

# DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

---

*Director of Graduate Studies:* M. Rogal  
*Program Coordinator:* P. Grigsby

**Summary:** The Master of Fine Arts degree in Design and Visual Communications is a terminal degree with the goal of preparing designers to address complex problems through an expanded design framework. The curriculum envisions design as an integrated activity, emphasizing co-design and horizontal practices in its teaching and application of research, theory, methods, and practice. A key aspect of the program is to design with people in context in order to address complex problems that matter to people and the environment and we believe Florida is an excellent laboratory to explore pressing problems of our time. Students benefit from Florida's complexity and diversity. As the third largest US state and gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean, the state offers a unique lab to explore collaborative design interventions in context. Through this program, we use design as a catalyst for change and sustainable development to make Florida, and the world, better through design. We also encourage students to consider how what they learn is transferrable to other contexts and environments. Students will encounter the world through a framework that is respectful of context and culture and that values collaboration and many knowledges as ways of making design that is responsible and meaningful.

**Admissions:** Enrollment is competitive and limited. Applicants should have the background and proficiency in communication design or a related field and demonstrate potential for successful study at the graduate level. This includes the ability to craft appropriate communication design artifacts, excellent verbal and written articulation of ideas, and an understanding of and interest in this program specifically rather than design more generally. Preferred applicants will have professional practice experience in design or a design-related field. Certain deficiencies, such as some formal technical competencies, may be corrected before beginning graduate study. Applicants must submit a portfolio and other materials for admission consideration (for comprehensive admission information: <https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/art-and-art-history/programs/mxd/>). (<https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/art-and-art-history/programs/mxd/>).html)

**Enrollment Options:** This program offers two-and three-year residency tracks. Students on a three-year track will enroll in 9 credits each semester and students on the two-year track will enroll in 12–15 credits during the academic year and both tracks require summer coursework. Students who wish to obtain teaching experience should pursue the three-year track and apply for a graduate assistantship (teaching assignments are based on faculty recommendation and availability).

**Curriculum:** We offer a design-centered curriculum that allows you to dive deep into research, theory, methods, practice, and designing in and with communities. Our curriculum, built on our 20+ year history of graduate education and research in design, allows you to learn from diverse knowledges, approaches, experiences, and modalities. We emphasize culture, inclusivity, social justice, and sustainability so we make design matter. We recognize the value of exploring other disciplinary knowledges, particularly at such a comprehensive university. The program, known as the MXD, allows you to inform your design practice by identifying and exploring other interests (the "x") to inform

your design trajectory, making your studies at the University of Florida even more rewarding.

The M.F.A. requires a minimum of 60 credit hours for the terminal degree. Normal course requirements include the following: 24 hours of design and visual communications courses (12 hours of seminar, 12 hours of research and practice); 6 hours of practica; 15 hours of project-in-lieu-of-thesis research; and 15 hours of elective coursework.

All major coursework is designed to provide opportunities for professional development in design. Students develop knowledge in design theory, methods, discourse, and issues in the seminar courses, while the research & practice courses provide frameworks to apply this learning in context. Students will study and use a range of methods appropriate for an expanded design practice. Their use is addressed and applied through discussions, case studies, writing, fieldwork, project work, deliverables, and presentations. Projects will engage students to design in a complex environment for diverse audiences and explore the many aspects necessary to design for 'real world problems' and constraints. Throughout the program, students will be mentored in ways to disseminate research at conferences and in publications in order to share their work and build their careers. Six hours of practicum provide an opportunity to conduct research and practice with an approved entity; and elective courses are intended to support an area of interest and expertise. In consultation with program faculty, the program director may recommend specific courses to support the student's knowledge-base (for example, in design, writing, subject matter knowledge, and/or teaching). The program culminates with a 15-credit project-in-lieu-of-thesis, which is selected, researched, and carried out under the direction of the supervisory chair and committee. This committee is formed in consultation with and approval from the program's director of graduate studies during the first year for students on the two-year track and during the second year for students on the three-year track. The objective is to contribute original research and disseminate it to the field.

