

COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN - GRADUATE (DES)

DES-601 Design Process + Methodology - (3 Credits)

This course introduces students with little or no background in design to the fundamentals of two-dimensional composition and gestalt, three-dimensional form and structure and color theory. Students explore the interrelationships between form, function, and content in communications design, with an emphasis on critical and conceptual analysis, creative visualization, and understanding of context. Students utilize both digital and non-digital production techniques for image and form construction.

DES-602 Design Technology - (3 Credits)

This course introduces the essential tools, skills and techniques for best practices utilizing digital technology to solve problems creatively and effectively in communications design. Students analyze and explore current and emerging technologies, with an emphasis on effective research, visualization, and production techniques.

DES-603 Design Ideation + Visualization - (3 Credits)

This course develops the designer's visualization and ideation skills through the medium of drawing combined with critical writing. The ability for the designer to visualize and ideate utilizing image and word is essential. Students use writing as form of sketching and drawing as a form of language, combining word and image to both communicate and discover new ideas. The course includes an introduction to the basic principles of drawing towards an understanding of perspective, the dynamics of objects in space, and graphic translation.

DES-604 Typography - (3 Credits)

An introduction to communication problem solving through the visual medium of language, the fundamentals of typographic design are explored in experimental and practical projects. Both historical and contemporary forms of alphabetic communication are addressed.

DES-616 Communications Design Studio - (3 Credits)

This course focuses on research, planning and application of strategic, human-centered communications design. Students envision and develop multi-faceted design responses across multiple formats, media and platforms that benefit citizen-communities as they self-organize around issues of civic and social importance, responsible economic development, and sustainable built ecologies. Project outcomes aim to enhance public awareness, participatory engagement and overall well-being for individuals, communities and society at large.

DES-620 Design Systems - (3 Credits)

This course offers a disciplined, systematic approach to concept development and the problem-solving process applied to graphic design. Use of the grid system, figure and ground relationships, typography, and symbolism are covered in relationship to setting priorities and utilizing information. Students are engaged in a wide range of assignments in order to apply design principles and broaden creative experiences.

DES-625 Visual Perception - (3 Credits)

After an introduction to the physiological and historical perspectives of visual perception, the course develops a conceptual awareness of the organization and perception of two- and three-dimensional design through selected readings. Symbols, archetypes and the creative process of problem solving are explored as aids in approaching practical and relevant design problems. Technological advances of computer graphics are explored as issues affecting perception. The course includes readings, presentations, discussions, papers and visiting lecturers.

DES-628 Structural Packaging - (3 Credits)

This course teaches the use of multiple production materials, manufacturing and assembly processes. The course addresses the standards, rules and language of retail merchandising in multiple venues, with a focus on presentation skills that will allow students to utilize and maximize their creativity abilities. Students will design retail packages that are practical, affordable and competitive.

DES-629 Fragrance Packaging - (3 Credits)

This course takes a focused view of cosmetic packaging through a workshop format and the development of a term project. Selection and development of projects are augmented by ongoing and individual critiques and consultations.

DES-630 Packaging Design I - (3 Credits)

This course explores the critical elements of form-making within the context of packaging design. Different media and methods for exploring and developing three-dimensional packages such as sketching, rendering, and both physical and computer modeling, will all be presented and incorporated to develop a greater sensitivity to and hands-on engagement with sculptural form, volumetric and spatial relationships and ergonomics.

DES-631 Packaging Design II - (3 Credits)

Packaging design is an extremely viable field that combines marketing, graphics and three-dimensional design. Emphasis is on the application of graphic design elements to various types of products. Packages are analyzed and positioned from a marketing point of view. Brand marks, visual graphics and color schemes are developed for individual products and more sophisticated related product lines. Typical assignments include food, pharmaceutical and mass market products.

