

U-M Title: Operations Director

Working Title: Director, James and Anne Duderstadt Center

Job Code: 101957

Job Summary

The Director of the Duderstadt Center provides strategic leadership and operational management for one of the University of Michigan's most dynamic, student-centered interdisciplinary hubs, providing industry leading tools and technologies to the campus. Opened in 1996 as the Media Union and later renamed for former U-M President James J. Duderstadt and Anne Duderstadt, the 250,000-square-foot Duderstadt Center was conceived as an easily accessible, forward-looking environment where technology, creativity, research, teaching, and collaboration converge. Located at the heart of North Campus, the Center is distinctive in bringing together advanced digital media resources, library services, collaborative learning environments, events, research support, and specialized creative spaces under one roof.

The Director coordinates the activities of the James and Anne Duderstadt Center and leads the Digital Media Commons (DMC), located within the Center, with a focus on elevating the Center's role, reach, and impact. The DMC is a unique campus resource, providing students and faculty with direct access to an extraordinary suite of creative technologies, including extended reality platforms and educational tools, audio and video production studios and editing facilities, design and fabrication technologies, maker spaces, and experimental spaces for digital scholarship and creative practice. Its state-of-the-art media production spaces and technology labs, studios, and specialized technology stations are supported by experienced and passionate staff, and serve students and faculty across disciplines including engineering, art and design, architecture, music, information, the sciences, humanities, and beyond.

The Director provides strategic leadership of the Digital Media Commons in its mission to deliver outstanding services to U-M students, faculty, and staff, ensuring that the DMC achieves its goal of multidisciplinary impact in media production, emerging visualization technologies, high-end digital production, and fabrication. Coordination and partnership with the organizations in the Duderstadt Center, the university's schools and colleges, and the community is critical to the role, as is working to increase awareness of the Center's resources among the campus community.

The Director also oversees the day-to-day facility operations of the Duderstadt Center, ensuring accessibility, equity, and administration of classes, research, events, and specialized spaces. Responsibilities include recruitment, hiring, training, and ongoing performance management for a diverse staff comprising full-time employees and student workers. Key duties involve strategic planning, budget oversight, operational decision-making, infrastructure maintenance, and the development of collaborations and partnerships. The role reports to the Provost's Office through the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs – Graduate Studies.

The Director supports convenings of the Executive Advisory Group of the Duderstadt Center and ensures coordination with the Provost's Office. Through this work, the Director advances the Duderstadt Center's continuing role as a future-oriented resource for learning, discovery, creative production, interdisciplinary collaboration, and student innovation at the University of Michigan.

Responsibilities

Leadership of the Digital Media Commons (DMC) — 30% effort.

In response to academic needs and in partnership with the supervising Vice Provost, the Director provides strategic leadership of the Digital Media Commons as it provides innovative services to U-M faculty, staff, and students, including audio and video studios, multimedia labs for education, research, design, and fabrication, and emerging technologies such as extended reality, motion capture, immersive media, and other advanced digital tools. The Director sets strategic direction for the DMC, aligns services and investments with University priorities, monitors external trends in digital media, academic technology, AI, visualization, fabrication, and digital scholarship, and strengthens partnerships across U-M and with external peers, professional networks, industry partners, and technology communities to advance collaboration, innovation, and emerging best practices.

Management of the DMC — 35% effort.

The Director manages the DMC's staff, operations, and resources, including 11 immediate reports, approximately 35 total FTEs, and up to 85 student staff. Together, these teams support the daily administration of the 250,000-square-foot Duderstadt Center, including classes, events, research, tours, studios, labs, maker spaces, information technologies, and programs, ensuring they operate smoothly and equitably for U-M faculty, students, and staff. The Director supervises and supports the DMC lead team; sets goals and work assignments; ensures staff mentorship, performance evaluation, and workplace support; and exercises accountability for operational decisions. The Director also works with the lead team to develop and manage the annual budget, oversee expenditures and internal controls, approve special projects, support cost-rate setting and fundraising as appropriate, and oversee internal communications and the DC website.

Management of Operations at the Duderstadt Center (25% effort). The Director oversees operations of the Duderstadt Center (DC), coordinating and collaborating with the other organizations located there. The direction includes decisions regarding administration, communications, development, information and media technologies, facility maintenance, renovations, space usage, specialty labs, and resident partnerships housed within the DC.

Coordination of Building Governance with North Campus Schools and Colleges (10% effort).

The Director supports convenings of the Executive Advisory Group (consisting of the North Campus Deans, the Library Dean, and the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs). This support includes responsibility for reporting on the status of the goals and operations of the DC and DMC. This coordination includes partnership with the Provost's Office via its staff and the Vice Provost.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in media, communication, performance technology, educational technology, or fine arts; or in business administration, operations management, or higher education administration
- Minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible experience in professional, educational, or administrative leadership in an academic setting.
- Demonstrated experience in strategic leadership, planning, and organizational development, with proven success leading change and innovation.
- Ability to create partnerships and collaborations across organizations spanning multiple disciplines and with diverse missions.
- Significant experience supervising professional staff and managing cross-functional teams, including staff, faculty, and/or students in a complex organizational setting.
- Proven ability to develop and implement operational policies, procedures, and strategic initiatives
- Experience with budget development, financial management, and resource allocation for large-scale facilities or multi-disciplinary programs.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and collaboration skills, with demonstrated success in stakeholder engagement and partnership development across units with varied goals and ways of working.