



**Faculty of
Communication
& Design**

PhD in Creative Practice Preliminary Letter of Intent

Submitted by
The Faculty of Communication & Design (FCAD)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Proposed Program Name and Degree Designation

Program Name: Creative Practice

Degree Designation: Doctor of Philosophy, PhD

1.2 Identification of Academic Unit Responsible for the Program

The PhD in Creative Practice is a Faculty-wide doctoral program proposed by the Faculty of Communication & Design. The dean of record is the Dean, Faculty of Communication and Design. As is the case with existing FCAD Master's programs, a Graduate Program Director will be appointed by the Dean, FCAD.

1.3 Program Development Committee

The Program Development Committee responsible for this proposal was constructed broadly to represent diverse schools from across FCAD. All committee members hold a PhD and would be potential professors and supervisors within the proposed program. See Appendix 1: Program Development Committee Bios.

The Program Development Committee includes:

Dr. Gene Allen, School of Journalism

Dr. Jean Bruce, Associate Dean of Graduate Education, FCAD

Dr. Charles Davis, RTA School of Media

Dr. Blake Fitzpatrick, School of Image Arts

Dr. David Gauntlett, School of Creative Industries

Dr. Wendy Freeman, School of Professional Communication

Dr. Bruno Lessard, School of Image Arts

Dr. Ali Mazalek, RTA School of Media

1.4 Program Consistency with Ryerson's Mission and the Academic Plan of FCAD

As stated in the Ryerson Academic Plan, 2014-19:

Ryerson's distinctive core mission – to serve societal need by providing career-related and professional education, and scholarly, creative and research activities – responds to the demand for highly skilled, creative and critical thinkers who can frame increasingly interconnected, complex problems and determine effective solutions. It conveys the responsibility to serve as well as anticipate and respond to societal need by seeking and defining new opportunities to make the world better (Our Turn to Lead, Ryerson University Academic Plan 2014-19, Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic).

Ryerson's academic plan is differentiated by a unique focus on career-related education that combines creative and scholarly activities in order to serve societal need. The Faculty of Communication and Design's academic plan balances creative and scholarly activity in an increasingly interdisciplinary context that leverages existing curricula to create unique learning experiences that meet the needs of the cultural, communication

and creative industries.

The PhD in Creative Practice takes its direction from these plans and priorities. The goal of the program is to deliver an interdisciplinary education that balances scholarship and creative project-based research to meet the anticipated needs of the academic, cultural and non-profit communities for skilled and qualified scholar-practitioners.

A focus on the career-ready aspect of the degree is consistent with Ryerson's mission and is strengthened by program flexibility in allowing candidates to study on a full or part-time basis. For employed candidates this will provide an opportunity to maintain an existing position, self-fund their education and potentially use their affiliations within a cultural industry to develop a research project.

Consistent with FCAD's interdisciplinary focus, the program will support interdisciplinary exchange and an affiliation between the doctoral candidate and existing FCAD graduate programs and schools. Learning in a faculty-wide context, doctoral students will integrate with Master's students in courses presently offered under the shared elective band of Communication and Design courses. A differentiated scale of evaluation will be developed with higher-level course expectations for the doctoral candidates. Doctoral candidates will be expected to find their supervisors within an FCAD School most directly related to their program of research.

2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

2.1 Admission Requirements and Process

The minimum academic requirement is the completion of a Master's degree in a field that is related to the proposed program of study. A minimum grade average of B+ or 3.33/4.33 in the last two years of a Master's program is required.¹ Evidence of ability to carry out a project-based program of research will be demonstrated through the applicant's Curriculum Vitae, a detailed letter of intent and research proposal.

An interdisciplinary Admissions Committee will adjudicate applications to the program. The Admissions Committee will have representation from FCAD graduate programs who hold membership in the Yeates School of Graduate Studies. Students will apply to the program with a statement of intent that identifies an interest in one of the areas of concentration (media or design) and a proposed practice-focused research or demonstration project to be developed through the program.

Applicants will be required to establish contact with a potential supervisor before application to the program. The Admissions Committee will require a letter or email from an identified faculty supervisor indicating an interest in working with a given applicant. The potential will also make it clear whether or not funding is available to support the student's SRC. A list of supervisors with bios and identified research interests will be made available to the all applicants via a program website.

¹ Students holding a relevant 1-year master's degree will also be considered.

2.2 Program Overview

The practice-focused PhD in Creative Practice is an innovative, doctoral program that builds on FCAD's history of applied education and addresses the need for scholar-practitioners in the communication and creative industries, and in academic fields. The practice-based focus of the program may be particularly well suited to those interested in entering the academic field as professors or instructors within applied university and college settings.² Among other possibilities are researcher-practitioners in digital media industries, senior research scientists, developers within industry-based research centres, as well as government and policy-related careers.

As Chapman and Sawchuk (2012) maintain, research-creation projects typically integrate a creative process or practice. An experimental aesthetic component, artistic work or prototype is an integral part of the study, but in its aim to generate new knowledge its "methodological and epistemological challenge is to the argumentative form(s) that have typified much academic scholarship" (6). Thus, "research-creation [becomes] a form of critical intervention," a means of speaking to mediated experiences and "modes of knowing" (7).

The program offers concentrations in the fields of media and design with doctoral candidates supervised by affiliated faculty from one of FCAD's Masters-level degree programs.

The curriculum for the program is original, and will introduce students to the study of innovative research methodologies. Doctoral candidates will complete a qualitative research methods course that supports their research question as well as a practice-based research methods course that is focused on the emerging field of creative practices and research-creation methodologies. The curriculum also includes a required graduate colloquium, two elective courses drawn from affiliated graduate programs and a directed reading course to prepare for comprehensive examinations.

The doctoral program in Creative Practice will appeal to practitioners in the design and communication fields who are interested in developing advanced credentials through a terminal degree, who wish to pursue intensive project-based research and who want to take a more scholarly approach to their work.

The program is not a professional program and/or a full cost recovery program.

2.3 Unique Features of the Program

There are three unique features to the program. The proposal calls for a practice-focused PhD program and provides candidates with an opportunity to study on a full or part-time basis and to conduct an internship³ in a field related to the proposed research project.

² See Chapman and Sawchuk, "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances,'" *Canadian Journal of Communication*, Vol. 37 (2012) 5-26.

³ Not all doctoral candidates may qualify for an internship, nor are all project proposals "internship receptive." The internship is not a required component of the PhD.

Practice-focused doctoral programs are not unprecedented within the university sector. In fact, they are well-established internationally.⁴ They are an emerging option for advanced doctoral study in Canada, however, and as a point of differentiation, this will be Ryerson's first practice-focused PhD.