DES-632 Packaging Tech I: Materials and Methods - (3 Credits)

This is a study of methodologies and scientific methods employed in research, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in comprehensive design problems. The course reviews information on packaging materials properties; material compatibility; and production methods including: blow molding, injection molding, vacuum forming, blister packing, and paperboard construction.

DES-633 Prototyping and Production - (3 Credits)

This course introduces packaging production methods, procedures and techniques. Students will learn how to explore and express design solutions using an array of techniques to accurately represent in form and finish a final design outcome. Through a series of lectures, demonstrations and exercises students will build an understanding of contemporary production tools and techniques, as well as how to effectively employ those processes in a professional capacity, to produce industry standard comprehensive mock-ups. Skills development will be aligned with process and problem solving.

DES-634 Sustainability and Design - (3 Credits)

This course explores the contemporary role of sustainable practices as a necessary competency for emerging designers. There is positive and increasing pressure for effective design solutions that balance creativity with social, environmental and economic factors. Through an examination of current best practices involving circular economy and sustainable material management, life-cycle analysis tools and industry reports, students will research, analyze and synthesize core principles of sustainability within a wide array of communications and package design scenarios.

DES-637 Creative Coding Studio - (3 Credits)

This course provides the foundation necessary to create and manipulate a range of media by utilizing code. Students will be introduced to the unprecedented creative capabilities that coding presents the contemporary designer as an emerging technology, tool and skill in the design of images, animations and interactive experiences. This course affords students the unique opportunity to tackle design problems with an entirely new approach that can be productively incorporated into existing working methods, processes and design practices.

DES-638 User Experience Design Studio - (3 Credits)

This course details and employs key principles of User Experience Design (UX). Students engage and work with tools, methodologies and processes pertinent to both physical and digital UX in order to develop whole-system designs for platforms, or integrated multi-platforms, that effectively provide for a range of optimal experiences for both individuals and groups. Project activities are supported by exploratory user research, motivation and behavior analysis, supporting readings and discussions, group critiques, and individual meetings with faculty.

DES-639 Design Ethics and Practice - (3 Credits)

Design is a participatory process that positions care and compassion as central to its value creation. Accordingly, our field demands that we as design practitioners formulate an ethical stance that interrogates our responsibilities and potentiality in working with other beings, both human and non-human, environments, communities, etc. Lectures, discussions, and inquiry-based activities help demonstrate and model best working practices and provide students with the opportunity to observe, gather, evaluate and synthesize data, as well as prototype and test the viability of more-than-human-centered design responses. Sustainability in terms of both social and environmental concerns is addressed.

DES-640 Design Management - (3 Credits)

This course deals with management methods within large corporations, design consulting firms, advertising agencies, and multi-media production companies. Each student receives a broad perspective as a manager and employee within the context of the professional world. Guest lectures include management experts from the worlds of business and design.

DES-642 Typographic + Information Design - (3 Credits)

This advanced class deals with virtually all aspects of typography. Typographic applications encompass historic and contemporary viewpoints. Course projects involve the effective use of type and letterforms in order to creatively solve communications problems. Use of Macintosh systems incorporating design, production, text, and display type is required as a prerequisite for this class.

DES-645 Cross-Platform Design - (3 Credits)

Cross-Platform Design explores the ever-evolving media landscape in which design must function. This course utilizes detailed research methods to effectively understand user behavior and contexts of use. Students then use this information to develop innovative cross-platform design solutions, both physical and digital, supported by clearly articulated strategies, while leveraging both traditional and new technologies and counterpart communication media channels.

DES-647 Motion Design Studio - (3 Credits)

Designing for film and other kinetic media has grown from underground artists' efforts in the 1950s to a major role for both directors and designers. The look of a film, video or digital presentation's opening sequence sets the tone for what follows. This course will examine how and why this look is achieved.

DES-651 Color Studio - (3 Credits)

This course explores color and light phenomenology in the three-dimensional world. Relationships between color and light as they affect our visual perception of size, shape and proportion are explored from both practical and aesthetic perspectives. Projects examine color and light on forms such as product and packaging as well as color and light in space, as for display and interiors.

