

# Visual Communication Design

Visual communication design supports many subcategories of specialization. One large area of specialization is hyper-media or interactive computer-based media that are accessed through emerging technologies. Print media, which is concerned with the design of printed materials such as books, magazines, brochures, posters, corporate literature and annual reports is still a staple of the profession. Packaging graphics, exhibit design, and way-finding systems are other areas of focus that intersect the interests of other professions.

Visual communication design falls within the broader category of design, which is the professional area of activity concerned with planning and developing a wide variety of objects, systems and spaces. Of particular importance in this field are relationships between production and aesthetic characteristics and those who use that which is designed.

Ohio State offers three design majors: industrial design, interior design and visual communication design. Students who study design at Ohio State have the advantage of collaborating with students in other design disciplines in several courses and studios in a setting that models that which is often found in emerging professional design practices.

**Pursuing Visual Communication Design at Ohio State**  
All freshman applicants to the Columbus campus are considered within a competitive admission process; find admissions criteria at [go.osu.edu/admissions](http://go.osu.edu/admissions).

Admitted students who indicate their major as visual communication design directly enroll as pre-design students in the College of Arts and Sciences. Entrance into the Department of Design then occurs by a two-part, competitive process.

1.) The Department of Design selects a very limited number of pre-design students to go through its first-year foundation course sequence on an annual basis. The sequence includes required visualization and design studios. The primary criteria for selection for the first-year foundation course sequence are the completion of the applicant's high school college preparatory program and performance in that program as indicated by class rank and/or grade-point average

2.) An annual Entrance Review process occurs at the end of spring semester. The students previously selected for the first-year foundation course sequence submit project outcomes from the autumn and spring semester courses, along with other materials specified by the department. After these materials are reviewed by design faculty, approximately 18 new major students will be offered acceptance to the interior design major program.

**For more information, check these websites:**

Design: [design.osu.edu](http://design.osu.edu)

Arts and Sciences: [artsandsciences.osu.edu](http://artsandsciences.osu.edu)

Ohio State: [osu.edu](http://osu.edu)

Students not accepted to one of the major programs via the Entrance Review process can receive a design minor and will be able to pursue another major in the university.

Since admission to the major is highly selective, applicants are advised that maintaining a 2.5 cumulative point-hour ratio (CPHR) is a minimum level for acceptance, and that students qualifying for the program will be selected on the basis of highest qualifications in CPHR, assessment of quality in the entrance review portfolio, and assessment of overall aptitude for studies in the design program.

In order for students to continue in the second-year course sequence, they must complete first-year foundation courses and meet the requirements listed above. The curriculum leading to a Bachelor of Science in Design (BSD) calls for the completion of university requirements, major requirements and college requirements.

## Educational Objectives

Students majoring in visual communication design will achieve the following learning outcomes.

- Students will gain a lifelong desire and ability to create new knowledge and foster problem-solving skills through creativity and the application of a creative process.
  - Students will apply design thinking and the design process in all studio projects.
  - Students will develop the ability to design and develop ideas for new products, spaces and/or interfaces that may not have existed before.
  - Students will be able to apply design and creative skills learned in one studio to problems encountered in the new context of a successive studio.
- Students will develop an understanding of a human-centered focus on design and research.
  - Students will be able to conduct and complete user research studies for all studio projects.
  - Students will create designed artifacts that will be evaluated by design professionals and potential users.
- Students will prepare for a successful career in the design profession.
  - Students will prepare a portfolio that documents their creative work throughout the undergraduate program.
  - Students will develop the skills of presenting themselves and their design competencies in a professional practice context.
- Students will develop an understanding of and familiarity with the tools and methods of the design profession.
  - Students will demonstrate proficiency in model-making techniques using various materials to explore three-dimensional design ideas.

Admissions: [undergrad.osu.edu](http://undergrad.osu.edu)

Multicultural Center: [multiculturalcenter.osu.edu](http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu)

First Year Experience: [fye.osu.edu](http://fye.osu.edu)

## Curriculum Sample

This is a sample list of classes a student will take to pursue a degree in visual communication design. Since university students need more than specific education in a narrow field, they also will take classes to complete General Education (GE) requirements. Because GE courses come from a variety of academic areas of study, this course work helps students develop fundamental skills essential to collegiate success and allows them to tailor these courses toward their interests. Note: This sample represents one of several possible paths to a degree in visual communication design. Visit [design.osu.edu](http://design.osu.edu) for details on each specific track.

### Freshman Year:

Survey course	1
Design Fundamentals 1–4	6
Visual Principles 1–4	6
Introduction to Design Practice	3
Design History	3
GE courses	12
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>31</b>

### Sophomore Year:

Introduction to Visual Communication Design 1–2	6
Design Research 1	3
Design Media 1–2	6
Typographic Design	3
Materials and Processes	3
GE courses	15
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>36</b>

### Junior Year:

Intermediate Visual Communication Design 1–2	6
Design Research 2	3
Design Media 3	3
Collaborative Design	3
Professional Practice	3
Elective courses	9
GE courses	6
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>33</b>

### Senior Year:

Advanced Visual Communication Design 1–2	6
Design Research 3	3
Design Seminar	3
Design Media 4	3
Elective courses	3
GE courses	13
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>31</b>

- Students will demonstrate proficiency in the use of relevant design technology in the problem-solving and creative process.
- Students will exhibit proficiency in both 2D and 3D design methodologies.
- Students will hone the skills that are central to communicating design ideas and solutions.
  - Students will demonstrate proficiency in drawing, sketching, and digital visualization techniques for the purpose of exploring multiple ideas and using storytelling techniques to express them.
  - Students will present and defend their design projects in public critiques.
  - Students will be able to create documentation that describes the processes associated with a capstone thesis project.
- Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for the role of the designer in environmental relationships.
  - Students will be able to synthesize knowledge and skills learned in a liberal arts environment and apply them to issues and problems in their specific area of design.
  - Students will develop a knowledge of and appreciation for the concept of sustainable design practices.

## Co-Curricular Opportunities

Ohio State offers many opportunities for students to learn and grow outside of the classroom. These range from internships to study abroad programs to student organizations. Internships allow students to apply what they know about practicing design in professional environments while they are Ohio State students. Ohio State offers more than 100 study abroad programs in 40 countries around the world. In addition, there are hundreds of student organizations on campus, including student chapters of professional design organizations.

## Honors & Scholars Programs

Ohio State offers the Honors and Scholars programs to create an environment of intellectual support and stimulation within a close-knit community of high-ability undergraduate students. Through these programs, students have access to smaller classes, undergraduate research opportunities, close working relationships with faculty, priority scheduling, and unique housing options.

Honors and Scholars programs represent great opportunities to be part of a smaller community within a large university. The honors program offers the opportunity to pursue a bachelor's degree "with distinction" or "with honors." Visit [honors-scholars.osu.edu](http://honors-scholars.osu.edu) for more information on the Arts Honors Program or the Arts Interdisciplinary Scholars Program.

## Career Prospects in Visual Communication Design

Students graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Design take positions with design consulting offices, corporate design departments and government design agencies and work on consumer and industrial products, building and equipment systems, and public and corporate communication projects.

Students in visual communication design can find employment opportunities with large corporations, small graphic design firms, department stores, publishing companies, advertising agencies, television stations, or they can be self-employed.

**Revised July 2015.** Information subject to change. For the most up-to-date information on the visual communication design program, visit [design.osu.edu](http://design.osu.edu).

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