The proposed PhD in Creative Practice will bridge multiple disciplines in FCAD through a combination of intensive project-based investigation, the study of emerging research and creation methodologies and advanced sectorial engagement in the creative and communication industries.

The program's practice-focused approach offers candidates an opportunity to engage in socially relevant research topics, such as: create a demonstration project that tests a communication strategy or technology; produce a prototype of a new financial model for emerging technologies in the field of journalism; or develop an exhibition or publication within the fields of media and design that investigates a current issue or trend with multimedia solutions.

As an emerging method of study, practice-focused approaches to the PhD have generated new and innovative curricula, and have added to the study of research methods, with new course offerings in, for example, 'creative practice research.' As defined by RMIT (see Comparator Programs, RMIT, Melbourne) "creative practice research is research in the medium of creative practice itself." Rephrased, we suggest that a practice-focused curriculum supports research questions that can only be resolved through the actuality of a situated practice. Following Sawchuk and Chapman, we argue that as an epistemology "it is not our intention to police the meaning of the term research-creation, but rather to open up its potential as an approach."⁵

The contribution to knowledge produced through this form of research will be original in content and form. The demonstrated practice will be accompanied by documentation and a contextualization of the research question and process.

Every project will be expected to:

- address a clearly stated research question;
- explore the question through rigorous methods;
- communicate the research journey and its findings in a clear and systematic manner.

While the specifics of what constitutes a practice-focused project will vary depending on the individual FCAD graduate program with which the doctoral candidate will affiliate, the contextualization of the research project will be expected to follow identified parameters in the form of a written exegesis of approximately 30,000 words.

In keeping with the focus on career readiness and to provide enhanced curricular flexibility for life-long learners who may wish to stay connected to the work place, the program of study will be offered on both a full and part-time basis. Part-time study extends the length of the program to six years and is not financially supported by the

⁴ See chart of comparator universities, pp. 18-22.

⁵ Chapman and Sawchuk, p.7.

university. Part-time students in need of workspace while on campus, will be able to access facilities at the Student Learning Centre (SLC).

As participants in a practice-focused program, students would have the opportunity to augment their program of study with an internship. Students, in consultation with their supervisory committees, would be responsible for identifying potential partner organizations. A proposed internship would require the approval of the supervisory committee and must be shown to advance the student's research question or project. An approved internship, with a relevant industry partner or research facility, could replace the required two electives within the program. The student supervisory committee, in collaboration with the partner organization, will be responsible for setting the expectations for the internship and must also be directly involved in supervising and coordinating the findings of the internship, which will have a demonstration and written component. The expectation is that interns will be paid by the partner organization, though the rate of compensation could vary from placement to placement.

2.4 Curriculum Overview

The proposed PhD in Creative Practice is a four-year interdisciplinary practice-focused program of study for students interested in academic careers as scholar-practitioners, practice-oriented teaching careers at the college or university level or research-focused careers in the media and design industries. To prepare students for these outcomes, a rigorous program of study has been developed based on the emerging specialist field of practice-focused creative research strategies. These studies will contextualize the production of practice-focused research creation projects. Each student will be expected to individually develop a dissertation, constituting an original contribution to knowledge, which may be demonstrated through projects, interactive designs, applications, or prototypes of particular relevance to designated audiences. Depending on the nature of the SRC, students may have the opportunity to collaborate with other students or faculty members. This may provide a basis for a dissertation, but all dissertations must be individually realized.

The program of study combines required course work, interdisciplinary offerings drawn from shared graduate electives as taught in existing FCAD Master's-level programs and the option of an internship approved by the supervisory committee that may replace the elective course requirements.⁶

Year One: Fall

All students within the program will take the *Graduate Colloquium*. The colloquium functions to introduce graduate students to one another and to FCAD faculty affiliated with the program. Faculty presentations on relevant project research will be broadly contextualized through an interdisciplinary and expansive reading course that surveys the fields of creative media and design. A thematic focus relevant to practice-focused research will be provided as a way of demonstrating connections across the program areas of concentration.

⁶ Anti-requisites will be in place for graduates from existing FCAD masters programs.

Students are required to take the *Qualitative Research Methods* course that exposes them to a variety of epistemological approaches. The Research Methods course will be developed specifically for the doctoral program as existing Master's-level research method courses tend to be overly program specific. If **warranted by the research project**, a student would be allowed to take a *Quantitative Research Methods* course pending availability within the university.

Year One: Winter

Practice Based Research Methods is a required course that investigates methodologies associated with the emerging fields of project-based research and creative practice research. Research that incorporates or results in demonstration projects, creative objects and prototypes will be studied.

One of the two required graduate-level electives will be taken in the second semester. Graduate electives are selected from graduate programs across FCAD (see 2.7 Course Descriptions: FCAD Graduate Electives). The expectation is that the doctoral candidate will choose an elective in an area of concentration that supports the dissertation. Integrating doctoral students into FCAD Master's graduate programs has the benefit of providing an opportunity for doctoral and master's-level students to work together. With the support of the graduate supervisor and respective program directors, electives may also be selected from across the university as relevant to the student's research plan.

Year Two: Fall

The course, *Directed Reading* will be offered in the fall semester of second year. The course will help to prepare the student for the Comprehensive Examination to follow in the Winter semester. The reading list is prepared by the student and approved by the supervisory committee.

Year Two: Winter

The second of two graduate electives will be taken in the winter semester. In addition, the Comprehensive Examination will be successfully completed by the end of the second year of study.

The Comprehensive Examination tests breadth and depth of knowledge as applied to the program's research concentration in creative media and design. It is expected that the candidate will develop research questions and reading lists to support an essay comprising the 'major comprehensive' in a concentration that is closest to the research project and two 'minor comprehensives' in the other concentrations. An oral defense of the Comprehensive Exams will follow, normally within two weeks of their submission. A dissertation proposal must be approved by the supervisory committee in the second year of the program and is required by the end of the Spring semester.

Year Three and Four

The last two years of the program are dedicated to the research and production of the dissertation project and the contextualization of the project in a written exegesis (critical explanation of the body of work) of approximately 30,000-40,000 words or between 80-100 pages. Documentation of the practice component of the thesis is required and will take a form that is appropriate to the work.

Supervisory Committee

Students will establish a supervisory committee consisting of a supervisor and two faculty members who are members of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies (YSGS) and have been approved for program membership by the Graduate Program Council (GPC). The supervisor is expected to hold a PhD. Given the practice focus of the program, other committee members may hold a terminal degree, such as the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree, a Master of Design (MDes), another relevant Master's degree, or a PhD.

