

**MFA UMD**  
**Master of Fine Arts with an Emphasis in Graphic Design**  
**University of Minnesota Duluth**

**Student Handbook**

The information in this handbook and other University catalogs, publications, or announcements is subject to change without notice. University offices can provide current information about possible changes.

*revised November 2006*

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation. In adhering to this policy, the University abides by the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Statute Ch. 363, by the Federal Civil Rights Act, 420 S.C. 2000E; by the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; by Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; by Executive Order 11246, as amended; 38 US 2012, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1972, as amended; and by other applicable statutes and regulations relating to equality of opportunity.

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**1.0 Graphic Design at UMD**

Graphic Design is part of the Department of Art and Design within the School of Fine Arts (SFA). Other departments in SFA include the Department of Music, and the Department of Theatre and Dance. The University of Minnesota Duluth is a campus of the University of Minnesota system. The University provides a comprehensive set of high quality programs for 10,000 students. Duluth is located on the shores of Lake Superior in one of the most scenic areas of the USA. The metropolitan area, including the Duluth region and Superior, Wisconsin, has a population of approximately 110,000. The area offers an exceptional quality of life with excellent housing, a variety of cultural events, and abundant educational, recreational, and medical facilities.

*Undergraduate Courses*

The Department of Art and Design offers a range of undergraduate courses in graphic design, typography, interactive design, motion graphics (including sound, video and visual narrative) information design, experience design, branding and graphic design history. Undergraduate art courses are offered in a number of areas including: painting, drawing, ceramics, jewelry, 2 and 3

dimensional digital design, printmaking, sculpture, photography, art history and art education. The undergraduate Graphic Design program confers approximately 50 bachelor's degrees each year. The Department has approximately 400 undergraduate majors. Faculty in the Department total 30, with over twenty full time positions.

### **1.1 The Graduate Program**

The graduate program in Art and Design has an emphasis in Graphic Design and confers an MFA degree. The program began graduating students in 2001. To date, the program has 100% placement of its graduates in teaching positions in higher education.

The Master of Fine Arts with an Emphasis in Graphic Design may be earned full or part-time. All requirements for the master's degree must be completed and the degree awarded within seven years. Full time students usually finish the program in five semesters. The department's financial aid does not extend beyond six semesters. Within a liberal arts setting, our program is tailored to each individual's educational, artistic and professional strengths. Expanding the boundaries of conventional design education, it includes the following areas of study: new media; motion graphics; book arts; design in the public realm; experience design; graphic design history, theory, criticism; and preparation for college teaching. Academic study and studio practice are equally emphasized. The program draws on faculty with international and national experience as designers and artists who are recognized for the quality of their teaching, research and professional design activities.

### **1.2 Facilities**

Graduate students are provided Macintosh computers for their use, and have access to a scanner and printer in the Graduate Studio. Additionally, graduate students have access to the Visualization and Digital Imaging Laboratory (Viz Lab), a continuously updated graduate facility containing the following equipment: the latest Macs and PCs, a vast array of software (including Maya, InDesign, ProTools), podcasting, plasma screens, video editing workstations, video game modding, large format Epson printers and scanners, sound editing and recording equipment, mics, sound-proof recording studio, a virtual reality wall, Canon and Nikon digital still, SLR, digital video and special purpose cameras. The Viz Lab is an interdisciplinary research facility of the School of Fine Arts and the College of Science and Engineering. See the website for more information: <http://www.d.umn.edu/vdil/>

Information Technology Systems and Services ITSS provides the campus community with a high-quality, stable, and reliable technology environment in support of the campus mission. ITSS helps faculty, staff, and students use technology to their best advantage and provides technical leadership and planning for future applications in these rapidly changing technologies. Further information is available at <http://www.d.umn.edu/catalogs/current/umd/gen/itss.html>

### **1.3 Graduate Faculty**

To review faculty roster, areas of teaching and research please view departmental website: <http://www.d.umn.edu/art>

## 2.0 Admission and Application Information

### 2.1 Entrance Requirements

Applicants must have adequate undergraduate education and experience in the area of emphasis, and a B.A., B.S., or B.F.A. in graphic design or art. Individuals with undergraduate degrees in other disciplines who have completed a substantial number of design courses or who have extensive professional graphic design portfolios also may be considered for admission. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is a minimum requirement.

