

**REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO IMPLEMENT A  
BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN  
DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION AT  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN (UW)-MILWAUKEE  
PREPARED BY UW-MILWAUKEE**

**ABSTRACT**

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee proposes to establish a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Design and Visual Communication (DVC) within the Department of Art & Design in the Peck School of the Arts. Currently, the DVC curriculum is an “area of concentration” (subplan) within the Studio Arts BFA in Art & Design. The development of the separate BFA degree responds to the historically and consistently high enrollment within DVC, and the specific curricular needs of the program because it must be responsive to the needs and standards of the design profession. The proposed BFA in Design and Visual Communication is a 123-credit degree with 45 credits of University Core, 30 credits Art & Design Core, and 48 credits Degree Curriculum.

**PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION**

**University Name**

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

**Title of Proposed Academic Program**

Design and Visual Communication

**Degree Designations**

Bachelor of Fine Arts

**Mode of Delivery**

Single Institution Face-to-face

**Department**

Department of Art and Design

**College, School or Functional Equivalent**

Peck School of the Arts

**Proposed Date of Implementation**

January 2022

**Enrollment/Projected Enrollments and Graduates by Year Five**

Enrollment in the Design and Visual Communication program has remained relatively consistent (between 180-210 students overall) for over 10 years, and has historically been the highest-enrollment program in the Department of Art & Design (all degrees).

In Table 1 below, “Total Enrollment” includes all students who have declared Design and Visual Communication as their BFA sub-plan in the current program: incoming students, transfer students, students accepted into the DVC BFA program, and students who have completed the capstone but need to complete more degree requirements to graduate. In Table 2, “Total Enrollment” includes all BFA-DVC intended students (incoming, transfer), as well as students accepted into the program through their completion of all graduation requirements.

Once the DVC program is a stand-alone BFA, it has the potential for stronger recruitment to a dedicated design BFA degree with more professionally-tailored requirements than to the current program as a sub-plan within a larger studio BFA.

Table 1: Five-Year Degree Program Enrollment History

Students/Year	AY15-16	AY16-17	AY17-18	AY18-19	AY19-20
Total Enrollment	197	197	180	187	201
Graduating Students*	31	42	31	24	38

\* students participating in capstone BFA Exhibition in Design

Table 2: Five-Year Projected Enrollment

Students/Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
New Students	45	50	55	60	60
Continuing Students	138	138	143	148	150
Total Enrollment	183	188	198	208	210
Graduating Students	33	35	40	45	50

**Tuition Structure**

For students enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design and Visual Communication, standard tuition and fee rates will apply, per University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee undergraduate fee schedules. For the current academic year, residential tuition and segregated fees total \$4,627.06 per semester for a full-time student enrolled in 12-18 credits per semester. Of this amount, \$4,045.56 is attributable to tuition and \$581.50 is attributed to student segregated fees. Nonresident tuition and segregated fees total \$10,559.50 per semester for a full-time student enrolled in 12-18 credits per semester. Of this amount, \$9,978.00 is attributable to tuition and \$581.50 is attributed to student segregated fees.

Additionally, each student enrolled in an undergraduate course in the Peck School of the Arts will be assessed a 'tuition differential' equal to \$21.80 per credit, with exception of eight 100 level GER courses in the Peck School. For online courses, distance education fees will apply, which is equal to \$30 per student credit hour of online enrollment.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM**

### **Overview of the Program**

The program is a 123-credit Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The breakdown of credits is 78 credits of Art & Design coursework, and 45 credits of University Core and general education. The curriculum includes coursework in typography, design strategy and problem diagnosis, design methodologies, portfolio development, web and multimedia design, composition, and real-world internships in local and regional businesses.