**Expected Outcomes:** Every student in the program will develop a body of work that includes design and visual communication artifacts, systems, and strategies, that reflect original contributions to the discipline; demonstrate the ability to frame and incorporate research methods and related research activities and findings into tangible outcomes; create a dossier that organizes and communicates research (including creative activity), findings, proposals, and work products at a professional level; demonstrate the ability to collaborate and work effectively in interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary teams to develop approaches and solutions to complex problems; be prepared to present project work at professional conferences and publish in professional venues; and demonstrate the ability to design with people, in context.

**Assessment:** Student achievement is assessed in multiple ways from admission through graduation. University and program regulations state that a student must achieve a 3.0 GPA in order to graduate from the program, which is the result of assessment in courses. In addition, students must present their work product at the end of each semester to a faculty review committee who determines if the student, on the whole, is making sufficient progress towards candidacy and completion. Reviews consider the momentum, direction, and performance as a whole. Outcomes of semester reviews include continuation based on appropriate progress; recommendations for improvement; and recommendation of dismissal for continued performance below expectations.

**Futures:** With this credential, program graduates will be prepared to enter leadership positions in design consultancies, non-profit organizations,

government agencies, and corporations, as well as form their own consultancies and studios, within design proper and in a range of industries. They will also be eligible to teach at universities and colleges in the US and abroad.

More information can be found at our website: <https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/art-and-art-history/programs/mxd/>. (<https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/art-and-art-history/programs/mxd/>)

## Degrees Offered

### Degrees Offered with a Major in DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Master of Fine Arts

Requirements for these degrees are given in the Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.ufl.edu/graduate/degrees/>) section of this catalog.

## Courses

### School of Art and Art History Departmental Courses

Code	Title	Credits
ARE 6049	History of Teaching Art	3
ARE 6148	Curriculum in Teaching Art	3
ARE 6246C	Principles of Teaching Art	3
ARE 6247C	Teaching Art: The Study of Practice	3
ARE 6386	Teaching Art in Higher Education	3
ARE 6641	Issues in Art Education	3
ARE 6746	Methods of Research in Art Education	3
ARE 6905	Individual Study	1-5
ARE 6910	Capstone Project	3
ARE 6933	Special Topics in Art Education	1-3
ARE 6944	Internship in Teaching Art	3
ARE 6971	Research for Master's Thesis	1-15
ARE 6973	Individual Project	1-10
ARH 5420	Art in the Age of Revolution	3
ARH 5527	Arts of Central Africa	3
ARH 5528	Art of West Africa	3
ARH 5529	Clothing and Textiles in Africa	3
ARH 5655	Indigenous American Art	3
ARH 5667	Colonial Andean Art	3
ARH 5816	Methods of Research and Bibliography	3
ARH 5877	Gender, Representation, and the Visual Arts: 1600-1900	3
ARH 5905	Individual Study	1-6
ARH 6141	Greek Art Seminar	3
ARH 6292	Medieval Art Seminar	3
ARH 6394	Renaissance Art Seminar	3
ARH 6422	Beginnings of Modernism. Realism to Post-Impressionism 1848-1890	3
ARH 6477	Eighteenth-Century European Art Seminar	3
ARH 6481	Contemporary Art Seminar	3
ARH 6496	Modern Art Seminar	3
ARH 6596	Chinese Art Seminar	3
ARH 6597	African Art Seminar	3
ARH 6654	Pre-Columbian Art Seminar	3
ARH 6666	Colonial Latin American Art Seminar	3
ARH 6696	American Art Seminar	3
ARH 6797	Museum Education	3
ARH 6836	Exhibitions Seminar	3