For more information about Graduate School admissions, visit the Graduate School Web Site: <http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/>

### 2.2 Application Procedures

An application form may be obtained from the Graduate School Office at the following address:

**Graduate School  
University of Minnesota Duluth  
431 Darland Administration Building  
1049 University Drive  
Duluth, MN. 55812-2496**

Web Site: <http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/>

Phone: 726-7523 or 726-8037

TTY/TDD: [Minnesota Relay Service \(800\) 627-3529](http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/)

Fax: 218-726-6970

Email: [mleone@d.umn.edu](mailto:mleone@d.umn.edu)

An application may also be requested via email <mleone@d.umn.edu>.

Applicants requesting financial aid must complete both an application for admission (to be mailed to the Graduate School) and a separate application for Departmental Graduate assistantships and fellowships (to be mailed to the Department of Art and Design). For details regarding departmental aid please see sections 2.3 and 2.4 below. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early in the year. This allows the department to consider requests for financial aid in a timely fashion. The Graduate School notifies each applicant when his/her application is complete. Information regarding other types of university wide financial aid such as loans and grants may be found at <http://www.d.umn.edu/fareg/>

***The following items are required of all applicants and should be sent directly to the UMD Graduate School Office at the address given above.***

- A.** Two copies of the completed Application for Admission to the University of Minnesota Graduate School.
- B.** Two official copies of transcripts from each college attended by the applicant (including the University of Minnesota). Unofficial transcripts will not be accepted.
- C.** An application fee of \$55 for US residents or \$75 for international applicants. This fee cannot be waived.
- D.** For those applicants currently enrolled at an academic institution, a list of all courses he/she expects to complete before entering graduate school at the University of Minnesota Duluth

E. A statement of the applicant's educational and/or career objectives (see question 23 on the Application for Admission).

***In addition, the following items are required of all applicants and should be sent under separate cover to:***

**Director of Graduate Studies  
University of Minnesota Duluth  
Department of Art and Design  
317 Humanities Building  
1201 Ordean Court  
Duluth, Minnesota 55812**

A. Portfolio of 20 design works (Mac format CD, or DVD)

B. Please provide a sample of professional or academic writing. Writing samples not originally written in English must be provided with an English translation

C. Three letters of recommendation are required as part of the application. If you are applying for a teaching assistantship, the letters should address any teaching experience you have had and how successful it was, along with directed comments on your ability to understand, write and speak English.

***In addition to the items listed above, some applicants should include additional information in their applications:***

A. Applicants whose native language is not English must submit a record of the scores received on either the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), MELAB (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System). See English Language Proficiency at [http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/adm\\_app.htm](http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/adm_app.htm) for the most current information regarding acceptable tests and minimum scores required.

B. Each foreign applicant must submit an International Financial Certification Statement before a visa will be issued. (A copy of this form should be included in your application packet. If not, it will be sent with your letter of admission.)

### **2.3 Departmental Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available through the department in the form of teaching and graduate assistantships. Available assistantships are limited and are awarded for one year periods. Renewal of an Assistantship for a subsequent year is based on available funding, demand, and student performance.

When applying for financial aid please specify a fax number, telephone number, and an email address where you may be reached during the year (including summer). Should you accept financial support from the department in the form of a Teaching or Research Assistantship, note that additional information is due in our office by these deadlines:

#### *June 15 - Verification of Visa*

A copy of the official verification from the consulate that you have been granted a visa to enter the US, i.e, a copy of the page in your passport with the sticker applied by the US consulate. Fax this copy to us at 218-726-6532.

### **Teaching and research assistantships**

25%, 33.33%, 50% and 66.66% Teaching and Research Assistantships are available to qualified students. Stipends amounts are:

- 25% provides a stipend of approximately \$6,000;
- 33.33% provides a stipend of approximately \$7,000;
- 50% provides a stipend of approximately \$11,500, and
- 66.66% provides a stipend of approximately \$15,500.

25% and 33.33% assistantships/fellowships carry a 50% tuition waiver. 50% and 66.66% assistantships/fellowships carry a full tuition waiver. Students offered at least a 25% assistantship or fellowship are charged tuition at the in-state rate, which is significantly lower than out-of-state tuition.

Satisfactory performance for a teaching assistant is also based on his/her ability to communicate effectively in English, both on an individual basis and in a classroom environment. Should a teaching assistant fail to meet this requirement during his/her first year, the assistantship will not be renewed for a second year.

### **2.4 Departmental Financial Aid Applications**

When applying for an Art and Design Department teaching or research assistantship, applicants must complete a financial aid application, which is separate from the admission application.

