

# RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL

## Needs and Feasibility Assessment

**Proposed Program Title:** Game & Real-time Interactive Design (GRID)

**Date:** March 6th 2025

### Proposed Type of Degree or Certificate (if applicable)

- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science
- Certificate
- Associate of Fine Arts
- ***Associate of Applied Science***
- Option in \_\_\_\_\_

### Rationale / Demand for Program:

***Note:** The prior proposal for this program's name was **IDEA**. After consultation with our Department, it was decided that **GRID** would be a better fit. Any mention of **IDEA** in prior correspondence refers to the same proposal.*

The GRID AAS program is designed to address the growing demand for skilled professionals in interactive media, game design, web development, and digital arts. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment in multimedia arts and game design is expected to grow 8-16% from 2023 to 2033, faster than the average for all occupations.<sup>1</sup> The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development also reports increasing demand for digital content creators, UI/UX designers, and interactive media specialists.<sup>[2]</sup>

The GRID AAS program **consolidates five existing degrees** — Game Development (AAS), Game Art (AS), and Interface Design & Web Development (AS, AAS, & Cert) — into a single, streamlined curriculum that aligns with industry needs. This restructuring:

- Addresses shifts in industry standards from 2000 to 2025,
- Increases enrollment efficiency,
- Provides a focused, interdisciplinary approach to digital content creation.

Employer feedback and industry advisory committees generally emphasize the need for graduates with cross-disciplinary skills in creative computing, game engines, UX design, and portfolio development. Similar programs in neighboring institutions (e.g., Middlesex College, Mercer County Community College) lack the interdisciplinary approach of GRID, creating a competitive advantage for RVCC.

## Resources for the Program:

### Classroom & Lab Setup:

- The program will make use of the existing W213 Game Dev and W205 IDMX Labs, re-branding them to "GRID Labs 1 & 2." This is completely cosmetic.
- If the Labs are moved to the Arts Building there will be costs associated with reconfiguration of existing spaces and hardware but no new hardware expenditures.

### Faculty & Staff:

- No additional full-time faculty currently required.
- No additional adjunct faculty currently required.
- Lab Assistants for Open Lab Hours are funded by Perkins.

### Clerical support:

- Shared with existing Arts & Design programs.

### Professional Development:

- Training and industry conference attendance handled under Faculty Travel budget and Perkins.

### Consumables & Maintenance:

- Software subscriptions, digital asset libraries, and maintenance at current prices (Phil Strollo will have to confirm).
- Focus on Free and Open Source solutions will reduce any software licensing considerably.

### Accreditation & Consultants:

- No immediate accreditation costs beyond standard program review.

## Projected Revenue and Expenses:

- GRID will be **Perkins eligible**.
- Estimated enrollment: **70 active majors per semester**
- Estimated program course enrollments: **~245 per semester, plus “tourists” in electives and Gen Ed.**
  - Average program-specific courses per student: **3.25 - 3.75 per semester** (higher than previous programs: Game Art: 1.5, Game Dev: 1.75, IDMX: 2.0)
- **Revenue calculation:**
  - ~70 students x 15 credits/semester x (\$186/credit + \$50 fees) = **\$247,800 per semester (\$495,600 annually)**
  - (Any additional Lab fees assessed would be dependent upon software licensing costs.)
- ***This will readily be revenue positive within the first two years.***

## Competition for Program:

### Local Programs:

- **Middlesex College:** Offers Game Development, but lacks the integration of art, UX, and web.
- **Mercer County Community College:** Similar offerings, but does not provide industry-focused interdisciplinary training.

### Statewide Programs:

- Few NJ community colleges offer a comprehensive degree like GRID.

### Online & Proprietary Schools:

- For-profit institutions such as **Full Sail University** and **SNHU** offer online alternatives but at significantly higher tuition costs, making RVCC's GRID AAS a more accessible and cost-effective option.

## Transferability of Program:

While *the GRID AAS is designed for direct employment*, articulation agreements could be established with:

- **TCNJ** (The College of New Jersey) – Interactive Multimedia
- **NJIT** (New Jersey Institute of Technology) - Digital Design & Human-Computer Interaction
- **Stevens Institute of Technology** - Visual Arts and Technology, Game Design Concentration
- **Montclair State University** - Animation & Interactive Media
- **Rutgers University** - IT and Informatics
- **Seton Hall** - Art, Design, and Interactive Multimedia (ADIM)
- **Temple University** - Graphic and Interactive Design BFA
- **Pennsylvania College of Technology** - Game & Simulation Programming

By aligning coursework with four-year institutions, students can seamlessly transfer into advanced degree programs in Interactive Media, Game Development, and UX Design.

## Opportunities for Graduates:

- **Estimated Graduates Annually: 20-30**
- **Job Market & Growth Projections:**
  - Multimedia artists and animators: **8% growth (BLS)**
  - Web developers & UX designers: **16% growth (BLS)[1]**
  - Game designers and developers: **Projected strong demand due to industry expansion**
- **Estimated Salaries (NJ, based on listings):[3]**
  - Game Developers: **\$62,500 entry, \$96,250 median**
  - UX/UI Designers: **\$84,150 entry, \$104,800 median**
  - Web Developers: **\$80,000 entry, \$105,000 median**
  - Game Designers: **\$106,000 entry, \$123,400 median**

This program provides **a clear, industry-driven path for graduates to enter high-demand careers** while also allowing for further education opportunities.

This proposal has been reviewed and is supported by the department in which it will reside.

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Department

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Department Chair's Signature

### **References:**

1. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/web-developers.htm>
2. <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/tools-support/demand-occupations/index.shtml>
3. <https://www.talent.com/> entry and median salaries for New Jersey.