

DEPARTMENT OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

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

The Department of Graphic Design champions agency through the competencies of collaboration, research, making and cultural literacy. The department believes in responding to the reality of our time and that design is activated by content, condition and impact. Further, that design exists in a continuum: The study of the historical past as it informs the now strengthens design's ability to strategically speculate on future forms, languages and systems.

The department provides an education that values the inclusion of diverse backgrounds, skill sets and experiences. Students develop acuties to communicate effectively through visual and verbal representation, and are prepared – as individuals and collaborators – to be practitioners not limited by the confines of current professional practices.

- Graphic Design, Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/arts/graphic-design/graphic-design-bfa/>)

GDES 220. Design Practices. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. This studio is an introduction to research, analysis and the interpretation of content, emphasizing how hierarchical and syntactic structures participate in the making of meaning. Students are oriented as shapers and interpreters within culture.

GDES 221. Core Studio I. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. This studio is an introduction to the generation and control of form. This involves the exploration of methods, materials and language. Students are oriented to fundamental modes of design practices.

GDES 222. Core Studio II. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Prerequisite: GDES 221. This studio reinforces methods, materials and language used in generating and organizing form. Students examine the potential and implications of design processes and their outcomes.

GDES 231. Theory Inquiry. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. This inquiry course is an overview of theory and philosophy influencing graphic design as a situated practice. Students are exposed to design criticism and theoretical perspectives from a variety of disciplines.

GDES 301. Letterpress. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. A letterpress printing studio course designed for students interested in being introduced to and developing their visual vocabulary in letterpress and relief printing. Students will undertake critical analysis of the letterpress medium and utilize techniques to develop and produce finished editions of each assigned task.

GDES 302. Book Arts. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. An introduction to the tools, materials and craft of contemporary bookmaking. Investigation of bookbinding, handcraft and related techniques.

GDES 308. Web Design. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 4 credits. A course developing the design of websites. Emphasis is placed on the visual design, navigation, development, communication and authoring of websites.

GDES 321. Core Studio III. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Prerequisite: GDES 222. This studio examines systems and structures as frameworks for design methods, processes and outcomes. Students broaden their practice relative to scale, context, conditions and effect.

GDES 322. Core Studio IV. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Prerequisite: GDES 321. This studio expands critical discourse to investigate design's impact through distribution and engagement. Students consider how their personal voice and point of view function in a larger context.

GDES 330. The Business of Design. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course introduces basic global economics and general design business concepts such as the free enterprise system, legal forms of business and financial considerations. It also surveys business and management practices such as planning, decision-making, communication, global ethics, marketing, human resources, finance and entrepreneurial skills needed to open a design business. Crosslisted as: IDES 330/FASH 330.

GDES 331. Precedents Inquiry. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. This inquiry course is a pluralistic survey of precedents and historical examples of design with an emphasis on multiple perspectives and power structures. Students will encounter design histories through a source-based approach.

GDES 356. Studio Management. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 4 lecture hours. 4 credits. A study of business and management factors that relate to creative design. Topics include marketing, structure and organization; financial factors; ethical and legal aspects; and management of design, illustration and photography studios.

GDES 370. Design History: 20th and 21st Centuries. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: ARTF 105-106. Study of the major theories and styles on communication arts, fashion and interior environments of the 20th and 21st centuries. Contemporary analysis of cultural conditions and the manner in which designers respond to those conditions. Crosslisted as: FASH 370/IDES 370.

GDES 380. Multi Studio I. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. May be repeated for a maximum total of 8 credits. This studio emphasizes critical engagement, research and speculation. Students engage in collaboration, peer learning and interdependent discovery.

GDES 391. Lecture Topics in Design. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; 1-4 lecture hours. 1-4 credits. May be taken for a maximum of four credits per semester and repeated for a maximum of 12 credits. Topical lectures focused on evolving and emergent issues that affect contemporary design practice. Upper-level students outside of the graphic design major may take this course with an override.

GDES 392. Research/Individual Study. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; 2-8 studio hours. 1-4 credits. May be repeated for a total of eight credits. Enrollment is restricted to students with permission of the instructor, approval of faculty adviser and department chair. The structuring, research, execution and presentation of an independent project in visual communications under the direction of a faculty adviser. The student will be encouraged to become a self-generating problem-seeker and -solver with the ability to carry out self-stated goals.

GDES 398. Dialogues. 1 Hour.

Semester course; 1 seminar hour (delivered online or face-to-face). 1 credit. May be repeated for a maximum total of six credits. This course engages students in peer-to-peer reflection, dialogue and debate in order to further develop an understanding of the diversity and scope of design practices. Graded as pass/fail.

GDES 401. Experimental Letterpress. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of eight credits. An advanced print studio course designed for students interested in exploring their visual vocabulary in digital and letterpress relief printing. Students will undertake critical analysis of the combined media of digital and letterpress and utilize techniques inherent within each technology to develop and produce finished editions.

GDES 403. Design Activism. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. This course explores relationships between design, activism, advocacy and organizing. Students will critically examine the politics of design practice and the artifacts and systems design practice activates. Working with internal and external collaborators, students will interpret the relevance of social and political topics, pose critical questions and provoke new relationships within the spaces they occupy.

GDES 404. Typeface Design. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Glyph construction is explored through historical and methodological analysis as well as the creation of typographic systems. Formal mechanics of typefaces are emphasized in discussion of their function as vehicles for communication. Both the functional and expressive nature of typefaces are examined through hands-on exercises.

GDES 412. Typographic Systems. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Advanced approaches to typographic design with focus on typography as a primary interface to information.

GDES 414. Exhibition and Environmental Graphic Design. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 studio hours. 4 credits. Study of the presentation of information in large-scale, multi-dimensional formats. Exploration of exhibition and environmental design, including understanding the use of "wayfinding" and "wayshowing" (identification, interpretation and orientation), sensitivity to and awareness of human factors, and developing visual and experiential navigation solutions.

GDES 418. Design Center. 3-9 Hours.

Semester course; 2-6 lecture and 3-9 studio hours. 3-9 credits. May be repeated for a total of 12 credits. Enrollment requires portfolio review by faculty. A professional studio to give students practicum experience working with faculty on self-initiated and client-initiated, real-world design projects.

GDES 431. Critical Inquiry. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture and 2 studio hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 4 credits. Prerequisite: GDES 322. This inquiry course is focused on research, critical analysis and discussion. Students assess and reflect on their emerging practice and its relation to the field.

GDES 440. Synthesis. 6 Hours.

Semester course; 12 studio hours. 6 credits. Prerequisite: GDES 431. This studio provides students the opportunity to synthesize knowledge, skill and experiences accumulated over their progression through the program. Students are required to define and execute a capstone project that demonstrates their readiness and capacity to engage responsibly and creatively in the field. The class culminates in a public exhibition.

GDES 480. Multi Studio II. 2 Hours.

Semester course; 4 studio hours. 2 credits. Prerequisites: GDES 380 and GDES 431. Utilizing principles and skills gained in the prerequisite course, students facilitate discourse, framing and articulation of creative partnerships.

GDES 481. Practicum. 2-4 Hours.

Semester course; 2-4 field experience hours. 2-4 credits. Students must be actively engaged in work for a minimum of 30 hours per credit. This course engages students in practical experiences related to the contemporary and future practice of design and research through hands-on learning under the supervision of qualified practitioners. Graded as pass/fail.

GDES 491. Studio Topics in Design. 1-6 Hours.

Semester course; 2-12 studio hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 1-6 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of 16 credits. Studio focusing on evolving and emergent topics that affect contemporary design practice. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered.