

Frequently Asked Questions for Community College Transfer Students

What is the Bachelor of Design program?

The Bachelor of Design (B.Des.) program is a transfer-friendly, interdisciplinary, studio-based design degree option in the College of Design. Students earn a non-professional degree that provides a broad education in design thinking and methods for generating ideas and solving problems through design.

What kinds of students choose the Bachelor of Design major?

B.Des. students often know they want to study design but may not yet know which professional or career track is right for them. The program appeals to a wide variety of students, including freshman, transfer students, non-traditional students coming back to school full- or part-time, and students who want to double major in design and another degree. The program is flexible and can be tailored to a student's personal interests and strengths. Students have time and opportunities to learn more about the differences between design professions and interact with faculty from all seven departments in the college while in the program.

A large percentage of our students did not start their college experience in the College of Design at Iowa State. They may have chosen another major at Iowa State before design or transferred to Iowa State from another two-year or four-year school. The program is a good choice for transfer students who want up to apply up to 65 previous credits toward Iowa State degree requirements. Credits are applied after review by College of Design faculty on a case-by-case basis or according an articulation agreement. For most students with an A.A. degree or equivalent, the program can be completed in eight semesters.

Is Iowa State's program accredited?

Like all Iowa State University degrees, the B.Des. is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The Bachelor of Design (B.Des.) is not a professional design degree. Our students are not eligible to sit for

licensing or registration exams unless they continue their education at the graduate level. Students can use the term 'designer' to describe their expertise.

How is the curriculum structured?

The B.Des. program requires 122.5 credits across design, general education, and elective courses. These include 32 credits of design workshops, seminars, and studios intended to connect the theory and practice of design, and to give students hands-on experience grappling with design challenges that vary in complexity and scale. Students also take the 11.5-credit design core curriculum, 12 credits of history, theory, and criticism of design, as well as 12 credits of design skills courses from an approved elective list. In the final year of the program, students take a portfolio and professional preparation course and complete a capstone project with the help of a faculty or professional mentor. B.Des. courses are taught by faculty from many departments in the college, and studio topics change each semester to reflect their interests and expertise.

About half of the total credits are in general education and electives, most of which will be complete for transfer students with an A.A. degree or equivalent credit. Like most other students in the College of Design, transfer students will begin with the core curriculum. Typically students take a full load of core courses in the first semester (fall or spring) and then continue into the B.Des. program requirements in their second semester. Students beginning in the summer will take other requirements and start the core curriculum in the fall.

What's the culture of the program?

The B.Des. program is small and congenial with a high level of student-faculty interaction. Currently about 70 students are enrolled in the program, and we graduate 20-25 students each year. Studio courses have about 20 students; workshops and seminars range from 20-40 students. Students also take courses outside of the program ranging from small, specialized seminars and workshops to large lecture courses.

What kinds of jobs do Bachelor of Design graduates have?

Many graduates of the B.Des. program continue into professional master's degree programs in the College of Design and elsewhere. Other graduates are working in design firms, community art education, design entrepreneurship, and logo and branding design.

Many B.Des. students are self-motivated with individualized career goals. Completion of the program is often one step in a long-term plan to achieve the professional and lifestyle goals that they have set for themselves.

How long does the Bachelor of Design program take to complete?

The B.Des. is a transfer-friendly non-enrollment managed major that allows for a "2+2 plan." If you have an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or have completed four semesters of general education requirements at ISU or another university, you may be able to complete the Bachelor of Design program in just four semesters. You will begin taking courses required for the Bachelor of Design degree immediately upon enrolling at ISU, and you can start your studies in fall, spring, or summer semesters. Students entering in summer will begin with general education and other non-studio requirements before starting the core design curriculum in the fall. You can also pursue this major in conjunction with a double major, secondary major, or minor at Iowa State. For transfer students, adding a major or minor may add additional time to your plan of study.

Is there a minimum GPA required for transfer students?

A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required.

How do I receive more information?

Find us online at www.design.iastate.edu/design

Contact the Academic Adviser, Audrey Kennis, at (515) 294-9555 | kennis@iastate.edu

How do I apply?

Apply online at www.admissions.iastate.edu/apply.