary academic programs suggest about trends in traditional disciplines and emerging interdisciplinary areas?

In Chapter 2, I lay out the conceptual frameworks and relevant literatures that inform my inquiry; Chapter 3 details my methodology in gathering data and analyzing findings. Chapter 4 offers an in-depth look at the Screen Arts and Cultures case, addressing the operational research questions by focusing on its history and development; faculty experience; student experience; and the flow of resources to and through the department. Chapter 5 synthesizes my findings from the case in terms of the conceptual research questions, situates those findings in the scholarly literature, and suggests avenues for further research.

I close with a brief consideration of future directions for the humanities. My study does suggest that interdisciplinarity is a strategy for engaging in academic capitalism in the humanities. The move to market in Screen Arts and Cultures is partly shaped by the pre-professional, or vocational, aspects of the curriculum, but its effectiveness and impact stems from its liberal arts foundations. Thus, this interdisciplinary undergraduate program has found new avenues for making concrete the value proposition of the humanities in an increasingly market-based higher education landscape.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study draws on a number of interrelated literature streams: the history and typologies of academic disciplines, interdisciplinarity, and the departmental structure; institutional change theory and the literature on restructuring; theories of resource dependency and academic capitalism; and studies of the rise of pre-professional fields, the decline of the humanities, and the new sociology of knowledge that explores the nexus of intellectual and financial power. In what follows, I outline the major strains of inquiry in each of these four areas with reference to my research questions, and suggest ways in which my study might extend current understandings.

Disciplines, interdisciplinarity, and departments

Abbott (2002) and others have observed that considerations of interdisciplinarity arose simultaneously with the establishment and differentiation of the disciplines a century ago; and the disciplines took the organizational form of the academic department in the modern American research university. Thus, I shall consider scholarship on these three intersecting themes – the differentiation of the disciplines, the destabilizing force of interdisciplinarity, and the academic department – together. How are the disciplines defined, and distinct from one another; how are interdisciplinary spaces identified and exploited, and what organizational structures support or suppress interdisciplinarity? The Department of Screen Arts and Cultures began as an interdisciplinary program and

moved in parallel with the development of film studies as a discipline along a deliberate trajectory to achieve departmental status. The literature in these key areas has significant, though incomplete, explanatory power to support my analysis of how and why this interdisciplinary program was conceptualized and established, and the impact of achieving departmental status on the flow of resources associated with the program.

What counts as knowledge is constantly evolving, from the articulation of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* to the broad array of disciplines as they now exist in the modern research university. The establishment of departments arose from the need to organize an increasingly specialized institution into disciplinary sub-categories. Trow and others point out that departments are an American phenomenon, developing between 1890 and 1910 “with the emergence of graduate education and the research oriented university” (Trow, 1976, p. 11). He points out the emergent structural need for departments that paralleled the development of distinct disciplinary identities: “The department, then, was as much an organizational as an intellectual necessity, an efficient unit for making decisions about the curriculum, student careers, and the appointments and promotion of staff, that could no longer be made effectively or credibly by university presidents” (Trow, 1976, p. 12). Blau further elaborates on the reciprocal relation of disciplinary expansion and the development of departments, as professional communities of scholars across institutions became formalized and universities adapted by creating institutional structures to house emerging specializations (1973, pp. 194-95). Abbott extends the professional labor economy metaphor, arguing that the “disciplinary degree provided a medium of exchange” and that while “the disciplines constitute the

macrostructure of the labor market for faculty ... the system [of departments] constitutes the microstructure of each individual university” (2002, p. 208).

The academic department is the primary site of faculty careers: departments hire, tenure, and promote faculty; departments make teaching assignments and evaluate faculty effectiveness; and departments provide the primary context for colleagues, intellectual community, and faculty work. Clark asserts that the department is also the “building block of faculty hegemony,” strengthening the influence of the specialized faculty within the bureaucratic structure of the university (1987, p. 154). Even with the advent of interdisciplinary centers and institutes that house an increasing share of the research enterprise, most faculty appointments still reside in traditional academic departments. Economists have studied the department as a workplace, exploring salary, promotion, career paths, demographic composition, and conflict that affect faculty (e.g., Moore and Pfeffer, 1980, Pfeffer & Langton, 1988, Ulrich, 1989). Hearn’s comprehensive review of sociological work on academic departments identifies several main areas of emphasis: “the structuring of academic work; competition, conflict, and change within departments; resource dependencies and power relations; organizational implications of disciplinary differences; compositional patterns; and departments as contexts for student development and socialization” (2007, p. 223). And finally, Gumpert and Snyderman’s (2002) delineation of the bureaucratic, and inherently stable, structure of the department – and the programmatic, and thus more flexible, structure of the degree program – offers a nuanced view of the structural forms a discipline takes in a particular institution, and the different purposes each type of structure serves in the validation and transmission of knowledge.

Several scholars have attempted to develop classification systems to map disciplinary differences in conceptual and structural terms, and along axes of power. Recognizing the significant empirical and theoretical work that developed in the 1970s through the 1990s, Braxton and Hargens (1996) provide a comprehensive review of the literature on conceptual schemes for describing disciplinary differences. Of the several threads they identify, there were two that held up most effectively under various empirical assessments of validity: the concept of paradigm development in a discipline, articulated by Lodahl and Gordon (1972, cited in Braxton and Hargens, p. 12); and Biglan's typology that classifies disciplines along hard-soft, pure-applied, and life-nonlife dimensions (Biglan, 1973, cited in Braxton and Hargens, p. 14). The paradigm development concept draws on Thomas Kuhn's conceptual foundation, and considers the degree of consensus in a discipline about the scope and nature of the field, methodologies, and which kinds of inquiry and knowledge are valued. High paradigm fields (e.g., physics) have highly developed agreement in the field, while low paradigm fields (e.g., sociology) allow for diverse perspectives and competing values.

These schemas, while inherently ahistorical, do provide a helpful point of reference for scholars assessing the impact of disciplinary differences on various aspects of university culture and structure. Lee (2004), for instance, uses Biglan's dimensions as a frame for assessing the alignment of departmental and institutional cultures, noting that departments fare better when there is a high level of cultural congruence with the institutional orientation, and also suggesting that university leaders account for the varied positions of departments along Biglan's continuums in strategies for effecting change. Bresser (1984) argues that departments in high paradigm fields also benefit from greater

stability in their internal and external environments, and more predictable resource streams. And Alpert's matrix model (1985) puts a schematic form to the aggregation of departments as constitutive of an individual university: disciplines on one axis and universities on the other, with X's marking the disciplines represented by departments at each institution. Importantly, Alpert indicates an array of external and interstitial forces – including federal and state government, industry, private foundations, alumni, student tuition, accrediting and professional associations, and other influences – that shape the power and resources of individual departments. Recognition of the differential impact of environmental factors and resource streams that affect the status and functioning of departments offers an important corrective to the static typologies offered by Biglan (1973) and Lodahl and Gordon (1972).

Departments and disciplines evolve, and interdisciplinarity is a key destabilizing force that both creates and motivates change. The case study at hand treats the emergence and establishment of an interdisciplinary undergraduate program, created out of the spaces between disciplines and departments, shaped by the characteristics of its original constituent parts, and propelled by many of the environmental factors Alpert enumerates. The literature on interdisciplinarity thus informs my assessment of the various strains of interdisciplinarity evident in Screen Arts and Cultures.

The very establishment of the disciplines created the conditions of possibility for interdisciplinarity (Abbott, 2002). The emergence of interdisciplinary programs challenges the centrality of the department as the core element of the university. Interdisciplinary centers and institutes – a byproduct, in some respects, of market forces that support problem-based research, more than traditional discipline-based research – are

consuming an ever greater share of faculty and institutional resources, at the expense of traditional departments, and many argue that they are displacing undergraduate teaching as well (e.g., Massy and Zemsky, 1994). The development of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs of study thus represents an extension of interdisciplinary practice that reaches to the heart of the university. Lattuca in particular has elaborated on contemporary issues of interdisciplinary research and teaching (2001, 2002), including a typology of forms of interdisciplinarity, as well as a consideration of challenges associated with interdisciplinary teaching, for instance: team-taught courses, or distribution requirements among traditional disciplines, or newly-created curricula that do not demonstrate clear roots or affiliations in an established discipline. It is conventional wisdom that interdisciplinary work is expensive – with research funding in the sciences only partially offsetting the costs of interdisciplinary research, and little to no funding streams attached to the extra costs of instruction entailed by interdisciplinary teaching. Barriers to implementation usually come down to “credit,” whether for grants and the flow of indirect costs in research, or for student headcount, credit hour production, and counting courses toward teaching expectations in instruction.

The literatures on departments, disciplines, and interdisciplinarity provide helpful frameworks for interpreting the case of Screen Arts and Cultures at the University of Michigan, but this study also suggests possibilities for extending current understandings of interdisciplinarity. First, examination of the establishment of a new, interdisciplinary discipline may shed light on the advantages and disadvantages of occupying a disciplinary space. Interdisciplinarity is generative of new knowledges, flexible, and responsive to changing environmental pressures and opportunities, yet marginal to core

institutional structures; while disciplinarity, especially embodied in the structure of an academic department, allows for centralization of power and resources, including faculty, students, funding, and intellectual terrain. What does it mean to straddle these identifications, as Screen Arts and Cultures currently does, and who has agency to maneuver between them? Second, if interdisciplinary enterprises are growing and beginning to crowd out core functions and structures like the discipline-based department, what does it mean for an interdisciplinary program to strive for and attain departmental status? Third, what features of interdisciplinarity might be particular to humanistic fields, as opposed to STEM or pre-professional interdisciplinary programs that are better understood? And fourth, given the competing resource streams of interdisciplinarity (often externally funded) and disciplinary departments (the bureaucratic structure used to organize academic resources and internal funding), how do resources flow to and through a program like Screen Arts and Cultures? Given the rapid rise of interdisciplinarity at research universities, and the even more recent emergence of interdisciplinarity in undergraduate programs, this study may help to define more clearly these gaps in the literature, and begin to address some of them.

Institutional change and academic restructuring

The evolution of disciplines and the establishment of new academic programs represent aspects of institutional change; hence, theories of change in higher education provide helpful frameworks for interpreting themes and trends that emerge from the case study data. I consider briefly several of the most pertinent strands of change theory from the literature on organizations, and then move to the more specific terrain of research on

academic program restructuring in research universities. Of particular relevance for my study are adaptation models of institutional change, that offer a framework for considering both the evolution of the discipline of film studies and the relationship of the curriculum to a rapidly-changing industry. While population ecology, natural selection, and life cycle theories of change fall into the realm of adaptation, they are characterized by passive or reactive, incremental change in response to shifting contexts. I am more interested in theories of adaptation that emphasize the roles of leaders and strategic choice in effecting change in response to environmental conditions.

Cameron (1984) considers a broad spectrum of theories of organizational adaptation, in acknowledgment of the continuous influence of external environments on higher education. Acknowledging a significant role for leaders in shaping change, theories of strategic choice address how leaders respond to a socially constructed environment with specific initiatives for change. Strategic choice theory posits that leaders identify options and select a direction for the organization based on resource dependence, political economy, and a negotiated fit between the organization's structure and its socially constructed environment. Symbolic action theories also credit leaders with the ability to construct environments by assigning meanings to external forces and changing organizational behavior in response to strategically defined environments. Julius, Baldrige, and Pfeffer (1999) focus on the strategic use of power by leaders in higher education, a theme that draws on significant prior work by Pfeffer and Salancik (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974; see also Hackman, 1985) on power in organizations. And Simsek and Louis (1994) propose that change in higher education is not necessarily incremental and adaptive, but can occasionally be characterized as a

dramatic paradigm shift. In the case of Screen Arts and Cultures, both the object of study and the industry in which it is embedded have changed significantly in recent decades, especially with the advent of digital technologies that are often heralded as representing a paradigm shift. These environmental changes prompted the creation of the discipline in the first place, but have also demanded leadership from faculty and administrators in adapting academic programs to shifting contexts. Cameron's characterization of the post-industrial environment points to an increasingly complex, turbulent, knowledge-based environment, all recognizable features of contemporary higher education, as well as of the digital media environment that now defines the object of study in Screen Arts and Cultures. In order to respond to this environment, he argues, leaders must have the *adaptability* to identify needs and possible strategies, while also wielding organizational power in order to implement *adaptation* (1984). He draws on Wieck's (1976) organizational concept of "loosely coupled" organizations that are more fluid, decentralized, and generative of new strategies, versus "tightly coupled" organizations that are more centralized, directive, and effective in making change.

It is possible to identify strains of strategic choice and symbolic action leadership in the narrative of Screen Arts and Cultures. While my study does not propose to develop new theories of leadership and power in organizations, it is interesting to note the varying strategies for change at work within the institution and within the program over time, in response to the industry environment. And the locus of power also shifts at different moments in the program's development: sometimes it is the faculty who are empowered to lead change, sometimes it is administrators, and sometimes it is groups and individuals outside the university who define the array of strategic choices available

to the leaders of the institution. Who effects change, and who is affected by change, are important aspects of my research questions. And perhaps the interdisciplinary nature of the program allows for flexibility, adaptability, and a broader array of strategic choices for faculty and administrators; yet perhaps it is the move to consolidate the program into a departmental structure that allows for the effective implementation of change.

This brings us to the literature on institutional change in the form of academic program restructuring, which is on the rise in the contemporary context of budgetary and environmental pressures facing higher education. The restructuring of academic programs – program closure, consolidation, realignment, or creation – has implications for the legitimation and transmission of knowledge, as well as impact on departments and disciplines. Restructuring can be prompted by political forces (e.g., Gumport & Pusser, 1999); strategies of selective excellence (e.g., Barrow, 1996); knowledge change (e.g., Trow, 1999); or internal strategic planning (e.g., Rhoades, 1995). Gumport and Snyderman's (2002) distinction between academic departments – bureaucratic structures that tend to be stable – and degree programs – programmatic structures that tend to be flexible – as important elements of academic program restructuring – are particularly relevant in understanding the evolution of Screen Arts and Cultures. Case studies on academic program restructuring often point to winners and losers among the various disciplines represented at the institution, with differential resource allocation and growth patterns that indicate shifts in power and resources connected with the disciplines (see, for instance, Eckel, 2000 and 2002; Trow, 1999; Gumport, 1993; Barrow, 1996; and Hardy, 1988). In the vein of new program creation rather than budget cuts as drivers of academic restructuring, Brint et al. have assessed trends in the institutionalization of

emerging fields (2011) and the stratification of liberal arts disciplines that remain stable largely at only the most prestigious universities (Brint, 2002).

Gumport draws on “neo-Weberian and neo-Marxian theorists, who make problematic the demarcation between external and internal factors influencing knowledge legitimation and who make explicit a link between power and knowledge in higher education” (1993, p. 286). The stakes of restructuring are high: what is the future shape of knowledge, and to what extent should higher education institutions remake themselves in response to market resources? She notes a trend toward increasing administrative power over faculty, especially when change means cuts; the faculty that is generative of new knowledge and responsible for its transmission has less to say about how that knowledge is valued or resourced in the institution. In general, the literature on academic program restructuring points to an array of factors that create winners and losers among academic disciplines and departments: a focus on mission-centrality (which programs represent the core?), resource dependencies (where are the revenue streams?), the production function of the institution (are there paying students, or well-funded lines of research?), the uses of performance data to justify change (is there program-level data, and how should it be deployed?), and the engagement of external constituencies as advocates or providers of resources (who are the powerful external stakeholders?).

These factors all come into play in the establishment of Screen Arts and Cultures: it is a new program, developed in response to an emerging field of study, and the story of its growth entails structural changes at the University of Michigan including academic program closure, consolidation, and creation. Though the primary drivers of change in this instance are not budget cuts *per se*, the university does operate in a context of fiscal

constraint; thus, resource allocations shift along with intellectual and disciplinary alignments in the restructuring that took place as Screen Arts and Cultures became established. Beyond the current understandings of academic program restructuring, though, my study sheds light on a subtler but perhaps more pervasive form of restructuring through interdisciplinarity. As the borders between disciplines become permeable, resources (faculty lines, students, space, budgets) move among them osmotically. My research questions about the drivers of change in the establishment of a new, interdisciplinary undergraduate program, and the effects of that new program on resource allocations, may point the way to new lines of inquiry in understanding interdisciplinarity as an important form of academic restructuring, perhaps purposeful, enacted by strategic choices of faculty and administrators, or perhaps resulting as an unintended consequence of those choices.

Resource dependency and academic capitalism

Resource dependency theory posits that organizational behavior is shaped by external resource streams. The applicability of resource dependency concepts to universities is increasingly evident in the current environment of budgetary constraint, and the concept was initially formulated in the 1970s with respect to academic departments (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1974). In a sort of fiscal tautology, productivity and power enable departments to secure resources, and resources flow to departments that demonstrate productivity and power. How and why does a new program enter into this competitive landscape and stake a claim to resources? The case of Screen Arts and Cultures illustrates the principles of resource dependency in action, though with a twist:

the humanities are thought to be far distant from robust resource streams, yet administrators and faculty leaders of Screen Arts and Cultures have positioned the program for significant investments from on and off campus funding sources.

In two related studies, Pfeffer and Salancik noted that departmental power within an institution was directly linked to the department's ability to obtain external grant and contract resources (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974); and they analyzed differential resource allocation compared to work load in academic departments, developing a method of assessing departmental power through indirect measures of surplus allocations not accounted for by productivity measures (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Departmental power and influence within the university is closely tied to departmental success in attracting external resources; resource dependency has thus amplified the environment of competition among departments. On a macro level, as well, the institution responds to external resources, in part by deploying assets differentially in the marketplace. The marketplace is of course diverse, and universities respond to a wide array of external resource streams. Some departments are highly attuned to industry needs and funding, others are primarily focused on state appropriations, and still others are more fully engaged in seeking student tuition dollars, for instance. While the conventional wisdom is that the faculty invests in educating students as a primary product, James & Neuberger invert that model, instead arguing that it is the students who produce the faculty (1981, p. 596). In a competitive market for students and the tuition dollars they bring, departments are under pressure to create demand and attract students to their programs, and it is the presence of students that legitimizes (and funds) the faculty. Curriculum adaptation is

one measure of the degree to which departments are responding to student resource streams (Manns & March, 1978).

More recent work complicates understandings of resource dependencies in academic departments, giving more nuanced attention to disciplinary differences, cross-subsidies, diverse and overlapping production functions, and departmental power as forces that modify strategies for securing and allocating resources. For instance, responsibility-centered management (RCM) budgeting is a strategy for embedding resource dependencies within an institution and its constituent units, as each “responsibility center” seeks to maximize its resources from both external and internal sources, sometimes in direct competition with other responsibility centers in the same institution. (At the University of Michigan, the budget model has been largely RCM-based, though in the mid-2000s it was revised to a more centralized allocation model. Thus, Screen Arts and Cultures developed in an internal budget landscape that fostered competition within the institution (Hanover Research Council, 2008).) But at the department level, RCM is often too blunt an instrument; Rhoades argues that disciplinary differences in the production functions of departments make it difficult to assign costs and assess value in a consistent way across departments (Rhoades, 2001). Language about efficiency and productivity has penetrated deeply into research and practice in higher education, as the sector is increasingly framed as an industry that is accountable to stakeholders and sensitive to markets. Markets are never pure or simple, however, and there is significant variability in the ability of departments to accrue resources of all kinds. Volk, Slaughter, and Thomas (2001) assessed the allocation of state funds among departments by a large, public research institution, in terms of each department’s

centrality to mission, workflow, grant and contract activity, faculty and student resources, and closeness to market. Their findings show that differential resource allocation among departments is tied to the expected measures of productivity, merit, and efficiency, but is overlaid with unacknowledged dynamics that privilege already powerful departments at the expense of less-powerful departments that often have large numbers of women and minorities among their faculty and students. Thus, resource dependency at the department level has significant implications for the valuation of knowledge: disciplines aligned with power structures and market resources increase their power, while the margins get pushed ever further out. Typically, humanities disciplines, especially smaller fields like classics or philosophy, have been among those pushed to the margins. The program under study in this project illustrates a marginal, humanities-based program that worked its way to the center by growing its student tuition funding base and making strategic alignments with external resources.

While resource dependency theory assumes that higher education responds to external market forces beyond the boundaries of the university, the theory of academic capitalism articulates the ways in which those boundaries are blurred, and universities are fully imbricated into, and helping to establish, the very networks and markets in which they participate (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). In *Academic Capitalism in the New Economy*, the authors give specific consideration to the academic department as a site of academic capitalism, in which “shifting revenue streams...shape strategic initiatives” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 183). Department-level strategies they identify include special academic programs such as professional masters degrees or executive programs that generate revenues; curricular enhancements to compete for

tuition-paying students; and industrial advisory boards and alumni outreach that foster closer relationships with corporate markets. While federally-funded research – a competitive market that brings significant revenues to STEM fields in particular – is still at the center of the research reward structure, there is a growing emphasis on industry-sponsored research. The authors argue that “educational entrepreneurship” (p. 188) is available to departments across a diverse array of institution types and disciplines, and not just the typically well-resourced science and engineering departments. They also suggest that centers and institutes, as market-driven structures that enable faculty and universities to meet emerging opportunities and secure new resources, will reshape and perhaps begin to displace the department as the central structure that organizes knowledge. Academic capitalism and other forms of resource dependency may portend a paradigm shift in higher education that remakes it as a commercial enterprise, fully integrated into the external marketplace of power and resources.

Screen Arts and Cultures illustrates patterns of resource dependency and the deliberate practice of academic capitalism in the establishment of an interdisciplinary, humanities-oriented undergraduate program. Interestingly, though, the program attracted resources from the margins and then moved to the center, coopting rather than competing with the traditional departmental structure. My research questions are attuned to themes of resource dependencies and the strategic deployment of an academic program that generate resources – and my focus on the humanities-oriented, interdisciplinary nature of Screen Arts and Cultures may extend current understandings of the role of interdisciplinarity in facilitating academic capitalism in the humanities.

The new sociology of knowledge and the state of the humanities

Critical theorists of higher education ask questions about systemic and implied power relations of the broader social and political context that have important but often unacknowledged influence on the differential impact of change on women, minorities, economically disadvantaged groups, and low-status disciplines and sectors within and among institutions. The so-called “new sociology of knowledge” explores how these “patterns of authority located in organizations shape both the content and structure of knowledge” (Swindler & Ardit, 1994, p. 307). Scholars of higher education are especially attuned to the “structure of knowledge” as constitutive of universities, and are asking questions about the nexus of knowledge and power as institutions change and shrinking resources are reallocated (see, for instance, Gumpert, 1993; Gumpert, 2002; Gumpert & Pusser, 1999; Gumpert & Snyderman, 2002; Slaughter, 1993; Volk, Slaughter, & Thomas, 2001). Interdisciplinarity by definition offers a restructuring, and re-valuation, of knowledge, as disciplines combine around problem-based inquiry and associated funding streams. Sometimes these interdisciplinary combinations are temporary and ephemeral, dissolving when funding streams shift or when new problems emerge that require different combinations of expertise; in other instances, interdisciplinary structures are consolidated and institutionalized in more permanent form, as is the case with Screen Arts and Cultures. Of interest to my study are the “patterns of authority” that are encoded in the establishment of Screen Arts and Cultures, which draws from disciplines in the humanities. The liberal arts core is further from the market than applied, STEM, or pre-professional disciplines, in terms of direct paths for students into the professions and in terms of government and industry funding of

research. Hence, the humanities in particular are vulnerable in an era of fiscal constraint and marketplace competition. Screen Arts and Cultures offers an exemplar of humanistic disciplines making concrete their value in the marketplace, which in turn helps to leverage investments by the institution.

A significant body of work has focused on the diminishing status of the humanities, which have been perceived to be in crisis for decades (e.g., Ladd, 2005, Bivens-Tatum, 2010, Davidson, 2011). The voluminous literature on the crisis has shifted to become a critique of the crisis rhetoric, along with a concerted effort to demonstrate the value of the humanities with productivity data of various kinds. Articles with titles like, “Has the growth of science crowded out other things at universities?” (Ehrenberg and Epifantseva, 2001) and “The humanities really do produce a profit” (Watson, 2010) are a regular feature of the landscape in the scholarly and trade press. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences has for the past decade commissioned reports on the status and value of the humanities. One such report (Hearn & Gorbunov, 2005) provides a comprehensive review of research literature and data sets on the financial status of the humanities. Another (AAAS, 2013), titled, “The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences for a Vibrant, Competitive, and Secure Nation,” stakes a claim to the national security interests of a humanities-educated citizenry. The mission centrality of the humanities is also key to their defense, and suggests that their condition is symptomatic of the overall state of higher education. In a special issue of *Representations* on the humanities and the public university after the financial crisis of 2008, one contributor noted,

humanistic claims for public education are most likely traceable to the precarity of the humanities, which also now appears to be the precarity of the autonomous university. Thus the discourses and aspirations of the humanities are diagnostic of more than the professional insecurity of humanities academics. In their persistent tensions with market values they may even be politically generative. (Lye, et al., 2011, p. 7)

The power and resource disparities among disciplines tend to disadvantage the humanities disciplines that do not have external funding sources comparable to those in STEM or pre-professional fields. Yet the language that permeates much of the literature on the decline of the humanities assumes that the values of the humanities and the market stand in opposition to one another. Historically, the humanities have been prized precisely for their practical utility in the marketplace of social, political, and financial capital, from the time of the Italian Renaissance through the 1950s (Cummings, 2013). What would it look like, for the humanities in the contemporary public research university to embrace the market rather than stand apart from it, to claim a space and command resources? The instance of Screen Arts and Cultures may suggest answers to that question: it complicates the narrative of the decline of the humanities by its eager, and successful, engagement in both creating and responding to the demands of the marketplace.

In the marketplace for students, Screen Arts and Cultures has responded to student demand for pre-professional curricula – though not without caution and careful rhetoric about the complementary roles of humanities and pre-professional training of students. The literature on shifts toward vocational and pre-professional fields in

undergraduate education is thus instructive. Scholarship on curricular change has long acknowledged the role of external influences in shaping what is taught in the undergraduate classroom. Michael Bastedo (2005) references social movements as contributors to curricular change, including the “dignification” and “parturition” of new fields of study, and traces the ways in which extracurricular student activities get incorporated into the formal curriculum over time. Stark and Lattuca address the “sociocultural context” involving external factors such as government, accrediting agencies, disciplinary associations, and the market (2009, p. 24). Slaughter gives extended consideration to the role of market pressures in shaping curricula, addressing the ways in which academic knowledge serves private industry interests in generating new, commodifiable, knowledge and preparing the workforce. The nexus of knowledge and power, at least in resource-rich disciplines, sustains the professional privileges of faculty who engineer curricular change to accommodate industry interests, perhaps at the expense of the autonomy of the university (1997, p. 20). Market forces that shape curricula, and the differential wage scales in professional fields, combine to produce student demand for curricula and degrees that will result in high-paying jobs. Brint and others have charted this sea change over the past 30 years, chronicling the “rise of the practical arts:” “the gradual shrinking of the old arts and sciences core of undergraduate education and the expansion of occupational and professional programs” (Brint et al., 2005, p. 151). Whereas 30 years ago, the majority of bachelor’s degrees were awarded in the liberal arts, in recent years nearly two thirds (and at some institutions more than 80%) of bachelor’s degrees have been granted in occupational fields (Brint, 2002). Even as greater numbers of students are earning degrees, an ever smaller fraction of those degrees

are in the liberal arts, and the humanities in particular. The shift of student tuition dollars away from traditional disciplines presents a major threat to liberal arts colleges in particular; hence the rise of vocationalism as a survival strategy, that does not always work, for many institutions in that sector (e.g., Kushner, 1999; Kraatz and Zajac, 1996). For arts and sciences colleges in research universities, the shift to pre-professional emphases does not threaten the institution's overall survival (in fact, it may enhance overall revenues), but does necessitate curricular change and strategic market positioning of liberal arts disciplines to attract enough market share of students to remain viable.

It is the highest-status institutions that can afford the privilege of maintaining the traditional disciplines as markers of the cultural elite (Brint et al., 2005). But Brint also demonstrates that, ironically, high-status institutions are also more market responsive in their investment in new fields than lower-status institutions, because of both their greater financial resources and their heightened competitive interests (Brint, 2012, p. 290). It is no accident that LS&A at the University of Michigan is able to sustain highly ranked departments in the humanities while also building new, interdisciplinary programs like Screen Arts and Cultures. The stratification of higher education thus includes differentiation by discipline, with elite institutions maintaining the traditional disciplines even as they negotiate within-institution status differences among existing and emergent disciplines, departments, and the faculty and students who build their careers and intellectual lives in them. Yet despite the status of Michigan as a well-resourced, leading institution that can afford the luxuries of the liberal arts, the strategies at play in the development of Screen Arts and Cultures offer potential approaches to shoring up the status of the humanities at a broader spectrum of institution types. The integration of pre-

professional curricula with traditional disciplines offers one such possibility; and interdisciplinarity itself offers another. One scholar extends the analysis of the humanities in the marketplace, capitalizing on the concept of the “derivative,” the recombinant and shaky investment vehicle that helped to precipitate the 2008 financial crisis, as a metaphor for interdisciplinarity that facilitates engagement with the complex challenges of the public sphere (Martin, 2011). His extended metaphor encapsulates the ironies inherent in my study of Screen Arts and Cultures: interdisciplinarity, academic restructuring, market responsiveness, and the rise of pre-professionalism may all provide keys to viability, power, and influence for a re-imagined and re-valued humanities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

I chose a qualitative case study approach for this research, believing that in-depth analysis and thick description would yield meaningful insights into the nexus of academic capitalism and interdisciplinarity represented by my chosen site. In what follows, I outline the rationale and methodology of the purposeful selection that led me to the Screen Arts and Cultures Department at the University of Michigan. I then discuss my methods for gathering data about that site, including primarily documents and semi-structured interviews. Finally, I outline my approach to data analysis and strategies to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of my findings.

Case study site selection: Screen Arts and Cultures at the University of Michigan

I chose to make a purposeful selection (Creswell, 2007) of my case study site, starting with the decision to focus on a leading public research institution; continuing to narrow possibilities of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs in fields traditionally farthest from the market; and finally selecting Screen Arts and Cultures as an ideal context for exploring my research questions. My rationale for each stage of site selection follows:

First, I decided to focus on leading public research universities for several reasons: these institutions have the scope, resource base, and prestige to allow for risk-taking new ventures; they are under extraordinary pressures to innovate for budgetary as

well as intellectual reasons; and they are held in high regard as models to which other institutions aspire. The research focus of these institutions is perhaps the leading edge, now well established, of interdisciplinarity and academic capitalism, with the development of interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial academic programs following on the heels of the research-based innovations. And while private institutions have by definition been responsive to private markets throughout their history, public institutions are generally facing a more dramatic shift in recent years from reliance on state appropriations to increased reliance on private funding of various kinds as well. Finally, public institutions are embedded in multiple layers of institutional control, including state systems of higher education and legislatures, in addition to institution-specific governing boards. These multiple layers have the potential to present greater barriers to entrepreneurial activity than those facing private institutions, and thus, insights that emerge on pathways through those barriers would have particular utility.

Within this fairly narrow band of institutions, I chose to focus on the University of Michigan. The University of Michigan was founded in 1817; has approximately 41,000 students and 5,000 faculty at its main Ann Arbor campus; is a member of the American Association of Universities; had \$1.27 billion in research expenditures in FY2011; and is comprised of nineteen schools and colleges at the Ann Arbor campus (“About,” n.d.). In 2012, Michigan was ranked 4th among public research universities and 29th overall by the *U.S. News and World Report* (2012). In the years since the dramatic economic downturn of 2008, the University of Michigan has been relatively well insulated from state budget cuts. At Michigan, state appropriations as a percent of operating expenses were 7.2% in FY07, rose to a high of 8.1% in FY08, and declined

thereafter to 6.3% in FY11, a relatively modest change (University of Michigan, 2011). Given the relatively low proportion of its budget that comes from the state, the University of Michigan has developed a culture and practice of attracting other kinds of resource streams, thus demonstrating successful academic capitalism at the institutional level. Lastly, my own personal background with the institution made it an ideal choice: I attended the university as a graduate student in the English department in the early 1990s, which gives me a first-hand appreciation for the power and centrality of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LS&A) at the institution, as well as its strengths in humanities disciplines. I also worked as a development officer at the Law School there, which gives me insight into the university's strategies for seeking private philanthropic support. I have done prior research on the higher education policy and governance landscape in the state. And finally, I maintain several key contacts with faculty and campus leaders that facilitated my access to the institution for this study.

Within the university, I scanned the catalog of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs for possible candidates. While many ethnic and area studies interdisciplinary majors have existed since the 1970s and 1980s, when social and political movements legitimized academic study of gender, race and ethnicity, and cultural groups – and STEM fields such as bioinformatics, ecology, and interdisciplinary life sciences have emerged in connection with research-related funding streams – I was most interested in newly emergent interdisciplinary programs that draw from disciplines typically considered farthest from the market for resources: the humanities and the social sciences. While the science disciplines are continual sources of innovation, and populate the proliferation of well-funded and industry-connected research centers and institutes, the

social sciences and the humanities are less often viewed as contributing to an entrepreneurial, academic capitalist regime. Departments in those disciplines are typically the most vulnerable to budget cuts and restructuring; I theorized that their status at the margins would motivate faculty and administrators in these fields to think creatively about attracting undergraduate students with new, interdisciplinary majors that reframe the traditional disciplines in more market-friendly – and, specifically, workplace-friendly – combinations. I was particularly interested in undergraduate concentrations, as teaching undergraduates is central to the university’s mission and identity. Humanities and social science departments often (though not always) have large populations of undergraduate students, giving them legitimacy and representing a substantial source of funds. This sets them apart from some graduate-focused science programs with few undergraduates, which often (though not always) point to research funding in their claims to legitimacy.

Several undergraduate concentrations emerged as possibilities: Organizational Studies, established in 2001 and drawing on sociology, economics, psychology, communication, business, and public policy in its interdisciplinary focus on organizations in society; the Program in the Environment, established in 2002 and pulling from natural and social sciences and humanities disciplines, with tenfold growth in enrollments over its first decade; Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience, established in 2000 and connecting social and behavioral sciences with neuroscience; and Screen Arts and Cultures, with a longer history since the 1970s but a reorganization and renaming in 2005, bringing together film and media studies from a variety of humanistic disciplines with production curricula (“Majors and Minors,” n.d.). I selected the latter, for a variety

of reasons. It is centered in the humanities, whereas the other programs had at least some disciplinary links to STEM disciplines or business with well-travelled pathways to the marketplace. It seeks to address the divide between professional and creative practice and humanistic inquiry. It explicitly connects students' academic preparation with opportunities in the industry. Finally, it has a long enough history to allow for reflection and analysis of patterns of growth.

Data: documents

Documents of various kinds were instrumental in providing background and context for many of my topical research questions about program history, mission, curriculum, and staffing, and offered nuanced perspectives on the strategic and conceptual questions as well. A list of program-related documents I obtained for this study is attached as Appendix A. The internal development of the Screen Arts and Cultures program is chronicled in a series of lengthy and detailed program review documents from 1988, 1993, and 2004, which include large amounts of data on curriculum, enrollments, faculty, facilities, budget, space, and the ebb and flow of investments in the program over the four decades since its inception. The narratives in these program reviews, including on-campus faculty committee reports as well as perspectives from off-campus reviewers, provide further insight into the barriers to success and opportunities for growth, as well as the strategic and political concerns of faculty and administrators relating to internal and external stakeholders. The resource environment and strategic initiatives that influenced the Screen Arts and Cultures program from the college and university level are evidenced by financial statements,

accreditation reports, and strategic plan summaries, as well as task force reports on the Undergraduate Initiative of the 1990s, the focus on interdisciplinarity in the 2000s, and the specific efforts to foster team teaching as part of the interdisciplinary focus. Student experience is captured in qualitative and quantitative exit surveys of graduates from 2012 and 2013. Faculty composition and interdisciplinary dynamics emerge through rosters and biographies of core, jointly-appointed, affiliate, and visiting faculty members – tenure-stream and non-tenure-stream – as well as in a recent proposal to create a tenure track for the creative/production faculty.

Still other documents shed light on the ways in which the Screen Arts and Cultures Department positions itself for student recruitment, alumni relations, fund raising, and industry alignments. The department's website provides significant descriptive background, making explicit the connections between the curriculum and professional opportunities for students, and linking to a career guide for Screen Arts and Cultures concentrators. Newsletters produced periodically since 2001 for alumni and friends of the department feature reports from the director or chair; alumni notes about job placement and success; celebrations of major philanthropic gifts; features on guest lecturers from the scholarly and industry communities; student awards and internship opportunities; and event listings for co-sponsored university and community film events. And the context of peer and aspirational peer institutions that have a presence in the discipline is helpfully compiled in reports of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, an important intermediating organization that helped to legitimize the field, including documents on the history of the emergent discipline, membership rosters, and surveys of departments and programs at member institutions.

In all of these documents, I was especially interested in the language and rhetoric used for both internal and public consumption. How is language deployed to persuade, or claim affiliation or status, or justify the program? Who are the explicit and implied audiences? Are there subtexts, or lacunae, or distinctive rhetorical features that might speak to my research questions? Documents that address questions of authority in the establishment and evaluation of the program encode institutional power dynamics. And performance data on enrollments and faculty status offered quantitative markers of resource flow and restructuring. Finally, documents not only aided in the descriptive aspects of the case; they proved essential for triangulation among different sources of information, including personal interviews.

Data: interviews

I conducted fifteen semi-structured interviews with a range of participants associated with Screen Arts and Cultures: seven in person, and eight via telephone. A sample letter of invitation and consent is attached as Appendix B and a copy of my interview protocol is attached as Appendix C. My interview subjects included nine men and six women; seven faculty members, four students, and four staff and administrators. They are all identified indirectly in the description of the case; although a number of participants were willing to be specifically named, I decided to use indirect identifiers throughout for consistency and to preserve the confidentiality of those who did not wish to be named, given the relatively small size of the program. The table below indicates the positions of each interview subject.

Table 1: Interview subjects

| | | | |
|-------------|---|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Faculty | M | Professor Emeritus, Studies | 100% SAC |
| Faculty | M | Assistant Professor, Studies | Joint appointment |
| Faculty | M | Associate Professor, Studies | Joint appointment |
| Faculty | M | Professor and Chair, Studies | Joint appointment |
| Faculty | F | Professor | Affiliate, non-SAC |
| Faculty | F | Lecturer, Production | 100% SAC |
| Faculty | M | Lecturer, Production | 100% SAC |
| | | | |
| Student | F | Production | |
| Student | M | Studies | |
| Student | M | Production | |
| Student | F | Production/Screenwriting | |
| | | | |
| Staff/Admin | F | Student Services | |
| Staff/Admin | M | Development | |
| Staff/Admin | M | LS&A administration | |
| Staff/Admin | F | Career Center | |

Of the seven faculty members, five are tenured, emeritus, or tenure-track and two are lecturers; five are men and two are women; four are jointly-appointed, one is an affiliate faculty member, and two are wholly appointed within the department. Of the students, all are seniors set to graduate in 2014; two are men and two are women, with diverse academic and professional interests representing the scope of the curricular offerings. And of the staff and administrators, one works in student services; another in the career center; a third in development; and a fourth is an administrator in the LS&A dean's

office. This sample of interview subjects is purposeful – reflective of the composition of the faculty, students, and curriculum, and of the department’s role in institution-wide efforts such as career placement and fund raising. After initially identifying a handful of key informants from a search of the department’s website and consultation with my contacts at the university, I relied on a snowball sampling technique (Merriam, 2009, p. 79) to identify additional interview subjects through the recommendations of my initial group.

The interview protocol was semistructured (Merriam, 2009, p. 89), with a loose framework of topics and questions designed to offer points of entry to discussion of the topical and issue-based research questions noted above. While there was a high degree of consistency in themes and subjects covered in all the interviews, my questions did become more focused with each successive interview as my knowledge base of topical information increased, as interview subjects pointed me toward questions or issues I had not anticipated at the outset, and as some themes reached saturation. Also, some interview subjects were naturally better positioned to respond in depth to certain themes in the interview protocol: e.g., students had more to say about their motivations to pursue the concentration, and faculty members had more to say about the nature of interdisciplinary appointments. Thus, the overall interview design was emergent, though there was remarkable consistency among respondents in identifying the strengths, opportunities, and challenges facing the department.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to interview such a well-informed and articulate group of subjects. Their responses to my questions showed that they had engaged in significant reflection on many of the issues my study touches on. Most had

questions for me about the theoretical frameworks, context, and current research on my subject. These intellectual exchanges added significantly to the depth and nuance of my interviews. I appreciated my interviewees' forthright, welcoming, and honest responses, and their willingness to share time and insights with me. My case study and my findings are much the richer for their full and open participation. Finally, during my visit to campus for the initial set of interviews, I was given a tour of the facilities of the department, including faculty offices, classrooms and screening rooms, library resources, production and editing suites, equipment storage and maintenance facilities, and student lounge spaces. My field notes about the physical setting in which the department conducts its activities inform my sense of the resources allocated to the department by the university, as well as through industry partnerships and philanthropic contributions.

Analysis and interpretation

I had all of the recorded interviews transcribed, and thus my primary tools for analysis were in the form of texts, whether documents or transcriptions, that I coded in an effort to identify dominant themes. While the heuristic case study (Merriam, 2009, p. 44) is my primary approach, I adapted elements of grounded theory in my data analysis, using the constant comparative method in coding data such that the categories and conceptual threads were refined and reconsidered throughout the process of gathering and analyzing data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 5). I began with a short list of *a priori* codes informed by the research literature (e.g., interdisciplinarity; strategic planning; student demand, job placement), and soon had a more specific list of approximately twenty-five codes that I loosely grouped into themes of program development and planning; faculty perspectives;

student perspectives; and resources. These themes are reflected in the analysis of the case study that comprises the next chapter. My own bias as an observer is toward post-structuralism, critical theory, feminism, and textual analysis; hence, I tend to give significant weight and attention to language, symbols, and power dynamics whether articulated or implicit. I am also oriented toward the social constructedness of experience, with its attendant ambiguities and contradictions among multiple perspectives. Understanding how my interview subjects were situated vis-à-vis each other and their relationship to the department helped me evaluate and contextualize their interpretations of their involvement and experiences.

The validity and trustworthiness of my findings are buttressed by several strategies for cross-checking and confirming the qualitative and numerical data I gathered. I was able to use a limited measure of member checking, sharing preliminary observations and conclusions with selected study participants as I circled back to them with follow-up questions (Stake, 1995). Triangulation among responses of interviewees, documents, and available data helped to refine minor details of fact such as names and dates, although I was struck by the remarkable consistency of memory, interpretation, and experience that emerged through multiple data streams.

Finally, after articulating and analyzing the Screen Arts and Cultures case in Chapter 4 in terms of the operational research questions guiding my study, I turn to the more conceptual research questions and findings in Chapter 5. Chapter 4 offers the case study as an heuristic; Chapter 5 reaches toward theory. This aspect of my analysis situates the major themes of the case into the bodies of literature noted above. Which themes extend and confirm theories that others have explored? And what new concepts

emerge, that challenge or complicate current understandings? Which strains of theory offer the most appropriate explanatory models for the phenomena illustrated by the Screen Arts and Cultures case? My objective in structuring my analysis in this way was to generate a very pragmatic and descriptive characterization of the mechanics of establishing an interdisciplinary academic program that might be of use to faculty and administrators at other leading public research universities with an entrepreneurial bent. I further sought to assess the tangible and the symbolic impacts of such programs on faculty, students, departments, and disciplines, and to theorize from this example about the nature of interdisciplinarity and academic capitalism in the humanities.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY: SCREEN ARTS AND CULTURES

Screen Arts and Cultures had modest beginnings in 1972, when a small group of faculty from English, Engineering, and Art with an interest in film studies began to organize an interdisciplinary program and teach a handful of courses primarily to undergraduate students in those disciplines. Forty years later, the program has been established as a department in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LS&A), with 28 core faculty and ten affiliated faculty representing a dozen disciplines; 200 undergraduate majors; a popular minor in Global Media Studies; a graduate certificate and PhD program; state-of-the-art facilities in the marquee new building on campus; robust connections with the film and media industries and community organizations; highly successful job placement for graduates; and an active and devoted network of alumni and donors. How did they get from there to here? How do faculty and students experience the current program, and what challenges are on the horizon? And what resources and pressures are fueling the growth of the program; what is the university's return on investment?

