Program Overview: Bachelor of Fine Arts, Graphic Design Visual Design Concentration

COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

About This Major . . .

The BFA degree in Graphic Design with a concentration in Visual Design is designed to give students a strong overview of the industry. A focus on the software/technical skills combined with design and the study of typography establishes a strong foundation for future designers. Students develop skills and aesthetics while solving a myriad of design problems that involve planning and producing 2-D and 3-D design collateral for print promotions, editorial design, packaging, and web solutions. A Graphic Design portfolio should demonstrate strong typography and layout expertise, original thinking and concept development all while exhibiting an impeccable sense of craft. The degree culminates in a senior-level Portfolio Development course. Graduates leave with a portfolio book, a digital portfolio, website, résumé, business card, and leave-behind.

Students must participate in and complete a sophomore portfolio review and written exam for entry into the program.

A concentration in Visual Design prepares the student to enter professions within Graphic Design including positions at design studios and corporate in-house design departments, and as freelance designers.

All CMU baccalaureate graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, communication fluency, quantitative fluency, and specialized knowledge/applied learning.

In addition to these campus-wide student-learning outcomes, graduates of this major will be able to:

1. interpret and apply formal elements and principles of design. (Specialized Knowledge)

2. demonstrate application of tools, materials, techniques, and proper use and care for equipment through quality craftsmanship. (Applied Learning)

3. generate individual response through concept and theory beyond formal elements to create personal content. (Communication Fluency)

4. communicate clearly regarding the critical analysis of art and design both historical and contemporary. (Critical Thinking/Communication Fluency)

5. design and publish a professional portfolio that meets current industry standards. (Applied Learning)

6. demonstrate technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions based on the application of the design process. (Specialized Knowledge)

Program Highlights:

Be Seen
Get your design work out in the world and seen by peers through critiques and student portfolio reviews.

Make Connections
Be a member of Mesa Emerging Designers (MED) and make connections with your classmates and professionals.

Get Experience
Apply your expertise in a real-world setting by completing an internship in a professional Graphic Design studio.

Get a Job
Land a job as a designer for local, regional and national design studios or as an in-house designer.

See a Professional
Travel and see design practices first-hand on trips within the continental US or abroad.

Get Smarter
Consider graduate studies by earning an MA or MFA.

A student must follow CMU graduation requirements by completing 120 semester credit hours, including 40 credits of coursework at the 300+ level. See the "Undergraduate Graduation Requirements" in the catalog for additional graduation information. Students should work closely with a faculty advisor when selecting and scheduling courses prior to registration. In general, CMU's programs of study are based on two curriculum groups:

1. Essential Learning

CMU's Essential Learning program provides the foundation of skills and information that cuts across all fields of study and the support for advanced concepts that students will later encounter in their majors. Before moving into work at the 300+ level, students complete the Maverick Milestone and its co-requirement, Essential Speech. This pair of courses is a capstone experience where students integrate what they have learned from their foundation courses by making connections among diverse areas of knowledge. The capstone is also an opportunity for students to work with disparate ideas, a critical skill expected of all CMU graduates that will aid them in solving the complex and unscripted problems they will encounter in their personal, professional, and civic lives.

2. What You Will Study in This Major. . .

Foundational Courses

These courses provide you with a general background in art theory and application including vocabulary, art methods/ practice and a broad overview of 40,000 years of art history to prepare you for more intensive study in the arts.

- ARTE 101 Two-Dimensional Design
- ARTE 102 Three-Dimensional Design
- ARTE 118 History of Art, Prehistory to Renaissance
- ARTE 119 History of Art, Renaissance to Present
- ARTS 151 Foundation Drawing I
- ARTS 152 Foundation Drawing II

Visual Design Core

All students take courses that explore a variety of different design problems. This study provides each student with a strong base of skills. The focus is on developing creative thinkers and ways of thinking, both timeless tools that a graduate can apply as technology needs change. Students study the History of Graphic Design to help them see where design has been applied in the past to educate their design decisions now. Each design project/course helps students develop a critical eye as they learn to create and analyze artwork and build an intellectual set of tools to help them think through solutions.

- 45 Credits in Visual Design Studies
- 3 Credits in the History of Graphic Design

Electives

We want you to have breadth as well as depth, and these electives allow you to supplement or complement your choices in Visual Design. A strategic selection of electives can help you "cross-pollinate" what and how you think.

- Artists' Books
- Animation
- Motion Graphics
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Illustrator
- Digital Photography
- Digital Painting
- Visual and Conceptual Thinking
- Development of Contemporary Art
- American Art History
- Ceramics: Throwing
- Printmaking
- Screen Printing
- Drawing
- Mixed Media: Drawing
- Mixed Media: Painting
- Acrylic Painting
- Oil Painting
- Life Drawing
- Figure Painting
- Sculpture/Construction
- Bronze Casting

Concentration Specialty

Courses in these Visual Design areas develop a broad base of Graphic Design practices with timeless lessons in design.

- Graphic Design
- Introduction to Motion Graphics
- Computer Illustration
- Letterforms and Typography
- Advanced Typography
- Motion Graphics
- Illustration and Storyboard
- Advertising Design I
- Sketchbook
- Web Site Design
- Advanced Web Site Design
- Identity Design
- Portfolio Development
- Internship

For more information about this major, go to: http://www.coloradomesa.edu/art/index.html or contact the Academic Department Head for Art, 313A Fine Arts, 970.248.1444.