Dissertation Examination Committee

The Dissertation Examination Committee is composed of a supervisor, two faculty members who are members of YSGS and FCAD, one additional faculty member from outside of the Faculty and one external member who is an expert in a field aligned with the practice-focused component of the degree. The external examiner will be drawn from another academic institution.

2.5 Curriculum Structure

Table 1: Curriculum Structure

Year	Fall	Winter
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Graduate ColloquiumQualitative Research Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ElectivePractice-focused Research Methods
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Directed Reading: Preparation for Comprehensive Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ElectiveComprehensive ExamDissertation proposal
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Independent Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Independent Study
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Independent Study	Dissertation: Practice-focused presentation, documentation and written exegesis to be followed by an examination conducted by the supervisory committee.

* New courses will include the Graduate Colloquium, Qualitative Research Methods, Practice-focused Research Methods, and Directed Reading.

** An approved internship may replace up to two electives.

2.6 Course Descriptions: Required Courses

Graduate Colloquium

The graduate colloquium is an academic seminar led by faculty affiliated with the program. The seminar introduces graduate students to the fields of media and design through a coherent and interdisciplinary set of readings. The readings will be thematically organized and subject to ongoing revision by program faculty. Guest speakers from the creative industries, cultural institutions, as well as independent artists and cultural researchers will be invited to the colloquium. Field trips as relevant to student research interests will be organized.

Qualitative Research Methods

This seminar presents qualitative research methods such as observation, interviews, and focus groups, as well as forms of sampling, recruitment strategies, the collection of evidence via field notes and audiovisual media, and related issues such as research ethics. With an emphasis on local and global perspectives, such research methods prepare students to analyze the complex nature of reality via thick descriptions of human experience in terms of behaviours, beliefs, opinions, gender, ethnicity, and religion in various socio-cultural and economic contexts.

Practice-based Research Methods

This seminar examines several methodologies associated with the emerging fields of practice-focused research and creative practice research. Students analyze various research methods sustaining the practice of visual artists, designers, and media makers by drawing on the scholarship and literature on art and media as well as communication practices as research. Particular emphasis will be put on the research methods that have been used to create knowledge via traditional, experimental, ludic, and social media. Research that incorporates or results in demonstration projects, creative objects, and prototypes will be studied.

Directed Reading

The directed reading course is designed to survey and review key texts that are relevant to student's research project or question. The student will develop a bibliography of readings on a topic or area of concentration under the direction of the faculty supervisor or a member of the supervisory committee. These texts will be used to contextualize the research project and will result in a completed research paper on the topic of investigation.

2.7 Course Descriptions: Faculty of Communication & Design, Shared Graduate Electives⁷

CD8310: Topics in Cross Cultural Communication

The term *cross-cultural competence* denotes a vast complex of competencies, which educators, politicians and business leaders around the world have identified as one of the most crucial of the 21st century. The purpose of this course will be to foster such "competence" through a wide-ranging examination of the major social issues that affect communication across national and cultural boundaries.

CD8320: Media Language: Forms, Approaches

This interdisciplinary course will investigate both common elements (visual and auditory narratives, methods of presentation/distribution, cultural roles) and specific attributes (individual characteristics and technologies) of contemporary media forms. Key developments in the evolution of media types and media languages will be explored in the larger context of understanding critical and theoretical issues associated with these forms and languages.

CD8330: Audiences and the Public

This course will begin with the work of Jürgen Habermas and his influential notion that

⁷ There are two new FCAD electives being proposed at this writing that may be particularly relevant to students in this program and these will be added to the list at a later date.

"the public" is not something that can be taken for granted, but a very specific historical development that first emerged in the 17th century in the bourgeois societies of Western Europe. The course will examine how the idea of "the public" or "the audience" has taken shape at different times; for example, the "imagined communities" that are the foundations of modern nations could not have taken shape in the absence of mass media. Different conceptions of the audience that arise from the different disciplines offered across the Faculty of Communication & Design will be examined.

CD8340: Media Writing: Critical and Narrative Forms

This course will explore issues of form, expression and viewpoint in writing for contemporary visual arts and media. The emphasis will be on essays and critical studies, but writing of summaries, proposals and analyses will also be covered. Traditions of literary and arts criticism form a basis for study of contemporary writing practices for both print and screen-based media.

CD8350: Socially Engaged Media

Bringing together master's students in Social Work and Documentary Media, this research/creation seminar explores socially engaged practices which privilege collaboration and social interaction in an interdisciplinary dialogue. These practices adopt and borrow from such disciplines as pedagogy, theatre, ethnography, anthropology, art and social work. Through praxis we will explore common methodological problems faced by researchers and practitioners in relation to their subjects and communities.

JN8106 The History of News

This course will study the evolution of journalism from 1600 to the present, with a particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on developments in Canada. It will examine the various forms that news took at different periods and in different places; how news influenced culture and was influenced by it, as well as by changing technology, business organization, and markets; how different audiences used and responded to news; and how the producers of news understood their work in relation to their society, their audiences, their employers and their peers.

PC8101 Advanced Speaking and Presentation Technology

This course builds upon fundamental informative and persuasive speaking techniques by introducing students to their advocacy role as professional communicators. Students learn how to adapt high-level messages for a variety of internal and external audiences and effective audience-response strategies. They will learn the use of presentation technology such as PowerPoint, podcasting, and webcasting to transmit their messages effectively. Theories of self-presentation, presentation protocol, medium and message, and cognitive perception underlie the course. Students will deliver presentations to their peers and have the opportunity to use the Professional Communication Department's new media facilities to create and broadcast audio podcasts and videocasts on the Department's intranet for feedback and evaluation. Spoken voice training to achieve clarity and confidence in oral communications is a part of this course.

PC8105 Proposal Writing, Grant Seeking and Fundraising

This course provides a detailed introduction to the multidimensional processes of grant-seeking and the strategic principles of writing proposals for research funding and non-profit fundraising. Through a theoretical framework grounded in classical and modern rhetoric, meta-rhetoric, and narratology, students will explore how professional communicators construct polished arguments to generate support. From the perspective of both grant seekers and multidisciplinary peer-review audiences, students will learn how to identify and target government, foundation, and corporate funding sources/opportunities, to translate project goals and problem statements into clear objectives and hypotheses reflective of societal need, and to coordinate activities in the planning, development, structuring, and articulation of feasible, methodologically rigorous, and conceptually innovative research projects/proposals. Students will also gain practice in applying these techniques to fundraising initiatives and tasks including outreach and the cultivation of potential foundation and corporate donors.