The articulation of the case in this chapter addresses the operational research questions in the study; again:

- How are new interdisciplinary programs conceptualized, and by whom?

- What is the faculty's investment, incentive, or reward for initiating or implementing such programs? And who are the faculty: tenured, adjunct, contingent?
- What or who is driving the establishment of these programs: e.g., senior administration, legislatures, disciplinary or industry organizations, departments, deans, individual faculty members, student demand?
- What infrastructure – budgetary, human resources, policy, or other – facilitates their implementation?
- Where are such programs housed in the institution: e.g., extension, continuing studies, professional schools, traditional colleges, distance learning offices?
- To what extent have enrollment patterns shifted, if at all, in response to new interdisciplinary offerings?

After delineating the three major phases of program development, I then turn to the perspectives of faculty in the department and discipline as they currently stand; a consideration of student experience from admissions through job placement and alumni involvement; and a preliminary analysis of the types of return on investment in the department being realized by the university.

The development of Screen Arts and Cultures can be divided into three primary phases: beginnings (1972-1988); consolidation (1988-2004); and expansion (2005-present). For each of these phases, I examine the rhetoric around the program's objectives; the internal and external factors shaping the status of the program; the alignment of program goals with institutional investments and strategic plans; and the flow of resources associated with the program.

Beginnings: 1972-1988

From the outset, the conceptualization of the program was driven by the intellectual interests of a small group of faculty members from several different disciplines, who recognized the opportunity to centralize and strengthen film studies. “As in most universities,” comments one faculty member, “film was being taught all over the place. In many cases, covertly in, like, Shakespeare classes. Because as a popular culture, it wasn’t deemed important enough to be a legitimate thing to teach.” As the medium gained legitimacy as an object of study in a number of humanities disciplines, though, the small group of founding faculty members was able to initiate a Program in Film and Video Studies in 1972, and gain approval for a formal undergraduate concentration in 1976. The objective was “to train students in the history, theory, and analysis of film, with an emphasis on liberal arts as opposed to production” (Sanford, 2008). And though the emphasis from the start was on “studies” – the humanistic exploration of film and video as an object of study – there was also a “production” component, to give students some hands-on experience with the medium as a means of deepening their critical and analytical skills. One faculty member compared the production aspect of the curriculum to asking students to write a sonnet in a poetry class: the purpose of the creative side was primarily to inform the scholarly side of the curriculum.

The internal forces shaping this early phase of the program thus centered on faculty intellectual interests across a handful of humanities disciplines, but student demand and academic restructuring soon followed. The report of the first formal program review, conducted in 1988, noted that: “No one at the University expected the

program to generate such interest among the students and such a number of concentrators – within five years the program could claim sixty concentrators and by 1987 it had 110” (Konigsburg, et al., 1988, p. 3). Though the production classes were limited in size due to equipment needs, the studies classes (such as The Art of Film; Major Directors; Studies in Film Genre; History of American Film; and Introduction to Radio and Television) “continuously draw between 100-150 students, and Film Analysis continues to average 350 students. Such enrollments give no indication of abating” (pp. 3-4). And despite the stated emphasis on liberal arts curricula, student demand for production classes quickly outstripped instructional capacity and facilities for those high-cost courses. Some of these extra costs were passed along to the students through course fees, prompting debate among faculty and administrators about appropriate funding levels for the program:

As well as needing sufficient equipment, the production technique courses need funds for student costs. While it is arguable that the chase for monies, already at this early stage, is useful ‘reality training’ for anyone aspiring to work further in film, it is contrary to the spirit of a state university that advanced work in a subject should depend on the individual student’s independent access to between one and two hundred dollars for course expenses (beyond tuition). (p. 22)

Internal academic restructuring also paved the way for the development of Film and Video Studies. While most of the faculty in the program came from humanities departments in LS&A, the program was initially housed outside of the college as several faculty members came from the schools of engineering and art; when the engineering faculty member moved his appointment into LS&A’s residential college, and the school

of art discontinued its film curriculum, the program's administrative home shifted to LS&A (Konigsburg et al., 1988, p. 3). And within LS&A, the establishment of a separate theater department, the restructuring in the 1980s of the communications department that had housed a film production unit and the journalism program enabled a full-fledged shift to the Film and Video Program as the center of film studies at the university. The theater restructuring responded to the alignment of the performing arts emphasis of the department with music and dance in the School of Music (as distinct from the study of theater, often linked with film studies). And the communications restructuring that eliminated journalism resulted from a disciplinary rift in communications between statistical analysis, social science and cultural studies approaches, and applied production emphases. Thus, the primary driver of academic restructuring was intellectual, though the university did realize some financial and administrative efficiencies through the consolidation of production faculty, staff, equipment, and curricula. Centralizing production in Film and Video Studies enabled the university to contain costs and meet the increasing demands on those facilities from students taking courses; student film societies, and community-based film organizations.

The increased interest in film among students, faculty, community organizations, and media and entertainment industries resulted in external pressures on the university that also contributed to the early development of the Film and Video Studies Program. On the academic side, the development of film studies as a discipline – evidenced by the establishment of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies in 1959 with 37 members and its growth to nearly 3,500 individual and 35 institutional members by 2012 (“Organizational History,” n.d.) – and the establishment of film programs at leading

institutions both legitimized the field and created an environment of peer competition for the University of Michigan. As one faculty member noted,

One of the things that had always seemed to make an impact on LS&A and the University of Michigan is what was being done elsewhere and it was clear that film studies were beginning to become a legitimate subject of its own elsewhere. ...The College was able to take this seriously.

With the notable exceptions of NYU, UCLA, and USC, which had well-established programs focused almost exclusively on production and well integrated into the entertainment industry, several faculty reiterated the liberal arts, “studies” emphasis of the Michigan program and other Midwestern research university programs at Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio State, Chicago, and Northwestern: “most of these universities had just token programs made up of people from various kinds of disciplines.” I will return in more detail to the question of interdisciplinarity and the emergence of film studies as a discipline below, but suffice it to say here that Michigan had an opportunity to enter this field of competition with academic strengths in the humanities, coupled with nascent pre-professional training and connections with community, industry, and employment interests. The vibrant Ann Arbor film community – known for its active and diverse film societies, art house theaters, and festivals – provided opportunities for collaboration, shared facilities and equipment, screenings that informed the curriculum, and venues for showing student work. External reviewers noted what was well known to faculty and administrators at Michigan:

The vitality of Ann Arbor’s film community is an important asset to the University as a whole and directly enhances the University’s ability to recruit and

retain intellectually active faculty and students in all areas of study. The future of the Film and Video program is integrally related to the future of Ann Arbor's film and video institutions. A strong program could provide leadership, continuity, and coordination to help preserve and enhance these currently fragmented community resources. In turn, the community institutions provide a number of essential services for the Film and Video Program." (Konigsburg, et al., 1988, p. 45)

Local Ann Arbor and Detroit media organizations and corporations were increasingly offering internships and jobs for students with production skills, though even in the early days faculty leaders recognized that "keeping track of such opportunities, and matching students to jobs, will require a high level of coordination, organization, and follow-through" (p. 47). But the jobs were increasing exponentially. As one faculty member put it,

There was also a transition that I noticed. At first, when I was counseling students my advice was always to be very, very aware of what they were getting into, how keen the competition was and how few people really made it in the industry, and then it opened up with the various cable companies and digital and this and that. It seemed to me there was much more opportunity for people as the technology developed. The audiences increased; the media themselves opened up, and it was a much more welcome profession to go into, and to be candid, from my memory, my experience was that most of the students were interested in the industry aspect of it.

The report of the 1988 program review also acknowledged “realistic opportunities for attracting outside funding for activities” (Konigsburg, et al., 1988, p. 48). These external pressures and opportunities added to the internal, institutional forces in propelling the Film and Video Studies Program forward.

Despite the demonstrated demand and opportunities for the program, the 1988 program review made clear that the university’s investment lagged far behind the program’s potential: it told a story of “vain attempts, failed hopes, and diminishing energies” (p. 4). The reviewers commented that the “perception of institutional neglect still remains strong and it threatens the future viability of the program” (p. 49). The faculty director – on loan from the English department, clearly not a sustainable arrangement – shared one modest office with a half-time assistant, and the program did not have the ability to hire or appoint faculty members, so the faculty remained a loose confederation across multiple disciplines with little opportunity or mandate to coordinate curriculum and programming. The curriculum was idiosyncratic, with major gaps in coverage and sequencing across the board. Classrooms, screening rooms, and production facilities and equipment were inadequate, unavailable, and distributed throughout a Byzantine network of administrative offices, buildings, budgets, and support personnel across campus. This state of affairs was a natural outcome of the way in which the program was initiated: “Because the organizers of the program did not receive much encouragement from the University and because they were anxious to launch the program, they made very few requests and promised that the program would cost the University very little” (Konigsburg, et al., 1988, p. 3). But as the faculty and administrators across the university soon recognized, film programs are expensive. The

review committee “unanimously felt that the Program in Film and Video Studies had great potential to add significantly to the teaching and scholarly life of the University, but that it needed immediate and serious attention in its present state” (p. 2).

The fourteen recommendations of the review committee called for strengthening the faculty through dedicated hiring, fractional EFT appointments of allied faculty members across disciplines, and the appointment of a full time director. The curriculum was to be thoroughly revamped and coordinated, and discussions of a small graduate program were to be undertaken. Enhanced budgetary support and dedicated administrative and technical staff would enable the purchase and maintenance of equipment as well as a program of guest speakers. Centralized and increased space for offices, classrooms, screenings, and storage and maintenance of production equipment would serve the students and make the Film and Video Studies Program the central coordinator of production facilities on campus. And finally, the review committee recommended strengthening ties with community film organizations and actively seeking funds from grant agencies and industry partners. As one faculty member involved in the founding of the program noted,

We finally presented to the College a very powerful document saying that Ann Arbor had been the center of film, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, and whether you do away with it or not, it’s going to proceed on its own and it’s time that the university took a professional stand and supported it.

The ensuing discussion of the LS&A executive board and the dean resulted in a full-throated adoption of the majority of the review committee’s recommendations.

There are several noteworthy aspects of this early stage in the program's development. First, it demonstrates the conceptualization and implementation of an interdisciplinary undergraduate program by tenured, senior faculty from three different colleges, led by their own intellectual interests and the emergence of a national (inter)disciplinary community of scholars. Second, it sets up the tension between student demand for pre-professional production experience – tied to the burgeoning media industries and possibilities for jobs – and the faculty's stated objectives to focus the curriculum on liberal arts and the humanistic study of film and video. Third, it highlights the costs associated with the new program, raising questions of apportionment of those costs between students, the program, and the university as a whole. Fourth, it points to the pressures and opportunities presented by partnerships with community groups as well as entertainment and media companies that could potentially provide resources to the program and jobs for its graduates. And finally, it illustrates the need for academic program restructuring as a precondition for the emergence of a new program. All of these dynamics emerge pre-1988, and come into sharper focus during the consolidation phase that followed.

Consolidation: 1989-2004

The strong endorsement of the 1988 program review recommendations did result in a number of changes that strengthened the program: a full-time faculty director was appointed, and the program was able to hold fractional FTE of participating faculty, going from zero to all of 2.5 FTE in the five years following the review. The curriculum expanded from five courses to twenty-two, and the number of concentrators went from 44

to nearly 100. The operating budget was more than doubled (to \$40,000 per year, plus the addition of half-time salary support for a staff technician), and a three-year commitment of equipment funding enabled the program to purchase cameras and other technologies to support production classes. (As the director wryly noted, “we may be a humanities program, but like the sciences we depend on equipment” (Konigsburg, 1993b, p. 3).) A suite of offices and classrooms in the venerable but decrepit Frieze Building enabled the program to centralize its modest operations, which now also included faculty from more than twenty departments across campus. The program director noted that, “in many ways, the Program with its core faculty, large number of majors, facilities and equipment, and cultural presence in the community, now functions largely as a Department but without the normal support of a Department” (Konigsburg, 1993b, p. 1).

Yet there remained significant challenges to the health and functioning of the program. These include the lack of adequate faculty FTE in the program to ensure curricular coordination and coverage; continuing issues with the inadequacy of facilities and equipment; and a widening philosophical divide about the role of production courses in a liberal arts program. The report of the 1993 program review committee is suffused with frustration and a sense of exhaustion on the part of the faculty members who had overseen rapid program expansion far in excess of resources: “The issues raised reflect not only a phenomenal growth in the program, but a deeply held sense of the College’s failure to fulfill its promises” (Fredricksen, et al., 1993, p. 4). Following on this report, the College renewed its commitment to the program. In short order, the College authorized a search for a nationally-recognized scholar to direct and build the program,

the faculty, and the curriculum, and it engineered a restructuring that brought production curricula and facilities under the aegis of the Program in Film and Video Studies.

Thus, one internal force that shaped the program – and she was a force to be reckoned with, from all reports – was the program director who implemented the consolidation of the Film and Video Studies Program over the next decade. One faculty member described her thus:

She was a powerful feminist theorist, a very powerful woman, very sharp elbows and hard to work under, but even harder to work against. She was brought in to build this place, and she did. It's very impressive how far she took it. They went out and they wanted to hire a heavy-hitter, famous scholar, and someone who could build the program. She fit the bill perfectly, I have to say. She was also fearless and did not care if she upset people.

Others noted that she was “really aggressive and very capable;” and “not so good with personnel but good at getting resources.” Another faculty member commented, “I can’t give her enough credit for saying, ‘Let’s have a vision here; not to worry about where we get the money.’” With a mandate from the dean’s office and by sheer force of will, the new program director tightened the curriculum and centralized the core faculty of the program. The productive tension between the interdisciplinary origins and practice of film and video studies and its emergent disciplinary identity was helpful in her efforts to shift power to the center of the program. A faculty member noted this irony:

I find that incredibly interesting in terms of the disciplinary history and in terms of the promise of interdisciplinarity that, for institutional reasons, this department spends some time kind of circling the bandwagons [sic] and saying, we do film

studies and we do it in such a specific way, and it's so important to know the discipline and the protocols, that a) we want input on anybody who hires anybody who has anything to do with film, [and] b) we want to be a clearinghouse for any moving image. That helped to consolidate who we are.

Through aggressive policing of the borders, combined with outreach and coordination to bring together faculty, students, departments, and organizations on and off campus, this powerful director was able to build a central and authoritative core of faculty and curricular control for Film and Video Studies. I will return to the centrifugal and centripetal forces of disciplinary and interdisciplinary identification in the next chapter; it may be that good fences make good neighbors.

Concurrent with the director's efforts to claim a central space for film studies, the other internal factor driving the program's development was the restructuring of the communications department and the concomitant expectations for production curricula in the Film and Video Studies Program. Burgeoning student demand for production courses had amplified the problems with the infrastructure for equipment and facilities, already inadequate and still somewhat disorganized, and there were limited production courses offered in both the Film and Video Studies Program and the communications department. The 1993 program review made it clear that the program was at a crossroads: the college would have to decide whether to pool the equipment but continue offering courses from two units; make Film and Video Studies a department, incorporating the production series from Communications; create a separate unit entirely for production; or eliminate undergraduate production courses entirely with a shift to graduate level study as at UCLA and other production-focused institutions (Fredricksen, et al., 1993, p. 13). In light of a

fractious conflict in the communications faculty – a typical disciplinary divide between quantitative and cultural studies-oriented scholarly approaches – the College chose to restructure Communications, eliminating the journalism program entirely, and shifting the production courses, equipment, and several faculty members to the Film and Video Studies Program. While one faculty member characterized this episode as “a very bloody situation... all of the [journalism] professors lost their jobs, even tenured people, I’m told;” another referred to it as, “a divorce made in heaven.” A faculty member who joined the Film and Video Program from the Communications department as a result noted the “parallels” and “duplication” that had existed prior to the shift, and the logical sense of the restructuring: “It was the dean’s initiative. ... It made sense. It strengthened the Film and Video Program, put some things in a natural home. It was a natural move.”

While the academic restructuring provided clarity about curricular scope and responsibility for the Film and Video Studies Program, and consolidated faculty and facilities to support production, it amplified the tensions between the studies and production aspects of the curriculum. The 1993 program review characterized the strain as “fundamental, financial, and fractional. It has festered for five years, and will be the foundation of friction to come if it is not addressed” (Fredricksen, et al., 1993, p. 26). The university’s decision to place the production emphasis within the program addressed the structural concerns about management and ownership, but it did not address the mission-related questions of creative and pre-professional curricula in a liberal arts setting. The careful juxtaposition of studies and production is evident in the statement of objectives of the Film and Video Studies concentration, from the 1993 program review:

The goal of the concentration is to be part of the broad liberal arts education offered by LSA, to allow students to understand film and video in the context of humanities and the arts, to open their eyes so that they will comprehend the ways in which film and video shape our minds and the world in which we live. The courses in production are not intended to be pre-professional or to train students to go into the entertainment industry; they are courses intended to give students an intimate and close-up understanding of the ways in which the media work; but they are also classes intended to make students aware of their own creativity and the potential for creativity in these art forms. At the same time, these courses carefully integrate into their production aspects theoretical concepts and examples from film history that make them an integral part of the entire concentration. (pp. 10-11)

The delicacy of the relationship between production and studies, and the earnest denial of any pre-professional orientation expressed in this statement and many others like it, belie the context of overwhelming student demand for such training, and its explicit relationship to workplace opportunities in “the industry.” Also interesting are the contradictory assertions about the pressures for and against such pre-professionalism. In the same program review document that distances the program and its faculty from any pre-professional orientation, the faculty authors note that “It is clear that while a considerable number of its majors are more interested in production than film studies, the College will resist any major effort on the part of the Program to offer a pre-professional curriculum.” (Konigsburg, 1993a, p. 3) Yet, it was actually the college’s impetus to

fortify the pre-professional production area with the restructuring of communications and centralization into the Film and Video Studies Program.

Even as the internal forces of restructuring and strong faculty leadership in the program facilitated the consolidation of Film and Video Studies, there were significant external forces – and resources – that influenced college and program priorities. The rapidly changing media landscape influenced the composition of the faculty, as cable television and digital media were growing in importance for both production and studies; two tenure-track faculty hires in these areas were made in 2001. The need for access to technology and industry expertise heightened the faculty’s motivation to connect with industry: “The Program must, indeed, form a partnership with industry if it is to educate its students and if it is to develop” (Konigsberg, 1993a, p. 3). One instance of this came in the loan of state-of-the-art camera equipment from Panasonic, which enabled vast improvements in production courses. And community pressures to host events and support Ann Arbor film societies also shaped the program’s resource allocation, though not without some consternation:

The FVS program continues to be central to such community institutions as the Ann Arbor Film Festivals, Community Access Cable TV, the Michigan Theater, and the remaining student film societies... While we have heard some criticism that such efforts come at the expense of more basic curricular needs and spread the program’s limited personnel resources too thin, we feel that these types of programs are essential to keeping Ann Arbor the kind of environment that attracts people who are interested in studying film and video. Attracting such people is vital to the future of the program.” (Fredricksen, et al., 1993, p.19)

In other words, devoting scarce resources to community and industry partnerships was essential in maintaining an active market of students and faculty who would be drawn to the program, and ensuring the currency of offerings once they got there.

But perhaps the most striking example of external factors shaping the program is in the involvement of alumni and donors in the development of the screenwriting sequence in the curriculum. Alumni in the entertainment industry – who graduated from other programs prior to the establishment of Film and Video Studies but who had developed an affinity for the program – were instrumental in guiding the strategic direction of the college and the program. A faculty member told the story:

I told you how there's the \$2 million gift to establish that script library. Why a script library? Because when the college decided to make a program, they called in heavy-hitter alumni to advise them on what to do. These included the guy from New Line who lives in Yoko Ono's building. The Dakota, right? We're talking really really big money. Founding partner of the third largest talent agency in Hollywood. Lawrence Kasdan who did *Big Chill* and *Empire Strikes Back*. It was the college, the dean [who convened this group]. There was a strategic plan. I don't recall if it [the strategic plan] came before or after those kinds of meetings. Anyway, there was this collection of really rich, powerful Hollywood types. They told the college, what you want to do is specialize in screenwriting because you can do that in the Midwest. You cannot compete with New York and LA on the actual production end. Those places are schools. They have major money. They have the kinds of physical plant and donor base to work, and proximity to the industry to draw on working professionals as adjuncts. Both young people who

want to share in their 30s and 40s, and then really major people. Who are retiring and want to give back, keep busy. That's how those places function. We can't do that; you should specialize in screenwriting. We'll support you. Here's \$2 million for a script library.

There are several themes worth noting here: the dean was the convener of this advisory group, not the faculty, indicating a shift in control of the program from the faculty to the administration. Ironically, the industry leaders pushed back against the production curriculum as an effective pre-professional track, for geographical reasons as well as with respect to the competitive landscape of leading academic programs that dominate production training. Instead, they recognized the opportunity to build on Michigan's exceptional program in creative writing, to establish a niche in screenwriting. And, they put money behind it, with the gift to establish the script collection. A further irony comes in the 1993 director's report on the program: recognizing the power of alumni in the industry, he considers the limitations of fund raising from this group since "most of them are in the production aspect of the discipline, and the Program does not focus on production" (Konigsburg, 1993c, p. 25).

