

# PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/College/Unit:** UGA/Franklin College of Arts and Sciences/Lamar Dodd School of Art

**Department/Division:** Lamar Dodd School of Art, Interior Design, Sculpture

**Certificate Title:** Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication

**Effective Term:** Fall 2024

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

**Level (Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Baccalaureate):** Undergraduate, Post Baccalaureate

## Program Abstract:

The Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication program is intended to instruct students in the art of furniture design. At the same time, students will be instructed in how to use 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. We anticipate that there will also be people with a strong interest in the Certificate program but little interest in a formal UGA degree, e.g., non-traditional students interested in developing a career in studio furniture making; mid-career folks interested in pursuing a new career; and retired folks with an interest in studio furniture making as a serious hobby.

The certificate curriculum is designed to take approximately two years. It will utilize currently available UGA courses, instructional personnel and studio facilities. Participants that have successfully completed the Certificate Program will have the design and fabrication skills to work with others in making and refinishing furniture; 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 and goals of the Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication Program are 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 help create a greater ability to appreciate and make critical judgments about furniture design; they will enable students to produce pieces that are uniquely their own; and they will facilitate the pursuit of a meaningful career related to studio furniture production and or appreciation.

To add perspective, the goals of this proposal are modest: Not a BFA or MFA in Furniture Design, but rather a “Certification” in furniture design and fabrication. We propose using current UGA resources. UGA already has a wood studio and there are a variety of design and CNC classes in the Lamar Dodd School of Art that can be utilized to good effect. There are even wood technology courses in the Warnell School of Forestry (e.g., Design of Wood Structures). Certificate administration will be jointly administered by the Interior Design and Sculpture programs.

The goals of the proposed program clearly 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. Indeed, the Lamar Dodd School of Art (LDSOA) lists the goal of maintaining a comprehensive array of offerings as a priority. 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 even 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 program in furniture design will help fill that gap in UGA’s offerings.

A component of 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 Program. Expertise in the skilled application of these tools has career benefits in furniture design and also in the broader fabrication and design industries. Such knowledge clearly has benefits in post college employment. Internships are required by the Certificate Proposal and promise to 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. But those that exist are generally associated with retail establishments (e.g., Highland Hardware, and Rockler, in Atlanta) and have little to no emphasis on design. And, “craft schools”, e.g. John C Campbell Folk School, generally do not have well rounded instructional programs that include a strong dose of design. Not only do they under-represent the design component but most of these workshops/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 that we could find is SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design). SCAD, a private institution, offers the BFA, MA and MFA degrees in Furniture Design but only at the Savannah Campus.

#### Additional information about the program:

- a. Semester/Year of Program Initiation: Fall 2024
- b. Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program: Fall 2024
- c. Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded: Spring 2025
- d. Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established): 12-15
- e. Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program: We expect the numbers to grow as the program and its graduates become known.

### 3. Student Demand

There are several populations that might have an interest in the proposed certificate. Most centrally, UGA students who are currently enrolled in degree programs, particularly those in the LDSOA. For such folks the certificate will be a way of providing and documenting proficiency in a specialized area not currently available at UGA . There may also be qualified<sup>1</sup> persons who would like to learn more about furniture design and fabrication but who may not be interested in a formal undergraduate or graduate degree. (2) Some people may be ready for a career change; designing and fabricating furniture looks like a career option they want to explore. Or, (3) people are living longer and many are healthy, and engaged years beyond retirement. Some of them may be interested in designing and building furniture as a serious hobby or part time commercial pursuit.

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<sup>1</sup> Persons who have received a Baccalaureate degree may be qualified for admission to take courses without a specific degree objective. ( Click [HERE](#) for registration information.) Non-Traditional students with limited or no college experience may also be able to take Certificate courses. (Click [HERE](#) for more information.).

## Student Survey.

In order to document student interest in the potential Certificate Program in Furniture Design and Fabrication we surveyed students enrolled in the Interior Design and Sculpture classes at the LDSOA in April 2023. (See Student Survey, click [HERE](#).) 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. We also asked respondents, “If a certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication had been available when I began my degree I would have enrolled”. Seventy six percent agree, 32% strongly so; 24% disagree, 2% strongly so. The respondents thought the program would be personally useful. Ninety-two percent agree 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 ", 74% agree with this statement, 38% strongly so, and only 26% disagree. The survey included a subtle behavioral measure of interest in the program as well: We find it interesting that 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 program. One such group is the Athens Woodworkers Guild. This is a community group composed of professional and amateur woodworkers. Such persons are potential enrollees in the program in that the program might augment their professional credentials, help 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. (Click [HERE](#) to see the instrument and detailed responses.) Again the results were encouraging. One hundred percent agree that “It is a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a Certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication. And, 91% agree 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. Fully 82% agreed with: “I would be interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate program.” So 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, we also looked nationally at 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 Program is commensurate with other programs in the LDSOA. Indeed, interest is higher in the Certificate content than about half the current programs in the LDSOA. (Click [HERE](#) for a more complete report).

## Demand sustainability and projected minority enrollment

Diversity has been a long standing goal of the LDSOA and continues to be so. Happily there is significant minority representation in the school. With regard to gender representation, there are more women registered than men! We presume that these trends are likely to carry over to the Certificate Program.

## 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 by taking at least one **elective**. The electives are intended to strengthen their design skills, increase their understanding of wood technology, or 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 real world, 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 his/her program. This project will be selected by the student for having some special significance. It will be evaluated by program faculty as part of the certification and will provide students with valuable feedback.

## Wood studio courses: 12 Credit hours required

**Course ID:** ARST 1080. 3 hours. 6 hours lab per week.

**Course Title:** Three-Dimensional Design

**Course Description:** An introduction to the design of three-dimensional forms and space using various materials and methods. Students will explore concepts of three-dimensional design, such as scale and proportion, positive and negative space, focal point, and weight and gravity. Students will also study concepts of environmental context in three-dimensional art.

**Course ID:** ARST 2400. 3 hours. 6 hours lab per week.

**Course Title:** Fundamentals of Sculpture

**Course Description:** Technical fundamentals of mold making/casting, modeling, and constructive methods of sculpture and their aesthetic implications in terms of form and content.

**Course ID:** ARST 3470. 3 hours. 6 hours lab per week.

**Course Title:** Wood as a Sculptural Medium

**Course Description:** Processes include carving with hand, pneumatic, and electric tools. Stationary machine tools will also be incorporated

**Course ID:** ARID 3340. 3 hours. 6 hours lab per week.

**Course Title:** Furniture Design

**Course Description:** Cabinetry and furniture design, including construction methods, drawings, and design presentation.

## Electives: 3 Credit hours required

**Course ID:** ARID 2210. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Concepts in Design

**Course Description:** Techniques for developing ideas and advancing creative and problem-solving skills while designing three-dimensional spaces. Taught in the context of professional practice in interior design and related fields

**Course ID:** ARID 3210. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Design History I

**Course Description:** An historical survey of architecture, interior design, furniture, and allied crafts from antiquity to the Industrial Revolution.

**Course ID:** ARID 3220. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Design History II

**Course Description:** An historical survey of architecture, interior design, furniture, and allied crafts from antiquity to the Industrial Revolution

**Course ID:** ENTR 5500. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Introduction to Entrepreneurship

**Course Description:** Case studies of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ventures. Covers multiple areas, from structuring the new business to fundraising to defining the market. Students will learn from the experience of others in creating an entrepreneurial venture.

**Course ID:** ARTS 4900/6900. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Professional Practices: The Business Side of Art

**Course Description:** The business practices necessary for an exhibiting and practicing artist to survive in the contemporary art market. Assignments will focus on professional development. Each student will leave the class with a packet of material to approach galleries, museums, and other art centers for exhibitions.

**Course ID:** FORS 4530/6530. 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Wood Properties and Utilization

**Course Description:** General introduction to wood and wood products. Major uses of wood, characteristics of major wood products, processes involved in their manufacture, and properties of the raw material affecting its quality and use. Topics covered include wood formation, anatomy, chemistry, wood properties, and the processes used to manufacture wood-based products. (Need Permission of instructor.)

**Course ID:** ARST 4915/6915. 3 hours. Repeatable for maximum 15 hours credit. 6 hours lab per week.

**Course Title:** Thematic Inquiry in Contemporary Art

**Course Description:** Advanced cross-media research and studio production on a topical theme in contemporary art. Readings, guest lectures, and field research will guide discussions on the topical theme of the course. Students will develop studio work addressing the theme utilizing the media of their expertise.

**Course ID:** ARST 4995 3 hours. 6 hours lab per week

**Course Title:** Studio Art Capstone Course

**Description:** Curatorial practices leading to the presentation of a B.F.A. exhibition, including preparation, curation, and installation of work in gallery exhibitions.

## Studio furniture Internship: 3 Credit hours required

**Course ID:** ARID 4350, 3 hours.

**Course Title:** Practicum

**Description:** 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, or construction or design opportunities to dealing with issues concerning collectable objects and their display. (See potential internship experiences below. Students are expected to arrange internships of their own choosing from among the list below. Or, they may arrange to work 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 he/she 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 or written journal or final report by the student detailing what he/she accomplished.

Deleted: ARST 4350

### Potential internship opportunities:

**Georgia Museum of Art** The Georgia state museum of art is on campus and has an extensive decorative arts section including work by local woodturners and furniture makers, (Leadership at the GMOA is currently in transition, but its most recent Director, Bill Eiland, was enthusiastic about the prospect: "Friday is my last day at the museum, but I am indeed excited about the possibility of an internship in the decorative arts at the museum, especially from a student in woodworking or a similar so-called "craft area," which is "art" to me, and I certainly endorse and support the idea." email to A. Tesser, 3/30/23.

Below is a list of types of businesses that might make suitable places for an intern in the Certificate Program. Every placement promises to be unique depending on the needs of the individual student and the needs and affordances of the business. So the list is intended merely to be suggestive:

- Architectural design and fabrication firm
- 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 program is about designing and fabrication of decorative and functional objects primarily out of wood. As the student completes the program he/she will have completed 12 credit hours of studio time as well as an internship. Throughout these experiences they will be completing projects. To satisfy this, the “focal Project” requirement for the Certificate, the student, with advice from a certificate instructor, will select one of the projects he/she has completed. The focal project will be one which the student believes well illustrates his/her ability to design and fabricate an article of functional or decorative furniture. An administrator of the Certificate program will arrange a time for the student to present the focal object to 3 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 (without the candidate present), to reach a decision regarding the suitability of the project as evidence of the candidate being able to function independently as a professional in a field related to furniture design/fabrication.

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## 5. Model Program and Accreditation

### Model Programs.

We have identified two related university certificate programs. The University of [Arkansas at Little Rock \(UALR\)](#) and 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 is the bulk of the curriculum (This proposal 12 credit hrs; UALR (12 credit hrs); UW (11-14 credit hrs) UW also requires a 3-4 credit hour course in “Historical context of art/design”. [In addition to the studio courses, UALR also requires 2](#) additional courses from the wood/furniture area of instruction (6 credit hours). As can be seen in the proposed curriculum above, all 3 curricula emphasize wood studio and either require (UW) courses that contextualize furniture design and making or provide them as potential electives (current proposal and UALR). 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. We believe this is a unique strength of the proposed program.

There are also some differences in the target market for the different programs. In all 3 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, we 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 age persons interested in a career change; and retired persons interested in a post career serious hobby or part time career. UALR accommodates non-degree students in their program (Peter Scheidt, personal communication, 12/7/22). 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 and that entity has already been accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Associate, 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, Interior Design, is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation.

## 6. Student Learning Outcomes<sup>2</sup>

Upon completion, students will be able to:

- understand the principles of anthropometrics, ergonomics, and proxemics in relation to furniture design.
- understand appropriate vocabulary, materials, and methods of furniture manufacture.
- understand how construction documentation is applied to the design and fabrication of furnishings and cabinetry.
- understand and consider natural resource conservation.
- understand the use of equipment, materials, and applied design aesthetics.
- understand the properties of wood, and processing, and characteristics as relates to woodworking.
- demonstrate a mastery of woodworking joinery concepts, both hand and machine.
- demonstrate a mastery of a variety of woodworking concepts, including laminating, steam bending, veneering, turning, shaping, pattern-tracing, jig making, etc.
- understand and demonstrate use of appropriate wood finishes, with emphasis on selection, application, buffing, and safe practices.

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<sup>2</sup> The program in wood at Haywood Junior College, NC was useful in developing outcomes. [Programandtechnicalstandardspe-wood2020-2021.pdf \(haywood.edu\)](#) Haywood College, NC

- demonstrate safe studio procedure, including machinery operations, chemical use and storage,
- respiratory issues, ear/eye protection, and ergonomics.
- demonstrate appropriate levels of craftsmanship.
- develop an individualized design aesthetic and produce items within that aesthetic
- analyze work in context with the history of craft.
- understand marketing concepts.

## 7. Assessment and Admissions

**Admission :** All potential participants in the Certificate Program must be students currently enrolled in courses at UGA or show documentation of their acceptance for coursework at UGA (see note 1). The admission process requires an application packet containing a resume including applicant’s previous experience in areas related to Furniture Design and Fabrication, a portfolio of work where relevant, and a written statement of goals. In cases where there are more applicants than available positions, the Certificate administrators will jointly review packets and make decisions regarding the most acceptable candidates.

**Assessment:** Successful completion of the proposed certificate program is dependent on satisfactory completion of the required course work, the elective course work, an internship and a focal project. Grades are assigned in each of the courses and assessment of the internship and the focal project have been discussed above. In addition, a list of specific student learning outcomes (see Student Learning Outcomes above) will guide program administration in granting Certification status.

### Approval Signatures:

Department Head/Director:



Dean/Vice President:

Heads of any academic units which offer courses used in the program of study:

Heads of any academic units which offer similar programs. N/A

# Student Survey

Students enrolled in the Interior Design and Sculpture classes at the LDSOA in April 2023. In total 50 respondents completed a 4 question survey. Below are the specific questions with the total number of responses to each alternative.

Dear Art/Design Student

We would like your input on a new program.

The Lamar Dodd School of Art is considering adding a **certificate program** in **Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication**. The 18 credit hour program is heavy on **wood studio work** (9-12 hours) including a strong dose of **design and critique**, an **internship** in a field of the student's interest and a "**focal project**" demonstrating mastery of design and technique. Of course, participation in any of these certificate related courses may also be credited to any other UGA degree requirement.

Is it a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a Certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication.

Strongly agree	42, 84%
Agree	8, 16%
Disagree	0, 0%
Strongly Disagree	0, 0%

Having a Certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication would be useful to me in my intended profession.

Strongly agree	27, 54%
Agree	19, 38%
ZDisagree	4, 8%
Strongly Disagree	

I am interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate program.

Strongly agree	19, 38%
Agree	18, 36%
Disagree	13, 26%
Strongly Disagree	

If a Certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication had been available when I began my degree, I would have enrolled.

Strongly agree	16, 32%
Agree	22, 44%
Disagree	11, 22%
Strongly Disagree	1, 2%

It would be helpful for statistical analyses to have the following information about you:

Class:

Freshman	
Sophomore	28, 56%
Junior	10, 20%
Senior	10, 20%
Graduate Student	2, 4%

If you would like to learn more about this initiative as it develops, please add your email address here:

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**26 Respondents included their email address for further information.**

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact: Tad Gloeckler, [tgloeckl@uga.edu](mailto:tgloeckl@uga.edu) or Abraham Tesser, [atesser@uga.edu](mailto:atesser@uga.edu) or Martijn van Wagtendonk, [martijn@uga.edu](mailto:martijn@uga.edu)

Dear Art/Design Student

We would like your input on a new program.

## Interest in Furniture Certificate, woodworkers guild

### Program Interest Survey

Dear Athens Area Woodworkers Guild,

We would like your input on a new program.

The Lamar Dodd School of Art (University of Georgia) is considering adding a **certificate program in Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication**. The 18-credit hour program is heavy on wood studio work (9-12 hours) including a strong dose of design and critique, an internship in a field of the student's interest and a "focal project" demonstrating mastery of design and technique. Of course, participation in any of these certificate related courses may also be credited to any other UGA degree requirement.

Q1 It is a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a Certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication. Answered: 22 Skipped: 0 TOTAL 22

Dear Member of the Athens Woodworkers Guild,

We would like your input on a new program.

The Lamar Dodd School of Art, at the University of Georgia, is considering adding a **certificate program** in **Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication**. The 18 credit hour program is heavy on **wood studio work** (9-12 hours) including a strong dose of **design and critique**, an **internship** in a field of the student's interest and a "**focal project**" demonstrating mastery of design and technique.

What does this have to do with you, personally? If you are over 62 years of age and a college graduate we believe you are eligible to enroll in classes at the University of Georgia, and participate in this program for free.

I think it is a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a Certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication.

Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_  
Disagree \_\_\_\_\_  
Strongly Disagree \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate program.

Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_  
Disagree \_\_\_\_\_  
Strongly Disagree \_\_\_\_\_

Are you 62 or older? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to learn more about this initiative as it develops, please add your email address here: \_\_\_\_\_.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact: Tad Gloeckler, [tgloeckl@uga.edu](mailto:tgloeckl@uga.edu) or Abraham Tesser, [atesser@uga.edu](mailto:atesser@uga.edu) or Martijn van Wagtendonk, [martijn@uga.edu](mailto:martijn@uga.edu)

# Program Interest Survey, SurveyMonkey

Results as of 4/22/23,

22 people from a mailing list of 126 people responded to the survey.

Dear Athens Area Woodworkers Guild,

We would like your input on a new program.

The Lamar Dodd School of Art (University of Georgia) is considering adding a **certificate program** in **Studio Furniture Design and Fabrication**. The 18-credit hour program is heavy on **wood studio work** (9-12 hours) including a strong dose of **design and critique**, an **internship** in a field of the student's interest and a "**focal project**" demonstrating mastery of design and technique. Of course, participation in any of these certificate related courses may also be credited to any other UGA degree requirement.

Is it a good idea for the Lamar Dodd School of Art to institute a Certificate program in Furniture Design and Fabrication.

Strongly agree	19, 86%
Agree	3, 14%
Disagree	0, 0%
Strongly Disagree	0, 0%

Having a Certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication would be useful to me..

Strongly agree	9, 43%
Agree	8, 38%
Disagree	3, 14%
Strongly Disagree	1, 5%

I Would be interested in enrolling in the Furniture Design and Fabrication Certificate program.

Strongly agree	12, 55%
Agree	6, 27%
Disagree	4, 18%
Strongly Disagree	0, 0%

If a Certificate in Furniture Design and Fabrication had been available when I was in school, I would have enrolled.

Strongly agree	14, 64%
Agree	6, 27%
Disagree	2, 9%
Strongly Disagree	0, 0%

If you would like to learn more about this initiative as it develops, please add your email address here:

**Eighteen, 82%, of 22 respondents** typed in their email addresses for further information.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact: Tad Gloeckler, [tgloeckl@uga.edu](mailto:tgloeckl@uga.edu) or Abraham Tesser, [atesser@uga.edu](mailto:atesser@uga.edu) or Martijn van Wagtendonk, [martijn@uga.edu](mailto:martijn@uga.edu)

# Assessing Interest in Furniture Design Programs: Google Trends

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by Abraham Tesser, 2022

**Summary.** The Lamar Dodd School of Art is considering a Certificate Program in Furniture Design. Google Trends was employed to assess interest in furniture design programs compared to other areas of art serviced by the school. Results suggest that interest in furniture design programs is commensurate with other programs in the School, i.e., higher than some and lower than others.

**Background.** The Lamar Dodd School of Art (LDSA) at the University of Georgia is considering an initiative to add a Certificate Program in Furniture Design. The Program would be jointly administered by the Interior Design Area and the Sculpture Area. The Program would have a particularly strong emphasis on studio work, i.e., making, as well as design. The initiative is being planned around faculty, courses and studio space already at the University. There is also a variety of local community experts, institutions, and resources that might be enlisted to enrich the educational experience associated with the program.

One concern that any institution must have before undertaking a new program is the level of interest in such a program, i.e., is there sufficient interest to generate the number of students needed to justify a new program. One can't know for certain before an actual launch but there are clues that can be gathered: One can directly ask (survey) potential students; or, one can look at indirect indices of interest. Neither approach is without flaws but each provides some information. This report focuses on the latter route.

**Assessing Interest in a Furniture Design Program.** When considering this initiative one might want to know if interest in Furniture Design Programs (FDP) is increasing, decreasing, or staying the same over time. Hopefully interest in FDPs is staying the same or increasing. One might also want to compare the level of interest in FDPs with the level of interest in other programs in the art department, e.g. the Ceramics Area, the Sculpture Area. Hopefully, a relatively new initiative, FDP, would show a level of interest commensurate with at least some of the more established areas.

[Google Trends](#) provides a way of assessing public interest in a topic by reporting the number of searches on the topic over a period of time for a geographic area. The program does not count all searches but uses samples. Results are not reported in raw frequencies; rather, Google Trends scales the numbers between 0 and 100. The highest search frequency for any single time interval is assigned the value 100; and all other frequencies are assigned numbers 0-100 in proportion to that highest level. For more about how Google trends works click [HERE](#) or [HERE](#).

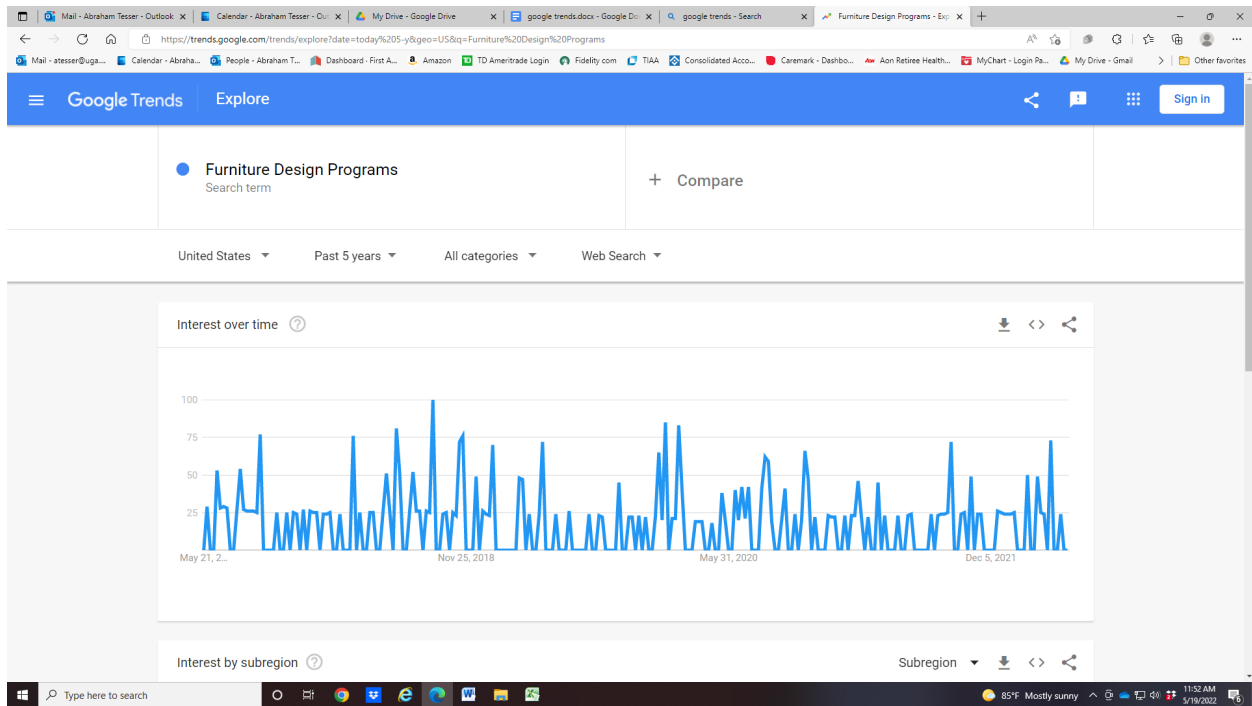
To assess trends over time, the search term "Furniture Design Programs" was entered into Google Trends with a request for data over the *5 years (May 2018-May 2022) in the United States*. To assess

interest in FDPs compared to each of the currently taught areas of art at the LDSA a series of two search term studies was conducted. Each of these studies compared the term “Furniture Design Programs” to a search term representing one of the current areas. All of the search terms<sup>1</sup> are listed in Table 1.

