

# CARSON CENTER FOR EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

## The Johnny Carson Legacy for the 21st Century

Johnny Carson was an innovator in the emerging medium of his day - television. When he graduated from the University of Nebraska with a degree in Radio in 1949, the U.S. only two million homes had TV sets. Suddenly things changed when 15 television stations on the East Coast and in the Midwest were linked by the first long-distance coaxial cable. Television sales and viewership exploded.

Johnny's education at Nebraska prepared him to succeed in an era of change. Now the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film wants to do the same for students today.

Johnny Carson's education at Nebraska was broad and forward-looking, much like the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts proposes to be. The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film wants to prepare its students - in the same way Johnny was prepared - to succeed in the changing media environment of today.

The Johnny Carson Foundation has continued to support the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film by providing ongoing funding for student scholarships and challenging the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film to differentiate itself as a film and emerging media program for the 21st century that offers students a distinct learning experience and is a leader among its peers.

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will build on the current success of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and create new opportunities for Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students to expand their knowledge of today's emerging media. It will prepare students for unique careers through a highly interdisciplinary learning, research and creative program in film and emerging media with an emphasis in virtual production and design.



### Honor the Name

Students studying in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film have a saying: Honor the Name. Honor Johnny's name - challenge yourself, go out in the world and create something new, be the best, do it with class and style and hard work. The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will honor the name.

# Fast Forwarding the Future

Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways that people engage their imaginations, formulate values and communicate, and it sits at the heart of all theatre, film and television. Today, emerging media technologies - animation, virtual and augmented reality, interactive media and gaming - are providing new ways of telling stories. Just as in Johnny's early career, today's disruptive, emerging media are changing the production and business of entertainment and rapidly expanding in use in other professions and industries.



## Vision and Mission

In the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, students will learn how to tell a story in any media existing now or in the future using virtual production for film, video, live performance, the Internet and other mediated environments. They will know how to recognize the potential that emerging media offer across an array of professional fields and be able to discern new technologies as they develop. Finally, they will become familiar with interdisciplinary skills in a variety of virtual production, art and design, and computational processes as well as entrepreneurship and business. They will learn to creatively fuse these skills into many professions – from film and game design, to science, theatre, television, architecture, advertising, journalism, education, science, law and agriculture, to name just a few.

Some of the most exciting developments in film and emerging media today reside at their boundaries, where cinematic narrative and storytelling intersects with science, the humanities, computer science, engineering, music, fine arts and other disciplines. Exploring these intersections is the mission of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will build upon the strengths of UNL's collaborative culture and will be unique among programs of its kind nationally. It will be a place where physicists work with emerging media artists, writers and designers to create an immersive world that shows what happens when atoms collide; where engineers, biomedical faculty and Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students create haptic simulations of the human body to help train surgeons; or where animators and computer scientists collaborate to develop high-speed networks for rendering 3D animation.

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will be an interdisciplinary learning, creative and research facility and academic program located within the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It will provide a specialized emphasis in virtual production and design.

This is a challenge. Interdisciplinary learning calls for new ways of thinking and teaching, for breaking down barriers and for bringing disciplines together. No one can predict what our students' professional world will look like 10, 25 or 40 years from now. What we can do is prepare students for the changing environment of the 21st century media revolution.

# Discovering a New Focus

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film consulted experts from across the country, in Nebraska and within the University. Faculty and administrators visited several universities and are particularly grateful for the guidance they received from the faculty and administration of the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. They surveyed our alumni and held targeted discussions with students, faculty and campus and business leaders. This culminated in an interdisciplinary symposium, "Movies and Beyond: Connecting Digital Creativity Across Disciplines," that drew 128 attendees from more than 40 departments and seven colleges at UNL and a three-hour discussion with more than 70 students from theatre, film and related majors.

## What We Learned

A new interdisciplinary focus on emerging media was enthusiastically supported by faculty, students and alumni of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and those from many other disciplines - physics, music, English, digital humanities, architecture, educational telecommunications, journalism and advertising, to name a few.

Discussions revealed many existing and potential synergies and the strength of interdisciplinarity at UNL. They identified key areas for collaboration in course development and research and showed the genuine interest across campus in emerging media. Interdisciplinary collaboration adds value to the educational experience at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

### Ideas that received strong support included:

- Faculty and Student Collaborations across disciplines on campus that apply virtual production, immersive/virtual reality, animation, game design and interactive media to research and creative activity
- An emphasis on creative coding for emerging media
- More hands-on learning in real-world, project-based courses
- Classes focused on business and preparing students to market their skills, and increased opportunities for internships and professional experiences
- More guest speakers and opportunities to work with people from the industry
- Developing Collaboration with External partners - in both the university and the private sector
- Creating a center for emerging media as a space for interdisciplinary collaborations among faculty and students

# An Opportunity to Lead

## *Virtual Production: A New Field of Study*

Virtual production is a rapidly changing new field of study that is still being defined. As a result, virtual production plays an increasingly crucial role in both traditional film and visual storytelling in film and a variety of emerging media fields. It is altering the way films are created and enabling new kinds of storytelling across a variety of emerging media. It can be applied to all forms of media that employ storytelling, including live stage performance. It encompasses the entire pipeline of the film and emerging media processes from inception to creation to distribution. The focus on virtual production and design will position the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts at the center of this change.

