

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

**SUBJECT:** Establish the Digital Studies Institute in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approval to Allow the Digital Studies Institute to Appoint Faculty


**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 2019

With the endorsement of the Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, the Digital Studies Institute was approved as a “funding only” unit and was given a budget for teaching by faculty with appointments in other schools and colleges. The purpose of this request is to establish the Digital Studies Institute and to give the Institute the status of an “instructional unit,” enabling it to appoint faculty, but not be a tenure home.


The Digital Studies Institute, housed in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is a major initiative to develop pioneering digital studies research and curricula at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Its research strengths include digital media and identity, game studies, digital media theory and history, infrastructure studies, and digital aesthetics. As an interdisciplinary unit, Digital Studies research will be a collaboration between the Departments of American Culture; Communication Studies; English Language and Literature; Germanic Languages and Literatures; History; Film, Television, and Media; the School of Information; and the Stamps School of Art and Design. The Institute will allow students to engage in topics such as video games and identity, digital culture, the role of computer codes in everyday life, and the use of social media as a form of personal and cultural expression. The Digital Studies Institute will offer two degrees: an undergraduate minor in Digital Studies and a graduate certificate in Digital Studies. The thriving undergraduate minor and the relatively new graduate certificate are currently housed under the auspices of the Department of American Culture and will move to the new Institute as of January 1, 2019.

The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts approved the proposal to provide two faculty lines that will be used to help fund joint appointments with the faculty members’ home units. This will enable the Digital Studies Institute to begin to establish control over a stable core curriculum. We respectfully request approval to establish the Digital Studies Institute as an instructional unit with the ability to offer joint faculty appointments in the Institute, but not be a tenure home.

RECOMMENDED BY:

  
Elizabeth R. Cole, Interim Dean  
Professor of Women’s Studies, Psychology, and  
Afroamerican and African Studies  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED BY:

  
Martin A. Philbert  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs