



University Council

October 13, 2023

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2023-2024

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences to offer the following new certificates will be an agenda item for the October 20, 2023, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting:

Undergraduate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost S. Jack Hu

Dr. Marisa Pagnattaro

## PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

**Date:** September 1, 2023

**School/College/Unit:** Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

**Department/Division:** Lamar Dodd School of Art

**Certificate Title:** Undergraduate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication  
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication

**Effective Term:** Fall 2024

**CIP:** 50049901

**Which campus(es) will offer this certificate?** Athens

**Level:** Undergraduate, Post-Baccalaureate

### **Program Abstract:**

The Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication certificate is intended to instruct students in the art of furniture design. Students will be instructed in the use of hand tools and machines commonly available to studio furniture makers to construct furniture. Participants will be recruited from among current Lamar Dodd School of Art (LDSOA) students and other UGA students. It is anticipated there will also be people with a strong interest in the certificate program but little interest in a formal UGA degree, such as non-degree seeking students interested in developing a career in studio furniture making, professionals interested in pursuing a new career, and retirees with an interest in studio furniture making as a serious hobby.

The certificate curriculum is designed to take approximately two years to complete. It will utilize currently available UGA courses, instructional personnel, and studio facilities. Participants that have successfully completed the certificate will have the design and fabrication skills to work with others in making and refinishing furniture and do model building for architects, and the knowledge to develop a business plan for their own foray into a studio furniture business.

### **1. Purpose and Educational Objectives**

The purpose of the Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication certificate is to provide a set of educational experiences that will enable participants to credibly design and build studio furniture. These experiences include ample wood studio work, relevant classroom work, and a professional internship experience. These educational experiences will foster a greater ability to appreciate and make critical judgments about furniture design, enable students to produce pieces that are uniquely their own, and facilitate the pursuit of a meaningful career related to studio furniture production and appreciation.

The certificate will use existing resources. UGA already has a wood studio and there are a variety of design and CNC (Computer Numerical Control) classes offered by the Lamar Dodd School of Art that can be utilized. There are also wood technology courses in the Warnell School of Forestry (e.g.,

FORS 54530/6530, Wood Properties and Utilization). Certificate administration will be within the Lamar Dodd School of Art.

The goals of the proposed program complement the mission of the Lamar Dodd School of Art, “to promote art and design, to educate students to be empathetic and engaged citizens, and to prepare them for careers as creative professionals; and to address critical issues facing Georgians and the nation through innovative research in art, art education, and design.”

## 2. Need for the Program

As the flagship university of the State of Georgia, UGA should be comprehensive in its offerings. The Lamar Dodd School of Art lists the goal of maintaining a comprehensive array of offerings as a priority. The LDSOA does have a number of studio programs that focus on a variety of structural materials associated with producing art, i.e., metal, clay, fabric, and paper. Yet it does not have a program with a strong focus on one material that is particularly important to the economy of Georgia, namely wood. The proposed certificate in furniture design and fabrication will help fill that gap in UGA’s offerings.

The proposed program will embrace current electronic design and fabrication technology. Experience with the software that drives computerized tools like 3-D printers, laser and water jet cutters, and CNC routers will play an integral role in the Furniture Design and Fabrication certificate. Expertise in the skilled application of these tools has career benefits in furniture design and in the broader fabrication and design industries. Such knowledge clearly has benefits in post-college employment. Internships are encouraged in the certificate and give students real world experience that may prove useful in developing employment opportunities. In sum, the program contains a number of elements that are associated with positive employment and entrepreneurial outcomes.

Moreover, the “art/wood gap” is not easily filled by other educational institutions. There are a few “woodcraft (skills) classes” in Georgia. Those that exist are generally associated with retail establishments (e.g., those offered by Highland Hardware and Rockler, both in Atlanta) and have little to no emphasis on design. “Craft schools”, e.g. John C. Campbell Folk School, generally do not have well-rounded instructional programs that include a strong emphasis on design. Not only do they under-represent the design component, most of these workshops and classes focus on teaching specific skills for completing a single project rather than a more comprehensive and general skills curriculum. Not even the local vocationally oriented community college, Athens Technical College, has a woodworking program. The only degree granting venue in the state of Georgia with a program in Furniture Design is Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). SCAD, a private institution, offers B.F.A., M.A., and M.F.A. degrees in Furniture Design, but only at the Savannah campus.

### **Additional information about the program:**

- a. **Semester/Year of Program Initiation:** Fall 2024. Expect 6-12 enrollees.
- b. **Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program:** Fall 2024. Expect 6-12 enrollees.
- c. **Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded:** Spring 2025. Since this is a 2-year program only those few, perhaps 1-3, who have already had many of the required experiences would be eligible and awarded certificates in 2025.
- d. **Annual Number of Graduates Expected:** 12-15

- e. **Projected Future Trends:** Enrollment is expected to grow as the program and its graduates become known up to 20.