## Virtual Production

A good story is the starting point in virtual production development, just as it is in film and theatre. A good story creates the world from which all other aspects of the virtual production process flow.

The virtual production process begins at the ideation stage and continues through the writing, production and distribution phases. It has the potential to pervade all aspects of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film from live theatrical performance, to design, technical production, film and emerging media. In the virtual production environment, elements of media are first designed digitally then combined (or not) with footage filmed or “captured” live in a process called compositing. Increasingly, virtual sets and environments are being composited with virtual actors. The virtual process allows for work to be distributed remotely among directing, design, editing, special effects and sound teams using networked information management systems. Digital assets such as virtual sets can be repurposed for use in virtual and augmented reality environments, interactive media and game design, and animation. Finally, the media are distributed to homes and theaters over the Internet.

### **Storytelling increases in scope within the virtual production environment in three primary ways.**

- **Virtual production expands the visual and design vocabulary of film and emerging media by making possible imagery and stories that are beyond what is observable and conceivable in today’s natural environment.**
- **The algorithmic processes that drive the virtual production environment allow for stories to be interactive and non-linear, the best example being today’s game designs.**
- **Because virtual production is a digital process, it is a transferable one; it allows for collaborations across multidisciplinary teams often working remotely from one another.**

## Design

Design has been a strength of UNL’s theatre and film programs since the 1970s, with graduates having stellar careers in production, scenic, costume and lighting design in major motion pictures, television, theatres and the visual effects industry. Now, students will learn to apply virtual production and design across the spectrum of emerging media from live multimedia performances, to film and television, to interactive and multimodal media, and finally, for augmented and virtual reality.

At the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, students will learn how to create virtual environments for electronic and mobile game environments and for visual effects and design for film and broadcast television. They will explore how virtual and augmented reality can overlay the live experience through the use of fully immersive goggles, augmented reality on mobile phones, and future technologies. They will learn how to transfer data captured from a live performer and use it to control and manipulate imagery and media such as projections, animated characters and virtual actors.

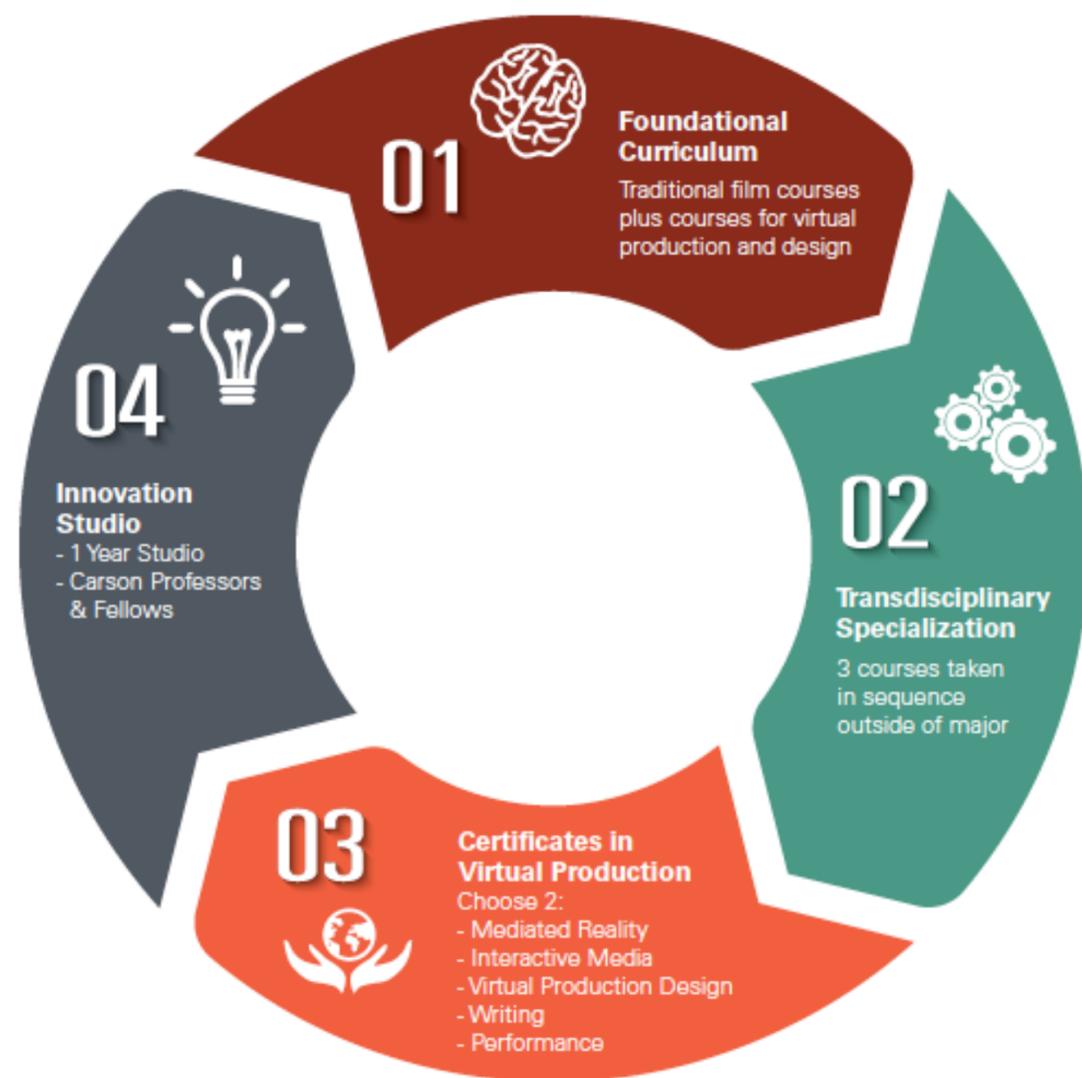
These new technologies are changing the way stories are told and visualized across an array of media platforms and can be applied transdisciplinarily for uses in the medical, science, architectural, journalism and educational fields, to name just a few.