DES-655 Packaging and the Retail Space - (3 Credits)

Packaging exists as part of the large retail ecology. This course examines packaging as one-among-many design components within this expanded context. Traditional retail environments are explored, as well as near future, speculative environments where packaging may exist. Students will consider the role strategic design and planning plays in the design of a total experience including and beyond the package object. Window and shelf presentation, point-of-purchase (PoP) displays, immersive digital environments and responsive experience design extensions are explored within the framework of spatial design and retail strategy.

DES-656 Special Projects - (1 Credit)

Coursework and/or special projects are assigned on an individual basis with the approval of and in consultation with the department chair.

DES-657 Special Projects - (3 Credits)

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DES-660 Directed Research - (2 Credits)

This course involves individual or team investigations related to the thesis project. Problem-solving and research techniques are explored. The objective of the class is to identify a subject and to formulate a viable hypothesis, bibliography, and plan of action for the final thesis.

DES-683 Motion Design I - (3 Credits)

This course aims to develop students' fluency in working with motion and time-based media. This class deconstructs the concept of motion by referencing how things move in the real world, as well as by exploring elements, such as space and time, that create motion. The traditional design attributes - color, composition, shape, depth, tension, and contrast - are used and combined with time-based attributes such as pace, rhythm, sequence, and repetition - to evaluate work.

DES-690 Capstone Research - (3 Credits)

This course focuses on research and investigation of topics of interest leading to student's capstone project. Students engage a broad array of design research methods and processes, as well as early prototypical investigations that support a clear framework for further exploration around a unique area of personal interest in preparation for their capstone project.

DES-695 Capstone Project - (3 Credits)

This end-of-degree course guides students through the process of developing a Capstone Project over the course of the semester. Students will develop a design brief that articulates the scope of the project based on their pertinent research and design investigations. Each student will produce work based on a particular area of interest, where they find an opportunity to innovate and define a position within the broadest definition of the packaging field.

DES-699A Thesis I - (6 Credits)

Independent research based on individual thesis proposals, submitted by the candidate and approved by the thesis advisor, is undertaken. Projects must represent a meaningful contribution to the field of design and show a mature correlation between design and supportive documentation. Communications and packaging design students must have a portfolio review before entering thesis.

DES-699B Thesis II - (3 Credits)

Independent problems based on individual thesis proposals, submitted by the candidate and approved by the thesis advisor, are undertaken. Projects must represent a meaningful contribution to the field of design and show a mature correlation between design and supportive research. Communications and packaging design students must have a portfolio review before entering thesis.

DES-700 Thesis in Progress - (0 Credits)

If the thesis is not completed in two semesters, students can continue working in DES-700 for no more than five semesters (not including summers).

DES-710A Graduate Studio: Visual Language A - (3 Credits)

This studio will focus on strategies to utilize design as a means for communication. Students will apply self-directed creative design strategies employing typography, image, and sound to explore the principles and methodologies associated with the development of communication design as a visual language. Students will utilize design process - how form, function and content interrelate to create meaning in the communication of ideas, messages, and information through print and digital media, artifacts, information, environments, and systems. 710A is the first semester and 710B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-710B Graduate Studio: Visual Language B - (3 Credits)

This studio will focus on strategies to utilize design as a means for communication. Students will apply self-directed creative design strategies employing typography, image, and sound to explore the principles and methodologies associated with the development of communication design as a visual language. Students will utilize design process how form, function and content interrelate to create meaning in the communication of ideas, messages, and information through print and digital media, artifacts, information, environments, and systems. 710A is the first semester and 710B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-720A Graduate Studio: Technology A - (3 Credits)