In some respects, the screenwriting sequence was an ideal bridge between studies and production; as one faculty member noted, "screenwriting adds literacy to our offerings and takes the emphasis from equipment to writing and thinking" (Konigsburg, 1993b, p. 2). Armed with the mandate to grow the program and the support of the dean and the alumni advisory group to build the screenwriting emphasis, the new program director approached the sole screenwriting faculty member at the time and asked for a proposal:

She looked at what was going on and she called me up into her office and she said, “Okay, look, it’s obvious there’s a big demand for screenwriting here, so here’s what I want you to do. I want you to tell me what you need to build a program. Take out a sheet of paper. Don’t think about money, start from scratch, tell me what you need and then we’ll worry about how we’re going to fund it. We’re going to build this.” She made it clear we’re not going to be a small, sleepy little program. “We’re going to build around the writing because let’s be honest, it’s cheap, we don’t need a lot of equipment, right? But what do you need to build a successful program?”

With the creation of a progressive sequence of courses, in which students are selected based on merit for more and more advanced work in smaller and smaller groups – and with the growth of the script library and a visiting lecturer series and additional faculty lines and team-taught production classes to produce scripts by advanced screenwriting students – the screenwriting emphasis does not turn out to be cheap. But as another faculty member noted, it “clearly churns out very, very successful screenwriters year after year. It’s got to be one of the best places to study screenwriting coupled with the writing program here.” And the alumni and donors have continued to support the screenwriting program with awards, guest artist series, and other kinds of gift funds. This philanthropic investment suggested the potential for more, and the college began an active effort to engage alumni and industry leaders in the program through guest lectures and special events (and occasionally with the promise of football tickets!), a regular newsletter, the establishment of New York and LA-based chapters of the “University of Michigan

Entertainment Coalition” comprised of alumni in the industry, and an advisory board of industry leaders.

The consolidation of the Film and Video Studies Program, fueled by an infusion of resources from the university and from donors, and shaped by the internal and external pressures described above, took place against the backdrop of the university’s strategic plan and 2000 reaccreditation report that laid out areas for institutional investment. As noted in the review of 2000 goals a decade later, these included an emphasis on interdisciplinarity, comprising a \$30M initiative to make junior faculty hires in jointly appointed positions and a \$2.5M Multidisciplinary and Team Teaching Initiative designed to support cross-disciplinary curricular development and delivery (University of Michigan, 2010). In 2001, the Program in Film and Video Studies was granted the ability to serve as a tenure home for wholly or jointly-appointed faculty, and thus benefited from the emphasis on cross-disciplinary hiring and joint appointments that were part of the strategic plan initiative. Team teaching in the program, an expensive proposition especially in low-enrollment courses, also increased during this period, especially connecting studies, screenwriting, and production, and occasionally extending across colleges, as in a course on dance in film. In 2002, the program received the \$25,000 LS&A Dean’s Award for advancing the Undergraduate Initiative – another university-wide commitment tied to the strategic plan, with emphases on using emerging technologies in instruction and improving the teaching of writing across the curriculum (*Michigan Today*, 1996).

The consolidation worked: a team of external reviewers in 2004 praised the intellectual profile of the program and its faculty, the “celebrated success of its graduates

in the film industry,” and its curriculum, and concluded that the program was ready to go to the next level:

We left Ann Arbor with the belief that the Program in Film and Video Studies is among the best programs of its kind in the nation. Its successful integration of film and video studies with film and video practice is a model that other programs around the country would do well to emulate. The curriculum is outstanding. Morale is high among faculty, students, and staff. Revisions in the major are in place to raise the bar and limit numbers. Given the coherence of the disciplines it studies, we feel departmental status is a natural next step. Building on the strength of program faculty, a small doctoral program should flourish. (Belton, et al., 2004, p. 18)

Clearly, the program had begun to make a mark in the discipline.

In sum, then, the consolidation phase of the Film and Video Studies Program entailed significant investment on the part of the university. And while the faculty framed the challenges and opportunities and led the consolidation efforts, the motivations and resources for investment came largely from outside the program. Student demand and pre-professional interests; the need for efficiency in managing technological and equipment resources; university-wide strategic planning; pressure from community-based film organizations; niche positioning in the national disciplinary landscape; changes in media and technology in the industry; alumni leaders from the entertainment industry; and philanthropic support: all of these market-based forces, all linked to resource streams, converged to shape college-level decision making about the investment of resources in building and fortifying the Film and Video Studies Program. In terms of the

themes that had emerged in the “beginnings” phase of the program: faculty were no longer the primary drivers of investment in the program; the purposeful yet fragile relationship of studies to production was clarified by academic restructuring, and enhanced by the development of the screenwriting track; and the university invested more money in an increasingly high-cost program, but with the promise of student enrollments, industry partnerships, and alumni giving on the horizon. Consolidation involved significant investment and risk-taking on the part of the college, with largely uncertain returns.

Expansion: 2005-present

2005 was a remarkable year for Film and Video Studies. After a decade of leadership in the consolidation of the program, the director stepped down, but she left the program poised for the “natural next steps” articulated in the 2004 external review. The program was granted department status; its name was changed to Screen Arts and Cultures; it launched a new doctoral program; and it was chosen as one of a handful of departments that would be housed in a brand new building. The interim chair of the new department explained how the name change, and departmental status, would position the department within the university, in the national disciplinary and interdisciplinary landscapes, and vis-à-vis the changing industry:

As a department we gain more recognition not only in the University but also among peer institutions nationally and internationally. As for the name change, we have realized for some time that Film & Video Studies was becoming anachronistic and we decided not to perpetuate an even longer laundry list of

media technologies. Our commitment to a curriculum that balances studies and production led to our choice of a name that would reference both components and best signal the balance. “Screen” encompasses all the media with which we work (at the point of display or exhibition), but it also is an established term in both the academy (e.g., departments, positions, periodicals, and conferences) and the industry (e.g., Screenwriters Guild, Screen Actors Guild). “Arts & Cultures” acknowledges our shared interest in the study of aesthetic forms as well as cultural representation and reception and in the practices involved in artistic production. It also suggests our shared engagement with interdisciplinarity, in recognition of the “interconnectedness” of moving image media across cultural, political, and industrial divides and of the global or transnational nature of their relationship. (Abel, 2005)

It is telling of the town-gown connectedness of the department, that the newsletter announcing the name change includes a photo of the marquee at the historic Michigan Theater in downtown Ann Arbor, recently restored by a community fund raising effort, with a message of congratulations to the newly-named department.

The name change was about branding and status, and signaling the mission of the department within the university and in the scholarly community. The move to departmental status was largely a ratification of the way in which the program had been functioning for some time, with an operating budget, faculty lines, facilities, a thriving major, a new minor in Global Media Studies, and a small but successful graduate certificate program. Departmental status did allow Screen Arts and Cultures to launch its much-anticipated PhD program; as one faculty member noted, “We needed to become a

department in order to have a grad program. It's hard to extract those two things. Having a grad program has changed us. Becoming a department, I don't think it has changed us.” Another commented, “I do know that one difference we have now, is our graduate program for the past two years. It's good. I think it elevates the standing of the department and also as an intellectual environment, I think it's a lot more viable because of the grad students... I would say it's probably the transition that's affected everyone the most.” The PhD program represented another stage in the legitimization of the department and the discipline. Michigan enjoys a reputation for excellence based largely on highly ranked graduate and professional programs. The PhD program allowed the university to enter the competition, through attracting and retaining nationally recognized faculty members who expect to work with graduate students, and also by eventually placing its graduates in faculty roles in other leading programs. As the interim chair noted, “our objective is to establish the pre-eminent doctoral degree program in our field in the Midwest” (Abel, 2005). The department had already been supporting a small number of graduate teaching assistants from other disciplines; now it could draw on its own students, admitted in small cohorts of one to three students per year. Even on a very small scale, the doctoral program thus recognized and augmented the stature of the studies aspects of the curriculum and faculty expertise. Undergraduate students, primarily interested in production, thus subsidized graduate students in studies and provided the studies faculty with an important basis for legitimization in the discipline.

But it was the move to the new building that represented the department's rising status at the university. The aging Frieze Building – “completely untenable, laced with asbestos. ... a terrible building” – was torn down in 2006, and in its place, the university

planned a high-rise residential and academic complex to be called North Quad.

Importantly, it was an institutional project, not one specifically initiated by and for LS&A. An administrator recalls the campus-wide planning process for the building that resulted in Screen Arts and Cultures, Communication Studies (both in LS&A) and the School of Information being selected for the new facility:

There was this huge planning committee, which was not always super happy. It was a little contentious with this whole deal. Who's going to share space? How is it going to work? We stick these three units together and how are they going to get along? Are they going to perceive limits on resources within the building? I think from the college point of view, those were the only two possibilities for us even to think about putting in the building. Screen Arts is a beneficiary of that.

And from the student life and housing perspective, the presence of these academic units in particular, and the production facilities, studio space, and technology-infused environment they entail, became an integral part of the marketing to students, for whom a globally-connected, media-rich environment is a key selling point in the arms race of student amenities on campuses. The housing information website touts the “unique combination of living and learning environments [that] offers a highly innovative experience that connects upper level undergraduate students to their community and the world” (“North Quadrangle,” n.d.). Amenities listed include a television production studio; a “high-tech media gateway to support students, faculty and staff in working with multimedia, network and communication technologies;” performance and presentation areas; and “collaborative work spaces that include video-teleconferencing and electronic media sharing/editing” (“North Quadrangle,” n.d.). Thus, the academic facilities became

marketing tools to attract students not just to study but also to live in (and pay for) on-campus housing. Further, the International Impact theme community and the Global Scholars Program, a residential learning community, both housed in North Quad, had natural connections with the Global Media Studies minor offered by Screen Arts and Cultures, drawing on the joint appointments of many faculty with international and area studies departments. Thus, the connection of the humanities with media, technology, and international themes proves to be a potent formula for attracting students in several dimensions of their college experience.

Several other aspects of the move to North Quad are worthy of mention: the centralization of studios and equipment in a state-of-the-art building served not only the department, but also the Instructional Support Services office that facilitates technology in the classroom across disciplines. With the consolidation of equipment, and staff technician and maintenance support, the Screen Arts and Cultures production curriculum benefited from overall equipment upgrades (e.g., moving to digital technologies) and improved maintenance and management. Second, the high visibility and multi-function nature of the new building presented naming opportunities to recognize gifts, and a number of spaces bear the names of alumni and donors who established endowments or contributed funds for facilities, equipment, library resources, or programs associated with the department. The high visibility and the central location of resources make the building a center of gravity for faculty, students, and cultural programs – and a magnet for prospective students from “industry” families on the coasts: according to a faculty member, “with our tremendous growth [in students from] California and students who are children of people in the entertainment industry, it was a good fortuitous intersection for

us that we would have a building that showed off things that said, ‘Hey, we’re a player.’” Another faculty member observed, “all the people in joint positions want offices in this building. It’s not just because it’s new. It’s because our film library’s here. It’s because they identify with it more, or differently.” An administrator in the department sums it up:

I do feel lucky because I sort of feel like in this building, it's always sort of the cutting edge of what's going on in the world, really. I don't know if you noticed the space down on the first floor, the big glass room? It's like a function space. ... So that space is kind of ... like the vibe of the building, because they're always having exhibits, art gallery stuff down there, events, bringing in guest artists from different fields, not even just Screen Arts and Cultures. I mean, we do use it for a lot of our events, but just all over kind of a global feel, I guess, is what it gives you. And it just makes you feel like you're lucky to be moving forward with things.

The North Quad building represents a high-visibility link between internal factors at the university, and the external presence and engagement of the Screen Arts and Cultures Department.

Other outside resources continued to buttress the strengths of the new department. The Michigan state tax incentive program for the film industry brought production companies to the state, creating local demand for student interns and job opportunities for graduates. The production companies “would actually contact the department looking for interns,” noted an administrator in the department. A faculty member who was appointed by the previous governor to the Michigan Film Initiative board notes,

It was a big deal here for a while til the new governor came in and dismantled it. But we were one of the top outside of Hollywood production centers in America, so we made a movie and I was all about growing, keeping these kids here rather than exporting them... as part of my commitment to the state.

The Traverse City Film Festival also emerged as a high profile industry event, and faculty members in the screenwriting and production programs were able to leverage industry contacts to secure a regular and highly visible presence for Screen Arts and Cultures at the festival. A faculty member commented on the heightened visibility of the department through involvement with the Michigan Film Initiative, even in its reduced form under the current governor, and the connections with the Traverse City festival:

A lot of people have been made more aware of what goes on in this program because of going to Traverse City and making those connections with that festival, which is a fabulous festival... There are a lot of people there. They come to the student film screening, and they see it, and it maybe puts us on the map in a way that might not have happened other than that.

And this visibility translates back into motivation for students in the classroom: because Screen Arts and Cultures is the only film program guaranteed two slots at the student screening at the festival, the faculty are able to say to students, “we don't know if your films are going to be any good, we just know they are going to be playing at the Traverse City Film Festival. Ask yourself this. Do you want to be the first class that bombed? Then we show them the last year's films, and they get serious.”

The university's development and alumni offices increasingly supported the philanthropic relationships between Michigan alumni in the entertainment industry and

the Screen Arts and Cultures department. A development officer suggests that private support, while a relatively small portion of the overall investment in Screen Arts, was a factor in leveraging university resources:

When you talk about the resources that the university pours into it, the university has been extremely generous because we were able to, but there's also a large portion of [gifts]. The Donald Hall Collection [script library] would not have been possible without this foundation. A lot of that cutting edge equipment that you see in there would not have been possible without alumni participation. Someone gave us the money for the camera and started an endowment that ... each year will spin off a certain amount of money to keep this equipment updated.... [The university was] very generous with the space at North Quad, but our alumni really made a lot of that happen.

Many of the donors have academic connections to other liberal arts disciplines but are supporting Screen Arts and Cultures because of industry ties, or because they value the role of film and video in making an impact on an issue of importance to them. The development officer noted, “it goes back to creating intellectual curiosity. [One donor] wants to give a voice to those who don’t have a voice. She does that through documentaries... Screen Arts and Cultures hosted it, but it was sociology and it was political science that all came together for that screening.” Another donor, who contributes not just to Screen Arts and Cultures but also to a number of other liberal arts disciplines in LS&A, “believes... you need to understand what’s going on in the world around you” to succeed in any field.

So when you ask about who our supporters of this program are, it's pretty broad based because Michigan Screen Arts and Cultures is truly based on liberal arts and we have for example, do you know the television show *The Big Bang Theory*?... So Mark Cendrowski is the director of *The Big Bang Theory*. Mark is phenomenal, he heads back to campus on a regular basis, he makes phone calls for us, he does a ton of stuff for us, but what Mark consistently says is that what separates Screen Arts and Cultures from other film studies is that when you're a student at Screen Arts and Cultures, you have to understand history, political science, Shakespeare. It's not just a technical, how do you use a camera, how do you adjust your position thing. You need to understand history, you need to understand society and you need to understand the great books. So when you ask where our donors are, it's across the board. English majors, it's history majors, it's people who are in the industry, it's people who have a critical eye toward the industry. There's no box for these folks.

As with the balance between studies and production among faculty and students, it is the balance between industry relevance and liberal arts foundations that motivates donors to the department. It is also the opportunity to be involved in the program: many alumni in the industry enjoy the opportunity to give guest lectures or interact informally with students; and as industry parents send their kids to Michigan, they also enjoy the opportunity to give back through their expertise and, increasingly, through contributions to the department. Screen Arts and Cultures both attracts and rewards donors through “the cultural element of it, the fact that it has visibility, it has some kind of pulling power just because it's media and ... directly or indirectly the department generates media.”

Faculty members in the department recognize that development is essential work for the quality of the program and opportunities for students. While the impact of unrestricted private gifts to date comes primarily at the margins of the program, it is still significant:

Our budget is quite large, especially if you're going to include salaries. It's huge. The flow of donations, it's quite small. What it does, it's like frosting. It gives us the freedom to invite people that we want to invite, snag people who are in town but we may want to give an honorarium for appearing in classes. Hold events. Serve food at something, run a party for students before the end of our film festival, do a kind of donation to the film festival in exchange for one ticket for every student, these kinds of things. Sometimes there are restricted gifts that are only for the equipment. That's always nice.

The department has also benefited from designated gifts for facilities associated with the new building, the script library, and equipment purchases, as well as endowments for student awards, visiting lecturers, internship support, and other specified purposes. But these gifts do not emerge spontaneously; it requires significant attention, time, and resources to build the relationships that lead to such gifts, and thus the development efforts for Screen Arts and Cultures represent yet another thread of university investment in the department. As one faculty member notes,

I'm not quite sure what the institution's perspective is in terms of investing so much. I think they see an opportunity. I think it's a department that has increasingly attracted more and more students all the time. They end up doing high profile things. Part of it I suspect, also the alumni in the entertainment

industry give a lot of money to the school, and to Screen Arts and Cultures in particular. I think they've identified it. I think the leadership in fact has done a good job of cultivating those folks, with other people among their alumni, which creates ... a fundraising network. Some of the growth of the department is a result of that.

Other faculty members concur with the “outcomes narrative... in terms of people very successfully making it in Hollywood and then giving back. Although I understand that we’re actually less well endowed than other departments, this could be a very, very heavily endowed unit.” An administrator in the dean’s office confirms this perception:

There’s a huge possibility for development here. It's pretty good so far but it has not been great. We just got an enormous [\$50 million] gift for the MFA program [in Creative Writing, housed in the English Department]. I don't think there's that big of a donor out there for [Screen Arts and Cultures] but there is a big donor out there for them. With [Screen Arts] just knowing what we’ve got passing through the pipeline, yeah.

When asked if that long-term potential of students who become successful alumni was an important reason to invest in the department now, his response was simple: “Absolutely, absolutely.”

Returning briefly to the question of investment by the university: it is not just potential, but also track records that inform resource allocations. Faculty and administrators spoke often of KPI’s, or key performance indicators, as “guideposts” that help identify trends over time in enrollments, faculty numbers, credit hours, and other departmental data. An administrator noted,

For us it's mostly just a question of trying to manage by fact. History when I got here had 600 majors and now it has 250. Guess what? They don't get any more faculty. Their student credit hours are down. It's sad but it's a finance system and they can try to get more student credit hours and good for them. That would make them a better program and fine, we will all compete with each other and the boats will rise. I hate that but this is a place where you can see one of the reasons why screen arts has more resources is that it has not had a huge growth curve but a nice, steady growth curve over time.

A faculty member indicated that "there are some departments that hate the KPI's because they reveal low enrollments" but that in general, the KPI's are "deployed in what seems to me to be a very honest and intellectually rigorous way. ... When I look at the kinds of things they're studying, they seem like they're important things to know." And for Screen Arts and Cultures, the KPI's have clearly justified the allocation of resources, most especially additional faculty lines. One search in 2008, just after the market crash, resulted in two new positions: universities were

pulling jobs left and right. There were only two jobs to apply for and one of them stopped their search immediately [upon the crash] because of the economics of it. Michigan was not only the only one to go through with it [the search], but to get two hires out of it.

Describing the recent recruitment of a high profile faculty member, another faculty member commented, "This felt like, wow. We've arrived. All this work, we've had between one and four searches going on every year since 1996. And we're a small unit."

But equilibrium is fragile in a rapidly evolving field, and at a leading institution that reaches for preeminence across the board. A faculty member described a conversation with the LS&A dean about the future of the department: the dean posed questions like, "Have you ever thought that stasis is not good? Where are you going to go now? What are you going to do? I see all the students watching things on their iPhones. Why aren't you doing more with that?" The faculty member continued:

There were lots of these kinds of questions and pressuring us, pressuring me and then by extension, all of the faculty to be thinking that, yes, we still need to grow. This isn't an enrollment thing.... He was implying but not stating terribly directly that it's this new media and digital humanities thing that is probably our growth opportunity. I think it's something that he, and probably every dean everywhere and president is thinking about. This is just my sense, that our dean is from his high perch looking at the breadth of LS&A, which is most of the university ... We're looking at the whole university but most of it is his domain, and saying, where is the best place to locate limited resources for this digital stuff, much of which, if not most of which has a visual component and a visual component that is often moving. The School of Art and Design, they're not in the liberal arts... Plus, they're a different school. We can do it better than them, that school, the way they think. What other departments are out there? I guess if I were [he], I would look at all of these departments. I'd see how a few individual faculty members can do some interesting things within these larger units. We're kind of the obvious place. That's not bad pressure. It's actually very good, productive pressure. What he was implying to me was that we have the opportunity to steal from other places

to build something if we can provide good, solid, compelling intellectual justification for it.

And from an administrator's perspective, it is once again student demand that is driving the pressure from the dean's office on the department to expand its intellectual scope and serve student interests in various kinds of pre-professional media training:

What we end up with is we've got a whole pack of feral students out there who want to do news, journalism, and online, that kind of stuff. Screen Arts has had a hard time coming around to serving that unit. It's only with a lot of kicking and pushing and the promise of at least a few more resources in the college that we were actually able to get them to engage this group of students and threats that Comm Studies might come in and take over, although Comm Studies doesn't want anything to do with production. Frankly, I would love it if Comm Studies would take this group of students but they say, "We don't do journalism." We got rid of our journalism school in 1982 or whenever it was. ... I think the college's strategic plan is out ahead of [Screen Arts's] own on the ground stuff.