**Results.** The search frequency for the term “Furniture Design Programs” over the past 5 years in weekly intervals is shown in Figure 1. There is clearly weekly variability in search frequency but there appears to be no obvious, simple growth or decrease in interest over the time interval. Indeed the linear correlation between scaled frequency and time is practically zero,  $r=-.06$ . In short, interest in FDPs has remained fairly constant.

Figure 1

Pattern of search history for the term “Furniture Design Programs” by week over the last 5 years (May 2018-May2022) scaled by Google Trends



If interest in FDPs has remained constant, one might ask if the level of interest is high, medium or low. The Google Trend data allow only a relative answer, i.e. is the interest level in one area higher/lower than that of another area. For example, Google Trends allows us to compare the FDP search term with another search term, e.g., “Graphic Design Programs”. The app returns results, including the average height of the trend line for each term *on the same scale*, making the two levels of search/interest directly comparable.

1

The first column of Table 1 lists each of the search terms we compared with “Furniture Design Programs”. The rows of Table 1 display the relative interest level for each pairwise comparison. Let’s focus on the first row, for example. Here the search term “Graphic Design Programs” was compared to “Furniture Design Programs”. On average, the graphic design term yielded 45 scaled units of search while the furniture design term yielded only 2 scaled units of search, a difference of 43 scale units in favor of graphic design. There appears to be more interest in Graphic Design Programs than Furniture Design Programs over the last 5 years.

**Table 1**  
**Comparing interest in Furniture Design Programs with Other**  
**Areas in the Lamar Dodd School of Art**

<b>Search Terms representing current "Areas" in Art Department</b>	<b>Average Interest in "X" compared to "Furniture Design"</b>	<b>Average Interest in "Furniture Design Programs" compared to "X"</b>	<b>Relative interest in "Furniture Design Programs" Compared to "X"</b>
Graphic Design Programs	45	2	-43
Interior Design Programs	45	2	-43
Drawing Programs	42	1	-41
Photography Programs	43	3	-40
Painting Programs	31	4	-27
Ceramics Programs	18	15	-3
Sculpture Programs	12	14	2
Scientific Illustration Programs	5	15	10
Fabric Design Programs	0	15	15
Jewelry Design Programs	0	15	15
Metal Work Programs	0	15	15

Jewelry and Metalwork Programs	0	15	15
Print Making Programs	0	15	15
Book Arts Programs	0	15	15

Similarly, Interior Design Programs, Drawing Programs, Photography Programs and Painting Programs yield substantially higher interest values than Furniture Design Programs. On the other hand, Furniture Design Programs produce approximately the same interest levels as do Ceramics Programs, Sculpture Programs and Scientific Illustration Programs. And, these data suggest that Furniture Design Programs have generated a bit *more interest* than some other areas of art currently available at the LDSA: Fabric Design, Jewelry and MetalWorking, and Printmaking and Book Arts. In sum, these data put national interest in furniture design programs over the last 5 years somewhere in the middle of the pack when compared to other areas currently being serviced by the LDSA.

**Some caveats.** We have done our best to select “representative” terms for each area. But different search terms might yield different results. Happily, Google Trends is relatively easy to use and the interested reader is invited to try other search terms.

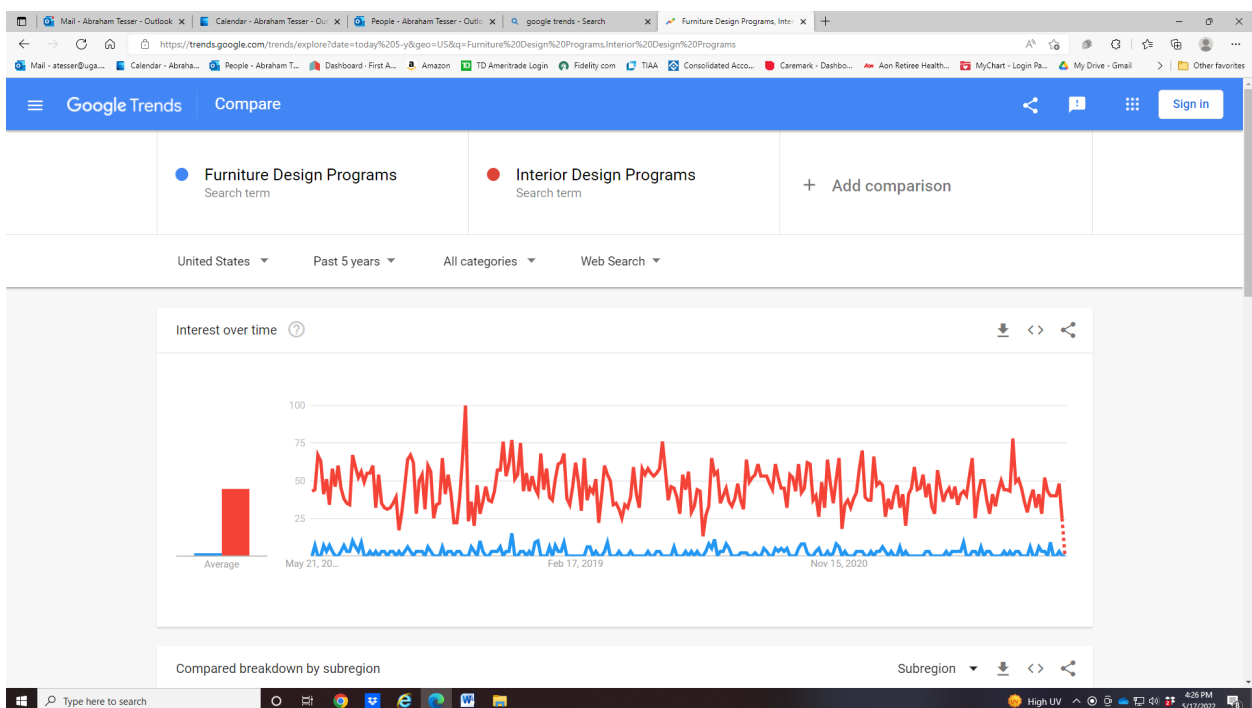
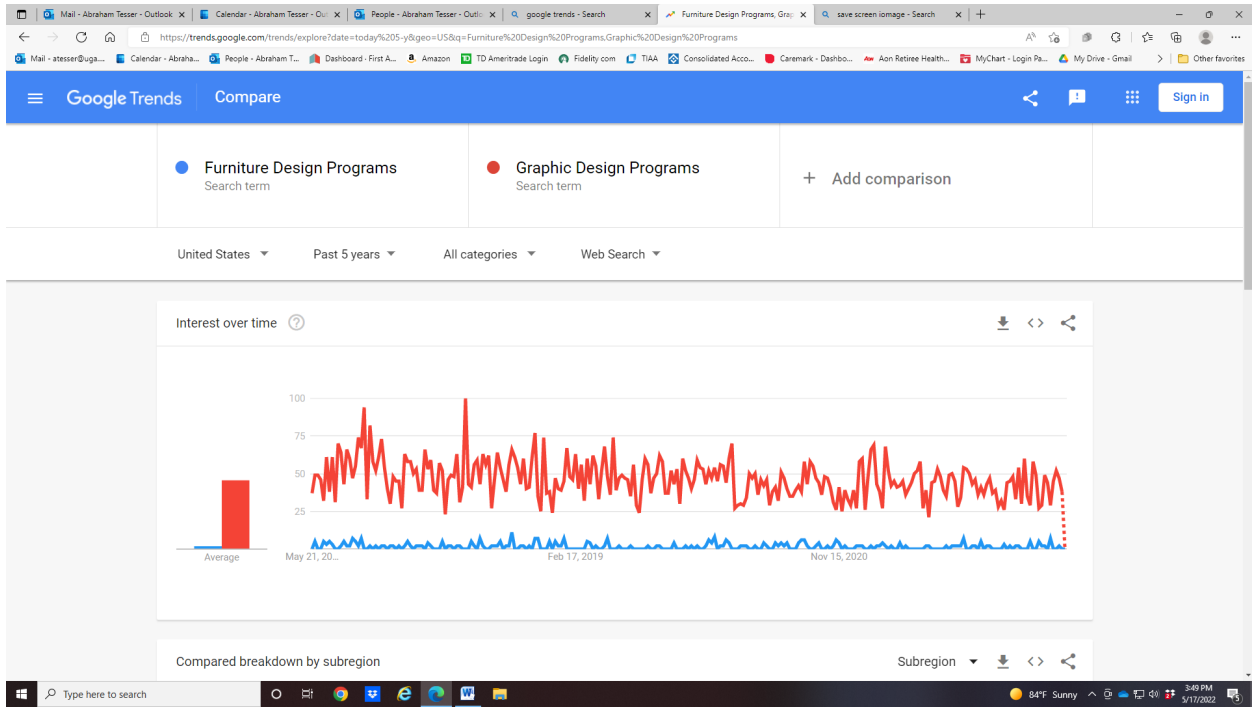
All the data presented here have been scaled by Google Trends. There are no “raw” search frequencies so it is only possible to make comparisons of terms on the same scale. Fortunately, these relative pairwise comparisons yield the kind of “ballpark estimates” needed here.

