

March 1, 2020

Faculty and Staff Message from the Dean,

Dear Colleagues,

- 1) Please be assured that the campus leadership is monitoring the news and being very alert to the potential health issues that may occur in reference to the Coronavirus. The Provost has been in touch with the Deans, and we are working with the CAM Department Chairs and leadership team to assure clear and precise communication—in regard to planning.
- 2) There is good news to share, and that is that Yang Wang received a [Getty/ACLS Postdoctoral Fellowship for the History of Art](#). This prize carries with it a \$60,000 stipend, plus generous travel expenses. This is exactly the type of external funding CAM needs to be attracting. ORS and CAM funding should always be aligning with the possibility of gaining external funds. So, congratulations need to be shared with Laurie Baefsky, who will coordinate VA/CAM/CU Denver support for this award. I also need to mention VA Chair Michelle Carpenter, and in Yang's words, "*Jeffrey, Maria, and Beth, who deserve immense credit for being the most wonderful colleagues that one could ask for.*" Faculty—employ Laurie and your Chairs as resources, and the colleagues in your area, as your agendas for research and creative work extend beyond the campus. Note: there is a second large external award in MEIS that will soon be announced.
- 3) As your Dean, I travel for conferences, philanthropy, and student recruitment. In January, I made two trips (at my own expense) to two art and design schools. I paid for these trips from personal funds, and used accrued vacation time, to underscore my deep commitment for fiscal accountability—but to also have the "freedom" to explore the networks of conversations at art and design schools. Here is some of what I learned:
 - a) The quality of our students and the high-level of specialized faculty research and creative work at CU Denver was affirmed. There is no doubt about CAM student and faculty quality. That being said, the conversations about interdisciplinarity in CAM are often about joining areas within a department. What I learned at two excellent art and design schools was that they are regularly reaching across departments and into diverse and evolving areas—without hesitancy, or fear of "losing" something.
 - b) The topic of the cultural and creative industries was "out-front" in every conversation. Across the breadth of faculty, students and community partners—this notion of artistic and design "work" beyond traditional areas was strongly embraced—without "fear."
 - c) Entrepreneurship (as a medium for artistic, design, and professional advancement) was embraced and viewed as an essential part of a student "toolkit."
 - d) Recruiting international students, providing robust study abroad, and having longer term study abroad programs (i.e. semester abroad) was all a part of conversations. Faculty seemed to use their international contacts to leverage international student

So, after ~~visiting~~ ~~the~~ ~~schools~~ and continuing to speak and listen to other art & design leaders, reading about research on the economic, artistic, design and creative futures for our students—there is a need for us to continue to look across the horizontal spectrum of what we do—and what we can do, in CAM. There are over 850 posts on artsandmedia.ucdenver.edu/DeansBlog that reflect current practices and future possibilities for all of us and our students.

- Discussions about working across departments, more broadly—and in the cultural and creative industries, are often framed by worry (who will get the SCHs, "yes, but..." that isn't how we have operated in the past, that's not how we were trained). These all may reflect a hesitation to explore.
- Entrepreneurship continues to be something that our alumni said they wished they had, something that CAM students say they need, and an area that other schools are investing in. Most often in CAM, we hear "who would run it?" (that's a good question—but not a good opening question), what would it take away from? [CAM has been slow to address this](#).
- And finally, the traditional CAM study abroad programs are proven to be successful—but only serve a very small number of students, on relatively short trips. In discussions about expanding to other formats (something that has been discussed in visits to departments) is a fear that if other forms of study abroad are introduced, it could [cut into the enrollments of regular specialized programs—and delay graduation](#). Broad-based study abroad programs in the cultural and creative industries, could be very attractive additions—to an extended menu of study abroad options. New programs do not need to be viewed as "taking away" or subtracting from present programs.

CAM has a very strong base in the 20th Century. Let's all start to address the possibilities and potentials of the 21st Century, without worry and fear—and be a leading institution for students who can move beyond specialization and have [Range](#), along with access to fulfilling and exciting careers.

Onward!