### 3. Student Demand

There are several populations that might have an interest in the proposed certificate, most notably UGA students who are currently pursuing a degree, particularly those in the LDSOA. For these students, the certificate will provide and document proficiency in a specialized area not currently available at UGA. There may also be qualified people who would like to learn more about furniture design and fabrication but who may not be interested in a formal undergraduate or graduate degree. Some people may be ready for a career change; designing and fabricating furniture may be a career option working professionals want to explore. People are also living longer, and many are healthy and engaged years beyond retirement. Some of these retirees may be interested in designing and building furniture as a serious hobby or part-time commercial pursuit.

There may also be interest in the certificate from non-degree seeking students who would like to learn more about furniture design and fabrication.

#### **Student Survey**

In order to document student interest in the potential certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication, faculty surveyed students enrolled in the Interior Design and Sculpture classes at the LDSOA in April 2023. In total, 50 respondents completed a four-question survey. Respondents were mostly sophomores: freshman, 0%; sophomores, 56%; juniors, 20%; seniors, 20%; and 4% graduate students.

Their responses were favorable. The first item asked, "Is it a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication?" All respondents agree, 84% strongly so. Respondents were also asked to rate their response to the following statement, "If a certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication had been available when I began my degree, I would have enrolled." Response was positive: 76% agree, 32% strongly agreed; 24% disagree, 2% strongly disagreed. The respondents thought the program would be personally useful, with 92% agreeing that "having a certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication would be useful to me in my intended profession." Perhaps the most significant item documents a strong interest in actually enrolling in such a program: "I am interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate Program." The majority of students agreed with this statement, with 74% agreeing, 38% of those strongly agreeing, and only 26% disagreeing. The survey included a subtle behavioral measure of interest in the program as well: 26 of the 50 students volunteered their email addresses to get updates on the program.

#### **Community Survey**

There are other populations that might have an interest in the potential Furniture Design and Fabrication certificate, such as the Athens Woodworkers Guild. This is a community group composed of professional and amateur woodworkers. Such persons are potential enrollees in that the program would improve their professional credentials, develop, and hone their traditional skills, and expose them to electronically controlled tools such as CNC routers as they pursue their profession or passion. The club was polled in April 2023 using the student instrument modified for this particular population and administered by SurveyMonkey. Twenty-two members responded, with encouraging results. All respondents agreed that "it is a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a certificate

program in Furniture Design and Fabrication.” At 91%, almost all respondents agreed with, “If a certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication had been available when I was in school, I would have enrolled.” More telling, 81% agreed that “having a certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication would be useful to me.” There was also an action/intention item; 82% of respondents agreed with: “I would be interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate program.” Based on this survey, there appears to be a potential pool of students outside of the University. Moreover, 18 of the 22 respondents left their email address because they wanted more information as the program progressed.

### **Google Trends**

In addition to the student and community survey, faculty also looked at national interest in studio furniture design programs. Google Trends was employed to assess interest in furniture design programs compared to other areas of art serviced by the LDSOA. To the extent that Georgia reflects national trends, this study implies that interest in the content of the certificate is commensurate with other programs in the LDSOA. Interest is higher in the certificate content than about half the current programs in the LDSOA.

### **Demand sustainability and projected minority enrollment**

Improving diversity in student populations is a long-standing goal of the LDSOA. There is significant minority representation in the school. With regard to gender representation, there are more women registered than men. It is presumed that these trends are likely to carry over to the certificate.

## **4. Program of Study**

The program of study requires 18 credit hours, including an internship and a “Focal Object” critique. The curriculum is heavy on wood studio work (12 hours). These courses are intended to provide the student with experience using hand tools and machines to complete their own projects. Project design and critique is an important component in each of these courses.

Students are also expected to broaden their approach to furniture design by taking at least one elective. The electives are intended to strengthen their design skills, increase their understanding of wood technology, and better prepare them for a related career. An important part of the program is the internship experience: students will be given an opportunity to work in a professional context under professional supervision. These experiences will help the student gain greater technical expertise and develop a better understanding of what it means to be a professional. Finally, each student is expected to submit a “Focal Project” before the end of their program. This project will be selected by the student for having personal significance. It will be evaluated by program faculty as part of the certification and will provide students with valuable feedback.