These extended comments capture several dimensions of decision-making and resource allocation that are worth noting. First is the need to serve students by developing curricula that provide a rigorous intellectual foundation for their interests and professional goals. Second is the identification of what should be taught – informed by changes in industry and the media environment, that in turn spark student interest. Third, as disciplines evolve, the college has to determine which department should serve as the intellectual home for emerging fields of inquiry. This calculus involves an overall perspective on the intellectual landscape of current faculty, department structures, and

national disciplinary norms. It is complicated in this instance by the restructuring of the communications unit, first to eliminate the journalism program, and later with the move of production curricula into Screen Arts and Cultures. Communication Studies has also experienced unprecedented growth, so there is a tension between Communication Studies and Screen Arts: on the one hand, both departments have identified goals and curricula and the faculty is resistant to further expansion into pre-professional arenas; and on the other, they are competing for resources and intellectual territory. It is further complicated by the growth of another college at Michigan, the School of Information, that shares both building space and intellectual space with Communication Studies and Screen Arts and Cultures: a brand-new BS in Information, “designed as a richly interdisciplinary program that examines both the social and technical aspects of the digital revolution (“Program Overview,” n.d.), is likely to attract students who might otherwise have chosen Communication Studies or Screen Arts and Cultures in LS&A.

As one faculty member observes,

This competition for more students is a zero sum game. We’re not increasing students; in fact, students are going to other schools so it’s... within LS&A, it’s a zero sum game, but outside of LS&A it’s real and you have people who are going to the School of Information getting BA’s there now. LS&A is terribly worried about the School of Information suddenly offering a BA, because it’s losing money.

Thus, the institution-wide competition for resources (students, faculty, space, and intellectual turf) both echoes and amplifies the competition within LS&A. College-level administrators are invested in growing or at least retaining market share among

undergraduate students, especially as other schools and colleges develop academic programs in emerging areas of student interest. One strategy for keeping those students in LS&A is to offer incentives to departments that serve the “pack of feral students,” who either do not notice or do not care about careful distinctions between liberal arts and pre-professional studies: they want jobs as the return on investment in their undergraduate degree.

The future trajectory of Screen Arts and Cultures is uncertain and likely to remain so as faculty and administrators respond to changes in the disciplines and in student demand for curricula that connect them to professional pathways in various kinds of media industries. This is institutional and environmental pressure, but it comes to rest on the shoulders of individual faculty members: “I can speak from experience ... There’s sort of like this piece of you that thinks it’s never enough. I think it’s probably everywhere in academia, but here it’s this impossible standard. You can drive yourself crazy to try to reach it.”

I will turn now to some particular considerations of the case, first regarding faculty: the constraints and opportunities of the practice of interdisciplinarity in the department, and the tension between studies and production as experienced by faculty members; and then regarding students: the ways the department both creates and responds to student demand, and how the curriculum and the culture facilitate professional opportunities for students.

Faculty dynamics

The interdisciplinary nature of the department creates both opportunities and challenges for faculty. Returning briefly to the evolution of film studies as a discipline: what originally began as a confluence of inquiries about film as an object of study across disparate disciplines has evolved into its own discipline, as evidenced by the growth of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, for instance, and the establishment of Screen Arts and Cultures as its own department. As the discipline began to become established through graduate programs nationwide, the next generation of scholars came to the faculty with training in film studies *per se*, rather than disciplinary foundations in traditional fields. Two thirds of the tenured and tenure-track faculty in Screen Arts and Cultures, for instance, hold PhD degrees in film, cinema, or media studies, illustrating the reification of the discipline and a marked shift from the interdisciplinary training of its original faculty.

This evolution has created a tension between disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. On the one hand, a faculty member notes, “you want to open that circle and say, who are the people who are going to help make us an attractive and important field of study?” But on the other, “if you have limited resources and you’re building something, it’s not the best strategy.” Another faculty member contrasts the field to Women’s Studies or American Cultures, as classic examples of interdisciplinary fields:

I think the difference here between these two things is, we are a disciplinary space in a fundamental way. We do not hire people who are not familiar with the theories and histories that are core to the identity. You can't say that of Women's Studies. There's a centripetal thing going on here intellectually. Whereas

in Women's Studies, it's radically centrifugal. I suspect that America is not enough to hold together all of the disciplines of American Studies.

Thus, the “birth of the discipline” creates “the burden it’s saddled with,” which results in “a lot of gatekeeping and a lot of need to protect our object of study.” Nevertheless, straddling the boundaries of the core disciplinary space and the multiple disciplines that contribute to it has worked for Screen Arts and Cultures:

We’re probably at an advantage in this regard at Michigan because of the love of interdisciplinarity and the willingness to make it as substantial a thing as possible as opposed to lip service. The best evidence of that is of course the joint position.

Joint positions represent the enactment of interdisciplinarity through the work and identifications of individual faculty members, who continue to reach for interdisciplinarity through affiliation and joint appointments with other departments, despite their formal training in film studies.

In Screen Arts and Cultures, there are fourteen tenure-stream faculty members, eight of whom have joint appointments with language and area studies departments, American Cultures, and Women’s Studies. (An additional group of affiliate faculty – who do not have FTE allocation to the department – extend the departmental reach to English, Communication Studies, History, Comparative Literature, Philosophy, and the School of Art and Design.) Thus, given the typical 50% FTE allocation of the eight jointly appointed faculty, plus six at 100%, the department’s tenure-track FTE is approximately ten, with a headcount of fourteen. In history, to give another example, there are approximately 85 faculty members, many of whom hold joint appointments,

resulting in an FTE of around 55. This high ratio of jointly appointed faculty positions has been characteristic of Michigan's emphasis on interdisciplinarity for a generation or more, and especially with the strategic plan emphasis that resulted in the hiring of 100 or more jointly-appointed junior faculty across disciplines in recent years (University of Michigan, 2010). An administrator commented on the higher rates of joint appointments in humanities disciplines, than in the social sciences, where a smaller number of joint appointments tend to center on the university-wide Institute for Social Research, or especially in the sciences, which have tended to make single-department hires; the sciences are well-resourced enough to practice interdisciplinarity through centers, institutes, and other mechanisms that do not rely on joint appointments to facilitate collaboration. This pattern may suggest less about the capaciousness and permeability of the disciplines in the humanities as compared to the sciences, and more about the relative cheapness of faculty hires in the humanities – made even cheaper by the device of the joint appointment that distributes limited and low-cost faculty lines among an even greater number of departments. Joint appointments also move faculty from lower-enrollment fields into departments with more students, thus amplifying the production function of faculty as instructors of greater numbers of undergraduates. In the humanities, and in Screen Arts and Cultures in particular, the financial costs of interdisciplinarity are relatively low: there are the typical concerns about allocating credit for teaching cross-listed courses, for instance, or the additional resources required for team teaching. The costs in time, effort, and attention, however, are significant, as one administrator notes: “There’s a kind of intellectual richness to it. It’s really nice to have a structured interdisciplinarity that forces you to do it. The bad thing is it’s super time consuming.”

The challenge to faculty in joint appointments, and especially to untenured, junior faculty, comes in heightened pressure to be visible and viable in multiple disciplinary communities. Joint appointments at Michigan entail joint review for tenure and promotion, rather than placing faculty in a primary “tenure home” and secondary “affiliate” appointment as is often the case at other institutions. Says one faculty member, “it’s a 200% administrative appointment. You don’t do more research because you’re in two units.” Others noted multiple sets of faculty meetings, committees, brown-bag colloquia, and other forms of departmental service that multiply the burden of visibility and participation for jointly appointed faculty members. Having offices in both departments is a double-edged sword, facilitating presence and involvement, but also making visible the faculty member’s absence from one department when he or she is present in the other. Ironically, the move to North Quad enabled Screen Arts and Cultures to provide offices to jointly appointed faculty members, but several have now been displaced because of the program’s growth: “Screen Arts just hired a bunch of new folks so there’s not even space for me now to share an office.” The issue of viability is more an intellectual one, putting pressure on jointly appointed faculty members to “do more on one side or more on the other side to convince people that what I’m doing is relevant to their field, but I really enjoy that kind of challenge. So that’s been extremely good.” And the critical mass of jointly appointed faculty has established the joint appointment as an institutional norm, around which research programs and curricula (such as the Global Media Studies minor in Screen Arts and Cultures that draws on the many area-studies departments represented on the faculty) can be built. This kind of intellectual border crossing offers its own rewards, but must be carefully managed when

it comes to junior faculty and the tenure process. Faculty and administrators point to the establishment of “really rigorous management plans” and “intensive dual mentoring.” Administrators have studied the tenure histories of jointly appointed faculty, and the data show that in fact, “it is statistically significant that our people actually do better in joint appointments,” achieving tenure at a slightly higher rate than single-department hires. And when the tenure process does not work, the faculty member has “the option to petition to go 100% in one or the other department. I’ve seen that happen a couple of times. It’s an important safety net.” By and large, though,

the relations between departments are cordial and careful. They defer on areas of expertise and assert areas of expertise. It’s intellectually rigorous and honest. I think it is hard, can be hard on the candidates. It’s nothing but good for the units. Intellectual rigor, combined with carefully structured policies around mentoring, teaching, and research expectations, creates the conditions of possibility for success in joint appointments.

A secondary dimension of interdisciplinarity – although the faculty does not use that term to describe it – is in the distinction between “studies” and “production” faculty within the department. There are fourteen “studies” faculty members (including those in joint appointments), all tenured or tenure-track. There are fourteen “production” faculty members, all appointed as lecturers, entirely within Screen Arts and Cultures. The higher teaching expectations of lecturers – typically three courses per semester, while tenure-stream faculty teach two – combined with their greater FTE and their exclusive focus on undergraduate teaching, means that lecturers as a group end up teaching more than twice the number of undergraduate courses than the tenure-stream faculty, and typically at

lower salaries. An administrator notes, “You have probably heard there is a bit of unevenness. The production faculty lectures, we hire them to teach in the most candid sense of the word. That’s where the cash flow is coming from. We hire them to teach.” This status differential sets up several interesting and contradictory dynamics.

First, production and studies faculty members and administrators acknowledge a culture of mutual respect and collaboration, as evidenced in the history and evolution of the department. This collegial atmosphere is atypical of film studies departments nationally, where the divide is often “toxic... there are many places where the divide between studies and production is severe. It’s most severe in the places that are not inside other colleges,” observes a faculty member. In freestanding film schools, where the curricular emphasis and resources are concentrated on production, critical studies are often an afterthought. In Screen Arts and Cultures, the flow of revenues from students, alumni, gifts, and industry partnerships is galvanized by the production and screenwriting aspects of the department, though the benefits generally accrue to the department as a whole. Administrators envision growth and new hires on the production side of the department, responding to student demand for more hands-on experience with digital cultures and social media, for instance, or other pre-professional curricula. The screenwriting program in particular benefits from “donors from the early days who continue to support it. It is extremely rich with its own line. There is some jealousy around that money, but [the screenwriting faculty director] is very careful to tell people that he’s willing to help. There’s plenty of money to do stuff.” On the other hand, the status and privileges of tenure are accorded to the studies faculty, and the mission of the department very purposefully situates the curriculum in the liberal arts as the foundation

of pathways for students to industry jobs. It is perhaps the balance between the institutional power of the tenured faculty and the recognition of production faculty as resource generators that enables the equilibrium and equanimity of the departmental faculty culture.

Second, the production faculty is as interdisciplinary in its orientation as the studies faculty, though absent the device of the joint appointment. They collaborate both within Screen Arts and Cultures and across the university. Team teaching by studies and production faculty members offers students opportunities

not just to study the history separate from the practice, but at the same time.

Those are great courses, when we can pull them off. Again, they're intensive, and they have to be small because of the production part of it. You can see where the challenges would come ... it is kind of intensive resource-wise.

Collaboration across disciplines is also heightened because of the nature of the curriculum: production faculty members routinely engage their classes with

set designers, costume people, sound people from the School of Art and Design...

The actors all come out of the School of Music. We get composers to do original scores. We get people from the Ross Business School to produce. We get people to do PR and marketing out of communications. I mean it's a university-wide thing.

This kind of interdisciplinarity – the collaboration that underlies creative work – offers exciting possibilities and intellectual enrichment for both students and faculty, but is generally undervalued by liberal arts faculty in the department and across LS&A, which does not include fine and performing arts disciplines and thus does not have an

established culture around the valuation of creative production as a form of research.

One faculty member observes,

It's also easy to have people, even colleagues outside of the department, think of you as a service person. They'll say, "I want to collaborate with you. Will you do all the technical work?" They don't want me to be part of the theoretical thinking.

Yet at the same time, there is a rhetorical shift at work, in which production is now driving the development of studies curricula and hiring, rather than primarily providing demonstration media in support of it. Changes in the industry prompt changing demands of the production curriculum, and also call for the critical study of emerging media:

Because of the people who started this place out, they were all film people. They recognized the growing importance of TV. TV within the discipline was a growing field and increasingly important. We brought a TV studies person in. ...Not just TV, but then digital media hit, the digitization of everything in the workflow. We're now at a point where film is essentially gone from that workflow in almost all cases of moving image production. We made a case for adding digital. We got two lines from the university for a digital scholar and a digital producer.

As the object of study moves, so moves the discipline – and the production faculty is closer to the leading edge than the studies faculty.

A third anomaly in the divide between studies and production faculty is evident in the expectation of production faculty to engage in creative production – unlike lecturers in other disciplines whose focus is primarily or exclusively on teaching, but without the

release time or rewards accorded to research by tenure-stream faculty. They are, as an administrator notes, “sort of directors and authors in some kind of way so their status is different from other lecturers.” A production faculty member articulates the gap in expectations between lecturers and tenure-stream faculty:

It’s exhausting. It’s a lot. I teach a three/three load. That’s a lot. The kind of teaching you do is really intensive work, creative work. As a creative artist I feel like sometimes just drained of my own creative energy, which has gone into everyone else’s work. There’s that. It’s a very different kind of teaching than someone who just talks from a Power Point, the kind of hands-on, one-on-one. Sometimes there’s a little bit of a lack of knowledge about how different the people’s rules are within the same department, someone who just does their research and is able to be a lecturer, they’re a tenured person but all they do is lecture to large groups of people. They don’t have that kind of engagement of one-on-one. They may have GSI’s [graduate student instructors], so they don’t even really ... It’s a different profile of what actual teaching might mean to people in the same department. ...I continue to be a practicing media maker, but I’m not given release or much research funding. I have to do it to keep being who I am.

As with any applied discipline, it is professional practice in the field that informs classroom teaching, and production faculty members face pressures to keep pace with rapidly changing technologies and the media environment while engaging in creative work outside of the classroom.

Disparities in status, workload, and the valuation of creative and scholarly work are evident not just to the production faculty, but to all members of the department, which has engaged in a series of thoughtful discussions about the possibility of establishing a tenure track for production faculty members. There are models of tenure guidelines for creative work elsewhere at Michigan, but not yet within LS&A (with the notable exception of creative writing in the English Department, a source of strength and point of reference for the screenwriting track in Screen Arts and Cultures). The department chair and faculty have consulted with peer institutions on current tenure practices in film schools and departments elsewhere that have established tenure tracks for creative and artistic production. The faculty has just submitted a proposal to the dean's office to create a tenure-track option for production faculty. If the proposal were implemented, it would bring recognition and resources to the production faculty members' creative work, at the very least through reduced teaching expectations and perhaps other resources as well. It would also significantly raise the bar for both quality and quantity of creative output. And while these benefits will indirectly accrue to the department as a whole and to its students, there are risks to the department as well. To have disparate tenure and promotion guidelines for two classes of tenure-stream faculty in a single department would require careful stewardship; to have two classes of production faculty (tenure-stream and lecturer) might also erode the coherence and collegiality of the faculty. The history of the department suggests that the long-standing culture of good will and mutual respect would mitigate these risks. But the establishment of a tenure track for production faculty members would change the resource profile of the department, significantly raising the overall cost of instruction and increasing the proportion of production faculty

to meet student demand. This shift in the allocation of resources and the increased cost basis for instruction would be perhaps the greatest challenge presented by the creation of a tenure track for production faculty members.

One final note on the differences between studies and production faculties, and the influence of the industry on the profile of the faculty overall: while it is typical of faculty demographic profiles to have more white men in senior, tenured positions, and more women and minorities in junior and contingent faculty ranks, this is not the case with Screen Arts and Cultures. It is disproportionately white and male across the board, and more so in the lecturer ranks of production faculty. Of the fourteen tenure-stream faculty, five are female, and perhaps three identify as racial or ethnic minorities (according to visible markers of race and biographical self-identifications, not definitive demographic data, if there even were such a thing). And of the fourteen production faculty, only two are female, and maybe only one is a member of minority group. While the underrepresentation of women and minorities is a concern across the board at Michigan and other leading public research institutions, in the case of Screen Arts and Cultures it is amplified by the gender and racial/ethnic dynamics of the industry itself. Several faculty members referenced studies on “how male the industry is, and that’s a reality.” The industry is of course stratified: film has historically been hegemonic, and typically dominated by men in the industry; television as a newer entrant to the industry skews more female as the “small screen” is regarded as a less monumental medium of cultural production; and the explosion of digital technologies now skews male again, as a faculty member notes, “women are making inroads into certain parts of film but not the technical parts of it.” These gender dynamics in the industry spill over into the faculty,

perhaps most directly in terms of the production faculty who typically come from various sectors of the industry. But the dynamic holds for the studies faculty as well:

It's not always speaking about Michigan but the discipline in general. I see so many people of color just drop out. It seems like even more women of color drop out because there is nothing in that world or in that curriculum that even remotely [connects to them]. It's gotten to the scholar individuals, it's something that USC had and probably still has a problem with that. It is very skewed toward men. I think it's acute and I think the perception is correct. I think the people that operate in that role most successfully tend to be [white males] and I think you could have other voices or other perspectives still struggling for legitimacy or at least to find a place.

"We do have a problem with diversity," another faculty member comments:

Officially, you've got enough white dudes. That's our problem. There have been faculty meetings where you look around and every person of color we have is a production faculty who doesn't have to show up to these meetings. That I think has changed. I think we have one, two new hires that hopefully will affect that, but I think it's low and the recognition of the problem I think has been slow, aside from me. I complain here and there, but I'm junior.

Fittingly enough, the imbalance in the gender composition of the faculty at Michigan, reflective of the axes of power in the industry, maps onto one of the theoretical foundations of feminist film scholarship, in which the "gaze" is posited as the empowered male subject position, and the object of the gaze is the passive female or "other" (e.g., Mulvey, 1975). Faculty, administrators, and external reviewers are laying bare these

disparities and giving them purposeful attention in faculty hiring, curriculum development, and program reviews, and recent hires are helping to shift the balance to a more representative profile. Institutional leadership gave the program a specific mandate to hire a leading feminist scholar – who happened to be female – in the “consolidation” phase of its development, responding to emergent intellectual themes in the discipline and the glaring absence of a woman on the faculty. The extent to which diversifying the faculty is currently more than a conceptual priority is unclear; value statements abound, but the strategic plan does not reference a specific, funded initiative to do so.

Interdisciplinarity was specifically noted by faculty, students, and administrators as a strategy to address disparities in gender and race. This is strategic, given the ethnic and area studies linkages of many jointly hired faculty members, but it is also perhaps too convenient. A faculty member suggests that the department “could I think develop more relationships, interdisciplinary relationships would give it that, enhance their offerings.” This may be true on a curricular level, but there is always the risk that a jointly appointed woman or person of color might be counted multiple times, for each departmental affiliation, thus skewing the reporting of the overall composition of the faculty. And of course the role of the department in educating the next generation of scholars and industry leaders may help to change the gender and race/ethnicity of both the industry and the discipline; I will return below to student perspectives on diversity and how it shapes their experience of the curriculum and sense of possibility for careers.

Student pathways

The most important asset of any undergraduate program is its students, without whose interest and tuition dollars, most programs would languish or simply close. Given the premise of academic capitalism that universities invest in academic programs that will attract students and their tuition, I consider below the ways in which Screen Arts and Cultures is deployed to attract students to the university and to the department; how students articulate their professional goals and experience of the curriculum; and the effectiveness of their academic preparation in integrating them into the workplace. Screen Arts and Cultures both creates and satisfies student demand; its interdisciplinary reach and liberal arts orientation enable its graduates' success in the workplace.

Screen Arts and Cultures offers a public face of the university that attracts students – especially from the coasts – to Michigan, which enrolls 30% of its undergraduates from out of state, and another 6-7% from other countries (Michigan Almanac, 2013). The high-visibility nature of the field and the high-profile success of alumni in the entertainment industry make the program an attractive exemplar of what Michigan has to offer students. One faculty member is regularly called upon to “showcase the program” and “speak to the high rollers, like last fall they had the parents’ advisory board.” Another faculty member observes

a new phenomenon recently that’s been fascinating to see of rich industry people bringing their kids here. Not necessarily for this department, but for Michigan and for Ann Arbor. And for football. Some of them have kids interested in the industry. They of course have a ready network awaiting them after graduation. Because they’re major producers, directors, actors, whatever. It’s clear that

they're coming here because of the liberal arts emphasis. It's not just a trade school, they'll get other stuff out of it.

An administrator notes, "We see it as a growth industry. We do really well with students from New York and LA." Several faculty members and administrators noted the position of Michigan as "the national public university" and the opportunity for the university to attract out-of-state students, who pay significantly higher tuition than Michigan residents, even accounting for tuition discounting through scholarships for high achieving students. As the University of California system in particular is suffering from budget cuts, fewer California students are accepted at UCLA or Berkeley as those institutions also seek to increase out-of-state numbers. A faculty member regularly hears from Los Angeles-based industry parents that "you can't get classes, the funding has been cut incredibly to the bone, so students aren't able to graduate in four years." And apart from the budget issues in California, the University of California system only guarantees admission to the top 9% of in-state students, further depending on availability of spaces at system campuses, so many qualified students must look elsewhere ("Statewide path," n.d.). Michigan has recognized this strategic opportunity to recruit wealthy California students who can afford its out-of-state tuition, and has established an admissions office in LA, targeting the premier private high schools and "seeing a big influx." A faculty member notes, "many of the students who come out of our program move to LA to work there and our reputation is pretty good so people are coming this way, not just for film but for other programs as well." The nature of the discipline and the specific industry ties and alumni networks associated with it have positioned Screen Arts and Cultures as an effective

recruitment tool for the university as a whole, and in particular for wealthy, out-of-state-tuition-paying students, some of whom end up majoring in the department.