# Creating a Transdisciplinary Learning Environment

## Curriculum

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film will develop the curriculum for a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film and Emerging Media. Therefore, the exact curriculum will be fully developed after a new director is hired. The new curriculum will begin in 2018. This will be just in time for the first student cohort admitted into the new program, but one year ahead of the completion of the new facility. Since most of the new courses will only be at the beginning level at that point and the student numbers will still be small, classes can be held in the existing facilities for one year.

The curriculum will have four basic elements:



**BFA IN FILM & EMERGING MEDIA ARTS CURRICULUM**

## The New Foundational Curriculum

All students pursuing the BFA in Film and Emerging Media will be required to take classes in the Foundational Curriculum as a basis of study in two or more Virtual Production Certificate programs. The curriculum will consist of courses in film studies and history, filmmaking, screenwriting, editing, cinematography and lighting, audio, production design and acting.

In order to better prepare students to enter advanced studies in virtual production, additional courses will include introductory virtual production, design thinking, creative coding, animation and compositing, entrepreneurship, art and design. Art and design courses will be taught in the Department of Art and Art History.

In addition, all students will be required to attend a weekly convocation to hear guest artists and lecturers and to receive academic and career advisement. Along with courses incorporated in the virtual certificate programs, three new foundational courses will be offered in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

the New Foundational Curriculum will be:

**Design Thinking:** First Developed at Stanford University's Design Lab, Design Thinking will teach students to work in teams to design from multiple perspectives of design, engineering, social implications and viable business models.

**Creative Coding:** This introductory foundational course will focus on computer programming for the media arts.

**Entrepreneurship:** Two courses will be developed in the area of entrepreneurship: Business and Law for Film and Emerging Media and Creating and Distributing Independent Film and Emerging Media. Students will learn about business plans, start-ups, career potential, film distribution, copyright and the intellectual property rights of creative work and research.

## Transdisciplinary Specialization

Building a deep and coherent understanding of a subject outside of film and emerging media is key to expanding the range of the students' abilities to collaborate and work across disciplines. It contributes to a fresh social vision. To meet the requirements of the Transdisciplinary Specialization, students will need to take three courses in sequence outside the Johnny Carson School for Theatre and Film in one subject area beginning no later than their third year. Gaining transdisciplinary expertise will increase the vocational choices of Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film graduates and better connect them to the issues of our time.