2.8 Intersection with FCAD Master's Programs

The PhD program is an interdisciplinary program that builds upon the curricular strengths of the schools and existing Master's programs within FCAD. Applicants to the program will be selected based upon a perceived intersection with the candidate's intended research and the program goals of existing Master's programs. This will be accomplished with a program Admissions Committee composed of professors and YSGS members from across the Faculty drawn from each Master's program. Doctoral candidates are expected to affiliate with at least one of the schools and to intersect with the research interests of faculty who teach in at least one of the Master's programs. Faculty engagement with an applicant to the program is required and includes the consent of a faculty member who is interested in serving as a supervisor for the intended research project. Students admitted into the program will be invited as researchers into the labs of the programs with which they affiliate, and permitted use of facilities and equipment to produce their research. Doctoral students will study alongside Master's level students in the shared graduate electives offered across the Faculty.

2.9 Potential Overlap with Existing Programs at Ryerson University

One potential source of overlap with an existing program concerns **one** of three streams, Technology and Practice, at the doctoral level in the joint graduate program in Communication and Culture (ComCult).⁸

On the program's website, the Technology and Practice stream is defined as offering research and seminars that focus on the development, application and influence of historical, current and emerging communication technologies in cultural production, both personal and organizational. (See ComCult graduate program website at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/programs/comcult/areas-of-study/index.html>). The

⁸ N.B. The York side of the joint program in Communication and Culture has internal "competition" from a variety of media and arts PhD programs with possible applied components, such as, Visual Arts, Cinema and Media, Theatre and Performance, Environmental Studies and Humanities.

program has a stated interest in digital media, film and photography and does allow students to produce creative projects as part of their dissertation.

A key differentiator between the proposed program and ComCult is that the SRC components will be distinct. They will differ on the basis of topic, method, and output.

Significant to the proposed program in Creative Practice is its engagement with creative industries from the perspective practice and design. This reflects and builds on the Faculty's established strength in creative media from Fashion to Film. Likewise, its professional graduate-level programs, such as in Journalism and Professional Communication provide focus on doctoral research that emphasizes the *demonstration* project as research outcome, over and above a *studies* focus on communication technologies and forms. The program web site notes that **one** student graduated from the Technology and Practice stream over a ten-year period, and this project is not specifically practice-based.⁹ Of all the dissertations listed in the Technology and Practice stream joint program three (3) were supervised at Ryerson and none are practice-based. Rather they are *research and analysis of technological and creative practices*, which are consistent with doctoral research in the broad areas of communication and cultural studies fields. The FCAD Creative Practice PhD is focused on producing a creative project, demonstrable prototype or application and to serving this specific research-practice agenda. We expect students to be particularly well-served by a program specifically designed to foster their research and creative practice. As indication of the legitimacy of research-creation, this field now requires a standalone program to support and develop the critical mass of creative practice doctoral output.

A point of emphasis is the proposed program's concentrated engagement with the emerging literature and methodologies concerning practice-focused inquiry as a form of knowledge production. One of the program's goals is to engage and extend the literature on practice-focused methodologies through the research of both students and faculty, specifically research-creation in the visual arts and media design fields. Our core courses offer visual arts-related and design-related instruction at the doctoral level. The intended applicant differentiates the two programs. We aim to develop creative practice researchers and to engage scholars to apply and evolve unique design methods to complex problems that are enabled by technology and new design empathies.

FCAD faculty members possess strong capacity to offer the proposed program. Currently, there are 60 full-time FCAD faculty members holding a PhD and another 30 holding an MFA or other terminal degree, such as an MDes or MBA, some with additional discipline-specific accreditation.¹⁰ Of these, 13 FCAD faculty members are currently affiliated with ComCult's Technology in Practice.¹¹ The proposed program will therefore provide opportunities for supervision and supervisory committee membership for faculty members that are not currently affiliated with ComCult. Individual faculty members may, of course, hold affiliations with both ComCult and the proposed

⁹ <https://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/programs/comcult/prospective-students/alumnae-full/>

¹⁰ The remaining 38 have Master of Arts degrees, Master of Education, or Master of Science degrees

¹¹ Technology in Practice is one of three streams within ComCult. It may be perceived to have some overlap with the PhD in Creative Practice.

program. The key point, however, is that there is currently capacity within FCAD to offer both programs, including the teaching, supervisory, and service loads. That capacity will only continue to expand as FCAD continues its ambitious faculty renewal efforts. Moreover, engaging faculty members not currently affiliated with ComCult in the proposed program, will provide differentiation in the types of topics, methods, and outputs that the program can offer.

The intended applicant also differentiates the two programs. Applicants to the proposed Creative Practice PhD are more likely to be working within the creative industries and professional practice from the outset. The structure of the program recognizes this student profile and has by way of a part-time option developed a doctoral program that is both accessible to and will encourage candidates who develop research projects that might be situated in their employment context.

3. SOCIETAL NEED AND VIABILITY OF THE PROGRAM

3.1 Evidence of Emerging Need

Graduates of the proposed PhD in Creative Practice will be well positioned to find employment in the growing creative and cultural industries, and the academic sector with a particular emphasis on applied or practice-focused teaching opportunities.

In June 2016, Hill Strategies, a Canadian company that specializes in applying social science research methods to the arts sector, reported that direct economic impact of Canada's culture industries (also known as value added or gross domestic product) was \$61.7 billion in 2014, or 3.3% of the country's GDP.¹²

In a comparative analysis, the report notes that the GDP of the culture industries is much larger than the value added of agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (\$29 billion); accommodation and food services (\$38 billion); and utilities (\$43 billion).

Hill Strategies also notes that the direct economic impact of culture (\$61.7 billion) is 10 times larger than that of sports (\$6.1 billion). Hill Strategies' findings are based on Statistics Canada's Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2010 to 2014,¹³ which were released in May 2016. Key contributors to the economic impact statistics were the relatively high employment rates in the cultural and communication industries. An estimated \$54.6 billion in economic benefit, representing approximately 3.5% of all jobs in Canada, is attributed to Canadian cultural industries. Some of the key contributors to these benefits include for example:

- Audio-visual and interactive media: \$18.4 billion
- Visual and applied arts: \$11.2 billion
- Written and published works: \$9.7 billion

¹² See Hill Strategies report on the economic benefits of culture, Volume: 15 Issue 3, at: http://www.hillstrategies.com/sites/default/files/ARM_vol15_no3.pdf

A summary of the report was published in Canadian Art Weekly, 06.23.16 at: <https://canadianart.ca/news/culture-impacts-economy/>

¹³ See <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/13-604-m/13-604-m2016081-eng.htm>

We highlight these in particular because the proposed PhD in Creative Practice will specifically address these areas as concentrations in the program. Graduates of the program will be career ready to enter and to potentially take leadership and research-oriented roles in the expanding creative and cultural sectors. Ryerson's location in downtown Toronto, centre of much of this growth, coupled with FCAD's reputation as Ryerson's creative innovation hub, will benefit students in the program by providing opportunities to network with these industries. The proposed program includes an internship option to better facilitate these connections.