### **Student Learning Outcomes and Program Objectives**

The DVC curriculum has the following program objectives:

- Prepare students for diverse professional opportunities in the field of Design and Visual Communication
- Provide foundational knowledge of design history and contemporary practice
- Address issues of diversity, sustainability and "design for good" within the discipline
- Embed designers within local and regional communities
- Encourage curiosity, inventiveness and exploration
- Foster an environment of support and collaboration
- Emphasize the ability to become proactive life-long learners and innovators
- Model professionalism and foster business partnerships

The DVC curriculum has the following student learning experiences and outcomes:

- Gain expertise in a range of design-focused software (including but not limited to the Adobe Creative Suite, digital fabrication prototyping software, motion graphics software, web and interaction design platforms and technologies)
- Understand the history of typography and its role in contemporary design
- Conduct primary and secondary source research
- Learn design thinking and its applications to design problems
- Engage in problem-identification and problem-solving
- Engage in collaboration and co-creation within design and across other disciplines
- Engage local and regional communities and organizations in project development
- Build story-telling expertise
- Consider the role of sustainable practices within contemporary design
- Explore design entrepreneurship by engaging business strategy development, market assessment and brand development
- Create design prototypes and engage user testing
- Strengthen public speaking and presentation skills

- Build high-quality professional portfolio

### Program Requirements and Curriculum

The following information outlines the requirements within the University Core (45 credits), Art & Design Core (30 credits) and Degree Program (48 Credits) for a total of 123 credits for the BFA in Design and Visual Communication.

Table 2: BFA in Design and Visual Communication Program Curriculum

<b>General Education Courses Required for Graduation</b>	
<b>University CORE</b>	<b>45 credits</b>
Social Science	6 cr
Natural Science	6 cr
Humanities	
Art Hist 101	3 cr
Art Hist 102	3 cr
Academic Electives outside PSOA	12 cr
Art & Design History	
Art 124 Design Survey	3 cr
PSOA Distribution Requirements	
ART 309 Issues in Contemporary Art (CD)	3 cr
PSOA electives outside Art & Design	9 cr
<b>Art and Design Program Core</b>	<b>30 credits</b>
First Year Program	
Art 101 Beginning Drawing	3 cr
Art 106 Art Survey	3 cr
Art 108 2D Concepts	3 cr
Art 109 3D Concepts	3 cr
Art 118 Digital Arts: Culture, Theory, Practice	3 cr
200-level Studio Requirements	
Art 221 Introduction to Design	3 cr
Art 223 Introduction to Typography	3 cr
200-level Studio Electives (choose 3 cr)	3 cr
Art 218 Moving Images & Sound	
Art 253 Introduction to Photography	
Art 277 Design for Digital Fabrication	
200-level Studio Electives (choose 3 cr)	3 cr
Art 201 Drawing II	
Art 212 Intro to Creative Technologies	
Art 218 Moving Images & Sound	
Art 243 Introduction to Painting	

Art 253 Introduction to Photography	
Art 261 Introduction to Sculpture	
Art 271 Intro to Jewelry & Metalsmithing	
Art 277 Design for Digital Fabrication	
Art 278 Introduction to Industrial Craft	
Art 291 Intro to Print & Narrative Forms	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	
Art 509 Art & Design Seminar (OWC-B)	3 cr
<b>DVC Degree Curriculum</b>	<b>48 credits</b>
Required Core Sequence	
Art 321 DVC I	3 cr
Art 323 Typography II	3 cr
Art 421 DVC II	3 cr
Art 422 Design Methodologies (QL-B)	3 cr
Required Interaction Design Course	
Art 324 Web Design	3 cr
Interaction Design Electives (choose 3 cr)	3 cr
Art 325 Web Design II	
Art 424 Topics in Web, Interaction, Screen	
Required Professional Practice (choose 3 cr)	3 cr
Art 524 Professional Practice in Design	
Art 608 Art & Design Internship	
Art 408 Nonprofit Information Technology	
DVC Electives (choose 12 credits not already taken)	12 cr
Art 325 Web Design II	
Art 329 Package Design	
Art 378 Industrial Processes & Fabrication	
Art 405 Product Realization	
Art 408 Nonprofit Information Technology	
Art 424 Topics in Web, Interaction & Screen	
Art 423 Experimental Typography	
Art 426 Motion Graphics	
Art 427 Advanced Design Workshop	
Art 478 Digital Fabrication & Craft	
Art 524 Professional Practice in Design	
Art 526 Research in Universal Design	
Art 578 Research in Digital Fab & Craft	
Art 608 Art & Design Internship	
Art 391 Int. Print & Narrative Forms: Book Arts & Letterpress <b>OR</b> Art 396 Int. Print & Narrative Forms: Screenprinting	