Send the financial aid application directly to:

**Director of Graduate Studies  
University of Minnesota Duluth  
Department of Art and Design  
317 Humanities Building  
1201 Ordean Court  
Duluth, Minnesota 55812**

***The deadline for initial consideration for Departmental financial aid is March 15.*** Late applications will be considered until all appointments are filled.

**The following materials are required to process an application for financial aid:**

- A.** An application for financial assistance (normally sent to you with the application for admission information packet sent by the Graduate School office).
- B.** The completed application for admission sent by the applicant to the Graduate School. The financial aid application is not processed until the admission application has been forwarded to the Department from the Graduate School office.
- C.** Additional material the applicant believes may enhance his/her application for financial aid.

For more information: [http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/fin\\_aid.htm](http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/fin_aid.htm)

### **2.5 Application Deadlines**

***Application deadline for Fall admission applications is April 15, 2006***

***Application deadline for spring admission applications is November 1, 2006***

### **Departmental Financial Aid Timeline**

March 15 – March 30 - Initial Round of Financial Aid Decisions

Decisions on admissions and financial aid for the next academic year are made during this period.

April 15 – 30 - Notification of Financial Aid

The Department makes offers of financial aid as early as possible in the spring of the year. Every attempt will be made to make offers by April 30th. If you are awarded financial aid, you will be notified by email no later than April 30th.

April 15 - Council of Graduate Schools Deadline

Note that the University of Minnesota Duluth subscribes to the Resolution of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States, and every offer of financial aid in the form of a Teaching or Research Assistantship is subject to this Resolution as a term of employment (see Section 8). This resolution specifies that acceptance of an offer of financial aid is an agreement that both student and graduate school are expected to honor. To quote “When a student accepts an offer before April 15 and subsequently desires to withdraw, the student may submit a written resignation for the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment was made. Similarly, an offer made by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of a written release from any previously accepted offer.” Please note that any student who accepts a Teaching or Research Assistantship from the department, fails to submit a written resignation prior to April 15, and enters the country on our form I-20 will be strictly held to the conditions of employment to which s/he has agreed. Under no circumstances will such a student be given a written release since at this point it is then too late to fill the position. Re inquiries on the status of admission: Such inquiries may be directed to the graduate school – [mleone@d.umn.edu](mailto:mleone@d.umn.edu) or 218-726-7523.

### **3.0 Costs**

For current information regarding tuition and fees and registration requirements consult the UMD website at [http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/reg\\_req.htm](http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/reg_req.htm)

Housing in Duluth is relatively inexpensive compared to many parts of the country. The Department does not make housing arrangements for incoming students. University residence hall information can be obtained by emailing or by writing UMD Housing Office, 149 Lake Superior Hall, 10 University Drive, Duluth, MN 55812- 2496, phone 218-726-p8178. <http://www.d.umn.edu/housing/>

Many graduate students live off-campus. The Kirby student Center lists off-campus housing available in the Duluth area. <http://www.d.umn.edu/kirby/housing/>

Resources for International students include Karin Robbins [krobbin1@d.umn.edu](mailto:krobbin1@d.umn.edu) in the International Student Adviser office, and Mary Jo Bowman [mbow-man@d.umn.edu](mailto:mbow-man@d.umn.edu) in the Kirby Student Center.

### **4.0 Requirements for the MFA degree**

The successful completion of this program requires the ability to express one's thoughts and work in written, as well as visual form. Based on portfolio review, the student's Adviser will develop plans to enhance each student's cognitive and technical proficiencies. Early classes will consist of custom assignments and directed work tailored toward the student's area of interest. This is also the time for discussion of the final project. Directed readings will supplement group

readings and discussions for enhancement of understanding of area of interest/project. Later classes will combine directed and self generated work and reading. Students will be responsible for compiling and securing faculty approval of a reading list, writing plan, timeline for completion of project goals, and for securing faculty approval of plans for their final project (carried out in Art 8990 MFA Creative Thesis).

Each student is expected to produce a thesis containing a minimum of 15 pages of writing, as well as visual material, written in an accepted style for an MFA in Graphic Design. Students deficient in the writing of their thesis may be asked to remedy this with additional study.

A gallery exhibition of project work produced in the program is typical, however, the project may also take another form such as a book, video, website, or interactive project.

An oral final exam based on the project and the supporting thesis is required.

In addition, each graduate student must progress satisfactorily in his/her own research program. Specific requirements in Plan B programs are found at this site:

<http://www.d.umn.edu/grad/planb.htm>

**Students must also meet the following requirements:**

- A.** Receive a favorable evaluation from his/her Academic Adviser at the end of each semester.
  