While graduates of the program will have the opportunities above to work in creative industry, government, and science, they will also be well-equipped for careers in academe. In addition to academic careers as professors, staff and administrators in universities, there is evidence of emerging need within the publicly funded college system for applicants who hold a completed doctorate.¹⁴ A report by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (Toronto) investigating alternative paths to university teaching for PhD graduates states that:

Ontario's 24 publicly funded colleges employ 7,000 full-time instructors and are offering an increased number of university and university-articulated programs for which they require faculty with earned doctorates.¹⁵

Graduates of the proposed doctoral program would be particularly suited to meet this demand as the practice-focused component of the program is aligned with the applied educational mandate of the college system.

3.2 Program Viability

The Faculty of Communication & Design is a dynamic and growing Faculty with over 140 tenured and/or tenure-track faculty. The program will draw faculty expertise and research strength from across the Faculty of Communication & Design. Collectively, the Faculty amasses a considerable number of highly active and externally funded researchers representing a diverse range of research expertise and topics of interest. This unique configuration exceeds, by way of a collective and interdisciplinary structure, the teaching and supervisory capacity of any one program. The Faculty-based structure of the degree is one of its innovative strengths as it guarantees potential applicants breadth in terms of their research direction and focus by affiliation with one of six existing Master's programs with depth in a pool of uniquely qualified supervisors.

The six graduate programs in the Faculty of Communication & Design include:

Master of Fine Arts in Documentary Media (MFA):

<http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/documentarymedia/index.html>

Master of Arts in Fashion (MA): <http://mafashion.ryerson.ca/graduate/master-of-arts>

¹⁴ See Section 2.2 Program Overview for other career paths.

¹⁵ See Maldonada, V., Wiggers, R. & Arnold, C. (2013). *So You Want to Earn a PhD? The Attraction, Realities, and Outcomes of Pursuing a Doctorate*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

Master of Arts in Film & Photographic Preservation and Collections Management (MA): <http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/ppcm/index.html>

Master of Journalism (MJ): <http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/journalism/index.html>

Master of Arts in Media Production (MA): <http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/mediaproduction/index.html>

Master of Professional Communication (MPC): <http://procom.ryerson.ca/graduate>

As FCAD expands its externally funded research activities, new tenure-track positions in the Faculty increasingly require a PhD. For example, in 2016, all three tenure-track positions posted by the Faculty required applicants to hold a PhD. This is an example that predicts a significant shift in the future professoriate of the Faculty, one that bodes well for the proposed doctoral program as new faculty appointments increasingly require doctoral qualifications and with that an ability to teach and supervise at the PhD level.

At the time of this writing, the number of full-time faculty members in FCAD holding a PhD level is 60 and 30 more hold a terminal master's degree. Collectively, they have considerable teaching and supervisory experience across the six Masters' programs and many of the full-time faculty members maintain an active record of teaching and supervision in Doctoral programs such as the joint Ryerson/York University Communication and Culture program, among others.

The research strength of tenured and tenure-track faculty within FCAD is considerable. In 2015-2016, FCAD faculty members reported 515 publications (in progress or published) and 265 creative activities (in progress or completed).

Approximately 31% of FCAD tenured and tenure-track faculty hold active internal or external grants. Of these, approximately 13% hold externally funded and adjudicated grants, including funding from the Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council and the Tri-Council agencies (SSHRC predominantly, NSERC, CIHR).

The total sum of externally awarded research and development grants is approximately \$6M-\$8M yearly.

The above numbers do not take into account the approximately \$250,000 of FCAD internal SRC funding, which is distributed mainly as travel and seed grants. Approximately 50 FCAD colleagues received this funding in 2015-2016.

3.3 Comparison to Practice-focused Doctoral Program: Canada

There is no Canadian PhD program that is identical to the proposed program. The proposed program is unique in its practice-focus and is differentiated by the topics, methods, and outputs that will be available to its applicants and students. There are some closer comparator programs in the United Kingdom and Australia. The table below highlights Canadian programs that have some relevance to aspects of the proposed program, but none represent a close comparator.

Table 2: Comparison Programs: Canada

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
York University	PhD in Visual Arts	21 credits (3.5 grad courses)	Required at the end of 2 nd year	4	Written component-support paper
Concordia University	PhD in Humanities	90 credits 24 credits required courses (8 – 3 credit courses)	3 comp exams 1 oral defense	4	Interdisciplinary degree – 3 fields required – one major and 2 minor fields. 2 core courses required: -1 in Methodologies -1 in Interdisciplinary Studies- thematic course 1 elective interdisciplinary studies Note: Students may do a practice based project or an essay for the major field of research.
Concordia University	PhD in Communications	Total-90 credits Courses – 21 credits Thesis proposal – 6 credits Thesis – 63 credits	The Doctoral Examination takes place in the summer of year 1. The examination committee is composed of 3 committee members from at least 2 universities and candidates respond to two questions prepared by the committee.	Min. 3 yrs.	The program offers a research-creation thesis option that includes both a creative and a written component. The written component contextualizes the creative project. All students must register for a Doctoral pro-Seminar and the program is a unique inter-university collaboration with Concordia, The University of Montreal and The University of Quebec at Montreal.
Western University	PhD Art & Visual Culture	Not Available	Course work is completed by the end of 2 nd yr. and followed by a Comprehensive exam.	4	The program accommodates academic research and creative practice. There are three streams which include, a project-based stream requiring a visual creative