For instance, a student taking a Transdisciplinary Specialization in biochemistry will take Fundamentals of Biology followed by General Chemistry and General Genetics to build familiarity in that field, which could then lead toward a vocation as a media specialist in the pharmaceutical field. Similarly, a student seeking to broaden her skills in order to work in one of Nebraska's many agricultural industries can take three sequential courses in Grass Ecology, Land Management and Water Science in UNL's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Developing a transdisciplinary expertise will be a unique feature of getting a degree in film and emerging media from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

## Innovation Studio

The culminating learning experience for the film and emerging media student will be the Innovation Studio, a capstone class taken throughout the entire senior year. Students will work end-to-end on final projects in teams under the mentorship of faculty, guest faculty and artists, and sometimes industry professionals. These projects will be larger in size and scope than students' in-class projects, thus preparing them for the professional world.

Students will work in teams of four to six on approximately six to eight projects per year that will be supported by the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. A yearly cohort of approximately 40 students will make this arrangement manageable. Students and their mentor(s) will submit proposals for Innovation Studio projects in their third year. The leader of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will select projects based on the feasibility and quality of the proposal.

Through a yearly advisement process, such as individual advisement settings and the weekly convocation, students will be urged to self-organize in groups of cohorts around similar issues and interests informed by their choice of transdisciplinary specializations. This will allow for the careful coordination of Innovation Studio projects among groups of students and manage the number of projects needing supervision. Students will be encouraged to parlay their final projects into presentations at national or international conferences – particularly the Triennial (or Biennial) Carson Conference on Emerging Media Arts – and to build potential long-term partnerships after graduation.

# Investing in the Creative Media Professionals of the 21st Century

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts is an investment in the future of students from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and in Carson's legacy for the 21st century. The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will require dedicated and talented leaders, faculty, students and staff; the resources to attract accomplished industry professionals to provide specialized learning experiences; and the most current facilities and equipment.

## Leadership

The field of emerging media arts is dynamic and constantly changing. The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will have leadership with a vision that aligns with current advancements in the field and who can apply that knowledge entrepreneurially. The director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, with the assistance of a possible Associate Director of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and the Board of Advisers will provide this leadership.

The **Board of Advisers** will meet semi-annually to provide counsel on:

**Creative and business trends in film and emerging media and their relevance to and effects on courses, programs and activities in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts**

**Developing relationships with private and public sector businesses to partner in Innovation Studio and other programs that are focused on hands-on learning experiences for students**

**Linking the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts to professionals who will participate as Carson Fellows, Professors and Guest Artists**

**Opportunities for Student Internships and job placement both before and after graduation**

## Faculty & Staff

Talented faculty and supportive staff attract talented students and are important to developing innovative programs and producing the future leaders in emerging media arts.

Teaching in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will be by appointment of the director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. All faculty members teaching in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will maintain their tenure homes in their respective departments, with a preponderance of the faculty having a tenure home in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. The director will oversee the hiring, evaluation, and promotion of all faculty in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, of which the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts is a part.

The director will aggressively recruit seven new permanent faculty members who are at the vanguard of film and emerging media. These new hires will augment the current four faculty members in the existing film and new media program. A focus on emerging media should attract faculty who are leading the creative and research developments in the field. The director will select and appoint Carson Professors, Fellows and Guest Artists who will provide additional instructional support.

The new faculty will have an array of expertise from cinematography, screenwriting and sound editing, to augmented and virtual reality, interactive media, game engines, visual effects, creative coding, virtual production design, writing for emerging media and animation. Faculty will be selected for their expertise in their selected fields and may or may not have an advanced degree. Ideally, most faculty will be able to teach in both the Foundational Curriculum and in the certificate programs.

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will begin hiring new faculty beginning in 2017, before the new facility is complete, and will continue hiring over a five-year period of time as student enrollment grows. The new faculty should be able to accommodate a total student enrollment of 160 or more.



## Professional Faculty

Professionals from the film and emerging media industry will play a critically important role in expanding the expertise of the faculty. These professionals – spending a year, a semester or shorter periods of time on campus – will bring the most current expertise in targeted areas of study in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. This “star power” will attract top students and faculty, create connections to the industry and the private sector and build special interdisciplinary expertise. Online courses and telecommuting will enable working professionals from out-of-state to teach classes.

### Carson Professors:

Accomplished industry professionals will be brought to campus for up to a year or more in residence as Carson Professors. This long-term arrangement will enable the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts to add the expertise of well-known working professionals in key areas. Carson Professors will develop relationships with the students and faculty and become ambassadors for the school as well as spread the word about its programs nationally.

### Guest Artists and Instructors:

These working professionals will spend a semester or less in residence at the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts teaching master classes and bringing their specialized skills, knowledge and connections to the industry.

### Carson Fellows:

Faculty from across disciplines at UNL or other universities may become Carson Fellows, a special appointment in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts funded by the Chancellor’s Challenge Grants to encourage interdisciplinary collaborations. Carson Fellows will bring transdisciplinary expertise to projects undertaken in the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. A Carson Fellow might be a computer scientist teaching creative coding or an anthropologist working with a student to design a virtual 12th century pueblo.

## Staff

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will hire staff for both their technical skills and their ability to work closely with students as part-time instructors and advisers. Some staff duties, where the roles overlap, will be shared with the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film or Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. Others will be full-time employees of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts will manage all of the college media labs centrally for better efficiency and security; therefore, the cost to the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts for an IT/Media Technologies Technician reflects its apportionment of IT needs. All staff will be hired by Year 5 of the implementation plan in anticipation of student needs and in advance of major enrollment growth, which will begin that year. The director will further examine staff needs as the program evolves.

The following staff list is a reasonable estimate of staffing needs at this time:

- Administrative Assistant
- Business Manager/Fiscal Coordinator
- Internship Coordinator and Student Adviser
- Equipment Coordinator
- Facility Coordinator
- IT/Media Technologies Technician
- Fabrication Space Coordinator
- Hourly Technology support staff

## Student Enrollment

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts expects to increase enrollments in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film to 160 after 10 years.

There are several factors that will attract students and drive student enrollment growth while maintaining high admission standards:

- The new facility with a capacity to hold over 200 students with extra room to grow graduate or expanded undergraduate programs in the future
- An Ideal Student to Faculty Ratio of 13:1
- Carson Opportunity Scholarships totaling \$2.25 million in endowment funds that assist students in paying for college
- A Five-Year Marketing Campaign paid for by the college to advertise the program, scheduled to begin in Year 3 of the implementation plan
- Tuition Costs at UNL, which are among the best values in the country
- And, of course, a progressive and innovative curriculum in film and emerging media that will allow students to start taking film and virtual production related courses in their freshman year

Students applying to the current Film and New Media program in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film must complete a rigorous application and vetting process for admission. Students accepted into the program have an average 28.2 ACT score and must maintain a 3.0 GPA to stay in the program. The current student-to-faculty ration is 12:1.

Several factors are expected to drive enrollment growth toward the expected target of 160 students, by Year 10, the most important being marketing. Up to this point in time, the film and new media program has been able attract 60 applicants each year from which it accepts 15. This is with minimal advertising and none that is distinct from that of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film as a whole. For at least five years beginning in Year 3 of the implementation plan, the College will committ to a special marketing campaign for the new film and emerging program and the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The faculty also plays a crucial role in recruitment. By enlarging the size of the faculty, the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film has more people to help recruit students. Likewise, faculty are expected to spread "word-of-mouth" about the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts in a way that will better attract the contemporary student. Both the increased marketing campaign and more effective outreach by the faculty are expected to increase the number of applicants to the program while still maintaining selective admissions standards.

The Carson Opportunity Scholarships generously provided by gifts from the Johnny Carson Foundation now totalling \$2.25 million, will be a positive difference maker for many students qualified but unable to afford study in the Carson School and Carson Center.