Recruiting students to the concentration in Screen Arts and Cultures is fairly straightforward: “students just sort of find us,” comments one administrator. The department’s website includes marketing language that is linked both with admissions and with career services, making explicit the goals of the curriculum and its intersection with the workplace:

Screen Arts and Cultures is uniquely situated to help LS&A students explore the intersection of intellectual study and creative practice in the arts. In contrast to the film school or art school model, SAC offers a well conceived integration of critical studies and creative production that examines American and world film, video art, television, and digital media, as well as the development of particular genres and the careers of individual artists. We also offer our undergraduate students exceptional practical experience in filmmaking, video, television, digital media, as well as a challenging merit-based sequence of screenwriting and TV writing courses to qualified students. (“About Us,” n.d.)

And the career services materials pick up on this language and make explicit the translation “from study to skills” and “from skills to career,” with itemized lists of “organization/project skills, communication skills, artistic skills, and technical skills” that map onto a wide range of industry career paths. The rhetoric of the department’s marketing language reflects the purposeful balance between liberal arts and pre-professional curricula (and the clear contrast with professional school training), yet the

dozens of career paths listed include only a couple (“K-12 teacher” and “film scholar”) that are not explicitly tied to the industry (“From study to skills,” n.d.).

As is typical of many undergraduate concentrations, large, introductory courses are often the primary recruitment device, and faculty and students spoke frequently of the “400-500 student American film course;” the “fiction in film class that is ... supposed to be 100 but we take more;” a class on the horror film that “got mentioned in an article in the *New York Times* and ... always drew about 150 students;” the “art of film” course that draws students “from all over the college... it’s just so interesting, and it gets them really thinking about the possibilities that they can have with this major.” One introductory class was offered in conjunction with a university-wide theme semester and linked to “the Ann Arbor Film Festival, which is a really experimental festival, and the seminar was called, ‘What the H Was That?’” This course pointed up the connections between the department and the Ann Arbor community film scene – but above all, it is the opportunity for production courses that draws students to the concentration. A faculty member explained the rationale for establishing a studies-focused series of prerequisites for students seeking to enroll in production courses:

I think having prerequisites in our histories and studies, they do keep the serious student of the kind that were interested in attracting, although some students game the system. There’s some students that will take the intro [studies] courses, take [introductory] production, declare the major so they can get into all the [advanced] production courses and then drop [the major]. I can’t say that doesn’t happen. There’s some students that clearly want more production... which means

being a major. They're not interested in the studies part and they've figured out that they can do that without a price.

As one administrator notes: "They seduce them in with the production stuff and then our hope is that they win them over with the studies stuff."

Managing student demand for pre-professional, production curricula is an increasingly unwieldy task. The contrasting rhetoric of faculty members and students is extraordinary. Faculty members in studies and production areas speak of "the liberal arts ideal;" "forc[ing] students to go through a path, taking some of the history and the theory;" "not being so pre-professional that it would just open the floodgates;" "pressure from students;" "reject[ing] vocational pedagogies;" "it was like pulling teeth;" and "holding back production a little bit so it doesn't get all about the fetishization of equipment." Students, on the other hand, in interviews and in exit surveys of the past few graduating classes, clamor for more production opportunities that prepare them for the workplace: they ask for:

- "more classes based on business and finance for films;"
- "more practical skills;"
- "a focus on truly developing the ability to use programs like Final Cut... and so on... Knowing how to use these programs is what gets your students hired and yet most are forced to struggle with them on their own;"
- "learning in-depth about lighting, editing, and sound... to increase the baseline technical knowledge of our graduates;" and
- "more about what a film producer does, how to manage a production... in other words, the intricacies of making a production in an applicable, real-life sense."

One student exclaimed, “I mean, seriously, you’re supposed to be preparing us to enter the industry and I don’t feel very prepared without [more] production classes!” (“Exit survey,” 2013). Another is hoping to “be like a junior entrepreneur ... to make mainstream films that had social issues in them, your typical Hollywood blockbuster, but you take a percentage to... go toward a nonprofit... actually doing good while I’m sitting in the theater.” Yet another: “I think producing is where I’m headed right now.” Despite the carefully balanced marketing language about the integration of studies and production and the difference between the liberal arts degree and a professional film school experience, what students are clearly hearing is that Screen Arts and Cultures is a pathway to a job in a high-demand, high-profile industry. This dynamic puts the department in the position of both creating that demand and responding to it.

The response to student demand for pre-professional experience comes partly in curricular change – “to offer our students more opportunity with newer technologies” – but also in the extracurricular activities supported by the department. The Film and Video Students Association brings films and speakers to the department, and serves as an official representative body connecting the students with the faculty in the department. The M-agination organization functions as a student-run production company, selecting student film projects for collaborative production and culminating in a student film festival. WOLV-TV, an outgrowth of the cable network in the residence halls, uses studio space in North Quad for television production; a faculty member comments that “we’re going to bring them into our fold in the next years,” illustrating both the tendency for co-curricular activities to evolve into formal curriculum, and the desire of administrators to have more robust faculty supervision of students using high-cost

equipment resources. The Projector Head student group is focused more on film criticism and analysis: it sponsors screenings of 16mm films “and they watch the films with the script... What happens is that they pause it and they talk about what are the historical implications of this? What is the politics of this? What was happening in society?” These extensions of the formal curriculum help to create an environment “where being a film buff is cool and all this knowledge is valued. It’s fun. I enjoy being in that kind of environment.”

On the studies side of the curriculum, curricular change has less to do with student demand, and more to do with finding the appropriate balance of foundational and upper-level specialized courses, and the balance between broad liberal arts approaches and more focused, discipline-specific courses in film and video studies. Some students complain about the burden and lack of utility of studies courses: “Studies classes seemed less useful in general;” and “In some of the theory courses, I felt bogged down in esoterica and a general sense of ‘what is the point?’” (“Exit survey,” 2013). Many others, however, did acknowledge the important role of liberal arts and interdisciplinary studies courses in their overall preparation for post-graduate careers. One student reflected on a theory class: “you don’t really enjoy it, but when you are making movies, you’re going to look back and say, ‘Okay, I’m really glad I had to have this theory class.’” Another student with a strong production career focus commented, “I also loved all of my film studies classes, and think that the theory requirement was essential to my current understanding of film.” A number of students observed that the interdisciplinary offerings were “really, really cool” and important in broadening their exposure: “most of the time they have to do with race and ethnicity” and world cultures including Jewish

film, Slavic history, or Islamic studies. In this, they echo the faculty's sense of enhancing the diversity of the curriculum through interdisciplinary and international offerings. Cross-listed courses were occasionally problematic, either hard to get into because of enrollment caps, or frustrating because of the diverse backgrounds and inconsistent foundational knowledge of students from disciplines outside of Screen Arts and Cultures: "I felt the level of the class was brought down because of the majority of non-SAC majors." (This perspective stands in contrast to a faculty perspective on cross-listed courses: "that's the promise of the class, is that you can actually teach each other things that you know from your home base.") Rarely, a student comes to Screen Arts and Cultures with an interest in production, and discovers an affinity for studies. One such student had transferred to Michigan after attending a proprietary film school, the Motion Picture Institute of Michigan, which offers technical training in the industry. He observed, "film has this great history and you would need more background than just how to use a camera." After pursuing opportunities first, to attend New York University – where financial aid fell through at the last moment – and the University of Southern California – where he was unable to transfer enough credits – he wound up at Michigan and "found out how actually extraordinary it was. I kind of got really into studies. So, writing about film. More like avenues for becoming a teacher." This student is currently planning to attend graduate school and become a film scholar – but he is an outlier in the overall undergraduate student population in the department. Still, broadly speaking, the students come to value the studies foundations that undergird their pre-professional production experiences, either during their time as students or in the workplace after they graduate. An administrator observes that Screen Arts and Cultures is one of a handful of

“liberal arts programs that for the students are masquerading as pre-professional programs. They feel a professional groove to it, whether or not it’s really there.”

One further point about the students in the concentration: the growth in student enrollment in Screen Arts and Cultures comes largely at the expense of other concentrations in LS&A as departments essentially compete for students. An increasing number of students in the past decade choose to double major, thus counting twice, but an administrator notes that Screen Arts and Cultures is pulling many of its students from Communication Studies – which is, itself, experiencing tremendous growth, is oversubscribed relative to faculty size, has implemented a gateway on admission to the concentration, but does not offer production courses. The department also “picked up some from English, which has had a similar kind of decline as history.” As noted above, the upcoming launch in 2014 of a new BSI (Bachelors of Science in Information) in the neighboring School of Information is widely perceived as a threat to LS&A student numbers: “they set up their own thing to compete with us head for head for students. We are not super happy with them actually.” The Global Studies minor, on the other hand, draws students to Screen Arts and Culture courses, again including many students from Communication Studies and English, but also sociology, the school of business, and other programs outside of LS&A. These credit hours enhance the department’s KPI’s, especially on the studies side of the curriculum, and help to balance the instructional offerings between production and studies.

Differential tuition pricing is not yet a factor in student choice among concentrations. While Michigan does differentiate between lower- and upper-division tuition, and has eight bands of tuition rates that differ by school, the LS&A tuition, which

includes Communication Studies as well as Screen Arts and Cultures, is in the lowest price category (with the single exception of the Computer Science department, which is in the highest price category along with Engineering). Interestingly, the lowest price band also includes Architecture and Urban Planning, Nursing, and the School of Art & Design, all of which include disciplines that tend to have high delivery costs akin to engineering. The production curriculum in Screen Arts and Cultures would also fall into this high-cost category, given the requirements for state-of-the-art technology and restricted class size, yet it is folded in with lower-cost degree programs in LS&A. The School of Information has not yet set tuition pricing for its first undergraduate degree, so price competition may yet emerge as a factor in undergraduate student choice among these allied concentrations. But the overall differential between the lowest and highest tuition bands is only about \$500 (for lower-division courses) and \$1,500 (for upper-division courses), and even less of a difference for out-of-state students, so it is a tight range. Currently, course fees range from \$50 to \$200 per course, so students in Screen Arts & Cultures do end up paying more than base tuition for their degree, bringing the total price up closer to the upper bands of tuition at the university (“Tuition and Fees,” 2013). And students in Screen Arts and Cultures report a higher-than-average satisfaction with the “value of your education for the price you’re paying” as compared to students at the university as a whole (OBP, 2011).

Students also report that the undergraduate population in the department is generally reflective of the student population of the university as a whole, “mostly female, predominantly white.” A student of mixed race and ethnicity comments,

I feel kind of like one of the few that are not predominantly white, but we have one African-American kid in one of my classes and he always jokes about being the token kid, you know, which is awful. Awful, awful, awful. I think campus as a whole is very diverse in certain aspects [like engineering], but it is predominantly white in most areas.

Nonwhite students, a faculty member observes,

end up feeling like professional outsiders, what they want to talk about doesn't legitimize them. I just think there is this unspoken resistance... that pushes students away or at least just fails to address their needs a little. They're always seen as people who don't get it.

Other faculty members observe the disconnect between Ann Arbor's proximity to Detroit with its large African-American population, and the fact that students typically only learn the name of one black director in the course of their studies. Some faculty members engage in outreach and recruitment efforts to engage low-income and minority communities in film festivals and collaborative community projects, to help counter the "elitist" perception of the university in those communities, and encourage "underrepresented populations of students who just never considered Michigan for whatever reason." But "things move slowly in terms of those kinds of changes," and the department plays only a small role in the university's overall efforts to support racial and ethnic diversity. Michigan's statutory limitations on the use of affirmative action in admissions have not helped in this regard.

In a 2011 university-wide survey on student satisfaction, there were several questions in the "climate" section that spoke to student experience of diversity in the

department. Interestingly, 67.3% of students in the department “agreed/strongly agreed” with the statement that “Students are respected here regardless of their race or ethnicity” – matching precisely the university-wide response and slightly exceeding the LS&A and humanities sub-sample responses. Yet on the statement, “Students are respected here regardless of their gender,” only 63.6% of Screen Arts and Cultures students “agreed/strongly agreed,” in contrast to mid 70s percentages for the humanities, LS&A, and the university as a whole. And there was an even greater gap on the parallel question about “economic or social class:” only 40% “agreed/strongly agreed,” as compared to 50-55% agreement among the larger groups (OPB, 2011). Regarding the gender gap, a faculty member observed that

the balance of students in the television classes tends to favor women, whereas in the narrative classes, film classes, it tends to be more heavily male. There’s this perception in the student culture of what those things mean and what the careers mean.... Students need to know [how male the industry is].

And the students do, it seems: reflecting on the lack of women on the faculty, one student observes, “that’s just the industry probably” – a comfortable excuse that only reinforces the status quo. And, given the recruiting strategies used by the university and the department, drawing on industry connections and out-of-state students from California, it is not surprising that many of the students come from wealthy families, and that economic disparities among their fellow students would be visible to them, or at least to the students who do not come from wealthy families:

I know a lot of production kids have family members that are of high class or whatever. I know a lot of times their parents are doctors, lawyers, something

higher up like that because a lot of them talk to me about their parents. Most people who go into film studies are not first generation college. I am myself, but I don't see that a lot.

Effectively, the social stratification of students by gender, race, and socioeconomic status, that is already reinforced and amplified by higher education in general, is made even starker by the particular discipline of Screen Arts and Cultures and its relationship to a hyper-stratified industry.

Students are also well aware of the resources of the department and the university, from the new building (“North Quad was a great improvement to the film department”) to the studios and equipment (“the facilities available to us are really amazing”) to funding for student activities (“they have a lot of grants for students to do internships, travel, research, career development”). Fund raising and private gifts are also highly visible to students, especially in the wake of a \$50 million gift made in March, 2013, to the creative writing program and the \$200 million gift to the business school and athletics programs made in September, 2013. “I don't see a monetary issue,” noted one student:

I think the university makes it [philanthropic giving] pretty apparent. I kind of think they almost put that in the foreground to, clearly to entice people to donate later, but it is kind of to keep this awareness, hey we should get money from alumni, it just isn't your tuition and it isn't just state funding. We need the support to come out in other ways.

Another student comments that “Screen Arts and Cultures is fine, but the business school is way more than fine, and I wonder what they're going to do with the money.” And a

third says, “Hopefully one day one of our alums, one of us will be fortunate enough to do that for the SAC department.”

The narrative of “making it big” in industry is pervasive among students, and internships are widely seen as the first step to a successful and lucrative career. One student had interned at NBC one summer, then at a

film festival local to Ann Arbor called Cinetopia that’s out of the Michigan Theater. That was really awesome and was totally different from NBC because it was a much smaller scale but it was equally as awesome. Then this past summer I worked at a place called Allied Integrated Marketing. They did marketing promotions for most of the big film companies. Their accounts are Paramount and Warner Brothers and Sony.

Another student who was awarded a summer research grant observed,

I know students who are going to internships in LA, some are going to Europe... and New York. And they had monetary assistance. ... Not going into deeper financial debt if you don’t have a lot of money for something like that.

While many students are able to secure their own internships through family connections in the industry, it is more and more the case that employers reach out to the department seeking interns. As the career center director notes, “Internships have become a very large recruiting tool for a lot of organizations, and so now I do think that they are expected and required, and the students that don’t have them are at a disadvantage.”

Many such internships are unpaid, which means that they “privilege people who have privilege,” as a faculty member notes. The department has secured some private gifts to endow internship funds for students, and supports perhaps a dozen students every

summer, but private funds for internships do come with a cost in time and management. An administrator in LS&A expresses frustration at the nexus of development work and internships: donors commit to funding internships, but the burden is on the institution to place outstanding students and monitor the quality of their experience. As an administrator notes,

It's like, "okay, do we have to steward these things?" The energy we are going to put into stewarding your three crappy internships is so not worth our time. The donor is saying, "Yeah, there's a good gift out there waiting ... but if you give me a crappy student then forget it, obviously."

Fortunately for Screen Arts and Cultures, there seems to be a good fit between students and industry internship opportunities, and the network of alumni in the industry will take as many students as the department can send them. As a faculty member observes,

We have a big network. They love our students. They know that they can get students from us, good students. We have a notebook about this thick that's always got amazing things for them to do. I'd like to think, at least, that part of it is we're producing smart students who are capable. They're flexible workers because of the liberal arts. At the same time, probably have a Midwestern work ethic, probably. It's pretty clear that they're happy. They keep coming back to us looking for more interns.

While the coordination of internships, donors, academic credit, and funding sources is an unwieldy and generally thankless task, done partially at the college level and partly through departments ("Comm Studies and Screen Arts, Econ, the Program in the Environment, they've all got very robust internship programs that they run out of binders

and Excel spreadsheets out of their own unit”), an administrator notes that “a light but active footprint in this takes us down the road to some kind of professionalization.”

It is precisely that professionalization that students demand: the career center director observes,

It just strikes me that Screen Arts has made that transition to being pre-professional, though the faculty will say, “we’re all about the liberal arts,” but the students say, “I want a job in the industry.” It’s a really interesting tension, and it strikes me that it’s perhaps unique in LS&A.

The pressure to professionalize comes from students, but also of course their parents, who “come from an era where it was the major that mattered, so aren’t convinced that a liberal arts major is going to be enough to get a student into a first opportunity.” But in Screen Arts and Cultures, the students are getting jobs: alumni come back to “offer their time, and sometimes offer jobs,” according to a faculty member: “Michigan has a great network of people and alumni that work in the industry, a good set of connections and a good track record. They end up getting really fantastic jobs.” Another faculty member observes, “there’s not a major studio or talent agency in Los Angeles that [we have] not placed somebody in at some point.” Yet another faculty member: “We train them to help each other find jobs.” A student comments on the motivating aspects of the alumni network:

You find recent alums that have just graduated from the program that are doing really, really awesome things. We’ve got students who have just won awards in film festivals... It’s thrilling. It’s been really cool to see people that aren’t much older than you doing actually really cool things.

Another student comments,

There are some students that are struggling I'm sure, post-grad. But... they're getting jobs. Most of the ones I've met are working and super driven to keep on working, and keep on working, keep on growing and getting bigger and better jobs.

Preliminary data from a survey of 2013 graduates backs this up: 78% of respondents to date were employed full or part time, and 8% were in graduate school ("Placement survey," 2013). And while the survey does not ask specifically whether the jobs are tied to the industry, the volume of alumni notes in the newsletter, success stories on the career services website and circulating among faculty and students, and reports of gatherings and events of the University of Michigan Entertainment Coalition in Los Angeles suggest that a critical mass of them are. Alumni involvement is instrumental in establishing the pipeline of students from Screen Arts and Cultures into the industry; most faculty, students, and administrators called attention to an annual networking event with alumni at home of alumnus Peter Benedek, head of the United Talent Agency:

We've got all these crazy high people who come to this reception and then we get these people who just graduated from Screen Arts and Cultures... a bunch of young kids who are couch surfing looking for that first job in the industry. Brad Pitt's agent talking with a 21 year old. It's hysterical.

And of course the rags-to-riches narrative does, in fact, happen for a significant number of students, and anecdotes of student journeys from the mailroom to the corner office abound. For instance, a faculty member tells this story:

Very bright student, goes out to LA to be a screenwriter, gets a job at Working Title answering phones. One day they say, “Hey, you want to read a script and tell us what you think?” He writes up a cover of it and, “Wow, you’re pretty good at this, we should give you some more.” At a certain point he says, “I came out here to be a writer so I’m going to leave now.” They said, “Wait, we’ll promote you off answering phones and we’ll pay you to start developing scripts,” and so every time he went to leave to be a writer they would promote him until in his mid 20s he was head of development for Working Title world wide. Overseeing movies like *Love, Actually*, right? I go to see him in his office, it’s like the size of an aircraft, and I said, “What the hell is going on here?” He goes, “I know, right?” Now he’s head of television for them. They do go out to LA to be writers ... but many become creative executives, in development, some wind up running production companies while still writing.

Successes like this are publicized in the department’s newsletter, fuelling student ambitions and also creating a feedback loop for faculty: “now he’s one of the biggest guys in television, before he was 30 had signed a seven figure deal... this was on fire. That’s how I knew our program, what we were doing was working.”

But it is not just networks, the Michigan brand, and serendipity that lead to such successful careers for Screen Arts and Cultures alumni. Faculty, students, and administrators all point to the importance of the liberal arts foundation in fostering the success of their students in the industry. It may be the pre-professional orientation and networks that get them in the door, but it is their interdisciplinary and liberal arts foundations that get them promoted. A student comments,

It's a liberal arts degree. It's a film degree but it's in the liberal arts college. All those jobs you could imagine getting as an English major, et cetera, you could get as a film major but maybe more so, because you have this other set of skills that an employer might recognize.

Faculty members comment on “why English majors do well in Hollywood” and the importance of knowing how screen writing works. Another faculty member observes,

When people do go to LA and find jobs in the industry, regularly we hear back that they're particularly well prepared because they combined their hands-on training with intellectual ... it's a liberal arts degree that they get and they're not just good technicians.

These observations are in keeping with student exit interview comments reflecting on the value of their studies, theory, and international media coursework in helping them really understand the craft of making film and video art. It is more than just pressing the buttons as a technician; they have to know the history, the culture, the audience in order to be successful in the industry. The return on the students' investment in the liberal arts – and on the tuition dollars they and their families pay – does come in the form of a job, thus fulfilling the promises of the department's marketing language that attracted them in the first place. As the career center director notes,

I think that there's a sweet spot there, weaving the academics with the real life, the mentorship, the testing it out, that's important for us to find. I do think that even though each of us as an institution has as its mission a focus on teaching content and creating good citizens, I also think that we can't turn a blind eye to

the fact that these are costly investments that families are making, and that there are expectations of what that investment is going to bring forth at the other end.

Screen Arts and Cultures seems to have found that sweet spot.

Resources: the bottom line

The story of the Screen Arts and Cultures Department at the University of Michigan offers a rich and instructive instance of the origins and development of a humanities-leaning interdisciplinary program with a marketplace orientation. There is an intellectual and disciplinary history, and faculty and student dynamics that shaped the program's history. But ultimately it is money that allows for growth. Keeping in mind the academic capitalist conceptual frame of my study, I encapsulate below the various resource streams associated with Screen Arts and Cultures from its inception.