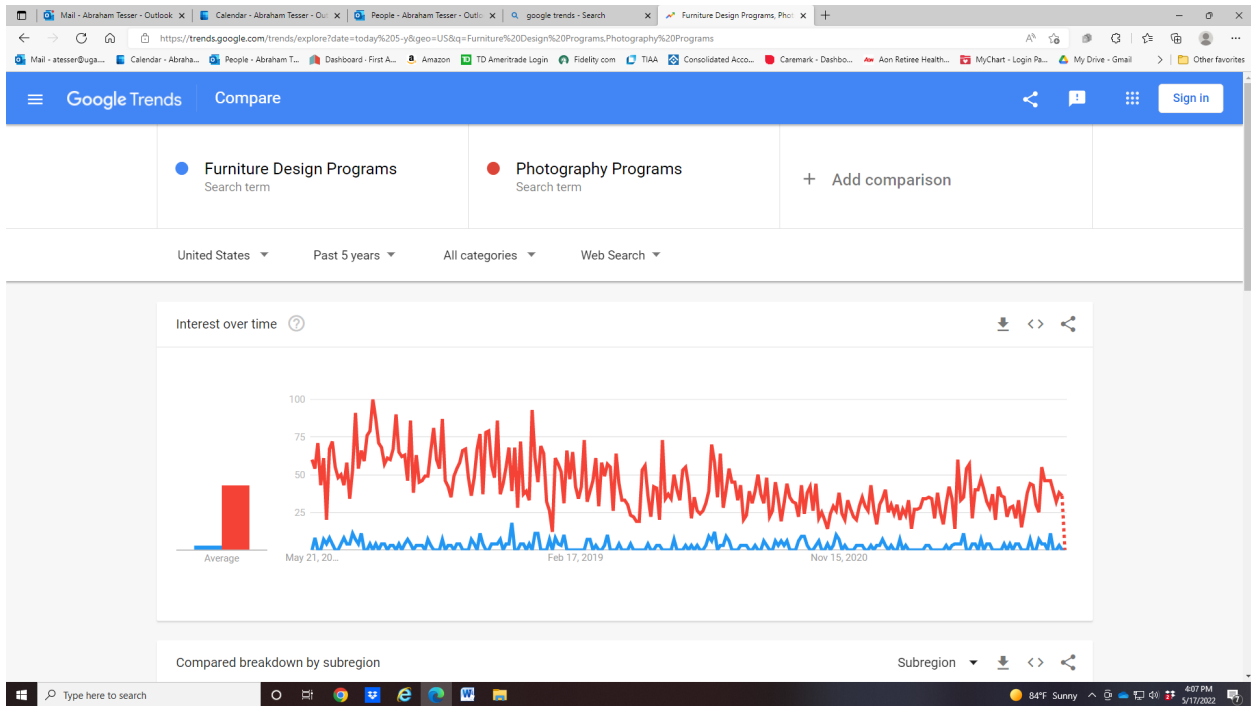
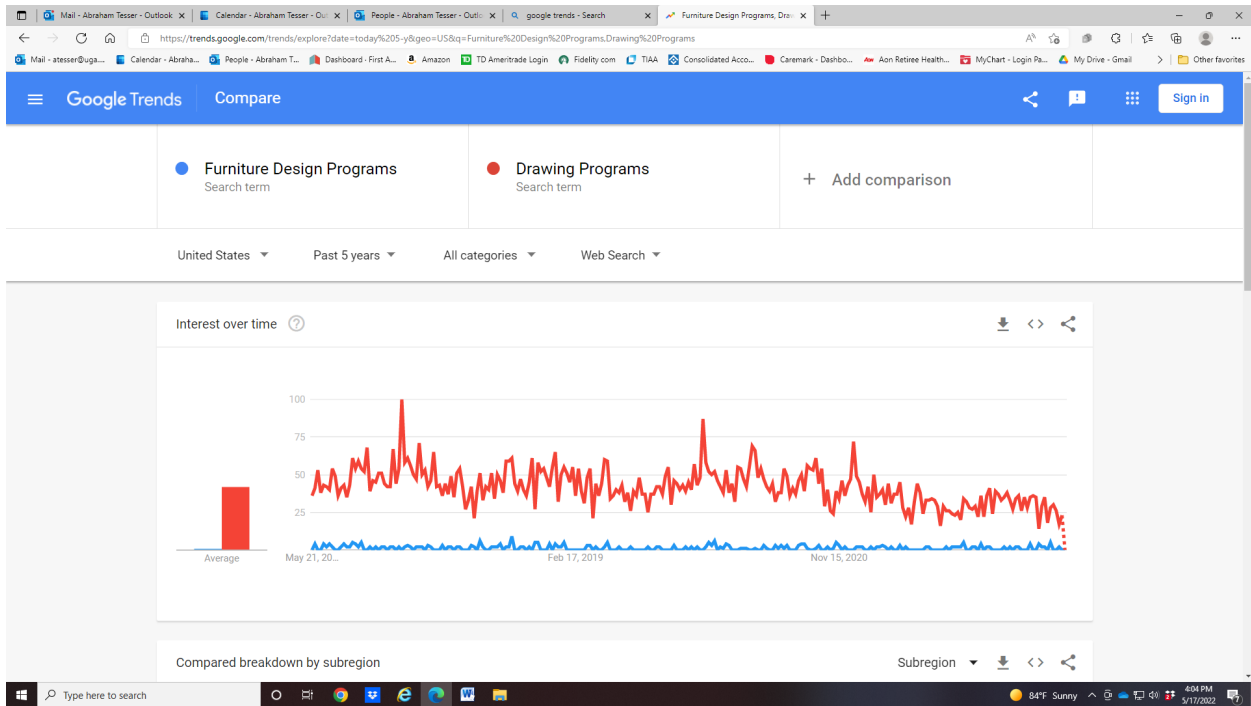
The averages we present in Table 1 are returned by Google Trends; not computed by us. And averages only reflect the height of a trend line; not its variability or overall shape. The **Appendix** presents all of the data for each pairwise comparison; fortunately, simply looking at the data leads to the same conclusions as the averages.