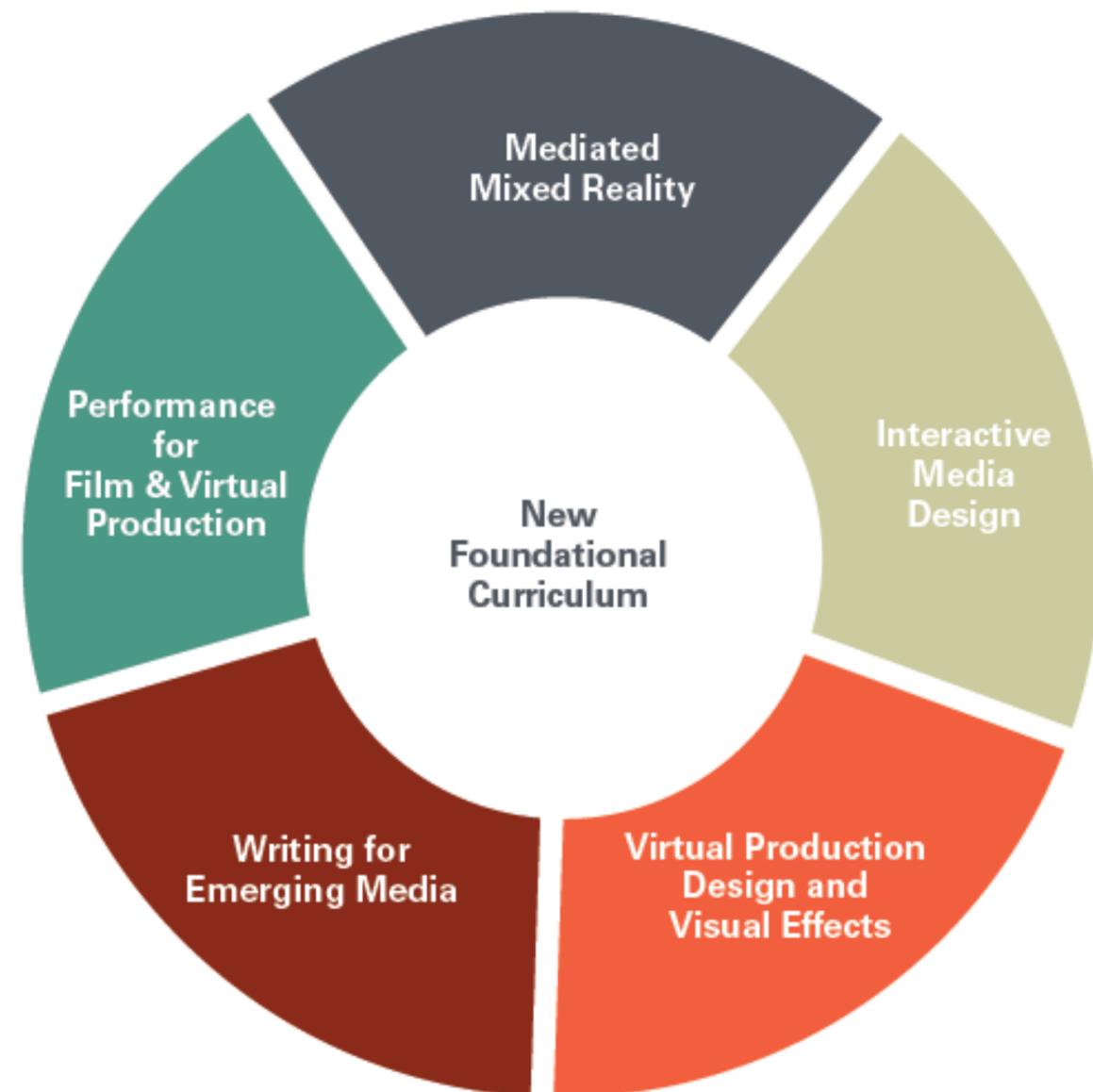
## Certificates

After completing the Foundational Curriculum, students will select at least two certificate programs in virtual production that will develop mastery in emerging media, virtual production and design. Each certificate will include a three-course sequence that will build expertise beyond foundational study. Through these certificate programs, each student will customize his or her own advanced specialization in emerging media, identify potential collaborators and develop the interdisciplinary skills to complete a required final project in the Center's Innovation Studio.

Acceptance into all Virtual Production Certificate programs will be limited to students completing the Foundational Curriculum in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Students will need to apply to each certificate program and take courses sequentially. This will enable the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts to predict enrollments and how often to offer classes. Students from other departments working on projects in collaboration with the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will add a benefit to Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students. They will be admitted to individual courses by permission only.

Virtual Production Certificates will be offered in:

- Mediated Mixed Reality Design and narrative structures for augmented and virtual reality environments
- Interactive Media Design: Design and creation of interactive stories and games in multimodal environments: consoles, mobile devices and computers
- Virtual Production Design and Visual Effects: Designing for virtual environments and special effects for film, video and broadcast media
- Writing for Emerging Media: Writing across the spectrum of emerging media such as gaming environments and interactive stories
- Performance for Film and Virtual Production
- Performing across the spectrum of virtual production from film acting to motion capture for control of virtual actors and animated characters



# Connecting to the Profession

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will create opportunities for students to connect with professionals and leaders in the field while still in school in order to build on classroom learning and grow their professional networks. It will do so through hosting international conferences, symposiums and master classes, and through internship opportunities that facilitate connections with internal and external partners.

## New Programs

Students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film have clearly expressed their need for exposure to professional guest faculty and eminent artists who will connect them to the latest advances in the field. In addition, they want a vigorous internship program and real-world educational experiences while still in school. Providing these opportunities will be a major focus of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. Some current and proposed programs are outlined below.

### EXTERNAL

**Carson Emerging Arts Conference:** Every two or three years, the Carson Center will host the Carson Emerging Media Arts Conference, an international conference for exchanging ideas, showcasing technology developments and conducting workshops on emerging media arts that will enhance the visibility and reputation of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and connect it and its faculty and students with potential sponsors, partners and employers. All students majoring in film and emerging media will be required to attend.

**Master Classes** will give students the opportunity to learn from established and experienced professionals through intensive one- to three-day teaching interactions.

**Internships** represent an opportunity to learn about the world of work, build on classroom learning and grow professional networks. The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will have an internship coordinator and student adviser dedicated to developing paid and unpaid, for-credit student internships with private sector companies and public organizations working in film and emerging media. A portion of the Carson Emerging Media Arts Endowment will be dedicated to supporting student internship activities out of town. Though internships are highly encouraged and supported, there is no guarantee that each student will find one. Therefore, internships will not be a requirement for graduation.