Students will critically analyze and explore the tools, skills, and production methods of current and emerging technologies in design media, with an emphasis on effective and appropriate creative visualization, analysis and utilization. Students will investigate technology trends within a historical context, in order to better understand and extrapolate emerging technology systems. 720A is the first semester and 720B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-720B Graduate Studio: Technology B - (3 Credits)

Students will critically analyze and explore the tools, skills, and production methods of current and emerging technologies in design media, with an emphasis on effective and appropriate creative visualization, analysis and utilization. Students will investigate technology trends within a historical context, in order to better understand and extrapolate emerging technology systems. 720A is the first semester and 720B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-730A Graduate Studio: Transformation Design A - (3 Credits)

This studio will focus on strategies to utilize design as a means for transformation. With an emphasis on a human-centered, holistic, and empathic approach, students will apply "design thinking" methodologies to problems and issues in an attempt to transform the behaviors of individuals in desirable and sustainable ways, while creating meaningful experiences and interactions for people with communications media, artifacts, environments, organizations, services, systems, and each other Emphasizing that people are participants rather than simply users, students will study ergonomics, usability, and human factors - cognitive, physical, linguistic, social and cultural behaviors. 730A is the first semester and 730B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-730B Graduate Studio: Transformation Design B - (3 Credits)

This studio will focus on strategies to utilize design as a means for transformation. With an emphasis on a human-centered, holistic, and empathic approach, students will apply "design thinking" methodologies to problems and issues in an attempt to transform the behaviors of individuals in desirable and sustainable ways, while creating meaningful experiences and interactions for people with communications media, artifacts, environments, organizations, services, systems, and each other Emphasizing that people are participants rather than simply users, students will study ergonomics, usability, and human factors, cognitive, physical, linguistic, social and cultural behaviors. 730A is the first semester and 730B is the second semester of this two semester studio course.

DES-741 Cross-Disciplinary Studio - (3 Credits)

This course introduces the student to communications design as it interfaces with, and is influenced by, other design disciplines. It will emphasize collaboration and cross-disciplinarity while encourage students to seek and solve design problems and issues that focus on community and social outreach. The studio will typically be team taught by a faculty member from within the department and a professional from another discipline.

DES-751 Design Writing - (3 Credits)

This studio course will focus on core writing skills and effective methods for researching, analyzing, evaluation and chronicling design issues. Students will address both critical thinking about design issues and practical considerations through writing and public discourse. This course allows students to develop a voice through writing prior to beginning their thesis project.

DES-760A Graduate Seminar A - (3 Credits)

Combining lectures, discussions, small groups, and collaboration, seminar is a forum for critical analysis and discussions of theoretical, historical and contemporary issues in communications design. Effective speaking, presentation and writing skills will be addressed. Assigned faculty and guest lecturers will serve as instructors. Topics will vary. 760A is the first semester and 760B is the second semester of this two semester course.

DES-760B Graduate Seminar B - (3 Credits)

Combining lectures, discussions, small groups, and collaboration, seminar is a forum for critical analysis and discussions of theoretical, historical and contemporary issues in communications design. Effective speaking, presentation and writing skills will be addressed. Assigned faculty and guest lecturers will serve as instructors. Topics will vary. 760A is the first semester and 760B is the second semester of this two semester course.

DES-771 Communications Design Teaching Practicum - (3 Credits)

Intended for those who desire to enter teaching at the college-level, students will explore and observe multiple teaching pedagogies/strategies, design education methodologies, and evaluation techniques in order to develop a knowledge base for curricular and project development, as well as techniques for effective and appropriate course preparation and instruction. Course, program and student assessment processes will be introduced and discussed. Evaluation given by participating faculty will serve to assist students in preparation for post-secondary teaching. This course may be repeated.

DES-791 MFA Thesis Research - (3 Credits)

Students will explore various research methods with the goal of identifying a problem or issue that will become the basic of a thesis topic. Students will be expected to formulate a viable hypothesis, bibliography, and plan of action. How to best utilize public and private archives, collections and libraries, as well as online and database research, will be addressed.