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
			-3 rd yr. submit research proposal		project & 80 page support paper; and adapted project-based stream which requires a visual or creative project & 100-150 page paper and a dissertation-based stream which results in a book or series of articles written within a research-creation context.
UQAM	PhD en études et pratiques des arts	90 credits, including 6 three-credit courses (combination of 2 required methodology courses + 4 electives)	Completed by the end of 2nd yr.	4 FT 6 PT	3 types of dissertation: 1- traditional PhD diss. focusing on research, 2- focus on the creation of work meant for public screening, exhibition, etc. with support diss., and 3- focus on performance in a public space or during cultural events (also includes support diss.) Program draws on the resources of 6 departments (dance, music, visual and media arts, theatre, design, and literary studies)
Royal Roads University	Doctor of Social Sciences (DSocSci)	Total 7 courses: 1- Dissertation 1- Directed Study 1- Applied Qualitative Social Scientific Methods 1- Applied Quantitative Social Scientific	Yes		-Applied research doctorate - 6 weeks total residency the balance of the program is delivered on-line - A minimum 10 yrs. work experience required - A Masters in one of the social sciences is required for admission - 15 students max admitted per year

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
		Methods) 2- courses focused on global issues 1 -course on Epistemology of Social Sciences			

3.4 Comparison to Practice-focused Doctoral Programs: International

Table 3: Comparison Programs: International

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
UC Santa Cruz	Film & Digital Media	Students take nine Film & Digital Media courses over the degree. However, students entering the program with an MA or MFA degree may petition to waive up to 6 of their required elective courses. - 3 directed reading courses to prepare for 3 topic areas of the qualifying exam - students must attend the dissertation colloquium	PhD Qualifying Exam	4-6 yrs	Creative and/or analysis thesis. Creative thesis requires a written component of at least 75 pages. Require one year of supervised teaching. -Language requirement – one language other than English (could be computer language) is required.

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
RMIT Melbourne	Art	2-3 Research Methods courses. 1 – Creative Practice Research Strategies 1-Qualitative Research Techniques and/or 1 – Quantitative Research Techniques. - Continuous Registration in PhD Research course	There are no comprehensive exams.	FT -3 yrs. PT 6 yrs.	Doctoral students must attend a series of practice-focused research symposiums. There are two symposiums per year. Students write a 25-40,000 word exegesis of the research project. The course, <i>Creative Practice Research Strategies</i> is concerned with research in the medium of creative practice itself. The course will showcase different perspectives on creative practice research strategies and methodologies, foregrounded by case studies.
University of New South Wales (Sydney)	Art, Design, Media	NA	NA	3 yrs. (min) 4 yrs is typical	Students undertake supervised research leading to the production of a thesis, which may include studio research. The length of a doctoral thesis normally should not exceed 100,000 words of text and may be significantly less in cases where studio research forms part of the thesis.
Auckland University of Technology (AUT)	Art & Design AUT also has a practice-focused Communication Studies PhD	There are no required courses outside of the independent work toward the practice-focused project and a 40-60,000 word exegesis	There are no comprehensive exams.	4 yrs.	The School of Art and Design offers a PhD as a full written thesis or as a body of creative work accompanied by a written exegesis. Areas of concentration parallel those of FCAD: Digital Design (animation, moving image, gaming, web, post production and

University	Program	Required Courses	Comp. Exam	Yrs.	Comments
		of the project.			film). Fashion and Textiles (knit, print, textile, fashion and costume design). Graphics (typography, illustration, animation and short film, photography and graphic novel). Spatial Design (interior, furniture, urbanism, performance, installation, moving image, digital environments, exhibition design and spatial theory). Visual Arts (multimedia, painting, printmaking, sculpture, installation and performance).
Bangor University (Wales)	Creative Studies and Media	NA	NA	FT: 3 yrs. PT: 6 yrs.	Programs parallel those of FCAD and include: Professional Writing, Film, Media, New Media, Journalism, Creative Studies, Drama. Practice led research programs available in the following areas: Digital Culture, Political Communication and Cultural Politics, Cultural and Creative Knowledge and Economy.

4. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Anticipated Enrollment

The anticipated enrollment for the Creative Practice program is 4-6 PhD students per year. This projects an enrollment of approximately 20 students across the Faculty when the program reaches a steady state across the four years of the degree. There are presently six Masters programs in FCAD. Ideally, we anticipate that up to one doctoral applicant will be selected by graduate faculty located in each of the graduate programs; however, we also expect a degree of fluidity as one program may take two or three students one year and none in the next. Ideally, when the program is steady state we would expect two or three students to be affiliated with each of the graduate programs across the Faculty. This presents an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning without presenting excessive demands upon the faculty and space resources of the affiliated program.

4.2 Faculty Requirements

The proposed program will draw primarily from the existing faculty pool across the Faculty of Communication & Design. As the doctoral program grows to reach the proposed steady state of approximately twenty students, the addition of one or two faculty members hired to address needs in the doctoral program will be necessary. This is a relatively modest increase in faculty requirement but we anticipate that on-going faculty renewal across FCAD and within the schools will bring faculty support to the doctoral program.

The Creative Practice PhD is meant to exploit the untapped strengths of research-creation faculty members with doctoral degrees. While it is possible that an FCAD Creative Practice doctoral program will have some impact on the availability of faculty members to teach and supervise in the Communication and Culture program, this would be limited to the Technology and Practice (T&P) stream of the PhD program only. Of the many FCAD faculty members who are **not** research-creation based PhDs, they will continue to support all aspects of the Communication and Culture graduate program.

The introduction of a practice-focused PhD will have little impact on the T&P stream of the MA program in Communication and Culture where FCAD faculty members with MAs and terminal MFAs can continue to engage students in this stream. It is worth noting, however, that each School within FCAD has 1-4 faculty members with PhDs who are research-practitioners. Many of these members do not supervise any Communication and Culture students at either the MA or PhD level, but devote their attention to the six masters program in FCAD where there is a good fit. A practice-focused PhD it is more likely to significantly engage these research-creation faculty members who do not at present contribute to the T&P stream at the doctoral level, as well as those who currently have no opportunities to contribute to **any** graduate program (e.g., School of Performance, School of Graphic Communications Management).

4.3 Support Staff Requirements

The program will require one staff member to serve as the Graduate Program Administrator. The GPA works under the supervision of the Associate Dean, Graduate Education, FCAD. The position is ranked at level 12. GPAs within FCAD graduate programs typically manage two graduate programs. It is anticipated that staff may eventually be shared between the PhD program and other new graduate programs currently in development within FCAD.

4.4 Specialized Space Required

One dedicated lab within FCAD is required for the program.¹⁶ The lab will be equipped with 2-3 shared and networked computer workstations, desks, and chairs. Given the practice-focused nature of the program, the dedicated lab should be a flexible space with movable tables and sufficient space to accommodate small project construction or a seminar-size gathering of 15-20 individuals.