### Creating Connections Across Disciplines

Interdisciplinarity is woven throughout the curriculum and programs of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, but two programs focus specifically on developing connections across the disciplines.

### INTERNAL

**Emerging Media Arts Symposium:** An interdisciplinary environment doesn't just happen, it requires focused efforts to bring together diverse faculty and to build relationships with external partners. Each year a campus-wide symposium modeled on TED events will be held to coalesce faculty from various disciplines and potential external partners around new opportunities for creativity and research in film and emerging media. The symposium is sponsored yearly with funds from the Chancellor's Challenge Grant Program.

**Chancellor's Challenge Grant Program:** Each year at the symposium, the chancellor will announce his Challenge Grant Program to support the Faculty Fellows program and interdisciplinary research and creative projects in emerging media arts. The program will give priority to proposals that include private sector partners. The program has two goals: to seed research and creative projects that cut across disciplines and enable teams to further develop projects for submission to federal funding agencies and foundations; and to encourage partnerships with the private sector.

## Partnerships

Students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film have clearly expressed their need for exposure to professional guest faculty and eminent artists who will connect them to the latest advances in the field. In addition, they want a vigorous internship program and real-world educational experiences while still in school. Providing these opportunities will be a major focus of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. Some current and proposed programs are outlined below.

### University Partners

Key partners within the university that may be involved with the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts in developing and implementing courses, programs and research include:

- Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts: The Department of Art and Art History, the Glenn Korff School of Music and the Mary Riepma Ross Theatre
- Film Studies/Department of English: classes in film studies
- Center for Entrepreneurship/College of Business Administration: entrepreneurship classes
- Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science and Management: Design Thinking course
- Holland Computing Center/Department of Computer Science and Engineering: creative coding classes, collaborative research

Other departments and units interested in collaborating with the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts on learning and research projects include: Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, School of Natural Resources, the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering.

### External Partnerships

Other departments and units interested in collaborating with the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts on learning and research projects include: Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, School of Natural Resources, the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering.

### Proximity to Movie Industry

Since the university is not situated in the center of the entertainment industry, the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts must creatively integrate online educational experiences, including short courses (one or two full-day master classes, or even two-week modules) and courses in virtual production offered by faculty and professionals at other institutions and professionals working in the industry. These learning opportunities will help break down the actual and perceived geographic challenge to running the program in Nebraska.

# A State-of-the-Art Facility

The site formerly operated as the Nebraska Bookstore, located across from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film at 13th & Q Streets on the UNL campus will house the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and provide the instructional space and equipment needed to teach film and virtual production. The facility will include teaching and production sound stages, a performance capture lab, classrooms, design and editing labs, computer labs, a seminar and screening room and other specialized spaces. These capabilities will be unique to the campus.

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts facility will open in the fall of 2019 on the UNL campus. It will house the instructional spaces and equipment needed to teach film, emerging media, virtual production and design – including teaching and production sound stages, a performance capture lab, classrooms, design and editing labs, computer labs, a seminar and screening room and other specialized spaces. Every effort will be made to use these spaces as both production and teaching facilities. This facility will be unique on campus and will be available to students enrolled in classes and programs in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, as well as faculty engaged in collaborative research.

A preliminary analysis done by Raymond Kahl, the architect for the film facilities at USC, estimates that the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will require approximately 31,000 gross square feet. A more detailed program statement will need to be developed under the supervision of the incoming director. The challenge at this time is to determine costs and programming needs and to reserve space on campus in a way that provides flexibility for the incoming director and possible expansion of undergraduate and graduate programs in the future.

The former Nebraska Bookstore site best meets the needs for the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, and the university is currently in the process of purchasing that facility. The facility would accommodate the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts on the north side (directly across the street from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film) as well as a retail store on the south side.

In addition, the Studio Theatre in the Temple Building will be redesigned to double as a performance capture stage and a performance venue that can accommodate data controlled imagery and sound, projections and augmented reality performances. Existing film and new media facilities adjacent to the Temple Building will be repurposed to accommodate future growth needs or other programming needs of the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. Current faculty teaching film and new media in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film will move to the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts as well. The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will be wired for a 100GB network for the fastest possible transmission of data between the building's servers and the university's supercomputer in the Holland Computing Center, which provides connections to the Internet II network backbone. This will enhance high-speed data transfer to collaborators at other universities. The building will have controlled access for students taking classes in film and in the Virtual Production Certificate courses.