First, the program attracted investment of various kinds from within the university:

- Faculty lines, at first only fractional EFT, later including tenure-granting authority, and finally significant hiring of jointly-appointed and whole positions (moving from 2.5 FTE (headcount of 4) in 1988 to 24 EFT (headcount of 28) in 2013).
- Space, at first one woefully inadequate office, then a suite of spaces in an older campus building, and now several floors of office, classroom, studio, library, and function space in a magnificent, high-profile building at the heart of campus.
- Funds, equipment, and administrative support (for instance, the doubling of the budget in 1988 and steady increases since then; growing staff from a half-time

administrative assistant to 6 full time administrative and technical staff; allocation of an equipment and maintenance/replacement funding of the department's own, plus robust support from the co-located Instructional Support Services staff and equipment).

Importantly, most of these internal resources represent reallocations within the university rather than net new revenue streams attached to the Screen Arts and Cultures department or LS&A. In the humanities, students have been flocking to programs in LS&A with an applied or pre-professional focus – such as Communication Studies, the Program in the Environment, Organizational Dynamics, and Screen Arts and Cultures – while enrollments in traditional bulwarks like English and history are shrinking dramatically. Further, efforts to consolidate resources and identify efficiencies, and decisions about restructuring and strategic investments also factored in to the shift of internal resources to the Screen Arts and Cultures department.

Second, resources from outside the university provided fuel for the program's growth and development, often in trade for influence and access to faculty, students, and the “products” of their work:

- Community resources from the Ann Arbor film societies, theaters, and festivals offered reciprocal access to town and gown facilities and equipment, a rich environment to attract students and faculty with an interest in film, and ready venues and audiences for student and faculty work.
- Statewide film industry connections, including companies attracted by the state film tax credit that provided internships and production experience for students,

and statewide festivals such as Michael Moore's Traverse City Film Festival that showcases student work each year.

- National industry connections, often facilitated by alumni, providing equipment, corporate support for the department, internships, and jobs for students – and shaping the demand for curricula that respond to industry needs.
- Alumni influence and advice, and the beginnings of philanthropic support to back it up.

Additional to these external resource streams are the intangibles of reputation, disciplinary presence and prestige, alumni pride, and the high visibility and branding of students and graduates as industry leaders.

And last but certainly not least, it is tuition-paying undergraduate students who are the primary market for, and drivers of, the Screen Arts and Cultures Department. From the early days of a few dozen undergraduate concentrators in the loosely-coordinated program, enrollments have grown steadily and consistently for more than three decades to more than 200 concentrators at present, plus 50 minors and a couple of dozen graduate students in the certificate and doctoral programs. In 2012, Screen Arts and Cultures graduates represented more than 3% of BA's awarded in LS&A – on the face of it, not a large proportion, but a greater than average share among the 75 concentrations to choose from in LS&A (“At A Glance,” 2012). By investing in the Screen Arts and Cultures Department, the university was able to corral and consolidate student demand for hands-on experience with the moving image and media technologies that permeate our culture and point toward diverse career paths. At the same time, the curriculum set in place a strong liberal arts foundation that would challenge the students

and give them intellectual underpinnings to support their creative and professional work. Student interest – created in large part by the very industry that craves their talent, or at least their labor, given the relative dearth of leadership positions in the workplace – consistently established the leading edge of the evolution of Screen Arts and Cultures to its present form. Activities that were extracurricular a generation ago have now become a curriculum.

It would be difficult to map all of these resource streams and investments on a balance sheet for Screen Arts and Cultures. Many of the investments and cost centers are diffuse and blurred by cross-subsidies within the institution; and many of the revenue streams are intangible, unpredictable, tightly restricted, or still to be realized. Clearly the program is considered a success by a wide range of stakeholders. But measuring the precise dimensions of that success is less important for this study than analyzing the institutional behaviors that have created it, and implications of those behaviors for understanding and shaping the future of interdisciplinarity, academic capitalism, and the humanities. That will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS: THE HEURISTICS OF THE CASE

The extended analysis of the case of the Screen Arts and Cultures undergraduate concentration at the University of Michigan in the previous chapter addressed the operational research questions that frame the first part of this study, having to do with the conceptualization and organization of this interdisciplinary undergraduate concentration; the roles of faculty, administrators, and students in driving the program forward; the consolidation of the departmental infrastructure through which the concentration is offered; the ways in which interdisciplinary and pre-professional curricula align students with the needs of the industry; and the patterns of resource investment and return associated with the program. In this chapter, I turn to the set of conceptual research questions that help to extend current understandings of interdisciplinarity, academic capitalism, and the future of the humanities. These broad questions, again, are:

- In what ways are new interdisciplinary undergraduate programs responding to and/or helping to create their own markets?
- How do these programs affect the status of faculty – e.g., faculty entrepreneurs who benefit from the market; faculty as a means of production of benefit to the institution; shifts in proportions of tenure-stream vs. contingent faculty?
- How have resource streams shifted in response to these interdisciplinary programs? What are the levers that faculty and administrators have at their disposal to move their disciplines closer to market?

- What do new interdisciplinary academic programs suggest about trends in traditional disciplines and emerging interdisciplinary areas?

First I will synthesize my findings from the case and suggest its broader implications regarding students (the market that is both created and served by Screen Arts and Cultures), the status of faculty, and the move to market. Then I will take up the last, broadest question, on the implications of interdisciplinarity.

The marketplace of students

In the broadest sense, Screen Arts and Cultures is responding to the explosion in the media marketplace: digital media, social media, entertainment media, and the corporate interests that promulgate these media streams. The production faculty also participates in the labor market outside the academy, through their professional experience and ongoing creative work. For some (and this is especially true at “film schools” like USC and NYU that emphasize production), this means that they are empowered by access to broader markets for their labor, though for others, faculty status provides a comfortable berth and steady income that they might not have in the non-academic market due to their sporadic and/or less-valued creative production outside of their instructional roles. But the department as a whole responds to the industry market indirectly: unlike other disciplines where the integration with industry comes in the form of research and intellectual property, and to a somewhat greater extent the provision of a specialized workforce through graduate training, in Screen Arts and Cultures the “market” is primarily defined as undergraduate students. The students themselves may see the labor market in the industry as a motivator, and the industry employers are eager

to hire them – but the pressure is on the university to recruit undergraduates, the lifeblood of the public research university. Competition for top students is fierce among leading institutions, and universities prize full-tuition-paying students, and especially out-of-state students, whose higher rates of tuition provide essential resources (some of which, of course, are returned to high-achieving students in the form of scholarships). At public institutions there is often a cap – implicit or explicit – on the proportion of out-of-state students to be admitted, given the taxpayer-funded state support. Michigan, though, enjoys relative independence from state budget politics given its constitutionally-mandated independent governance structure and the single-digit percentage of its budget that comes from the state, which is one reason Michigan is able to enroll 30% of its undergraduate students from out of state, and another 7-8% full-paying international students (Michigan Almanac, 2013). The synergies of the discipline of Screen Arts and Cultures with the entertainment industry in Los Angeles, and to a lesser extent New York, prove useful to Michigan in recruiting students and their tuition dollars from the coasts. And at the departmental level, the recruitment of students legitimizes, or even “produces” (James & Neuberger, 1981), the department and its faculty. The university and the department take an active role in marketing to prospective students; three key strategies they deploy to both create and serve the student market revolve around the curriculum, the building, and jobs.

The curriculum is designed to tap the student market in several dimensions: the media- and technology-infused subject matter itself; the blurring of co-curricular and curricular activities; and the global emphasis of the studies courses. First, the combination of media and technology: students are already immersed in a culture

suffused with technology and media. In this digital media environment, technology and the forms of expression it enables are democratized: everyone can make a film on their iPhone; YouTube is universally accessible; connectivity and communication is assumed to be available at all places and times. Undergraduates have never known a world before the Internet, and they interact seamlessly with digital devices as a matter of course. There is thus a generational and cultural predisposition to the subject matter at hand.

Second, the co-curricular activities of students – discretionary activities that bring students together around shared interests – are increasingly integrated into the formal curriculum. Students can earn academic credit for the kinds of activities they would choose to do anyway. Administrators and faculty have recognized over time that co-curricular student activities could and perhaps should be coopted into the formal curriculum. Student activity groups in television production, for instance, prompted the creation of television studies and production faculty lines, studio and equipment infrastructure, and coursework in the concentration. Ann Arbor and Traverse City film festivals as venues for showing student work have now been integrated as capstone experiences in the screenwriting and production course sequences. “Feral students,” as one administrator noted, must be brought under supervision, especially if they are handling expensive equipment. Robust co-curricular activities are a signifier of market demand for the development of new curricula (Bastedo, 2005), and Screen Arts and Cultures is capitalizing on that demand.

Third, globalization is another market-friendly theme that crosses disciplines and offers opportunities to combine language and area studies programs in ways that make transparent the connections between humanistic study and its importance in the

workplace (whether private sector, government, or nonprofit). Screen Arts and Cultures recognized this possibility in the assemblage of area studies faculty in the department, and the minor in Global Media Studies, with about 50 students, is an important curricular counterpart to the undergraduate concentration that draws its 200 students primarily for its production emphasis. (The minor also draws more undergraduate students to the studies faculty, augmenting their studies-specific teaching in the small-scale graduate program that enrolls only about a dozen doctoral students and another half-dozen graduate students seeking a certificate.) The undergraduate experience of interdisciplinarity in the curriculum amounts to international and cross-cultural exposure through the studies courses in both the concentration and the minor.

Thus, media, technology, and globalization are integrated into the humanities curriculum in a student-friendly formula that connects to students' cultural lives and pathways to employment. Although one administrator noted that the program was "liberal arts masquerading as pre-professional," I would argue that it is the other way around. Facility with digital media, entertainment and communications via "screens" of various types, and the global interconnectedness of the world are all keys to professional success – and Screen Arts and Cultures has wrapped these pre-professional themes in a liberal arts envelope.

The new living-learning facility, the North Quad building, offers a state-of-the-art setting for the curriculum. The building houses studios and equipment that are used by extra-curricular groups as well as Screen Arts and Cultures, and it is home to a Global Studies themed learning community in the residence hall section of the building. The student market entails tuition dollars, but that is just the beginning: housing, dining, and

activity fees extend the revenue streams attached to the student consumers of higher education. In the arms race for student-focused facilities, institutions are offering ever more enhancements to the on-campus lifestyle aspects of the college experience. They justify large investments in lavish student facilities by student demand and fees that offset costs, but the justification also involves rhetoric of the extension of learning beyond the classroom. The International Impact and Global Studies living-learning communities are prime examples of this phenomenon, and North Quad contains many more, from the “Media Gateway” to television studios, screening rooms, and other multi-purpose academic and extracurricular facilities. The building becomes a magnet for students, a signal of prominence for Screen Arts and Cultures and the other academic programs housed in it, and a highly visible marketing tool for the university. In the competition for student market share, the academic programs are thus marketed as an amenity to enhance the collegiate lifestyle, made visible in marquee buildings like North Quad.

Finally, the marketing tool that is perhaps most important to students and their parents expecting a return on their investment is jobs. The pipeline of graduates entering the industry is highly visible and tantalizing to students who want to make it big, and to parents who see media as a growth industry with employment potential. Broadcasting these success stories – the return on investment students realize – through newsletters, awards, and other media, helps to attract new students to the department. The university and the department have created a culture of professional networking among alumni, bringing alumni back to teach or guest lecture; supporting networking events in LA, and “train[ing] students to help each other find jobs” as the faculty note. The feedback loop of alumni success and continuing engagement with the department also helps to shape

curricula; it makes visible to current and prospective students the tangible pathways to success that study in the field points toward; it helps the faculty understand what skills and experiences graduates need in order to be competitive; and it builds loyalty and the likelihood of graduates giving back, through gifts, providing jobs for new graduates, or other forms of assistance. Students are the market, but they are also the product, eagerly sought by employers in the industry, and also valued by the university as players in Michigan's highly visible and powerful network of alumni and donors.

Thus, Screen Arts and Cultures serves a mediating function in the student marketplace, both creating and responding to student demand. The department's instructional production function works in two directions at once: it produces tuition-paying students for the university, and it produces graduates for the industry. The theory of academic capitalism thus has significant explanatory power in understanding the department's engagement with the marketplace of students across these varied dimensions. To use Slaughter and Rhoades's terms (2004), the department taps into "new circuits of knowledge" (the very medium under study, digital communications and entertainment technologies); harnesses and facilitates the involvement of "intermediating organizations" (e.g., Michigan film festivals and societies, organized alumni groups); and internal, "interstitial organizations" (housing and student life departments, alumni and development officers), to create and in turn satisfy market demand from both students and the industry that hires them. Students are clearly the drivers of the program, but it is the faculty that delivers it; I turn next to the implications of the program for the faculty.

Faculty legitimacy and authority

The patterns of authority that shape the status of faculty in the department are bifurcated, with tenure-track “studies” faculty members participating in one set of power dynamics and lecturer “production” faculty members in another. The studies faculty members are tenured or on the tenure track, with higher salary scales, lower teaching expectations, a defined role in shared governance in the department and at the university, and affiliations with one or more national disciplinary associations that validate and reinforce their identification as professionals with a research agenda as well as responsibility to transmit their expertise through instruction. For the studies faculty, the achievement of department status made one important difference, in allowing for the establishment of a small doctoral program. For these faculty members, the doctoral program solidifies the disciplinary status and authority of the department and its faculty; the production of second-generation faculty in the discipline legitimizes the first generation and positions the university and the department on a national stage of competition with peer institutions, training each others’ future faculty members. The “consumption function” of research, though relatively cheap in the humanities, and graduate education, expensive though done on a small scale in Screen Arts and Cultures, balance out the “production function” of the instruction of large numbers of undergraduates in the concentration and the minor. The production faculty, on the other hand, is comprised of lecturers, on a lower salary scale and with higher teaching expectations, an exclusive focus on lower-status undergraduate teaching rather than graduate education, and little involvement in shared governance at the departmental or institutional levels. The production faculty is typically closer to market, and generally

comes to the department from the industry, bringing professional insights and networks to bear on the curriculum and enhancing the students' opportunities in and beyond the classroom. Production faculty members garner significant resources (students, gifts, jobs, industry work, and the likelihood of additional faculty lines and technical support positions funded by the university) – and in the highest-ranked film schools like USC, UCLA, and NYU, the production faculty is the dominant force and controller of resources, with impoverished critical studies faculty as an afterthought. Yet in Screen Arts and Cultures, the production faculty is the means of production, the low-cost producer of the curriculum that is in the highest demand by students. There is no “consumption function” for these faculty members; the production faculty is about production, in all senses of the word. Professional privilege accrues to the studies faculty; it is no surprise that this bifurcation is often toxic at other institutions, and it is a credit to the faculty of Screen Arts and Cultures that they have achieved a collegial and cohesive departmental culture despite these marked differences in the two classes of faculty.

There are several factors that distinguish the bifurcation of the Screen Arts and Cultures faculty from the divide between tenure-stream and contingent faculty in other disciplines. One, of course, is the division of the curriculum, with tenure-stream faculty responsible for one aspect and non-tenure-stream faculty the other; occasional team teaching and cross listing both bridges that divide and makes it more visible. This is distinct from other disciplines, where the divide comes not between sub-fields, but between graduate and upper-division courses, more often taught by tenure-stream faculty, and lower-division general education courses, more often taught by lecturers or graduate

students. Second, the studies faculty is explicitly interdisciplinary, with more than half having formal joint appointments, while the production faculty is equally or more interdisciplinary in practice but not formally recognized for it. Interdisciplinarity of scholarship is accorded high status, but interdisciplinarity in creative and applied work is not named or celebrated as such.

I will return below to consideration of the joint appointment as a device to foster interdisciplinary work. Here I will call attention to a third factor that defines the bifurcation of faculty work and faculty status in the department: the notion that pre-professionalism stands in opposition to, and is eroding, traditional liberal arts disciplines. This is more than just a notion, of course, as Brint (2002, 2005, 2012) and others have documented the shift in enrollments over the past thirty years toward occupational fields and away from the liberal arts. But the rhetoric around this divide is highly partisan. Politicians, pundits, and policymakers on one side rail against “useless” degrees in the arts and humanities and insist on the instrumental value of higher education in vocational and pre-professional fields that articulate with workforce needs and economic development goals. This perspective resonates with parents and students who want jobs, and also with the move to outcomes-based funding for public higher education. And on the other side, scholars and public intellectuals who have been bemoaning the death of the humanities for more than a generation defend the liberal arts as the bastion of critical thinking, analysis, writing, and the cultural elite. Against this foil, humanities partisans position pre-professional education as compromised and ephemeral, of only temporary utility in a changing labor market that uses and discards workers who are merely “trained” and not “educated.” This characterization is oversimplified, of course, and both

sides of the debate rely on a fetishization of the humanities as somehow standing apart from, or even above, the on-the-ground workings of money and power in a market-driven society. The literature on pre-professionalism and the liberal arts is, broadly speaking, either descriptive of trends or partisan: useful as a backdrop for understanding the case of Screen Arts and Cultures, but limited in its salience for practice. What should institutions, administrators, and faculty do about these trends and the polarizing rhetoric? Should institutions change in response, and how?

The case of Screen Arts and Cultures suggests the possibility of introducing a third term into this polarized narrative. The department seems to have found a successful formula for combining liberal arts and pre-professional orientations in complementary and market-friendly ways. Liberal arts values are not the sole province of the liberal arts, and historically the liberal arts have been as vocationally oriented as many of the occupational disciplines are today (e.g., Cummings, 2013). By re-introducing a successful integration of the humanities and the pre-professional – embracing the market rather than standing apart from it – Screen Arts and Cultures points to a way forward, through the rhetorical (and very real) impasse between them. Yet this integration is incomplete, as faculty in the department recognize, because of the status differential of the non-tenured production faculty, who are aligned with the pre-professional rhetoric, and the tenure-stream production faculty, aligned with the liberal arts.

Addressing this status differential will entail a culture change in the ways in which knowledge is valued in the department and in LS&A. The faculty has taken an important first step, by petitioning the dean's office to create a tenure track for the production faculty. Studies and production faculty members alike acknowledge that the

expectation of creative work sets lecturers in the department apart from lecturers elsewhere, who are expected only to teach. Recognition of creative production as a valuable form of scholarship is built in to the culture of the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance – or the Stamps School of Art and Design – but in LS&A there is not an established culture that values such work. (The notable exception in LS&A is the creative writing program in the English department, which is about the written word and thus represents less of a departure from traditional scholarship in the liberal arts and sciences.) Creative production in Screen Arts and Cultures involves interdisciplinary collaboration among a range of performing arts disciplines, digital technologies, communications, business, law, and a host of other fields as diverse as those that combine on the studies side of the curriculum. Hence, the move toward acknowledgment of production work as having disciplinary integrity comparable to that in arts disciplines – a recognition that would take tangible form in the establishment of a tenure track – reframes the work of the production faculty from pre-professional to interdisciplinary. It would also shore up the professional identification of industry practice and scholarly production, giving a disciplinary frame and legitimacy to the secondary (non-academic) labor market available to production faculty, akin to the relationship of engineering faculty and engineers, or accounting faculty and accountants.

It remains to be seen whether their efforts will be successful, and what the impacts would be on the department, its students, and its faculty. For instance, creating a second tenure track with different performance expectations might address some status differential issues (salary, teaching load, governance and service, professional privilege) while possibly introducing or amplifying others (perhaps reifying the divide between

studies and production, or setting up new forms of competition between, or migrations among, Michigan's fine and performing arts schools outside of LS&A). A shift toward tenure status for some production faculty members would certainly entail an increased cost basis for instruction in the department, among other complications as noted more fully above. But as Brint (2012) and others have observed, institutions are increasingly making strategic choices on the basis of market logics, rather than intellectual logics. Screen Arts and Cultures is in the process of teasing out the complex relationship between pre-professional and interdisciplinary orientations in the humanities, identifying the market logics that respond to student demand yet also reinforce professional authority for the faculty. But ultimately, the move to a market orientation has paralleled the shift in authority from faculty to administrators, as universities make strategic investments in response to market opportunities and constraints. In this context, both studies and production faculty have become "managed professionals" (Rhoades, 1998) as the university deploys their skills and expertise in the competition for resources.

Resources: the humanities move to market

Resource streams at the University of Michigan have shifted toward Screen Arts and Cultures, as evidenced by growth in faculty lines, student enrollments, space, equipment, and budget allocations, and institutional investment in development and career service supports. These institutional investments have helped to generate external resources, even as those external resources leverage institutional investments. Philanthropic gifts, industry partnerships with the community and the state, and faculty and alumni connections with the centers of the industry in LA and New York all

contribute to the financial and cultural capital available to the department, though of course it is students and their tuition dollars that constitute by far the largest share of external resources coming to the institution. And while tuition dollars do not accrue directly to the department, the institution's allocation of tuition revenues to academic programs does reflect changing enrollment patterns, rewarding growing departments with additional faculty lines, space, and other resources. The alignment of the institution and the department with external revenue streams is in keeping with resource dependency theory, but, as is the case with the student market in particular, it is the theory of academic capitalism that has the greatest explanatory power for the resource dynamics in Screen Arts and Cultures, which is helping to create the very networks it depends on for legitimacy, power, and money.

Recognizing that knowledge has value in the marketplace, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) posit that "new circuits of knowledge" are an essential component of academic capitalism in the "new economy." With the transformation of the film and video industry by digital technologies that blur the lines between information, entertainment, communication, journalism, and social networking, the digital revolution has created multiple new circuits of knowledge that pass through "screens" large and small, and open up the disciplinary space available for Screen Arts and Cultures. The faculty is both interpreter of and contributor to these knowledge networks, establishing professional authority through the critical analysis of cultural production, the training of the workforce for the industry, and the creation of professional and disciplinary associations that legitimize their authority. Digital technologies in general offer opportunities for humanistic disciplines to share in some of the resource streams typically associated with

STEM fields, extending disciplinary knowledges through new platforms and paradigms of knowledge creation and transmission. Screen Arts and Cultures has leveraged this opportunity to garner market share among students and obtain significant institutional investments, but this new circuit of knowledge offers enough bandwidth to support multiple channels. There is competition within the university, among units including Communication Studies and the School of Information, just to name the two that share physical space with Screen Arts and Cultures, for ownership and authority over the domain of digital communications.