ARH 6895	Collections Management Seminar	3
ARH 6900	Independent Study in Museology	1-6
ARH 6910	Supervised Research	1-5
ARH 6911	Advanced Study	3-4
ARH 6914	Independent Study in Ancient Art History	3-4
ARH 6915	Independent Study in Medieval Art History	3-4
ARH 6916	Independent Study in Renaissance and Baroque Art History	3-4
ARH 6917	Independent Study in Modern Art History	3-4
ARH 6918	Independent Study in Non-Western Art History	3-4
ARH 6930	Special Topics in Museology	3
ARH 6931	Seminar in Curatorial Studies	3
ARH 6938	Seminar in Museum Studies	3
ARH 6941	Supervised Internship	1-6
ARH 6946	Museum Practicum	1-6
ARH 6948	Gallery Practicum	1-6
ARH 6971	Research for Master's Thesis	1-15
ARH 7979	Advanced Research	1-12
ARH 7980	Research for Doctoral Dissertation	1-15
ART 5674C	Digital Fabrication	3
ART 5905C	Directed Study	1-5
ART 5930C	Special Topics	3
ART 6410C	Printmaking Seminar: Mastering Process and Content	3
ART 6411C	Printmaking Seminar: Transformation and Change	3
ART 6412C	Printmaking Seminar: Ideation, Studies, and Completed Works	3
ART 6413C	Printmaking Seminar: Interdisciplinary Studio	3
ART 6671C	Advanced Experiments in Digital Art	3
ART 6672	Hypermedia	3
ART 6673C	Video Art	3
ART 6675C	Digital Art and Animation	3
ART 6691	Digital Art Studio	4
ART 6794C	Vessel Aesthetic 1	3
ART 6795C	Vessel Aesthetic 2	3
ART 6797C	Ceramic Sculpture 2	3
ART 6835C	Research in Methods and Materials of the Artist	3-4
ART 6849C	Reactive Environments	3
ART 6897	Professional Practices for the Visual Artist	3
ART 6910C	Supervised Research	1-5
ART 6925C	Art + Technology Workshop	3
ART 6926C	Advanced Study I	2-4
ART 6927C	Advanced Study II	2-4
ART 6928C	Advanced Study III	2-4
ART 6929C	Advanced Study IV	2-4
ART 6933	Area Methods: Rotating Topics	1-4
ART 6971	Research for Master's Thesis	1-15
ART 6973C	Individual Project	1-10
DIG 5930	Special Topics	3
DIG 6746C	Graduate Seminar in Sensors and Electronics	3
GRA 6930	Seminar: Rotating Topics	3
GRA 6931C	Research and Practice	3
GRA 6944	Practicum	1-6
GRA 6973	Project in Lieu of Thesis	1-9
IDC 6505C	Programming for Artists	3

## College of the Arts Courses

Code	Title	Credits
HUM 5357	Creativity and Health: Foundations of the Arts in Medicine	3
HUM 5595	Arts in Medicine in Practice	3
HUM 6308	Arts and Compassion	3
HUM 6350	The Art of Self-Care	3
HUM 6352	Art and Design in the Environment of Care	3
HUM 6353	Arts in Medicine Professional Seminar	3
HUM 6354	Arts in Medicine Advanced Professional Seminar	3
HUM 6355	Arts in Medicine Summer Intensive	3
HUM 6358	Arts in Medicine Capstone Proposal	2
HUM 6359	Arts in Medicine Capstone	3
HUM 6365	Collaborating Across Disciplines: The Arts Therapies	3
HUM 6375	The Arts and Human Development	3
HUM 6596	Arts in Medicine Capstone	4
HUM 6597	Research and Evaluation in Arts in Medicine	3
HUM 6886	Coding and Narrative Analysis in Arts in Health	2
HUM 6930	Special Topics in Fine Arts	1-3
HUM 6942	Arts in Medicine Graduate Practicum	3
HUM 6944	Arts in Action: Consulting Project in Performing Arts Management	3
THE 6933	Arts and Public Health Professional Seminar	3