# Outcomes

The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will enable more students to enroll in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and provide diverse career opportunities for them when they graduate. It will create a new field of study in virtual production and design; a new facility and expanded space for the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film; increased national visibility and reputation in film and emerging media; expanded partnerships with the film and media industries and other private sector entities; and increased potential for funded collaborative research and creative activity with other UNL programs.

## Measurable Outcomes will be:

- **Increased Student Enrollment:** The expanded space and faculty made possible by the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will enable the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film to increase enrollment while maintaining high admission/retention standards and a low (13:1) student-to-faculty ratio. With a new, professional, national marketing program, UNL's reasonable out-of-state tuition and the opportunity for students to begin taking filmmaking and virtual production-related courses in their freshmen year, we anticipate enrollment in film and emerging media of 160 students within 10 years.
- **Partnerships within UNL and with the Public and Private Sectors:** The emphasis on project-based, interdisciplinary learning and research will enable partnerships with other UNL schools and departments and with the private and public sectors.
- **Increased National Visibility:** The Triennial (or Biennial) Carson Emerging Media Arts Conference will create national visibility for the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and UNL by creating a venue where leaders and practitioners in the field can exchange ideas, showcase new technologies and conduct workshops.
- **Collaborative Research and Creative Projects:** Faculty and student involvement with innovative, funded research and creative projects will increase, generating both income and increased visibility for the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. The Chancellor's Challenge Grants will seed these kinds of projects.
- **Student Learning:** The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts will contribute to developing students who can take initiative and risks, collaborate with others with diverse viewpoints and skills, be involved in meaningful work that can benefit others, think critically and communicate their ideas clearly with energy and passion and have a genuine voice and a compelling vision for storytelling through emerging media arts.

*The following serve as preliminary working mission statements for the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. The new director, once in place, will lead the faculty in a strategic planning process that uses this as a framework and starting point.*

## Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film

Storytelling is among the most powerful ways that people engage their imaginations, formulate values and communicate. The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film educates students to become prospective practitioners of theatre, film and emerging media by confronting conformity and convention and extending the boundaries of storytelling across all forms of media including theatre, film and emerging media still being developed. It supports student and faculty discovery that fuses theatre, film and emerging media together; approaches creativity and knowledge entrepreneurially; is culturally and economically embedded in our community and region, and has significance and influence upon our peers nationally.

It achieves this through a comprehensive array of learning, creative and research experiences – such as play and film production and advanced emerging media projects – that are team-based and project-driven and exposes students to leaders in the field both inside and beyond the classroom. In all these ways, the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film fulfills the University of Nebraska’s land-grant mission to develop knowledge that is use-inspired, has impact on our region and world, and increases the working power of our graduates throughout the course of their careers.

Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts

**The Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts** is an interdisciplinary program and instructional facility for film and emerging media within the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film that explores the narrative storytelling capabilities of theatre, film and emerging media through the application of virtual production and other digital media technologies. Virtual production pervades all aspects of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film from theatrical performance, design, technical production and film, to emerging media such as animation, interactive media and virtual and augmented reality. Applications include the fusion of live performance with projected, interactive and augmented reality media; film special effects and virtual set design; interactive media and game design; and the cinematic experience within the virtual environment.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will contribute to the Carson Center in the following ways:

- Will purchase former Nebraska Bookstore Building and dedicate approximately 32,000 GSF to Carson Center
- Seven (7) new faculty lines
- Three (3) staff lines, including an administrative assistant, manager and equipment coordinator
- Chancellor's Challenge Grant to support the Faculty Fellows Program
- funding for startup equipment and computer purchases
- marketing campaign
- supplemental annual support for Guest Artists
- Ongoing operations and maintenance of facilities- janitorial, utilities, phones, etc.

The Hixson-Lied Endowment will provide:

- funding for Guest Artists
- startup equipment and computer purchases
- support of Triennial (or Biennial) Carson Emerging Media Arts Conferences
- support of internship program
- annual funding from the Carson Center Emerging Media Arts Endowment

The Johnny Carson Foundation will contribute \$20 million to support the following:

- The Carson Center Renovation Fund which will redevelop the former Nebraska Bookstore building and Temple sound stage spaces to provide dedicated sound and performance capture stages, labs, studios, classrooms, editing rooms, computer labs, offices, a commons area and equipment.
- The Carson Center Strategic Opportunities Endowment will be established as the mechanism for bringing the best possible faculty to UNL
- The Carson Center Emerging Media Arts Endowment will support:
  - Carson Professorships
  - Internship Program
  - Internship Coordinator
  - Facilities Coordinator
  - IT/Media Technologies Technician - half-time
  - Fabrication Space Coordinator
- The Carson Capital Endowment Fund for repair and replacement of equipment