

DESIGN, MASTER OF FINE ARTS (M.F.A.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Program accreditation

National Association of Schools of Art and Design

Program goal

The graduate program in design with a concentration in visual communications is oriented toward individuals interested in pursuing a career in design education and/or furthering their professional practices, in conducting visual or theoretical research, and in investigating the intersections of function and expression in design problem solving.

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will be able to present fluent verbal and written explanations of research and studio activities.
2. Students will develop a personal vocabulary, approach and vision in creative work.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of historical, social and cultural perspectives in relation to visual communications and clarify how they influence work.
4. Students will develop the ability to create expressive forms and use them to communicate appropriately.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the **academic regulations section** for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's

faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the **academic regulations section** for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the **academic regulations section** for additional information on graduation requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.F.A.	Fall	Jan 15	

Special requirements

- International applicants should apply by Dec. 15 to ensure that application materials are received by the deadline.
- See arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/ (<http://arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/>) for details on the application process, including portfolio, resume, statement of purpose, letters of reference, transcripts and scores.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), applicants must have taken 36 undergraduate credit hours in studio art that should include a minimum of 20 credit hours in visual communications and/or related fields. Under special circumstances, these requirements may be waived.

Interview

The department will contact selected applicants regarding the interview (may be via Skype, telephone or in person).

Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), the M.F.A. is an intensive two-year, 60 credit-hour full-time program with courses only scheduled during the day. Courses are often integrated with each other during the semester.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
GDES 610	Visual Communications Workshop	4
GDES 611	Visual Communications Workshop	12
GDES 612	Research Methods in Visual Communications	4
GDES 621	Visual Communications Seminar	16
GDES 698	Research Documentation and Exhibition Design	3
GDES 699	Directed Thesis Research in Visual Communications	12
Graduate electives		9
Total Hours		60

Graduate electives

Course	Title	Hours
GDES 593	Visual Communications Internship	3
GDES 631	Visual Communications Teaching Practicum	3
GDES 692	Visual Communications Research/ Individual Study	3

Additional 500-, 600- and/or 700-level graduate electives within the university require approval by the program director

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 60.

Sample plan of study

Semester 1		Hours
GDES 610	Visual Communications Workshop	4
GDES 611	Visual Communications Workshop	4
GDES 621	Visual Communications Seminar	4
Graduate elective ¹		3
Term Hours:		15

Semester 2		Hours
GDES 611	Visual Communications Workshop	4
GDES 612	Research Methods in Visual Communications	4
GDES 621	Visual Communications Seminar	4
Graduate elective ¹		3
Candidacy review presentation		
Term Hours:		15

Semester 3		Hours
GDES 611	Visual Communications Workshop	4
GDES 621	Visual Communications Seminar	4
GDES 699	Directed Thesis Research in Visual Communications	4
Graduate elective ¹		3
Thesis project review		
Term Hours:		15

Semester 4		Hours
GDES 621	Visual Communications Seminar	4
GDES 698	Research Documentation and Exhibition Design	3

GDES 699	Directed Thesis Research in Visual Communications	8
Thesis/creative project review		
M.F.A. thesis exhibition		
Oral review		
Term Hours:		15
Total Hours:		60

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Additional 500-, 600- and/or 700-level graduate electives within the university require approval by the program director.

Graduate program director

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Program website: arts.vcu.edu/graphicdesign/mfa (<http://arts.vcu.edu/graphicdesign/mfa/>)