Art 350 Int. Photography & Digital Imaging <b>OR</b> Art 357 Int. Studio Lighting <b>OR</b> Art 458 Photo Materials & Processes <b>OR</b> Art 313 Programming for Artists & Designers <b>OR</b> Art 327 Digital Media Workshop	
Capstone Course	
Art 529 DVC III Capstone & Exhibition	3 cr
Art & Design Electives	12 cr
<i>DVC students should consider taking any courses listed in Degree Curriculum not already taken, or courses in other studio media that augment their research interests, as part of the Art &amp; Design Elective credits.</i>	
<b>Total Degree Credits</b>	<b>123 credits</b>

### 45-credit University Core

The University Core includes the following distribution requirements for UWM students (6 credits Social Science, 6 credits Natural Science, 6 credits Humanities). DVC students are required to take Art History 101 and 102 as their Humanities distribution credits.

The University Core also includes the PSOA Core: 3 credits Art & Design History (Art 124 Design Survey), 3 credits Cultural Diversity (Art 309 Issues in Contemporary Art), 9 credits of electives within PSOA but outside of Art & Design, and 12 credits Academic Electives outside of PSOA.

### 30-credit Art & Design Core

The Art & Design Core includes 15 credits of First Year Program coursework, 12 credits of 200-level Introductory Studio courses, and 3 credits Writing and Critical Thinking (which also fulfills the OWC-B requirement)

### 48-credit Degree Curriculum

The Degree Curriculum includes 12 credits of Required Core Sequence coursework, 6 credits Required Interaction Design coursework, 3 credits Required Professional Practice coursework, 12 credits Required Core Choice Electives, 3 credits Capstone Experience, and 12 credits Art & Design Electives

### Curricular Sequence

Year 1: complete First Year Program requirements

Year 2: complete Introductory Studio requirements (200-level) and pass Portfolio Review

Year 3: begin DVC coursework at 300+ level

Year 4: complete all coursework, participate in Capstone/BFA Exhibition in Design

### Required Portfolio Review

After completing Art 124 Design Survey, Art 221 Introduction to Design and Art 223 Introduction to Typography, DVC-intended students must apply to the annual Portfolio Review. The submission includes all project work from Art 221 and Art 223, drawings from Art 101 (First Year

Program), optional studio projects from other studio courses, and a statement of intent. This Portfolio Review has been in place for nearly 15 years and has been a very successful method of assessing student achievement and preparedness, and curricular relevance.

### **Assessment of Outcomes and Objectives**

Assessment of the DVC program involves the following:

- Evaluation of Intro Design/Intro Type work during the Portfolio Review (Spring, sophomore year)
- Evaluation of student work during the Department of Art & Design Scholarship competitions (held every spring for Sophomores and Juniors)
- Evaluation of entrepreneurial projects exhibited at the Design Entrepreneur Showcase (Fall, senior year)
- Evaluation of capstone work exhibited at the BFA Exhibition in Design (Spring, senior year)
- Student Entrepreneurial Project Pitch Competition with area design professionals (Fall, senior year)
- Student Mock Interviews with area design professionals (ongoing)
- AIGA (national design professional organization) Portfolio Reviews (Milwaukee chapter)
- Ongoing dialog with regional design professionals about needs of Design profession

### **Projected Time to Degree**

The BFA in Design and Visual Communication can be completed in 4 years as a full-time student. At 123 credits total, students would need to take 15 credits per semester for 7 semesters, and 18 credits for 1 semester, to complete the degree requirements in 8 semesters (4 years). The DVC Required Core Sequence takes 4 semesters to complete, beginning the Fall after students pass the Spring Portfolio Review.

### **Program Review**

The UW-Milwaukee Academic Program & Curriculum Committee reviews newly approved majors after 5 years. The committee then reviews programs on a ten-year cycle.

