Design (Visual Communication Design), MSD

Program Description

Degree Awarded: MSD Design (Visual Communication Design)

The MSD with a concentration in visual communication design is a degree program meant for individuals interested in advanced studies in visual language, history, theory, criticism and methodology, design processes and technology. The student develops an understanding of contemporary graphic design issues through specialized research and design skills curriculum. It also prepares the graduate student for a career in graphic design education.

At a Glance

- College/School: Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts
- Location: Tempe campus

Degree Requirements

36 credit hours and a thesis, or
36 credit hours including the required applied project course (DSC 593)

Students may choose to complete their graduate work by way of a thesis or an applied project. A master's degree thesis is a scholarly endeavor that demonstrates the ability of the author to do supervised research and intellectual writing. The applied project is somewhat different. It includes a project and a written document and is a scholarly endeavor that demonstrates the ability of the designer to do supervised research and present substantial evidence of the ability to apply research creatively to a design situation.
Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in graphic design, industrial design, interior design or a related design discipline from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. portfolio
4. letter of intent
5. resume
6. contact information for three references
7. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English (regardless of current residency) must provide proof of English proficiency. International students are required to submit proof of English Proficiency through either the TOEFL or the IELTS if their native language is not English. The minimum score for admission to the program is 80 (internet-based) or 550 (paper-based) on the TOEFL or an overall band score of 6.5 on the IELTS. Other information for international applicants can be found at https://admission.asu.edu/international/graduate/english-proficiency.

When applying for admission, applicants must declare a concentration. Students should see the department website for an approved list of graduate programs.

The portfolio, letter of intent, resume and contact information of three references must be submitted via Slideroom (https://asuedesign.slideroom.com). The Design School requires that these be submitted in addition to the graduate application requirements.

Admission to the program is selective. Admission cannot be deferred; students must enroll in the semester for which they are admitted, otherwise they will need to go through the entire application process again for the year in which they are applying.

GRE scores are not required.
A personal interview is not required; however, a candidate wishing to visit the school is welcome and should make arrangements by contacting the department.

Contact Information

The Design School | CDN 162
designgrad@asu.edu | 480-965-3536