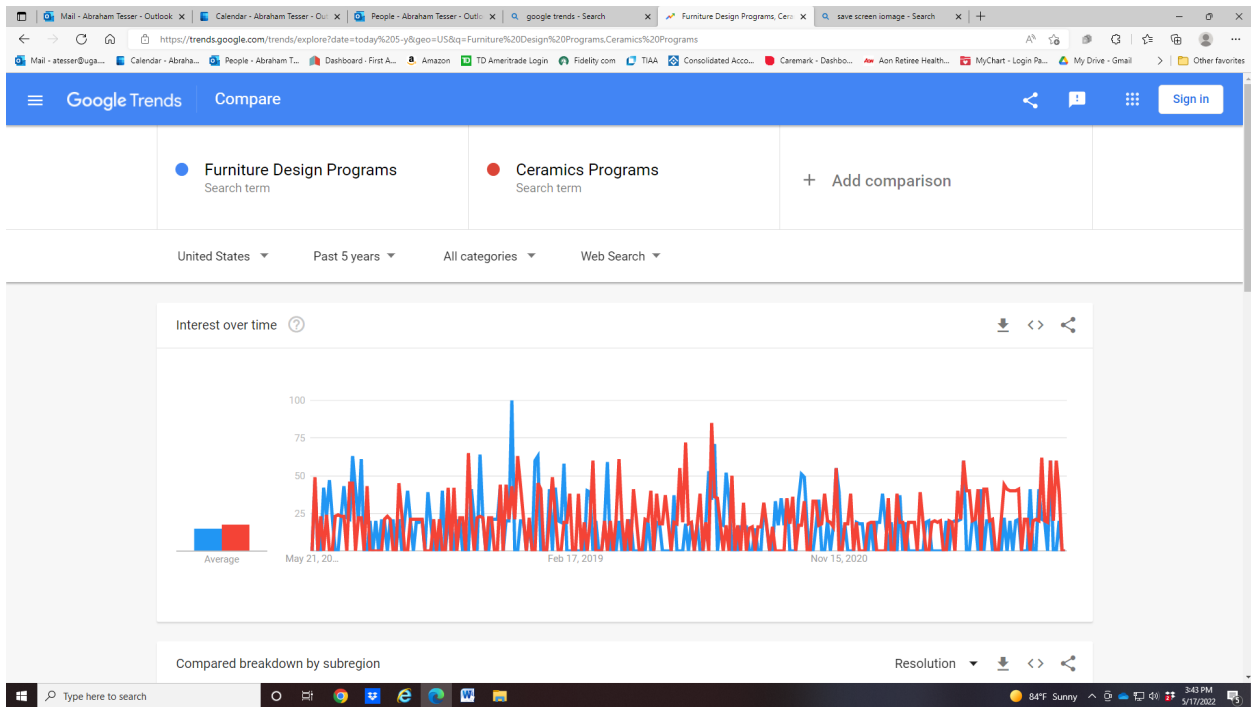
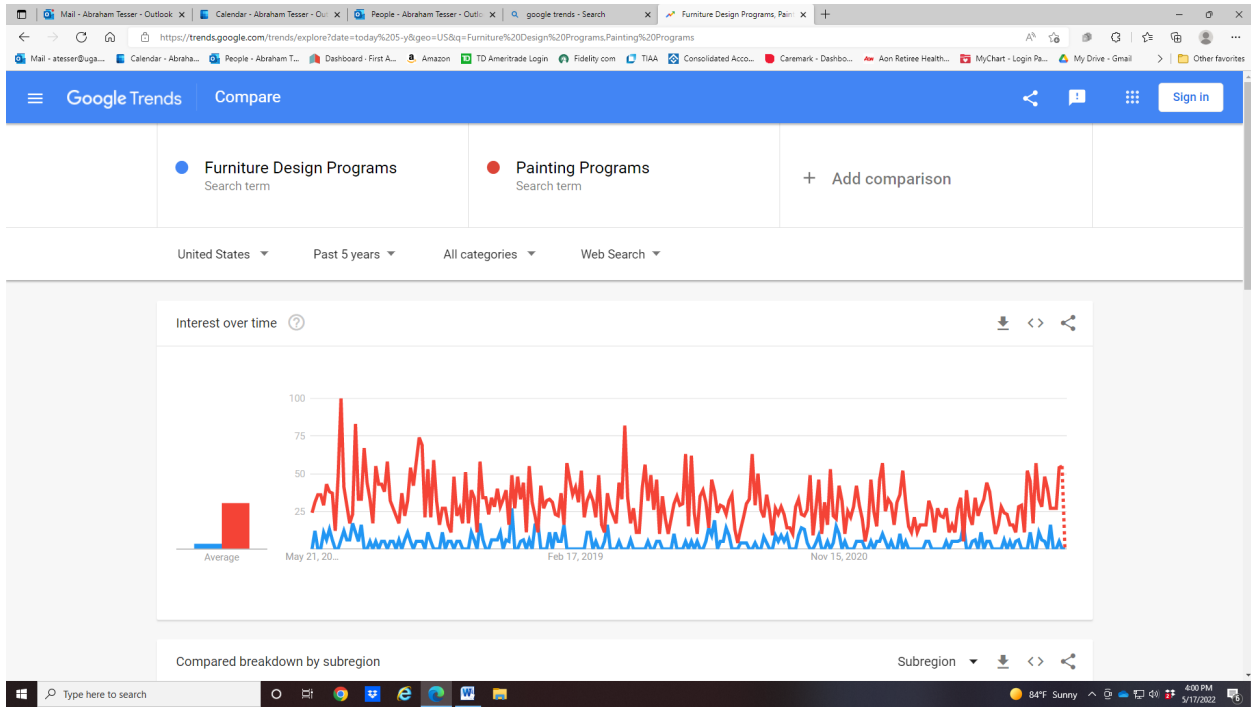
**Conclusions:** There appear to be *no simple trends*, either up or down, in furniture design programs over the last 5 years in the United States. However, the *level of interest* in furniture design programs is clearly *commensurate with the other areas* of art currently being serviced by the Lamar Dodd School of Art.

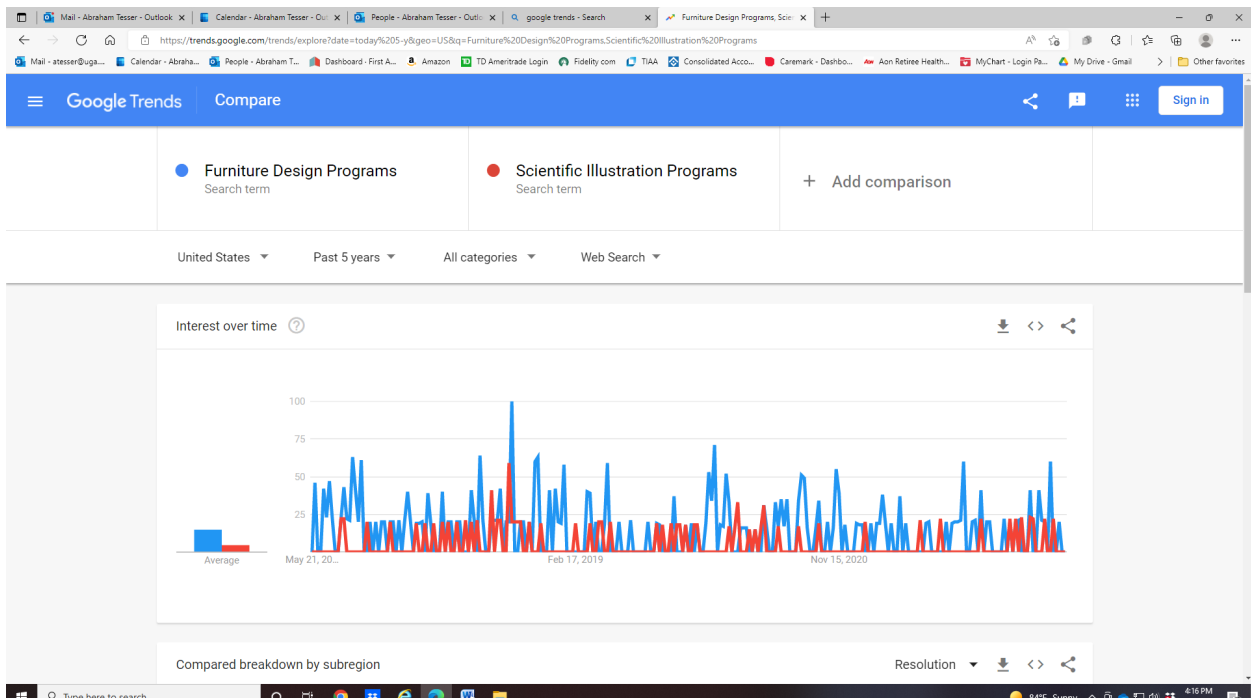
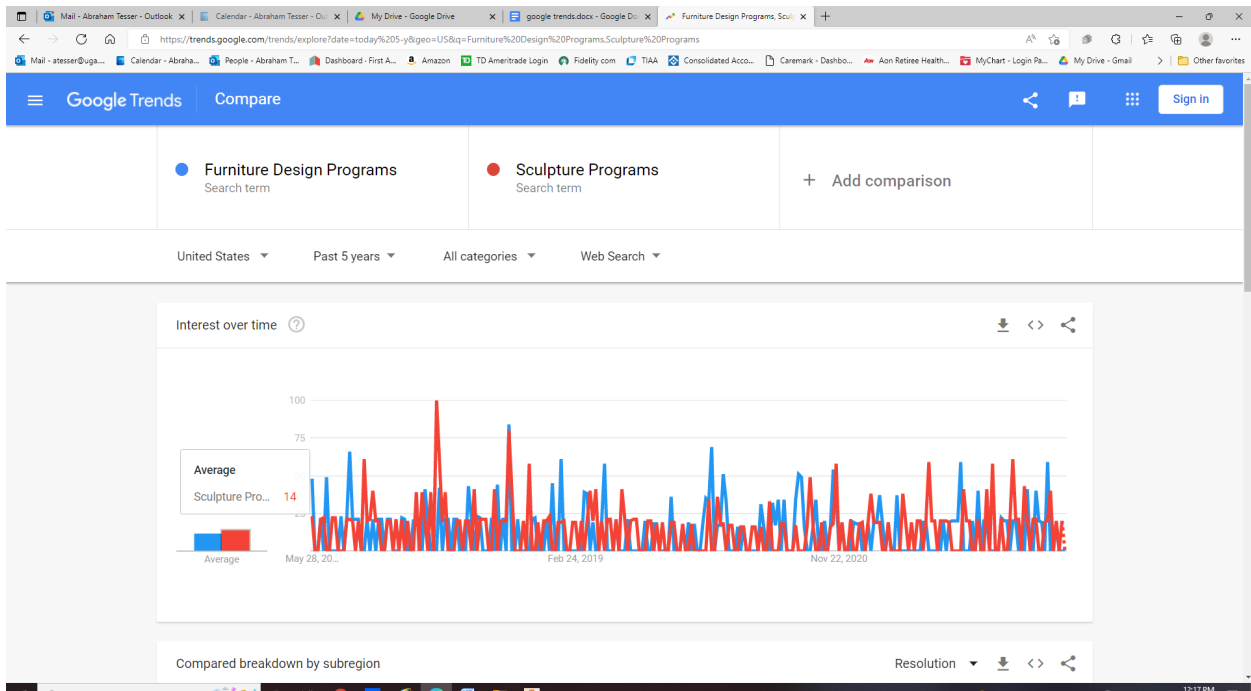
## APPENDIX