### **Accreditation**

All programs within the Department of Art and Design are currently accredited by NASAD and undergo required reviews every 10 years. NASAD itself suggested that DVC should be its own BFA degree based upon student enrollment and program description/structure.

### **Resources**

No additional resources are needed for the delivery of this program. The program has existed for at least 30 years as a sub-plan of the BFA in Studio Art.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

### **Rationale and Relation to Mission**

Design and Visual Communication has always been the largest of the Studio Art BFA subplans. For the past decade, enrollment in the subplan has ranged between 180 and 220 students pretty

consistently. Because of the program's size and the demands of the professional field of design, the course requirements for students choosing the Design and Visual Communication program have diverged significantly from the rest of the studio disciplines within the current BFA. It is to the significant benefit of both the Studio and the Design programs that Design and Visual Communication become its own BFA degree within the department, rather than remain a subplan.

During the process of NASAD accreditation and in subsequent conversations with representatives of NASAD, the Department of Art & Design has been encouraged to create a separate BFA degree for DVC. Their reasons hinge on the large student enrollment, the specificity of the curriculum to the field of design, and the necessity for the program to be responsive to the needs of the profession.

As a stand-alone BFA within the Department of Art & Design, the DVC program will continue – as it has done for decades - to serve students from across Wisconsin and the region who wish to enter the competitive field of design. The program serves as a design laboratory, focusing on design research, design process and design entrepreneurship. The curriculum includes coursework in typography, design strategy and problem diagnosis, design methodologies, portfolio development, web and multimedia design, composition, and real-world internships in local design firms. Students in the program are engaged in community collaborations and professional partnerships to a significant degree. This is consistent with the missions of the department, school and university.

Our program is embedded in the urban community of Milwaukee and draws from the larger Chicago region in terms of the professional field. The Wisconsin chapter of AIGA, the national professional design organization, is headquartered in Milwaukee, and UW-Milwaukee has its own student chapter (AIGA-UWM). Additionally, United Adworkers, Wisconsin's professional organization dedicated to marketing and advertising, is in Milwaukee. DVC students at UW-Milwaukee are actively engaged with the professional programming and community that these two organizations put forward in SE Wisconsin.

### **Institutional Program Array**

The proposed separate BFA in Design and Visual Communication does not significantly change the program array within the Department of Art & Design, Peck School of the Arts or the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. It is simply a matter of detaching the current DVC subplan from a broad studio BFA degree, and re-structuring the program within its own specific BFA. Design has been a subplan within the BFA since at least 1985 (35 years).

### **Other Programs in the University of Wisconsin System**

A search of the "Major Mania" system for "design" resulted in the following relevant results:

- Eau Claire (BFA in Art with Graphic Design emphasis)
- Green Bay (BA and Minor in Design Arts with Graphic Design option)
- La Crosse (Minor in Digital Media Studies & Design)
- Madison (BFA and BS in Art with Graphic Design option)



- Oshkosh (BFA in Art with Graphic Design emphasis)
- Parkside (BA and Minor in Graphic Design)
- Platteville (BFA in Art with Graphic Design emphasis, BA in Graphic Design)
- Stevens Point (BFA in Graphic Design)
- Stout (BFA in Graphic Design & Interactive Media)
- Whitewater (BA in Graphic Design)

This is unsurprising, as the design field is very much in demand, and the UW-Milwaukee design-focused subplan (formerly Graphic Design, currently Design and Visual Communication) of the Studio Art BFA has been part of this mix for over 30 years.

The proposed BFA in Design and Visual Communication at UW-Milwaukee would not change the program array of the UW System in any significant way. While the UW System has an assortment of different degrees in design-related fields, and two stand-alone BFA degrees in Graphic Design (Stout and Stevens Point), these programs serve distinctly different regions and student populations, and their programs focus on different aspects of a very broad professional and creative field of endeavor. Design and Visual Communication at UW-Milwaukee is embedded in the largest urban area of the state, and our program is in every way a reflection of the diversity of this urban environment within the State of Wisconsin.