

Art and Design, Graduate Master of Fine Arts, Graphic Design

I. Mission Statement

Graphic design is a professional field of study based on the foundations of visual communication. The study of graphic design encompasses cultural, aesthetic, ergonomic, technical, ethical, and economic fields. Designers create communications that serve many needs—everything from warning labels to multimedia interfaces. They solve communication problems of all types and sizes. The solutions require creativity, lateral thinking, research, and excellent verbal and written communication skills.

The two primary objectives of the graphic design curriculum at Iowa State are to educate students in both creative and analytical thought. A third component--development of technological and practical skills--supplements the primary objectives. Creativity, which involves the ability to develop original, innovative ideas, is encouraged throughout the curriculum through an emphasis on conceptually-oriented design problems (as well as exposure to the fine arts). Analytical thought, which involves the ability to understand and solve problems, is encouraged through an emphasis on design process over the final product. By stressing the problem-solving methodologies used, students are encouraged to place more value on the effectiveness of the solution rather than academic dogma or stylistic trends. The synthesis of creative and analytical thought, combined with an education in the liberal arts, provides students with a whole-brain thinking capability which is vital to the profession. Students are encouraged to fulfill their general education requirements with an emphasis on courses which involve abstract thinking. The rapidly changing area of skills development is accomplished through experience in computer design applications and an internship requirement.

II. Assessment Goals, Measures, Results and Changes

Master of Fine Arts graduates in graphic design are skilled in communication design, problem solving, and the use of visual language and symbology. Graduates are proficient in the design of communications and the use of technologies that incorporate human interaction with environments, objects, and experience designs.

Summary of Outcomes Assessment for MFA, Graphic Design

Intended Learning Outcomes	Relevant Required Courses	Measures	Results	Changes Based Upon Results
<p>Develop understanding of abstract thinking skills: Lateral association Conceptual and visual metaphor</p>	<p>Artgr 570, 571, 672, 698, art 501, and all graphic design elective courses</p>	<p>Assessment of: -Concept-based studio projects -Conceptual matrices -Mindmaps -Written analysis -Creative writing -Visual translation of poetry and metaphoric writings</p>	<p>Determine candidates' ability to creatively integrate familiar and unfamiliar concepts</p>	
<p>Develop understanding of Communication design theory: Communication Design theory History of Communication Design Communication Design Methodology Visual Hierarchies Visual Symbolologies Branding Design System</p>	<p>Artgr 570, 571, 672, 587, 588, 698 and all graphic design elective courses</p>	<p>Critique and assessment of concept-based studio projects</p>	<p>Determine candidates' ability to apply communication principles</p>	
		<p>Assessment of written examinations</p>	<p>Determine candidates' knowledge of design history</p>	
		<p>Portfolio review by area graduate faculty each semester</p>	<p>Determine candidates' ability to apply communication principles</p>	
		<p>Professional design positions</p>	<p>Quality positions confirm the program's success in delivering course content</p>	
		<p>Regional and national design competitions</p>	<p>Awards confirm successful delivery of communication design principles</p>	
<p>Develop understanding of Formalism: Elements and principles Two dimensional composition Three dimensional composition Motion graphics composition Typography</p>	<p>Artgr 570, 571, 672 and all graphic design elective courses</p>	<p>Critique and assessment of form-based studio projects</p>	<p>Determine students' ability to apply knowledge of formal design principles</p>	
		<p>Portfolio review by area graduate faculty each semester</p>	<p>Comparative assessment of students' knowledge</p>	

Summary of Outcomes Assessment for MFA, Graphic Design (cont.)

Intended Learning Outcomes	Required Courses	Measures	Results	Changes
Develop understanding of conceptual elements: Typography Symbology Design Systems Information systems	Artgr 570, 571, 672 and all graphic design elective courses	Critique and assessment of form-based studio projects	Determine students' ability to apply knowledge of formal design principles	
		Portfolio review by area graduate faculty each semester	Comparative assessment of students' knowledge	
Develop understanding of communication technologies	Artgr 570, 571, 672 and all graphic design elective courses	Assessment of technological proficiency in studio design projects	Determine candidates' ability to use appropriate and effective research methods	
Develop understanding of Communication Design Research	Artgr 698, 699a, 699b, Art 501	Assessment of research papers; Assessment by major professor and Program of Study committee of thesis development	Determine candidates understanding and application of research methodology	Proposed: develop research method course
		Peer review by candidates of each other's research papers	Varied feedback on methodology and topic significance	
		Assessment of research progress by international experts via the internet	International experts provide input on the global significance of research topics	
Communication Design Pedagogy: Teaching methods Verbal articulation	Artgr 698, Art 511, Teaching assistanships	Assessment of course plan development	Determine candidates' ability to integrate design knowledge into course materials	
		Assessment of presentation technique and critiquing methods	Determine students' ability to communicate their design knowledge verbally	
		Undergraduate student evaluations each semester of graduate teaching assistants	Determine the TA's effectiveness in delivering course content	
Develop understanding of experience Design: User interface design Way finding Exhibition design Interaction design	All graphic design elective courses	Critique and assessment of studio projects; Assessment of usability studies; Assessment of written assignments	Determine students' knowledge of experience design. Determine students' knowledge of interface design.	