A second major feature of academic capitalism is the emergence of intermediating organizations that serve to define and legitimize the professional authority of the faculty and provide structures that connect the academy with the marketplace. Organizations such as the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, the University of Michigan Entertainment Coalition, the alumni advisory board established to connect the department with the industry, the Michigan Film Initiative economic development board, and local film festivals and societies all serve this mediating function in one or more dimensions: most offer direct channels to resources (e.g., philanthropic gifts from alumni, or funds for faculty-student partnerships in film production supported by tax incentives, or jobs for students, or shared facilities and equipment), while the disciplinary association plays a central role in claiming intellectual ownership and interpretive authority over the industry. Intermediating organizations facilitate access to departmental power within the institution (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1974), and in the case of the humanities-oriented Screen Arts and Cultures department, they provide a platform for the liberal arts to embrace the market, rather than standing apart from it.

Finally, a note on resource constraints: academic capitalist behaviors and the entrepreneurial university reflect the imbrication of the public research university in private markets for resources. These new streams of revenue are generally not additive, however; at best, they replace the shrinking base of public funds on which universities used to rely more fully. Writ large, it is a zero sum game: external resources replace state funding; and internal competition within the university creates winners and losers as funds are allocated in response to marketplace shifts and profit centers. The investment of additional resources in Screen Arts and Cultures thus represents a disinvestment elsewhere – perhaps shifting resources from English and History, based on current analyses of enrollment patterns, or in an earlier moment in the program’s development, from communications with the move of production faculty and facilities into the (then) Film and Video Studies Program. Cost savings are sometimes possible, as with the consolidation of production facilities, equipment, staffing, and maintenance to eliminate redundancies and promote efficiencies – but universities tend to be expansive, and program elimination is rare. Hiring lower-cost teaching faculty is a nearly universal strategy to contain costs while continuing to grow: there is high marginal utility in offering low-cost instruction to out-of-state students who pay high tuition. Students in Screen Arts and Cultures also pay high course fees, beyond their tuition; these fees offset the costs of the facilities and equipment needed to support the curriculum, but unlike in the sciences, where grant funds often underwrite technology and equipment, in Screen Arts and Cultures it is students who bear much of that burden. It is administrators, rather than faculty, who must make decisions about resource allocation within the institution; hence, the increasing reliance on performance data, or KPI’s as they are known at

Michigan, in informing decisions about both baseline budgeting and strategic reallocations of resources. The administration deploys KPI's as part of its strategy to foment competition among units for market share of students and other forms of productivity. As new interdisciplinary programs emerge, and faculty and students move in response to new markets, the flow of resources shifts with them.

Interdisciplinarity is thus one dimension of restructuring; I will turn now to the framing question of interdisciplinarity, its impact on faculty status and the flow of resources, and its implications for traditional disciplines.

Interdisciplinarity

In general, we have a better understanding of how interdisciplinary, problem-based inquiry is at work in the sciences, and especially the life sciences and computational sciences. The basic sciences are generative of new technologies and new solutions to market-based problems and opportunities; basic sciences thus coexist with interdisciplinary sciences, and faculty members move comfortably among their disciplinary homes and interdisciplinary centers that house their research enterprises. These hyper-specialized, problem-based interdisciplinary centers tend to be research-oriented, perhaps with an associated graduate training program, while undergraduate curricula remain strong in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics. The disciplinary core of the sciences remains strong even as resources shift toward high-cost, high-prestige research and graduate education in interdisciplinary organizations. Much of the literature on interdisciplinarity focuses on these dynamics in the sciences, where interdisciplinarity is tied to significant resource streams. Yet in the humanities and

humanistic social sciences, far from robust sources of funding, interdisciplinarity amounts to a survival strategy.

There are three main observations about interdisciplinarity in the humanities that emerge from the case of Screen Arts and Cultures: there is productive tension between interdisciplinarity and claiming a disciplinary space; interdisciplinarity is an important strategy for engaging in academic capitalist behaviors; and, in the humanities, interdisciplinarity is cheap.

First, the establishment of a disciplinary space for interdisciplinarity: A generation ago, Screen Arts and Cultures was comprised of three faculty members from English, Art, and Engineering who started the program; now the disciplines represented on the faculty are both more numerous and, themselves, more interdisciplinary. Language disciplines have become area studies, bringing in history, culture, politics, economics, and other disciplinary approaches to frame and extend the language and literature curricula pertinent to various world regions. American Cultures is perhaps the extreme example of disciplinary inclusiveness. Identity-based disciplines have emerged and are multiplying as rapidly as social movements and communities are evolving: women's studies, African American studies, Latino studies, and so on have become established in the academy with all the trappings of disciplinary associations, departmental status, faculty lines, and academic programs. The growth of these interdisciplinary fields in the humanities comes in some cases in response to social movements, occasionally to address national security interests in the case of some area studies disciplines, sometimes to stave off threat of closure because of small enrollments, and rarely, in the case of the humanities, in response to the market (Bastedo, 2005; Brint,

2005; Slaughter, 1997). *Screen Arts and Cultures* brings together scholars from a dozen or more of these interdisciplinary fields, along with slightly smaller proportional representation of faculty from traditional disciplines like English and history. And it is growing – along with other humanities-leaning interdisciplinary programs at Michigan: Communications Studies (most notably), Organizational Studies, and the Program in the Environment, while English and history are shrinking. English and history will not go away; they are too central to the university’s mission and conception of itself. But the growth in the humanities is found in newer, interdisciplinary fields, and increasingly in those with plausible connections to the market.

There is a persistent tension between interdisciplinarity – where the intellectual energy is, and resources too – and the establishment and legitimation of emerging disciplines. The establishment and growth of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies roughly parallels the establishment of film studies as a disciplinary core at Michigan. The pattern is recognizable from the history of the establishment of disciplines over a century; interdisciplinarity is by definition “low paradigm,” yet power and legitimacy depend on becoming “high[er] paradigm” (Braxton and Hargens, 1996), establishing consensus on core knowledges and methodologies, and establishing boundaries around the discipline. This pattern is self-reinforcing and self-generative: the interdisciplinary program was able to attract more institutional resources in part because of its reputation among a landscape of peer institutions and reviewers as the new discipline became more formally structured nationally. And ultimately, the establishment of doctoral program reifies the discipline, by training second-generation faculty specifically in the new discipline, which begins to erode the interdisciplinary nature of the original enterprise as

departments seek to hire specialists that reinforce the disciplinary core. Screen Arts and Cultures exemplifies this pattern and this tension. Power and resources increased as the field moved toward definition, consolidation, and eventually department status, although in the case of Screen Arts and Cultures, most departmental functions like serving as a tenure home for faculty and offering undergraduate programs, preceded departmental status. Yet even as the department claims a disciplinary identity, it continues to draw strength from interdisciplinary engagements through jointly appointed faculty and programmatic activities that reach across the university. The infusion of new ideas and perspectives often comes via interdisciplinarity, which offers both renewal and deepening of central disciplinary core. Interdisciplinarity is a strategy for enhancing diversity in the curriculum, the department's intellectual scope, and its faculty and student demographics. In the case of Screen Arts and Cultures, the original interdisciplinary combination has spawned others, such as the global media studies minor. The combination of disciplines around one area of interest is generative of new fields as well. Interdisciplinarity brings flexibility, essential for adaptability, while disciplinarity brings power, essential for implementation of adaptations (Cameron, 1984). Thus, both the centripetal force of consolidation and the centrifugal force of interdisciplinary reach are productive for the department.

Theories about the establishment and evolution of disciplines – and the adaptive framework of organizational change – go a long way toward understanding the development of Screen Arts and Cultures, including the empowerment that came with departmental status for the emergent discipline. And the literature on interdisciplinarity does suggest the flexibility, problem- or industry-centered integration of ideas and

perspectives, and creative energies at the synapses between and among disciplines, which is so evident in Screen Arts and Cultures. Yet the limitations of the literature to date are apparent, when it comes to understanding the liminal state of Screen Arts and Cultures, straddling disciplinary and interdisciplinary identifications and drawing strength from both.

Second, interdisciplinarity is a primary enabler for humanistic fields to engage in academic capitalist behaviors. The organization of knowledge around problems, social movements, industry needs, and themes of cultural significance – crossing boundaries of traditional disciplines – positions the humanities to engage purposefully in the market, which by definition places a value on the knowledge purveyed by those disciplines. The new sociology of knowledge (Swidler & Ardit, 1994) addresses the relationship of knowledge and power, and the role of the marketplace in assigning differential value to different kinds of knowledge. This theoretical framework permeates much of the literature on academic program restructuring, with winners and losers among disciplines with different levels of student demand, marketplace integration, and demographic profiles of faculty and student bodies that are often, themselves, proxies for the social and marketplace value of the field. Returning to the notion of interdisciplinarity as a form of restructuring: if interdisciplinarity repositions the humanities closer to the market, does it increase their value? Academic capitalist strategies in the case of Screen Arts and Cultures do bring resources of various kinds to the department. The single case of this department suggests that, when the humanities embrace the market, students will come, and other kinds of resources will follow. But it also raises questions for further study about the larger context of the humanities: what is the net effect across the spectrum of

humanities disciplines, of a small number of interdisciplinary programs that successfully move the humanities toward the market? A meta-analysis of academic program restructuring through interdisciplinarity in the humanities could generate a more nuanced understanding of patterns of knowledge valuation and resource flows within the humanities, extending current knowledge that generally explores the differing trends between the humanities and other disciplinary categories.

Finally, while interdisciplinarity in the sciences is generally expensive, interdisciplinarity in the humanities is cheap. In the sciences, interdisciplinarity takes place largely in the research enterprise, sometimes involving graduate education. Research-focused centers and institutes supplement but do not supplant departmental structures; the infrastructure of laboratories and technologies and space is costly; and the institutional investment in administrative infrastructure to support sponsored research, licensing, technology transfer, research compliance, and other interstitial functions (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004) is enormously expensive. But in the humanities, interdisciplinarity is implemented on the backs of faculty members, who are redeployed strategically to maximize student teaching while minimizing cost. The joint appointment represents a form of restructuring, enabling a shift in faculty teaching responsibilities from low-enrollment to high-enrollment fields, without changing the salary scale, which in the humanities is already at the low end of the range. Not much is required in the way of research infrastructure to support interdisciplinarity in the humanities, either: small-scale funding to buy out faculty instructional commitments to allow time for interdisciplinary projects, perhaps, and a robust policy infrastructure to support mentoring and tenure and promotion processes for jointly appointed faculty.

The distribution of jointly appointed faculty at Michigan is telling: the joint appointment is far more pervasive in the humanities than in the sciences. Perhaps this is specific to the recent interdisciplinary hiring initiative at Michigan, or perhaps this pattern extends over time and across institutions that have articulated interdisciplinarity as a strategic objective. Differences in the practice of interdisciplinarity between the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities might be illuminated by identifying cross-institutional patterns in the nature and penetration of the joint appointment across disciplinary sectors – or the numbers of interdisciplinary centers and institutes, noting funding levels and the distribution of home disciplines of affiliated faculty – or the existence of, and trends in undergraduate student enrollment in, interdisciplinary majors. How is interdisciplinarity different – in its intellectual impacts, structural forms, and resource profiles – in the humanities and other sectors of the academy? Deeper inquiry in this area might inform best practices as institutions, faculty, and administrators wrestle with the constantly changing knowledge landscape higher education institutions are creating and to which they are expected to respond.

Interdisciplinarity in the undergraduate major, designed to attract students and their tuition dollars, may be a survival strategy for the humanities, but further study may show that the decline in the humanities is inexorable. Does interdisciplinarity in the humanities amplify the stratification of institutions, with market leaders able to sustain humanistic disciplines alongside interdisciplinary departments, and resource-poor institutions having to make hard choices? And what are the demographic impacts of interdisciplinarity in the humanities, that often celebrates diversity of various kinds, while institutionalizing “double counting” through multiplied affiliations of individual faculty

members? Further study may also indicate whether interdisciplinarity in the humanities is a deliberately articulated strategy of faculty and administrators interested in restructuring without the pain of closures or firings, or the result of an accretion of small changes that add up to a significant trend. For instance, faculty members in Screen Arts and Cultures seem happy with joint appointments, rather than exploited by them – perhaps, like students who double major, they see expanded options for intellectual growth and their career path, including access to more journals, disciplinary associations, and a wider array of jobs. Who is driving the restructuring via interdisciplinarity, and is anyone on campus noticing?

An additional thread that warrants further investigation is the intersection of pre-professional curricula and the humanities. The research to date tends to place them in opposition to one another, but the case of Screen Arts and Cultures illustrates the possibilities for students, faculty, and institutions when they are integrated, even if uneasily so. It is possible for the humanities to embrace the market, and to make tangible their vocational relevance beyond the value-based, elitist clichés about critical thinking. To what extent does interdisciplinarity, with its origins in problem-based combinations of knowledges, facilitate the integration of pre-professional curricula? Are undergraduate programs in film and video studies at other institutions experiencing successes similar to those of Screen Arts and Cultures? And which other interdisciplinary undergraduate fields in the humanities and social sciences are also drawing student enrollments and reshaping the undergraduate curriculum with an applied or pre-professional orientation? Is it possible to step away from the fetishization of the humanities, and engineer their continuing relevance not just with rhetoric but also with resources? Cross-case analysis

of such programs at other institutions might point to generalizable trends along the lines of the narrative of Screen Arts and Cultures – or perhaps would reveal alternative pathways by which interdisciplinary undergraduate programs are taking hold and reshaping the heart of the university.

My findings from an in-depth analysis of Screen Arts and Cultures are thus more generative than definitive. The particulars of the case may provide an instructive model for faculty and administrators addressing similar challenges and opportunities in moving the humanities to market in other institutions. It is what the case suggests about broader themes of interdisciplinarity, academic capitalism, and the undergraduate major in the humanities, however, which may matter most to scholars and administrators alike. The heart of the university – some might say its soul – is changing. Shaping that change matters, in the service of students, faculty, and the public good.

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Appendix A: List of documents

Documents obtained for background information are noted below; documents cited in the study are also included in the reference list.

Screen Arts and Cultures

- Faculty list with titles and biographies (website)
- SAC concentration description and curriculum (website)
- SAC career guide (website)
- SAC newsletters: Fall 2001, Fall 2002, Winter 2004, Fall 2004, Fall 2005, Fall 2006, Fall 2008, Winter 2011
- Exit interview survey results, 2013
- Placement survey preliminary results, 2013
- Academic year 2011-2012 undergraduate student climate survey
- Report on tenure practices for artists at peer universities, 2011
- Finding aid for Department of SAC Records, 1988-2005, Bentley Historical Library
- 1988 Program Review: Report of the review committee; Report of the external reviewers
- 1993 Program Review: Plan for development of the program; Review of film and video activities; Inventory of LS&A film and video equipment; Needs of the film/video program; Courses and faculty using film outside of film-video program; Report from the director; Report of the external review committee
- 2004 Program Review: Report of the external review committee
- University of Michigan Entertainment Coalition (UMEC) history and activities (website)

LS&A

- “At A Glance” fact sheet
- Undergraduate program and course approval processes, LS&A
- Progress report on the LS&A initiative to improve undergraduate education
- Majors and minors with program descriptions (website)

University of Michigan

- Michigan Almanac institutional data (website)
- Endowment fund profile and financial reports, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
- 2010 Reaccreditation self-study report
- 2000 Reaccreditation report on interdisciplinary initiative
- Conference program and white paper on “The Liberal Arts & Sciences in the Research University Today” conference convened at UM in May, 2013
- Tuition and registration fees and course fees, 2013-14
- Policy statement and procedures for reviewing new academic program proposals

Society for Cinema and Media Studies

- Organizational history
- 2011-2012 membership profile

Michigan Film Initiative

- Michigan strategic fund act (excerpt), Act 270 of 1984
- Michigan film and digital media incentive FAQs
- Michigan Film Office film and digital media incentive, 2013

Appendix B: Letter of invitation and consent

Dear [insert name]:

I am a doctoral student in the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia, with a research interest in interdisciplinary undergraduate programs. I am writing to request your participation in my dissertation research, which involves a case study of film and media studies at a leading public research university. Your name and contact information were provided [on the program's website/by another participant in the study {name}].

The purpose of my research is to understand more fully why and how interdisciplinary undergraduate programs get established, and the implications of such programs for students and faculty, academic departments and disciplines, and institutions. I am especially interested in the ways such programs explicitly connect interdisciplinary academic study in humanistic fields with professional opportunities for students; this is better understood in pre-professional and STEM fields, but less so in humanities disciplines. This work will expand on current understandings of interdisciplinarity in undergraduate instruction, as well as the strategic imperatives that shape program development in response to opportunities and pressures in the environment.

I am interested in capturing your perspective as [title], on the genesis, implementation, and impact of the film and media studies program at [institution]. You would be speaking from your own perspective and experience, and not officially on behalf of your institution. If you are willing to participate and your schedule permits, I would like to interview you during the month of [date], when I will be in [location]. The interview will not take more than one hour and I will meet you at a time and place convenient to you.

If you choose to participate, reasonable efforts will be made to keep any individually-identifiable information in your research record private and confidential. Unless you would prefer to be mentioned by name, I will use indirect identifiers (such as, a faculty member) both in the study and in the research records. There is a place at the end of this letter to document your preferences in this regard. With your permission, an audio recording of our conversation will be saved to help me remember what was said at the interview. The audio files will be destroyed once they have been fully transcribed. While conducting the study, only my faculty adviser and I will have access to the audio files and transcripts. All information will be stored in a locked file or password-protected computer in my home office.

Also, I would be happy to provide you with a preliminary draft of the report for your approval and with future publications related to this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary; you can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason and without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information. I do not foresee any risks or

discomforts you might experience from your participation, and there are no direct benefits to you. I do hope that there will be broader benefit arising from my findings that may improve understanding and development of future interdisciplinary undergraduate programs.

I would be most grateful if you would be willing to make the time to participate. Your perspectives will be invaluable for my study. If you already know you would like to participate and want to schedule an interview, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at lbachman@uga.edu or by phone at 706-206-9363. Otherwise, I will follow up by email or phone in the coming weeks to check on your interest in participating, answer questions, and schedule an interview time if you are willing and available.

If you are willing and available for an interview, I will bring hard copies of this letter for review and signatures, to document your preferences on direct or indirect identification and provide a copy for both of our records.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; telephone 706-542-3199; email IRB@uga.edu. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Sheila Slaughter, by email at slaughtr@uga.edu or by phone at 706-542-0571.

Again, thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Linda P. Bachman
Doctoral student
Institute of Higher Education, UGA

___ I understand that the researcher will use only indirect identifiers, and not my name or title, in the written report of this study.

___ I understand that the researcher may use my name and title in the written report of this study.

Participant's signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

Appendix C: Interview protocol

1. Could you provide an overview of your role in the Screen Arts and Cultures major at the University of Michigan? How did you get involved?
2. How did the program start?
 - a. Who initiated the program, and why?
 - b. Who were the program's early supporters?
 - c. What obstacles were there to its establishment, and how did you [they] overcome them?
 - d. Would you say that the primary drivers of this relatively new major were faculty who developed the curriculum, or were there non-faculty pressures that led to its establishment?
3. What external factors were at work in the initiation of the program?
 - a. Was there significant student demand, and/or pressures to generate credit hours by increasing enrollments?
 - b. Was this type of program part of a broad strategic planning goal for the university or the college?
 - c. Were there industry or alumni resources or other external funding sources that played a role in getting the program off the ground?
4. And how has the program evolved to its present form?
 - a. Has there been a change in administrative status or structure supporting the major?
 - b. Can you share enrollment figures over time, or other indicators of student demand? Have enrollments in other majors dropped as students have chosen Screen Arts and Cultures?
 - c. What about student placement successes and alumni involvement, if any?
 - d. Do you feel that the program has appropriate resources – faculty, staff, budget, space, administrative support? How have the program's resources grown or changed in recent years, especially as state and higher education budgets have been hit hard by the economic downturn?
5. Can you tell me about the faculty's role in the program?
 - a. Which disciplines or departments is the faculty drawn from?
 - b. Are current faculty jointly appointed with home departments elsewhere, or fully within the program? How has this program affected the numbers or distribution of faculty in related departments?

- c. What is the mix of faculty who teach in the program – e.g., tenure-track, adjunct, clinical, lecturer, graduate student instructor? Has the number or composition of the faculty grown or changed over the life of the program?
 - d. Were some faculty resistant to the establishment of the program, and why?
6. How are students recruited to the major?
- a. Are there any particular marketing efforts that the program undertakes on campus? If there are marketing materials – e.g., brochures or posters – I would appreciate it if you could share copies with me.
 - b. Is there outreach to parents, or alumni, or industries that employ your graduates, that helps in selling the program to prospective students?
 - c. Who is primarily responsible for recruiting and advising students? (e.g., professional advisors, program faculty)
7. How has the program been evaluated?
- a. Is there a mandated formal evaluation process? If so, can you describe the major findings? Is there a report of that evaluation that you would be able to share with me?
 - b. What about other forms of evaluation: e.g., student course evaluations, or exit interviews, or annual reports?
8. Within the college and the university as a whole, what is your sense of the status and stature of the program?
- a. E.g., is it widely regarded as a success, or a model for other programs to emulate?
 - b. E.g., does it capture the attention of university administrators, trustees, or public affairs personnel who trumpet success stories to various audiences, or is it more understated, or under-appreciated?
 - c. Can you give me some examples?
9. Are there others you recommend I speak with, or other reports or materials that you think would be helpful for my study?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to add that perhaps I didn't ask you about, but that you feel is relevant?