**GRAPHIC DESIGN, B.DES.**

**Begin Campus:** University Park  
**End Campus:** University Park

**Program Description**

This degree is intended to prepare students for careers in graphic design. The program includes the technical skills and the creative and intellectual capacity essential to the practices of graphic design and is intended to prepare students for employment in design studios, advertising agencies, packaging, publications and corporate design, film and television graphics, and Web and interactive design.

**What is Graphic Design?**

The Bachelor of Design in Graphic Design program at Penn State, is a four-year professional program accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). Graphic design is a professional field of visual communication, creative thinking, and complex problem-solving. Practitioners connect people with ideas, products, environments, and experiences. Graphic design explores systems, technologies, methods, and strategies for integrating typography, imagery, and form into a visual language that informs, instructs, and persuades. It is an engaging and evolving knowledge for advancing the human experience.

**You Might Like This Program If...**

- You enjoy learning and playing with new ideas and emerging technologies.
- You are creative, focused, and engaged.
- You love typography and imagery.
- You want to make things that improve the world and our experience of it.

**Entrance to Major**

Acceptance into the Graphic Design major is determined by a portfolio review by faculty after the completion of GD 1S, GD 100, GD 101, GD 102, and AA 121 or GD 115N with grades of C or better in all of these courses. Typically, this review will take place in the second semester. Applicants who are not accepted into the major may re-apply the following year but must realize that this course of action could delay their graduation by at least one year.

**Entrance Procedures**

**Incoming First Year Students**

Incoming first year students must apply to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admissions to Penn State must be complete and submitted before submitting an Evidence of Creative Work (ECW) portfolio. Detailed information about ECW submission can be found at: https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

**Transfer Students**

Transfer students must apply to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admissions to Penn State must be complete and submitted before submitting an Evidence of Creative Work (ECW) portfolio. Detailed information about ECW submission can be found at: https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

**Degree Requirements**

For the Bachelor of Design degree in Graphic Design, a minimum of 121 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0-6 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 0-6 credits of GA courses.

**Requirements for the Major**

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

**Code** | **Title**                                      | **Credits** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 1S</td>
<td>First-Year Seminar in Graphic Design</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 100</td>
<td>Introduction to Graphic Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 101</td>
<td>Design Foundation I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 102</td>
<td>Design Foundation 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 200</td>
<td>Graphic Design Studio I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 201</td>
<td>Typography 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 202W</td>
<td>The History of Graphic Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 203</td>
<td>Typography 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 300</td>
<td>Design Photography</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 301</td>
<td>Experience Design Process + Methods</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 302</td>
<td>Applied Communication</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 303</td>
<td>Applied Experience Design</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 400</td>
<td>Time and Sequence</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 402</td>
<td>Senior Problems</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 495</td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 250</td>
<td>Introduction to Web Design and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 256</td>
<td>Programming for the Web</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO 202</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Professional Photography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Courses**

*Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better*

| AA 121 | Design Thinking and Creativity                | 3           |
| or GD 115N | Visualizing Information                  | 3           |

Select 6 credits from History of the Arts coursework, which may be counted toward General Education Arts requirement

Select two of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

Cultures Requirement
Their academic adviser for these requirements.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult
provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year
Engagement Plan.

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies
at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3
credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year
Engagement Plan.

International Cultures: 3 credits

United States Cultures: 3 credits

International Cultures: 3 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies
at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3
credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year
Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year
Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar
provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult
their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

• United States Cultures: 3 credits
• International Cultures: 3 credits

General Education
Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum
provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills
necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in
interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing
intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense
of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate
students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements
of a program. For additional information, see the General Education
Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-
education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of
the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is
designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may
also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)
• Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
• Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Knowledge Domains
• Arts (GA): 6 credits
• Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
• Humanities (GH): 6 credits
• Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 6 credits
• Natural Sciences (GN): 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain
requirement)
• Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies
at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3
credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year
Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year
Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar
provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult
their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

• United States Cultures: 3 credits
• International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as
part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate
degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits.
Students should consult with their college or department adviser for
information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and
earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within
their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition
The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require
up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or
in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward
degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or
within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (http://senate.psu.edu/
policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-
requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested
Academic Plan for your intended program.