4.5 Preliminary Budget Information

Financial support for students within the program will come from a variety of sources. All full-time doctoral students will be encouraged to apply for external graduate scholarships including the SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS, \$35,000) and Post-Graduate Scholarship (PGS, \$20,000), Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS, \$15,000), Aboriginal OGS (if applicable, \$15,000). Internal Ryerson graduate funding (RGF and GDA) will be awarded to program students and/or provided as top up for exceptional students awarded externally. Faculty stipends will provide a third potential source of funding.

It is anticipated that approximately 65% of the program students will be funded through a combination of external and internal scholarships and faculty-supported stipends. It is further anticipated that the remaining students will be financially self-supported through a combination of personal financing, unique external scholarships and in the case of part-time students, work-related funding.

Beyond student funding we anticipate preliminary start-up costs of approximately \$25,000-\$30,000 for program related equipment, furnishings, and promotion.

5. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The anticipated launch of the program is the 2019-20 academic year. Working back from the launch date, the tentative timeline for development of the program is as follows.

1. Winter 2018: The Preliminary Letter of Intent (LOI) is submitted to the Faculty Dean and to the Dean of YSGS. The approved LOI will be transmitted to the Provost and a period of one month is set aside for comment by the Ryerson community.

¹⁶ At this writing, major renovations of the RCC building are underway to convert office and storage spaces into technology labs and meeting places for students. There will be no problem accommodating the PhD students with a dedicated lab. A letter from our dean accompanies this preliminary Letter of Intent.

2. Spring 2018: A decision to proceed with the development of the full LOI is received from YSGS. Feedback on the LOI is provided by YSGS and response as appropriate will be incorporated into the development of the Formal Proposal. Initial feedback and costing is sought from the UPO.
3. Spring 2018: The Formal Proposal is presented to all School Councils that are expected to participate in the PhD program.
4. Spring 2018: Approval from the School Councils is forwarded to the Faculty Dean and a letter of support is provided to the Dean of YSGS.
5. Fall 2018: The Formal Proposal is submitted for review to the YSGS Program and Planning Committee, followed by the YSGS Council.
6. Winter-Spring 2018: Peer review and site visit are conducted. Response to the site visit is submitted to PPC and the YSGS Council.
7. Fall 2018: YSGS Council recommends the program to Ryerson Senate. Senate approval is followed by submission to the Quality Council for approval. Following approval by the Quality Council, the Provost will present the program to the Board of Governors. Final implementation is the responsibility of the Provost.
8. Winter 2019: Promotion of the program and registration for first cohort.
9. Fall 2020: Launch of the program.

6. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PhD. in Creative Practice is a research and practice-focused program of study. The focus of the program is an in-demand curricular innovation within the contemporary educational environment and is professionally differentiated from other doctoral programs at Ryerson. Interdisciplinary in orientation and offering concentrations in media and design, the program will leverage existing curricula through shared graduate electives and develop affiliations with existing Master's degree programs in the Faculty of Communication & Design. In order to allow and encourage students to find or maintain employment within the communication and cultural industries, the program of study will be offered on both a full and part-time basis. The doctoral program in Creative Practice will appeal to practitioners in the creative and communication fields who are interested in developing advanced credentials through a terminal degree, who wish to pursue intensive project-based research, as well as those who would want to take a more scholarly approach to their creative work.

Table 4: PhD in Media and Design Executive Summary (Rationale)

	In Ontario	At Ryerson
What's the need?	<p>Traditional PhD programs develop limited skills for non-academic or practice-focused work. This represents an area of fast-growing interest to academics, industry and funding organizations.</p> <p>Many students who complete an MA or MFA are looking for more education, but lack a robust research-creation option inside Ontario.</p> <p>Funding bodies increasingly look to fund research creation, and industry employers are looking for practice-focused skills. These can only be developed at the PhD level through a practice-focused (or research creation) PhD.</p> <p>There is only one other research-creation program in Ontario, and primary research suggests that it is not sufficiently distinct from an MFA or structurally supported to ensure a quality academic experience.</p> <p>The province needs scholars who are creative, and those would-be scholars need a robust, well-supported, purpose-built PhD program.</p>	<p>In order to properly address the societal need that exists in Ontario, Ryerson needs a practice-focused PhD that is broader in scope and more robustly supported than what is offered through the ComCult program. We need to offer more diverse and rich opportunities for practice-focused scholarship across the creative industries.</p> <p>Ryerson has a strong roster of faculty to supervise a research-creation PhD program that can and should be utilized in this way.</p> <p>Ryerson needs to strengthen the reputation of its academic community to continue to attract top faculty from across Canada and around the world.</p> <p>We've grown in leaps and bounds in getting tri-council grants, but there is room for further growth that can be achieved through a practice-focused PhD program.</p>
Why does it matter?	<p>The creative industries account for a huge amount of economic activity in Ontario.</p> <p>Research-creation drives knowledge creation that benefits the industry. New knowledge and unique insights into the creative fields are shared with the professional community by virtue of the connections between research-creation PhDs and industry.</p> <p>Being a comprehensive innovation university with strong ties to industry, Ryerson's research-creation PhD will fuel further growth and economic development of the sector through research outputs and the training of</p>	<p>Having a PhD program that brings together different areas of research and numerous existing research centres will increase collaborative research and increase research funding inputs. Centres include the Experiential Media Institute (XMI), Centre for Media Activism, the Documentary Media Research Centre, the Print Media Research Centre, the Ryerson Journalism Research Centre, the FCAD Forum for Cultural Strategies and the Indigenous Communication & Design Network.</p> <p>Students in the PhD program are high-calibre research assistants and</p>

	In Ontario	At Ryerson
	high-skilled graduates.	would exmapnd and enrich the pool of talent available as CUPE instructors. A PhD program is a testament to our scholars and helps raise the reputation of our academic community, increasing our ability to attract valuable research grants.
How is it uniquely valuable?	<p>The Ryerson PhD in Media and Design will be the only research-creation PhD of its kind in the province – differentiated by the focus of the program and the strength of Ryerson faculty, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a Tier-1 Canada Research Chair in Creative Leadership, the only one of its kind in Canada – deep and broad connections to the creative industries among faculty across nine leading schools 	<p>In summary, the PhD program will allow Ryerson to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – attract top master’s-level students interested in pursuing a practice-focused PhD, and – cultivate a pool of high-talent research and teaching assistants in vital sectors of economic and creative activity, and – attract more grants for collaborative research and research-creation projects – deepen and enrich its societal impact through SRC outputs and industry value creation – produce high-achieving, PhD graduates who are ready for advanced positions in industry or academia, and – elevate itself to the national stage as a premiere destination for research-creation and innovation, and – attract and retain high-quality faculty who view a PhD program as a hallmark of academic excellence