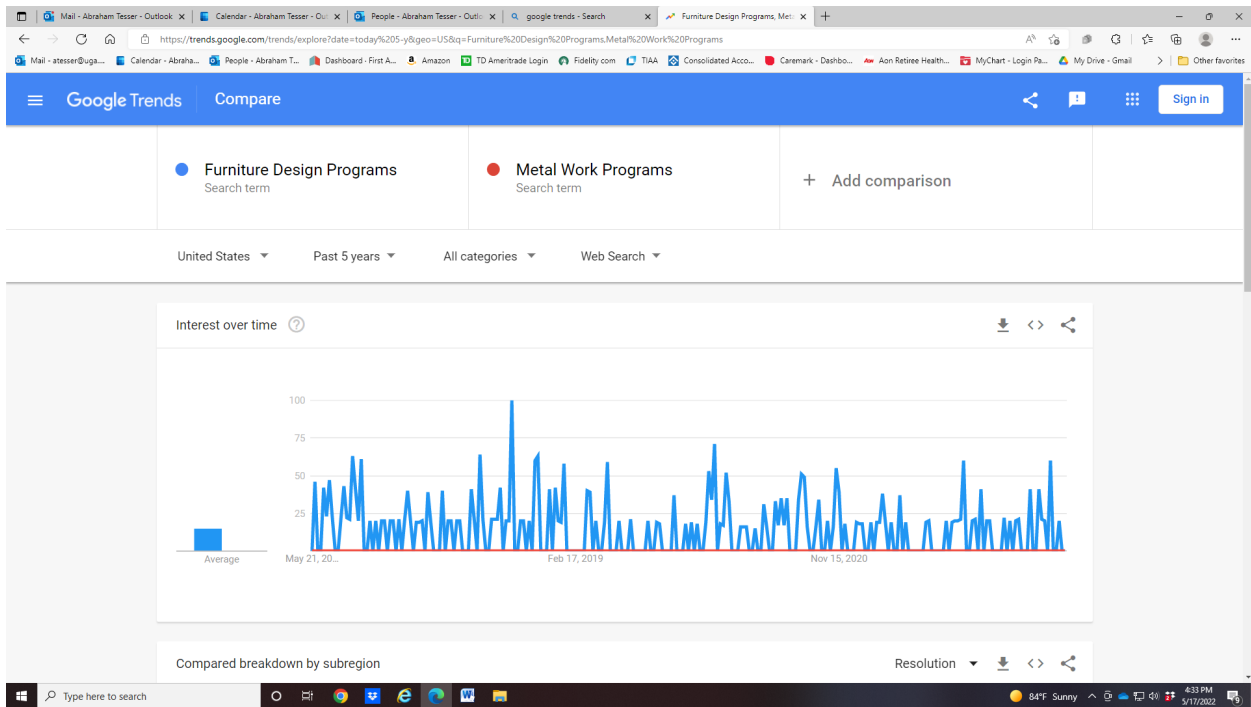
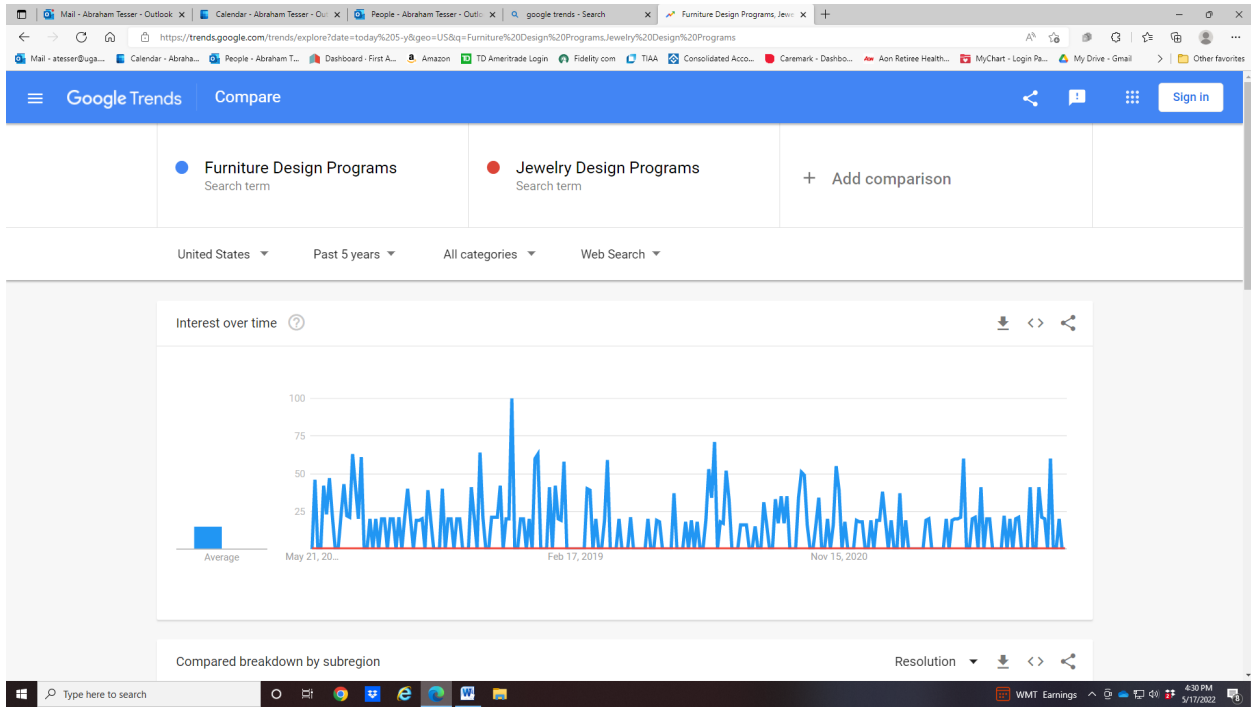
Graphic representation of 5 year (May 2018-May 2022) comparison of “Furniture Design Programs” (in blue) and terms representing other LSAD Areas (in red).

