

Master of Fine Arts, Interior Design, MFA & MA Specialization

I. Mission Statement

Reflecting human potential in the built environment.

Philosophy

Graduate study of interior design at Iowa State University develops around the premise that human purpose and potential are the cornerstones of interior design education and practice. Interiors are viewed as the essential containers of human performance, the supportive, optimizing interface between people and their natural and built surrounds. As such, interior designers must embrace five essential humanistic priorities:

- human safety
- operational (functional) utility
- physical fit
- psychological fit
- contextual fit

The realization of these ends is directly linked to the designer's creative means. Next to a rich knowledge of human nature, the designer's most important tools are methodologies by which to gain, apply and communicate ever deeper levels of humanistic insight.

II. Assessment Goals, Measures, Results and Changes

A. Goals

The goal of graduate study in interior design is to prepare students to shape and lead interior design and interior design education in the decades immediately ahead. To this end, students completing the program should be able to:

- Explain the centrality of human factors to the practice and study of interior design. Define "human factors," as broadly construed, including reference to design variables that optimize the aesthetic, social-psychological and utilitarian needs of different segments of the population.
- Demonstrate methodological flexibility. Explain widely held views of design as both a formal and informal problem-solving process. Demonstrate effective strategies for dealing with unfamiliar design problems, including reference to procedures suitable for investigating, analyzing, solving, communicating and evaluating complex design issues and responses.
- Explain interior design's professional and societal role. Express a defensible position concerning the designer's social and aesthetic responsibilities as a member of the professional design community.

Summary of Outcomes Assessment for MFA, Interior Design

Intended Learning Outcomes	Measures	Relevant Required Courses	Results	Changes Based Upon Results
In depth knowledge of human factors, as broadly defined, including sources of individual and group variability	See general measures below**	ArtID 565, 665, 698-I	--Knowledge of human factors tends to be fragmental, defined rather narrowly	--Pending changes in curriculum to make human factors in design a true emphasis of graduate study
Knowledge of multiple design investigation, analysis and synthesis options	See general measures below**	ArtID 565, 660, 665, 698-I	--Program viewed as strong in this area but further enhancement appropriate	--Formalize and build on current strength. --Make design methodologies of a wide variety of types a secondary emphasis of graduate study
Proficiency in communication of complex design concepts and information using a variety of oral, written and visual methods	See general measures below**	ArtID 565, 665, 698-I	--Professional Advisory Board (PAB) recommended broader, deeper attention to digital design development and communication --See below	--New faculty adds depth and breadth to digital design and imaging in ID --Program now makes earlier introduction to 3D computer methods --More discussion and use of written, oral and visual communication skills in studios --PAB regularly used for mock interviews, discussion, other student-pro interaction
Advanced understanding of the practice and potential future of interior design and interior design education	See general measures below**	ArtID 565, 665, 698-I	--Program historically strong—some loss of strength in recent times --See below	--New faculty should strengthen student and program contact with historical and cross-cultural forces effecting the present and future of design practice and education --Greater emphasis on methods will bring greater formalization and integration of theory in studios

III. Assessment Processes

**In addition to assessment criteria specifically cited by outcome, above, all outcomes are, to varying degrees, assessed using the general set of “Measures” and “Results” listed below:

Table of Assessment Processes, MFA, Interior Design

Assessment Activity	Period or Cycle of Activity	Record of Activity
--Program-wide graduate reviews	--Conducted at the end of every semester.	--Notes made of summary comments by reviewers
--Local, regional and national competitions	--Occur periodically.	--Photographic records of work submitted.
--Student performance reviews by ID Program Advisory Board (PAB)	--This has become a regular part of PAB visits, during each fall and spring semester.	--No formal documentation
--Juried charettes	--Customarily, at the beginning of each spring semester.	--Photographic documentation of charette materials
--Selected reviews by outside critics	--Outside critics form a portion of the review teams for every junior and senior studio project, many sophomore projects.	--Completed projects are photographed. Comments by outside critics are formally collected on forms provided.
--Surveys conducted at Interior Design Program “Town Meetings”	--Surveys conducted at periodic “Town meetings” (held once a month—all ID students are expected to attend).	--When conducted surveys take the form of open-ended questions; occasionally, more formally produced surveys are conducted.
--Graduate student service as project jurors, guest lecturers and teaching assistants	--Regularly, during every semester	--Graduate faculty participate with graduate students as co-instructors in courses and as fellow jurors when they conduct critical reviews, however, at present, no formal review or documentation is performed