Graphic Design BFA

The Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Graphic Design provides education and training in the conceptual and technical aspects of the visual communication process. Graphic Design majors take a diverse range of courses that prepare them to compete for entry level positions in the graphic design profession. There is an expanding range of employment opportunities for designers that includes books, magazines and other publications, branding and identity systems, information architecture, information design, both print and screen based, interactive design and design for the world wide web. The variety of design tasks typical of the design profession is reflected in the diversity of our program’s faculty whose professional practice is broad ranged and global.

In addition to courses in graphic design studio, majors study art history and graphic design history, the liberal arts and sciences, music and theater, to earn a BFA degree that assures a strong, well rounded liberal arts education. For those who wish to pursue graduate study, a Master of Fine Arts degree is available at UMD. Graduate students pursue advanced studies in design theory and practice. MFA students have access to UMD’s state-of-the-art Visualization and Digital Imaging Laboratory as well as the departmental graduate studio/lab. Students completing an MFA in Art (emphasis in Graphic Design) may prepare for teaching in higher education or pursue design research related to professional practice.

Admission
Students must pass portfolio review before being admitted to the Graphic Design program. Freshmen and transfer students are usually admitted to pre-major status before admission to this major. The review occurs approximately the fifth week of spring semester each year. Some transfer students may be able to apply in their first semester.

Portfolio review requirements:
Earn a minimum GPA (grade point average) of 2.5 in Art and Design classes and 2.5 overall. If you do not meet this GPA requirement, you may continue to take Art and Design courses required for all art majors in an effort to improve your GPA and apply when you meet the requirement.
2.5 for students already admitted to the degree-granting college.
2.5 for students transferring from another University of Minnesota college.
2.5 for students transferring from outside the University.
Successfully complete at least nine credits of art core courses during your first semester at UMD. One of these courses may be in art history.

Educational advisement and preparation
Each student works with a faculty advisor regularly, to plan their course of study. Completion of the campus liberal education program requirements is also necessary for the BFA degree. Students take the introductory core program courses in art and design fundamentals, and beginning and advanced studio courses selected from among the eight studio areas. In addition they study art history, visual literacy, graphic design history and contemporary art and design issues. Students take courses in such areas as graphic design concepts and processes, typography, motion graphics, interactive design, digital photography and digital imaging. A high percentage of our graduates find work in some aspect of visual communications both private and public. Our program combines the broad education of a liberal arts university with specialized professional training.

Special programs
During the academic year, the Department sponsors the Art and Design Lecture Series, that brings artists, designers, art historians and critics to the Tweed Museum of Art. The Tweed is a major resource for art and design students, providing them with the opportunity to view the permanent collection and changing exhibitions of original works of art.

Scholarship support
Each spring students who are in at least their second semester of study at UMD and meet the grade point average eligibility requirements are invited to apply for scholarships administered by the Art and Design Department. These scholarships are provided through several endowments which have been established for scholarship support. Scholarships for the following summer and academic year are announced each spring.