Academic Advising
The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help
advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their
intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of
both in-and-out of class educational opportunities in order that they
become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising
relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged
in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the
habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The
advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary
academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of
study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/
policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

University Park
Robin Bierly
Stuckeman School Undergraduate Academic Adviser
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Sara Watson
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seb246@psu.edu

Suggested Academic Plan
The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that
are in effect during the 2022-23 academic year. To access previous
years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://
bullets.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

**Graphic Design, B.Des. at University Park Campus**

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 15, 15A, or 30H‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>GD 102*§</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 1S*§</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Additional Course for Major</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see list below)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(see list below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 100*†‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 101*‡†</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 115N or AA 121*‡‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

16  15

### Second Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GD 200*</td>
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<td>GD 202W*</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GD 201*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>GD 203*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 250*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>IST 256*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Course for Major (see list below)††</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PHOTO 202*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15  15

### Third Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 100A, 100B, or 100C‡</td>
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<td>ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>202D‡</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 300*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GD 302*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 301*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GD 303*</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>Additional Course for Major (see list below)††</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

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### Fourth Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GD 400*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GD 402*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD 495*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Additional Course for Major (see list below)††</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(GHW)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

14.5  14.5

Total Credits 121

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
†† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

### University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GHW, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS, and Integrative Studies). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate an Inter-Domain course and Z is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and replace both ENGL 30H and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits.

### Career Paths

Penn State Graphic Design develops a pathway for placement in the nation's top creative firms and companies. The undergraduate B.Design program prepares students for broad opportunities in today's global marketplace. In addition to providing students with a robust foundation in technical skills, key concepts, methods, and knowledge, the program fosters and prepares students' overall creative and intellectual capacity. This degree prepares students for employment in design studios, advertising agencies, publishing, corporate design, and more — creating motion graphics, data visualization, packaging, print products, websites, apps, user experience design, and interactive media. Students may also choose to undertake specialized graduate studies.

### Careers

All graphic design students at Penn State complete at least one summer internship with leading creative agencies worldwide or study abroad. This provides real-world experience and global perspectives to help students build a professional network even before they graduate. Graphic design students enjoy an excellent job placement rate in top agencies and companies. In addition to gaining active faculty and alumni connections nationwide, Penn State graphic design students benefit from an in-house career adviser who can connect them with professional opportunities. Graphic designers are in high demand across industries, and graduates
of the Penn State program are active in such diverse fields as branding
design, motion design, web design, publishing, and environmental design.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS
FOR GRADUATES OF THE GRAPHIC DESIGN PROGRAM (https://
stuckeman.psu.edu/jobs/)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies
While graduates of Graphic Design programs may opt to pursue Master
of Fine Arts (MFA) programs in specialized topics or focus areas,
professional practice opportunities are readily available to Bachelor of
Design graduates.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES
(https://sova.psu.edu/?q=concentration-area/graphic-design)

Professional Resources
• American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) (http://www.aiga.org)
• Graphis New Talent Annual (http://www.graphis.com)
• College Art Association (CAA) (http://www.collegeart.org/)

Accreditation
The Penn State Graphic Design program is accredited through the
National Association of Schools of Art and Design. NASAD is an
association of approximately 323 schools of art and design, primarily at
the collegiate level, but also including postsecondary non-degree-granting
schools for the visual arts disciplines. It is the national accrediting
agency for art and design and art and design-related disciplines.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACCREDITATION OF THE GRAPHIC DESIGN
PROGRAM (http://stuckeman.psu.edu/gd/accreditation/)

Contact
University Park
DEPARTMENT OF GRAPHIC DESIGN
30 Borland Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-0345
cml34@psu.edu

https://arts.psu.edu/academics/department-of-graphic-design/