- B.** Maintain active student status by following registration guidelines for fall and spring semesters and filing milestone forms according to the timelines in this document. Graduate students are required to register every fall and spring term in order to maintain active status. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation. A maximum of 8 semester credits of incomplete coursework is allowed at any time.
  
- C.** Participate in a Graduate Review every semester that work is produced in. The review will assess progress in the program, and will be attended by the DGS, interested Graduate Faculty, and each student's Adviser and Committee Members. A finding of unsatisfactory progress must be discussed individually with both the student and the DGS before the beginning of the next semester.

**4.1 Residency**

The MFA is offered under Plan B, and requires 60 credits. The timeframe for completion of the coursework and research required for a Master of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in Graphic Design is usually 3 years for full-time students. The graduate school requires completion of the degree in 7 years. Plan B degree students accepting Teaching Assistantships usually spend three years in residence. Support beyond the normal three-year period is not available from the department.

## 4.2 Courses

A minimum of 60 semester credits are required, including:

16 credits |Art 8901, Graduate Seminar

16 credits |Art 8980, Graduate Studio

4 credits |ArH 4491, Directed Study in 19th and 20th Century European Art\*\*

4 credits |ArH 4991, Directed Study in the History of Graphic Design\*\*

3 credits |Art 5999, Special Projects in Design

6 credits |Art 8990, Creative Thesis

11 credits |Electives, most 5000 and greater courses and selected 4000-level courses\*

### 60 credits |Total

\*\*ArH 4491 and 4991 fulfill the Minor, or related field requirement

\*Art 8903 Art Teaching Practicum is required for TAs (up to 4 credits maximum) and encouraged as an elective for other students.

### Course Descriptions

<http://onestop2.umn.edu/courses/dl/courses.jsp?designator=ART&submit=Show+the+courses>

#### **ArH 4491 Directed Study in European Art 1900-1940 (4 credits)**

Independent research in an area of the student's interest; fundamental knowledge of period or subject required.

#### **ArH 4991 Directed Study in the History of Graphic Design (4 credits)**

Graduate students complete a substantial research paper or presentation on a topic in consultation with the instructor.

#### **Art 5999 Special Projects in Design (4 credits)**

The student will be provided with unique learning experience. The student and faculty member will develop a contract to include number of credits, nature of the work to be accomplished, time expectations, and the number of periodic meetings between students and faculty member.

#### **Art 8901 Graduate Seminar (to be taken concurrently with Art 8980 Graduate Studio) (16 credits)**

Critique of student work and discussion of readings. Faculty presentations on design history, criticism, theory, and analysis.

Assesses and refines student design knowledge and writing skills through discussions; directed readings and writing assignments on topics of design history, criticism, theory, and analysis; critiques of work generated in Art 8980 Graduate Studio; establishes the foundation for and definition of thesis project.

#### **Art 8903 Art Teaching Practicum (1 credit, repeatable for 4 credits)**

Theory of and experience in teaching college-level art.

Provides instruction and experience in university-level teaching. The teaching experience may include Teaching Assistantships and guest teaching in undergraduate classes. This class is required for TAs.

#### **Art 8980 Graduate Studio (to be taken concurrently with Art 8901 Graduate Seminar) (16 credits)**

Production of graphic designs based on problems and topics that are discussed in Art 8901 (Graduate Seminar), which students enroll concurrently.

Independent graphic design studio work based upon directed problems and topics for critique in Art 8901 Graduate Seminar.

**Art 8990 MFA Creative Thesis (6 credits)**

In consultation with advisor, completion of major project as culmination of M.F.A. studies. Students, in consultation with their Adviser, complete a major project and supporting paper as the culmination of study. The project will be determined through faculty and student consultation. Sample topics include: installation, poster series, original typeface, web- site, book, interactive media, animation, video. The supporting paper will typically discuss the development and execution of the project, comparing its position to relevant works in the field.

**5000+ |Electives (11 credits)**

Most 5000 and greater courses and some 4000-level courses at UMD will be available as electives. Graduate students may take additional courses either from within the department or outside it. The DGS or Adviser must first approve courses used to fulfill the minor or related field requirement. When choosing electives, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements and get permission from the Department and/or faculty offering these courses.

For Transfer policies and other information on courses see:

<http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/download/UMD/umdgrad07.pdf>

**5.0 Contact Information**

Graduate School  
University of Minnesota Duluth  
431 Darland Administration Building  
10 University Drive  
Duluth, MN. 55812-2496  
Telephone 218-726-8839  
<http://www.d.umn.edu/grad>

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