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Imagine Change

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Imagine you're watching your favorite instructor demonstrate a new approach—for example, a lighting setup for portrait photography, or a new conceptual approach to transportation planning. At one point there's something you don't quite understand, so you touch the pause button on your iPad, select a different camera angle, and watch that part again. Expanding on the topic, you pull up the instructor's diagrams, written notes and links. Because you're sitting in a cafe and not a classroom, the pace is your own—you're not slowing down others, and they're not slowing you down. But you could sit with a friend (online via chat, or in-person) and review the material together, helping and challenging each other.

Later, to apply and explore the concepts from the demonstration, you use a 3D simulation on the iPad to position and control virtual lighting to see the effects of the key, fill and back lights on a portrait. Or, using an interactive animation, you test how different traffic calming measures affect traffic flow, business activity and safety on a street.

While developing your project, you refer back to the iPad to re-watch portions of your instructor's demonstration. You check supplemental materials provided by the instructor and previous students—for example, details on how different lighting options affect a photograph's emotional impact, or transportation case studies. You also post questions and work-in-progress on the digital crit-board to get feedback from your instructor and other students.

Is this a new online class? It could be. But it could also be a new approach to learning in the classroom where the experience is enhanced by digital technologies and a more self-directed approach to education. Does it eliminate the face-to-face contact that's so important for art and design education? Never. There will always be time for direct contact with the instructor, whether in the traditional studio class, or in the new low-residency approach that Art Center is pursuing. In fact, "flipping the classroom" where students use homework time to access demos, lectures, simulations and interactive learning materials at their own pace enhances the in-person contact with the instructor. The approach leaves more classroom time for critiques and one-on-one interactions as students work on exercises and projects in class.

Technological, cultural and economic factors are driving major transformations in education. Even more important, changes in art and design are redefining what students must learn and how they approach learning.

The need for depth and breadth increases the range of learning that must take place in the short time available for coursework. Artists and designers must become life-long learners due to the rapidly evolving technologies, requirements and modes of practice that have become the norm. Further, new generations of students have different learning needs. Art Center must address all of these changes, as well as broaden the diversity of its students and faculty to improve the quality of education for everyone.

To accomplish this, *Create Change* proposes a range of approaches. These include better integrating technology in the traditional classroom and using collaborative tools and social networking to build new communities around making. To encourage and support self-directed and peer-to-peer learning, Art Center will develop an online and physical Learning Center supported by staff and digital materials. To address new student populations, low residency programs are proposed that combine online and tablet-based remote instruction with periodic intensive, in-person instruction.

We'll also address our alumni and other practicing artists and designers more robustly through workshops, low-residency master's programs and online courses. A key goal in the strategic plan is to develop new forms of art and design education to increase Art Center's relevance, reach and diversity, and to maintain the rigorous, conservatory approach that is fundamental to the institution. Some approaches can be adapted from innovative trends in education. Others will need to be invented for the specific needs of Art Center's art and design programs. It's an exciting, challenging opportunity for Art Center to lead the way on innovation in art and design education.