APPENDIX 1: BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Jean Bruce, PhD

Associate Dean, Graduate Education, FCAD

Lead on program development for the creative practice PhD, Dr. Bruce is the author of several articles on Canadian film and television. She recently co-authored a book on the NFB classic film, *Forbidden Love: Unashamed Stories of Lesbian Lives* (2016) and co-edited a special issue of the *European Journal of Cultural Studies* (Fall, 2017) on property television in the post-financial crisis era, which was the culmination of SSHRC-supported research on this subject. She is currently working on a collection of essays analysing advertising and consumer culture. Jean is a long-standing member of YSGS and has taught visual culture, television and a special topics course on Reality TV in the joint Ryerson/York Graduate Program in Communication and Culture. Jean supervises graduate students in this program as well as in the MFA in Documentary Media and the MA in Film + Photography Preservation and Collections Management Program. She has programmed numerous film festivals and speaker series and has organized academic conferences and symposia; most recently, an international symposium *Women, Property and Realty Television*.

Gene Allen, PhD

Professor and the Velma Rogers Research Chair in the School of Journalism.

Dr. Gene Allen is the author of *Making National News: A History of Canadian Press* (2013) and co-editor of *Communicating in Canada's Past: Essays in Media History* (2009). He is currently working on a biography of Kent Cooper, general manager and executive director of the Associated Press news agency from 1925 to 1951. Gene was the founding director (2007-2010) of the School's Master of Journalism program; he is also a member of Ryerson's Faculty of Graduate Studies and a faculty member in the York/Ryerson Joint Graduate Program in Communication and Culture, where he has supervised several Master's and PhD projects and theses. He was co-organizer of the International Communication Association's preconference on "Communications and the State: Towards a New International History" (Communication History Division) in 2015, chief organizer of the international conference "Toward 2020: New Directions in Journalism Education," held at Ryerson University in 2014, and of the first "Conference on Media History in Canada," in 2006. From 2011 to 2015 he was an International Scholar working with colleagues at the Department of Journalism, Tbilisi State University, Republic of Georgia, under the auspices of the Academic Fellowship Program, Open Society Foundations. In the summer of 2005, he was Guest Professor of Canadian Studies at the Free University in Berlin, Germany.

Charles Davis, PhD

Associate Dean, FCAD, Scholarly Research and Creative Activity
Professor, Edward S. Rogers Sr. Research Chair in Media Management and
Entrepreneurship, RTA: School of Media

Dr. Charles Davis is a professor in Ryerson University's RTA School of Media (Faculty of Communication and Design) and is cross-appointed with the Entrepreneurship and Strategy Department in the Ted Rogers School of Management. Charles currently teaches and conducts research on management and policy in industries that produce experience goods - with special interest in innovation and new product development in the software and content layers of mediated creative industries. He is currently involved in research projects on media product innovation, media labour, media industry clusters, audience responses to media offerings, corporate governance of innovation, and digital entrepreneurship. His recent graduate and undergraduate teaching includes courses in media management, new product development, political economy of media industries, audience analysis, innovation in experience-producing industries, cultural economy, and media entrepreneurship. Charles teaches in Ryerson's MA in Media Production program, in the Ryerson/York MA/PhD program in Communication and Culture, and in Ryerson's MBA/MSc in Management of Technology and Innovation program. For more information see <http://www.ryerson.ca/~c5davis/>

Blake Fitzpatrick, PhD

Professor and Chair, School of Image Arts

Dr. Blake Fitzpatrick is an active photographer, curator and writer. His research interests are in the area of documentary practices and he has written on the representation of disaster in contemporary photography. He has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions in Canada and the United States and his recent curatorial initiatives include *Disaster Topographics* and the highly acclaimed traveling exhibition, *The Atomic Photographers Guild: Visibility and Invisibility in the Nuclear Era*. He has held a number of senior administrative positions including Dean, Faculty of Art at the Ontario College of Art & Design, and Dean, School of Design and Communication Arts, Durham College.

Wendy Freeman, PhD

Associate Professor, School of Professional Communication and Director of iLearning

Dr. Wendy Freeman has a long career in information and communication technology use in adult and post-secondary education. Before coming to the School of Professional Communication, she worked as an Instructional Designer in both nonprofit and private sector organizations. Most recently, she worked at Ryerson with faculty as they integrated technology into their teaching. She has been Principal Investigator on funded projects that focus on the use of technology in educational settings and her research interests involve the use of technology to improve learning environments. Specifically, she investigates aspects of community and culture as they affect and are affected by new technologies such as blogs and other social media with a focus on socio-technical and

socio-cultural theories. Dr. Wendy Freeman received a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 2008, where her research investigated the use of blogs for postsecondary distance students.

Bruno Lessard, PhD

Associate Professor, School of Image Arts

After completing his doctoral studies, Dr. Bruno Lessard went on to a SSHRC postdoctoral fellowship at York University. He joined the School of Image Arts as Assistant Professor in 2009. His research and teaching interests can be divided into two areas: the contemporary moving image (fiction film, documentary, media arts, animation, and videogames) and French critical thought. Bruno also teaches in the joint graduate program in Communication and Culture and in the Documentary Media program. He has published extensively in both English and French in the fields of contemporary cinema, film music, new media arts, and digital preservation. His current research project focuses on the impact of the DV camera on fiction film and documentary.

Ali Mazalek, PhD

Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair in Digital Media and Innovation,
RTA: School of Media

Dr. Mazalek works at the forefront of trends in computing and interaction design that support a tighter integration of the physical and digital worlds. She designs and develops tangible and embodied interaction systems that enable people to be more creative across both science and art disciplines. Her research interests include the design and application of emerging physical sensing and digital media technologies to areas such as narrative expression, abstract thinking, and scientific modeling, as well as the study and use of embodied cognition as a framework for tangible and embodied interaction design. She has published her research in a range of academic conferences and journals, delivered guest lectures in both academia and industry, and exhibited her media art works and interfaces at numerous galleries and festivals. Mazalek received M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the MIT Media Lab and a Hon. B.Sc. in computer science and mathematics from the University of Toronto. She is a member of the inaugural cohort of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. Mazalek founded and directs the Synaesthetic Media Lab (Synlab) at Ryerson and Georgia Tech, a research playground where physical materials, analog sensors, and digital media happily co-exist and come together in novel ways to support creativity and expression. The lab's approach combines theoretical study and scientific research with technological development and artistic practice. Research is supported by industry and government organizations, including Intel, Steelcase, Turner, Google, NSF, and SSHRC. Visit the Synlab at: www.synlab.ca.