**Appendix A**

**White Paper on the University’s Material Culture Programs**

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The following comments are shaped by my experiences in museums and since 2004, as Director of the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. The Program has a distinguished reputation built on more than 60 years of graduate education and the achievements of its alumni. This white paper begins with my assumptions, and then moves to recommendations for strategic changes.

**Assumptions:**

The history and philosophy of things is important to humanists, social scientists, and scientists because we are entangled in a world that is messy, political, tangible, aesthetic, emotional, and rational. Humanists’ teach people about the complexity of this world in our cumulative efforts to manage sensible change.

The existing programs in material culture—Art Conservation, Art History, the Center for Historic Architecture and Design, the History of American Civilization in the Department of History, the Museum Studies Program, the Preservation Studies Program, and the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture—built their reputations largely on their graduate components. They have long worked together and separately to build the strongest group of material culture programs in any University in the United States. The quality of the students in these Programs reflects the University’s reputation for excellence in this area but the programs need to be better coordinated.

The University’s resources are supplemented by extraordinary local collections in museums and libraries, and by field-based learning in landscapes and environments all over the middle Atlantic region and beyond.

These units cannot fully merge because some of them have affiliations with other institutions, especially the Winterthur Museum, and have different funding streams, including large restricted endowments not managed by the University. They also have different missions that are still relevant.

The Programs need to find administrative and scholarly synergies to better leverage existing resources and facilitate innovations. These innovations must serve the many publics for whom material culture study is important or pleasurable.

**Recommendations:**

1. Put the small graduate Programs—CHAD, Museum Studies, and the Winterthur Program—physically together in the same space, ideally with shared classrooms and laboratory space. The interactions by students in these Programs would lead to greater interdisciplinary coordination and innovation and allow the development of a critical mass of skills, technology, and support that is now impossible. Consider moving the undergraduate component of Art Conservation into this space so that undergraduates and graduate students would freely interact or develop joint projects.
2. Reinvigorate CHAD as it is the principal nexus at the University for the study of historic preservation, vernacular architecture and landscapes, and the application of GIS and CAD to object study. This project is field and project-based and trains students in valuable career skills. This reinvigoration will require the hire of a new Director to replace David Ames. Eliminating this Program would be a big mistake because no other unit on campus has the collective experience with preservation or field-based service in the state or region. Alternatively, merge this unit with the Winterthur Program.
3. Hire or appoint Associate Directors for these Programs to build institutional memory, cross train, attract a more diverse student body, and lead new scholarly projects.
4. Transition to a hybrid administrative structure in which current Program Directors would become roughly equivalent to Graduate Chairs and the Director of the Center for Material Culture Studies a senior administrator equivalent to a Chair who reports to the Dean and manages the University side of separate web-site marketing, budgets, strategic planning, and grants.
5. Merge the Art History Department’s Visual Resources and the History Media Center as a new supporting structure for advanced digital humanities. Make a clinical hire or hires that could work across department lines to focus on building scholarly content, teach content management systems, train graduates in ePublications, social media and podcasting, and develop video content at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
6. Encourage MA graduate programs in any form of material culture to develop an interdisciplinary project and team-based nine-credit course (that would take place in the fall or spring semester of the second year) to apply skills and content acquired in the first year. Such projects might include exhibitions, websites, video productions, ePublications, technical reports, long-term GIS studies, or inventions in collaboration with outside departments. These projects could occur in the field, at an area museum or historic site, or on campus. They could substitute for a thesis or capstone requirement.
7. Make the Center for Material Culture Studies an advanced teaching and research center. Appoint senior material culture and interdisciplinary scholars (at the Associate or Full Professor level) as research associates for a period of one to three years in which they would be free for their own research for one semester and teach a nine-credit interdisciplinary project (see point 6) the other semester with the help of support staff and clinical hires. Stagger these project to better manage budgets, staff time, and resources, but announce them well in advance so that students could plan.
8. Develop undergraduate courses that would teach forms of cultural heritage and service in the Freshman and Sophomore years and create 3-hour, 3-credit discovery-learning courses during the junior and senior years that model behaviors used in graduate courses and professional work; the later should emphasize team work, individual responsibility for results, creativity, strong writing and critical thinking skills, and public service via some form of “publication.”