GRAPHIC DESIGN (TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE)

Overview

Award: Technical Certificate
Program of Study: Graphic Design
Program Code: 1709

The **Graphic Design Certificate (18 credit hours)** provides students with essential skills in visual communication, typography, color theory, illustration, and user experience design. This short-term credential is designed for students seeking a focused, affordable pathway into the design profession or for working adults and concurrent-enrollment students looking to enhance their creative and digital competencies.

Through hands-on, project-based learning, students gain experience with **industry-standard tools** such as Adobe Creative Cloud, digital printers, and professional production equipment. Courses emphasize design thinking, critique, and portfolio development, preparing graduates for entry-level positions or continued study in CMU's **AA or BFA in Graphic Design**.

The 18-credit curriculum draws entirely from existing courses in the AA/BFA programs, ensuring **full stackability** and efficient progression toward advanced degrees without duplication of coursework.

All CMU/CMU Tech technical certificate graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in specialized knowledge/applied learning, communication fluency, and critical thinking. In addition to these campus#wide student learning outcomes, graduates of this major will be able to:

1. Demonstrate visual literacy and effectively apply the elements and principles of design across analog and digital media. (Institutional SLO: Specialized Knowledge)
2. Use industry-standard software and hardware to produce professional visual communication for print and digital applications.
3. Create cohesive design solutions that address client, audience, and contextual needs using research-driven design processes.
4. Present and critique design work using professional vocabulary, visual rationale, and reflective self-assessment.

Requirements

Each section below contains details about the requirements for this program. Select a header to expand the information/requirements for that particular section of the program's requirements.

To print or save an overview of this program's information, including the program description, learning outcomes, requirements, suggested course sequencing (if applicable), and advising and graduation information, scroll to the bottom of the left-hand navigation menu and select "Print Options." This will give you the options to either "Send Page to Printer" or "Download PDF of This Page." The "Download PDF of This Page" option prepares a much more concise presentation of all program information. The PDF is also printable and may be preferable due to its brevity.

Institutional Certificate Requirements

The following institutional requirements apply to all CMU or CMU Tech Technical Certificates. Specific programs may have different requirements that must be met in addition to institutional requirements.

- Consists of 5-59 semester hours.
- Consists of 100-200 level courses.
- At least fifty percent of the credit hours must be taken at CMU/CMU Tech.
- 2.00 cumulative GPA or higher in all courses taken to satisfy certificate requirements.
- A grade lower than "C" will not be counted toward meeting the requirements.
- A course may only be used to fulfill one requirement for each degree/certificate.
- Non-traditional credit, such as advanced placement, credit by examination, credit for prior learning, cooperative education and internships, cannot exceed twenty-five percent of the semester credit hours required for a technical certificate.
- Pre-collegiate courses (usually numbered below 100) cannot be used for graduation.
- Capstone exit assessment/projects (e.g., Major Field Achievement Test) requirements are identified under Program-Specific Certificate Requirements.
- The Catalog Year determines which program sheet and certificate requirements a student must fulfill in order to graduate. Visit with your advisor or academic department to determine which catalog year and program requirements you should follow.
- See "Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees and Certificates" in the catalog for a complete list of graduation requirements.

Program Specific Requirements

(18 semester hours. To continue in the program and eventually earn the certificate, a student must earn, within no more than three attempts, at least a grade of "B" in the program-specific course requirements.)

Code	Title	Semester Credit Hours
ARTE 104	Color Theory and Design	3
or ARTE 101	Two-Dimensional Design-GTAH1	
ARTG 112	Graphic Design I	3
ARTG 120	UX Design I	3
ARTG 221	Graphic Design II	3
ARTG 222	Illustration Principles	3
ARTG 226	Motion Graphics	3
or ARTG 290	UX Design II	
or ARTG 292	Letterforms and Typography	
Total Semester Credit Hours		**18**

Suggested Course Plan

First Year		
Fall Semester		**Semester Credit Hours**
ARTE 104	Color Theory and Design	3
or ARTE 101	or Two-Dimensional Design-GTAH1	

ARTG 112	Graphic Design I	3
	Semester Credit Hours	**6**
Spring Semester		
ARTG 120	UX Design I	3
	Semester Credit Hours	**3**
Second Year		
Fall Semester		
ARTG 221	Graphic Design II	3
ARTG 222	Illustration Principles	3
	Semester Credit Hours	**6**
Spring Semester		
ARTG 226 or ARTG 290 or ARTG 292	Motion Graphics or UX Design II or Letterforms and Typography	3
	Semester Credit Hours	**3**
	Total Semester Credit Hours	**18**

Advising and Graduation

Advising Process and DegreeWorks

Documentation on the pages related to this program is intended for informational purposes to help determine what courses and associated requirements are needed to earn a certificate. Some courses are critical to complete in specific semesters while others may be moved around. Meeting with an academic advisor is essential in planning courses and discussing the suggested course sequencing. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand and fulfill the requirements for their intended certificate.

DegreeWorks is an online degree audit tool available in MAVzone. It is the official record used by the Registrar's Office to evaluate progress towards a certificate and determine eligibility for graduation. Students are responsible for reviewing their DegreeWorks audit on a regular basis and should discuss questions or concerns with their advisor or academic department head. Discrepancies in requirements should be reported to the Registrar's Office.

Graduation Process

Students must complete the following in the first two months of the semester prior to completing their certificate requirements (for one-semester certificates, complete in the first week of class):

- Review their DegreeWorks audit and create a plan that outlines how unmet requirements will be met in the final semester.
- Meet with their advisor and modify their plan as needed. The advisor must approve the final plan.
- Submit the "Intent to Graduate" form to the Registrar's Office to officially declare the intended graduation date and commencement ceremony plans.
- Register for all needed courses and complete all requirements for each degree sought.

Submission deadlines and commencement details can be found on the Graduation web page.

If a student's petition for graduation is denied, it will be their responsibility to apply for graduation in a subsequent semester. A student's "Intent to Graduate" does not automatically move to a later graduation date.