### **Required Courses (12 hours)**

- ARID 3340, Furniture Design (3 hours)
- ARST 1080, Three-Dimensional Design (3 hours)
- ARST 2400, Fundamentals of Sculpture (3 hours)
- ARST 3470, Wood as a Sculptural Medium (3 hours)

### **Elective Course (3 hours)**

**Choose one of the following courses:**

- ARID 2210, Concepts in Design (3 hours)
- ARID 3210, Design History I (3 hours)
- ARID 3220, Design History II (3 hours)
- ARST 4915/6915, Thematic Inquiry in Contemporary Art (3 hours)
- ARST 4995, Capstone Exhibition and Professional Practices (3 hours)
- ARTS 4900/6900, Professional Practices: The Business Side of Art (3 hours)
- ENTR 5500, Introduction to Entrepreneurship (3 hours)
- FORS 4530/6530, Wood Properties and Utilization (3 hours)

### **Studio Furniture Internship (3 hours)**

*Note: An additional elective course may be substituted with justification and permission from the department for an exception.*

- ARID 4350/6350, Interior Design Practicum (3 hours)

This course is an internship with a professional organization or individual in a field related to studio furniture design or fabrication is essential to the students' development. There are many opportunities for a student to gain relevant supervised experience; the possibilities range from hands-on refinishing, construction or design opportunities, and dealing with issues concerning collectable objects and their display. Students are expected to arrange internships with any relevant organization of their own choosing. The experience must be approved by a certificate instructor and the student must be formally accepted by the organization. Formal acceptance will take the form of a letter from a principal of the organization to the instructor indicating the expectations of the student and the promise of an evaluative report after completion. The student earns 3 credit hours for the experience and will be expected to put in approximately 9 hours per week on the internship. Grading will be the responsibility of the instructor based upon an evaluative report from the student's internship supervisor, and a project, written journal, or final report by the student detailing what was accomplished.

### **Potential internship opportunities:**

Below is a list of types of businesses that would make suitable placements for a student in the certificate. Every placement promises to be unique depending on the needs of the individual student and the needs and affordances of the business; thus the list is intended merely to be suggestive.

- Architectural design and fabrication firms
- Cabinet makers, custom kitchens, bathrooms, etc.
- Custom woodworkers
- Furniture design and construction studio
- Furniture restoration and refinishing
- Historic restoration
- Musical instrument makers
- Residential and commercial design
- Stage set design and construction
- Timber framing

### **Focal Project**

The certificate covers design and fabrication of decorative and functional objects primarily out of wood. Upon completion of the program, a student will have completed 12 credit hours of studio time as well as an internship. Throughout these experiences the student will be completing projects. To satisfy the “Focal Project” requirement for the certificate, the student, with advice from a certificate instructor, will select one of the previously completed projects which the student believes best demonstrates an ability to design and fabricate an article of functional or decorative furniture and present the focal object to three knowledgeable persons (e.g., faculty, internship supervisor, etc.). The group will provide the student with helpful, critical feedback regarding the project. The group will also confer among themselves to reach a decision regarding the suitability of the project as evidence of the candidate’s ability to function independently as a professional in a field related to furniture design and fabrication.

## **5. Model Program and Accreditation**

### **Model Programs**

Two related university certificates have been identified, one at The University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) and one at the University of Wisconsin, Madison (UW). The curriculum proposed here is similar to both of the model curricula. Each certificate is 17-18 credit hours. Wood studio time comprises the bulk of the curriculum, with UALR requiring 12 credit hours and UW requiring 11-14 credit hours. UW also requires a 3-4 credit hour course in “historical context of art/design.” In addition to the studio courses, UALR also requires two additional courses from the wood/furniture area of instruction (6 credit hours). As can be seen in the proposed curriculum above, all three curricula emphasize wood studio and either require courses that contextualize furniture design and making (UW) or provide them as potential electives (UALR and the current proposal). The curriculum of the current proposal differs from the others in two ways. The proposed set of electives is broader, including exposure to the business side of art and greater depth in wood biology and technology. Perhaps the most significant difference in requirements is that the current proposal is the only one that includes an internship, which faculty believe is a unique strength of the proposed program.

There are also some differences in the target market for the different programs. In all three cases the certificate is open to degree students in good standing enrolled at the university, with special emphasis on art majors. However, as noted above, faculty believe that student demand can come from a variety of places including persons interested in furniture design and fabrication but not necessarily interested in college degree; mid-career persons interested in a career change; and retirees interested in a post-career serious hobby or part-time career. UALR accommodates non-degree students in their program. Opening the proposed certificate program to qualified persons beyond those seeking a formal degree is also seen as community building and program building.

### **Accreditation**

The program will be conducted under the auspices of the LDSOA which has already been accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Associate’s, Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctor’s degrees and is also accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. More specifically, the interior design program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Art with an Area of Emphasis in Interior Design is accredited by





## Documentation of Approval and Notification

**Proposal:** Undergraduate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication  
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication

**College:** Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

**Department:** Lamar Dodd School of Art

**Proposed Effective Term:** Fall 2024

### Approvals:

- Lamar Dodd School of Art Director, Dr. Joseph Peragine, 8/15/2023
- Franklin College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean, Dr. Jean Martin-Williams, 8/31/2023

### Use of Course Approvals:

- Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources Dean, Dr. Dale Greene, 7/31/2023
- Director of Entrepreneurship, Dr. Bob Pinckney, 8/1/2023