DES-794A MFA Thesis I Resource A - (1 Credit)

Thesis Resource I offers the student the opportunity for individual guidance on their Thesis Research and development during Thesis I. A student's thesis committee is comprised of one primary advisor and a minimum of two secondary advisors. The course MFA Thesis I Resource A represents advisement from the first secondary advisor.

DES-795A MFA Thesis II Resource A - (1 Credit)

Thesis Resource offers the student the opportunity for individual guidance on their Thesis research and development during Thesis II. A student's thesis committee is comprised of one primary advisor and a minimum of two secondary advisors. The course MFA Thesis II Resource A represents advisement from the first secondary advisor.

DES-796 MFA Thesis I - (3 Credits)

Working under the advisement of a thesis committee, students undertake independent research through self-directed projects that represent a coherent voice and makes a meaningful contribution to the field of design. The thesis is not a single project, but rather a body of work consisting of multiple projects/visual explorations based on a single topic/subject area sharing a common methodology.

DES-797 MFA Thesis Production & Exhibition - (1 Credit)

Students are required to present and defend their thesis and body of work in a public venue, and submit a written document. This course will allow the student to work with faculty and peers in the design and development production and exhibition of the written and visual components of the Thesis.

DES-799 MFA Thesis II - (3 Credits)

Taken in the final semester of the student's study, students complete their thesis under the advisement of the thesis committee. In addition to demonstrating professional competence and persistent ideas consistently applied within a body of work culminating in a public exhibition, students are also expected to complete a written documentation of the Thesis.

DES-799A MFA Thesis II - (0 Credits)

Taken in the final semester of the student's study, students complete their thesis under the advisement of the thesis committee. In addition to demonstrating professional competence and persistent ideas consistently applied within a body of work culminating in a public exhibition, students are also expected to complete a written documentation of the Thesis.

DES-9600 Internship 0-Crs. Summer Only - (0 Credits)

The internship is a learning experience at a discipline-related professional site. It provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and skills in a practical setting, while obtaining new knowledge and skills in preparation for professional work or graduate school. Students experience the application of coursework lessons into a real-life context, thus enriching their education. They deepen their knowledge about important applied aspects of their discipline, enhance their professional skills in a real-world context, build their professional network, and inform their career choices. Additional faculty-supervised activities provide the opportunity for an in-depth reflection on the internship experience.

DES-9601 Internship - (1 Credit)

The internship is a learning experience at a discipline-related professional site. It provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and skills in a practical setting, while obtaining new knowledge and skills in preparation for professional work or graduate school. Students experience the application of coursework lessons into a real-life context, thus enriching their education. They deepen their knowledge about important applied aspects of their discipline, enhance their professional skills in a real-world context, build their professional network, and inform their career choices. Additional faculty-supervised activities provide the opportunity for an in-depth reflection on the internship experience.

DES-9602 Internship - (2 Credits)

The internship is a learning experience at a discipline-related professional site. It provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and skills in a practical setting, while obtaining new knowledge and skills in preparation for professional work or graduate school. Students experience the application of coursework lessons into a real-life context, thus enriching their education. They deepen their knowledge about important applied aspects of their discipline, enhance their professional skills in a real-world context, build their professional network, and inform their career choices. Additional faculty-supervised activities provide the opportunity for an in-depth reflection on the internship experience.

DES-9603 Internship - (3 Credits)

The internship is a learning experience at a discipline-related professional site. It provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and skills in a practical setting, while obtaining new knowledge and skills in preparation for professional work or graduate school. Students experience the application of coursework lessons into a real-life context, thus enriching their education. They deepen their knowledge about important applied aspects of their discipline, enhance their professional skills in a real-world context, build their professional network, and inform their career choices. Additional faculty-supervised activities provide the opportunity for an in-depth reflection on the internship experience.