

VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN - M.F.A.

College of Communication and Information
School of Visual Communication Design
www.kent.edu/vcd

About This Program

Ready to take on leadership roles in the design industry? The M.F.A. degree in Visual Communication Design focuses on field research methods, design thinking and social innovation, augmented by a practical university teaching experience. As a graduate, you'll be able to pursue careers in design education, but you'll also stand out in the industry for your ability to solve problems from a research-based design perspective. Read more...

Contact Information

- School Director: **Daniel Alenquer** | vcd@kent.edu | 330-672-7856
- Connect with an Admissions Counselor: U.S. Student | International Student

Program Delivery

- **Delivery:**
 - In person
- **Location:**
 - Kent Campus

Examples of Possible Careers and Salaries*

Art directors

- -1.8% decline
- 99,100 number of jobs
- \$97,270 potential earnings

Graphic designers

- -3.8% decline
- 281,500 number of jobs
- \$53,380 potential earnings

Fine artists, including painters, sculptors, and illustrators

- 1.0% slower than the average
- 28,300 number of jobs
- \$52,340 potential earnings

Additional Careers

- Brand Manager
- Creative Director
- Design Director
- Design Researcher
- Design Strategist
- Digital Designer

- Multimedia Designer
- Professor of Design
- Product Designer
- Senior Designer
- User Experience Designer
- Visual Designer

Accreditation

National Association of Schools of Art and Design

* Source of occupation titles and labor data comes from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics'

Occupational Outlook Handbook. Data comprises projected percent change in employment over the next 10 years; nation-wide employment numbers; and the yearly median wage at which half of the workers in the occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less.

For more information about graduate admissions, visit the graduate admission website. For more information on international admissions, visit the international admission website.

Admission Requirements

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Undergraduate degree in design or closely related program
- Minimum 2.750 undergraduate major GPA on a 4.000 point scale
- Official transcript(s)
- Résumé
- Goal statement
- Autobiographical statement (250 words)
- Portfolio¹
- Three letters of recommendation
- English language proficiency - all international students must provide proof of English language proficiency (unless they meet specific exceptions) by earning one of the following:
 - Minimum 587 TOEFL PBT score (paper-based version)
 - Minimum 94 TOEFL IBT score (Internet-based version)
 - Minimum 82 MELAB score
 - Minimum 7.0 IELTS score
 - Minimum 65 PTE score
 - Minimum 120 Duolingo English Test score

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¹ For applicants without a visual communication design undergraduate degree, a portfolio may be defined as any creative, problem-solving endeavor. It may include drawing, painting, illustration, photography, web related solutions, interactions, writing or other types of solutions not listed here.

Application Deadlines

- **Fall Semester**
 - Application deadline: March 1
- **Spring Semester**
 - Application deadline: October 1

Applications submitted after these deadlines will be considered on a space-available basis.

Program Requirements

Major Requirements

| Code | Title | Credit Hours |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Major Requirements | | |
| VCD 60009 | CANDIDACY REVIEW/GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION ¹ | 1 |
| VCD 60020 | GRADUATE STUDIO IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN | 3 |
| VCD 60091 | GRADUATE SEMINAR IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN | 3 |
| VCD 60094 | COLLEGE TEACHING IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN | 3 |
| VCD 69199 | M.F.A. THESIS I ² | 6 |
| Personal Focus | | 44 |
| Minimum Total Credit Hours: | | 60 |

¹ Successful completion of VCD 60009 is a requirement in every School of Visual Communication Design graduate program for both M.A. and M.F.A. students after the first semester or 12 credit hours of course completion. Successful completion of the examination designates the student as a candidate for the degree.

² The thesis is a significant project or body of work done independently of other coursework. Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to conduct research or produce an original project in a discriminating and disciplined manner. The thesis topic should be one that will further the student's knowledge and ability in the specialty by demonstrating skill as a researcher or professional designer/illustrator. The outcome should be an effort that serves as a foundation for the pursuit of independent work when the graduate program is completed. At this stage, students are expected to work in close consultation with their thesis advisor.

Graduation Requirements

- The Master of Fine Arts program requires the successful completion of 60 credit hours of graduate credit and requires a thesis.
- The final examination is at the completion of the studio or research thesis. The final examination is the presentation and defense of the thesis and is also an examination of the graduate student's general comprehension of visual communication design. Graduate students are expected to follow the university schedule of deadlines for taking the final examination and presenting thesis materials.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of this program will be able to:

1. Develop leadership abilities necessary for success in the design industry or higher education
2. Develop skills for collaborative engagement with strategic partners, team members and peers
3. Develop deeper awareness of issues related to the cognitive, social, theoretical, cultural, technological, educational and economic contexts of design

4. Develop understanding of design's use as a strategic tool and medium for business and social applications, through the integration of practice and research.
5. Develop enhanced comprehension of design thinking, design process and metacognition
6. Develop capabilities in the planning, application, and synthesis of field research methods and their use in design process

Full Description

The Master of Fine Arts degree in Visual Communication Design serves students with a strong undergraduate and/or professional experience in design who wish to advance into leadership roles. Classes have been developed to create an educational experience in design highlighted by field research methods, design thinking, and social innovation, augmented by practical university teaching experience. The M.F.A. allows graduates to pursue careers in design education, but they also stand out in the industry for their ability to solve problems from a research-based design perspective. The program offers individualized plans of study, experiential learning, design history and research. Interdisciplinary study is encouraged.