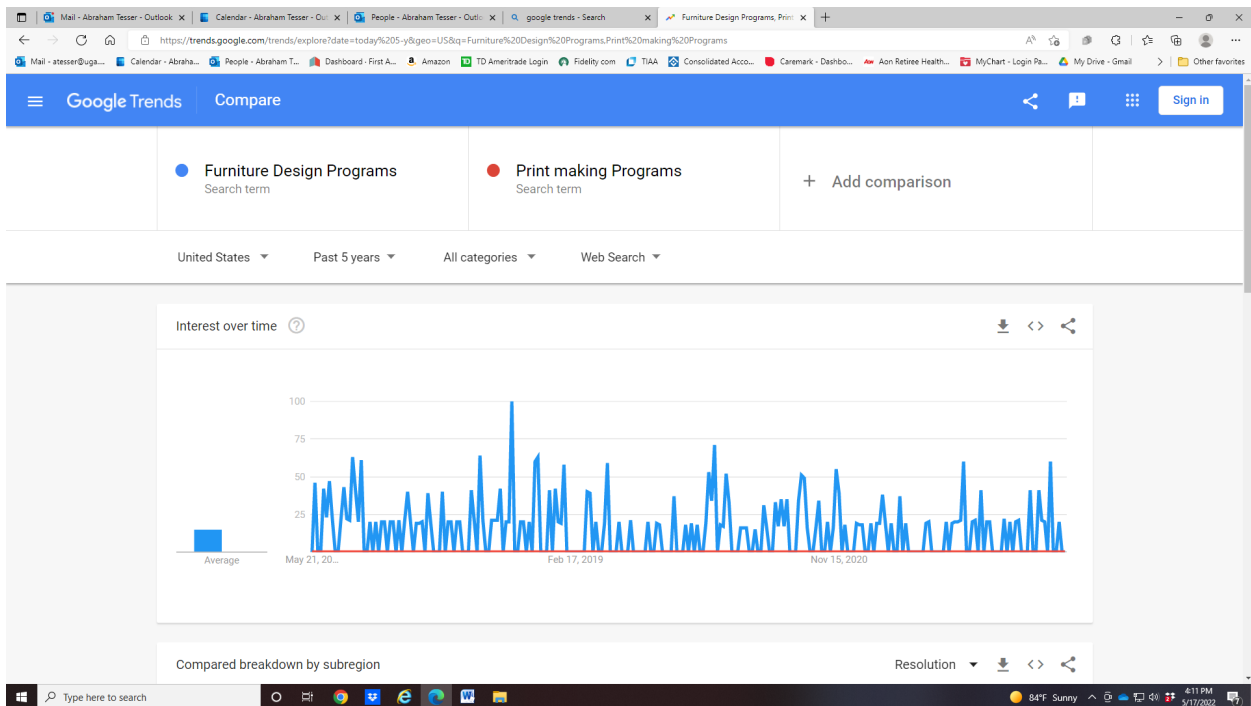
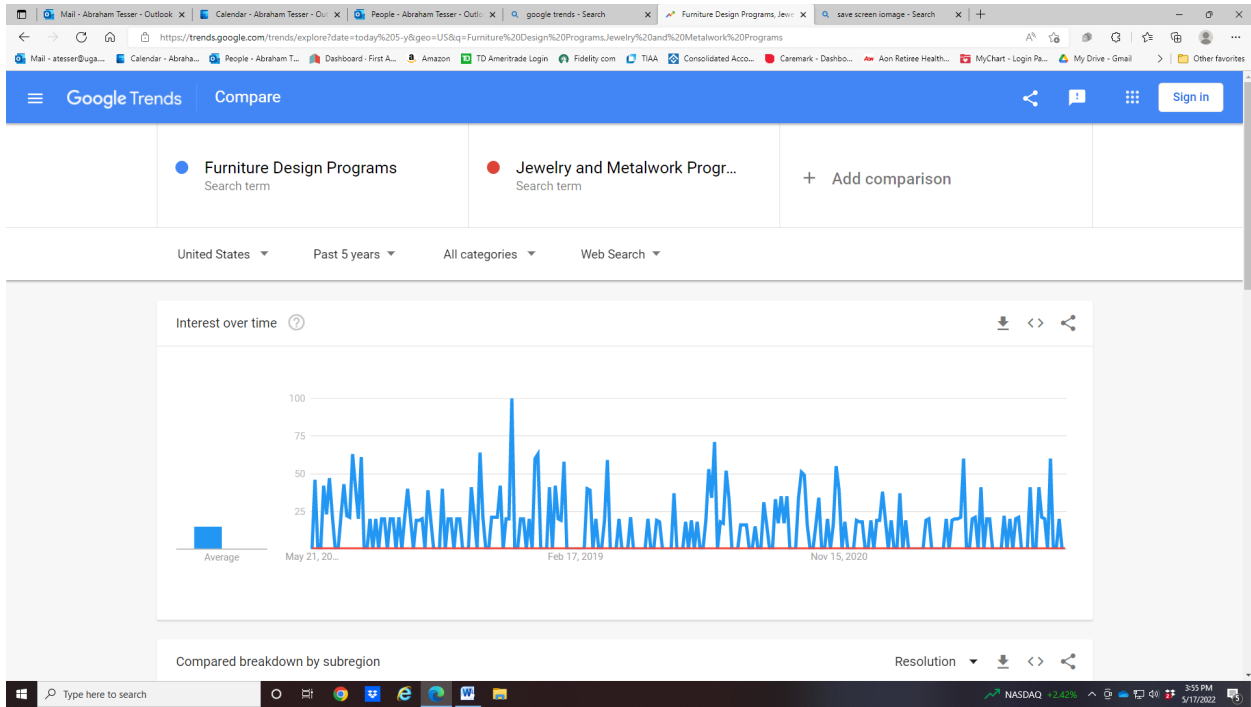












Google Trends Compare

**Furniture Design Programs**  
Search term

**Book Arts Programs**  
Search term

+ Add comparison

United States Past 5 years All categories Web Search

Interest over time

Average

May 21, 20... Feb 17, 2019 Nov 13, 2020

Compared breakdown by subregion

Resolution

Type here to search

84°F Sunny 4:13 PM 5/17/2022

## April L Brown

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**From:** Joseph Paul Peragine  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2023 1:08 PM  
**To:** April L Brown  
**Subject:** Re: Proposal for a Certificate Program  
**Attachments:** Forestry\_Approval.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hi April, the confirmation from Dale Greene (Dean, Forestry) is attached. We have received verbal approval from Bob Pickney. I will forward written notice as soon as possible.

Thanks, Jope

Joseph Peragine, Professor of Drawing and Painting (he, him)  
Director - Lamar Dodd School of Art  
University of Georgia  
270 River Road  
Athens, GA 30602  
P. 706-542-1511 C 404-786-2761  
email [jperagine@uga.edu](mailto:jperagine@uga.edu)

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**From:** April L Brown <[albrown@uga.edu](mailto:albrown@uga.edu)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2023 2:53 PM  
**To:** Joseph Paul Peragine <[jperagine@uga.edu](mailto:jperagine@uga.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: Proposal for a Certificate Program

Hi Professor Peragine,

Please obtain approval from the directors of the Entrepreneurship Program and the Warnell School of Forestry. I will need this before moving forward as the Curriculum Committee will question where the approvals are at. This came be a simple letter on letterhead from each.

Thank you,  
April

**April Brown**  
Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
*Assistant to Associate Dean Jean Martin-Williams*

300A Old College  
Athens, GA 30602-1732

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e: [albrown@uga.edu](mailto:albrown@uga.edu)  
w: [franklin.uga.edu](http://franklin.uga.edu)