

# GRAPHIC DESIGN

## What can I do with this major?

### AREAS

### EMPLOYERS

### STRATEGIES

#### PRINT DESIGN

Type Design  
Magazine Design  
Newspaper Design  
Book Publishing  
Publication Design  
Brochure/Newsletter Design  
Cover Design:  
    Book  
    CD  
    Video  
Label Design  
Publicity Pieces  
Advertising Layout  
Photo Editing/Photoshop Art  
Illustration  
Identity Design  
    Logo Design  
Branding

Publishers including:  
    Magazine  
    Periodical  
    Book  
    Directory  
    Newspaper  
Design firms Advertising agencies  
Publishing houses Business form companies  
Publicity firms In-house creative departments  
Large retail stores Nonprofit organizations  
Government agencies Universities  
Self-employed (freelance)

Graphic designers have a hand in creating countless items, large and small, from posters to identity systems and much more. Research all the niche areas and then gain the tools and technological skills to succeed in that area. Assemble an impressive portfolio of work samples. Complete a related internship to gain relevant experience and to contribute to your portfolio. Work on campus publications in design or layout or find a part-time position with a local publication. Develop excellent communication skills and learn to work well on a team of professionals. Volunteer to create brochures, newsletters or other publications for campus organizations. Develop problem-solving skills, attention to detail and the ability to meet deadlines. Join professional associations as a student member. Become knowledgeable in production and printing processes. Develop broad software application skills in MAC and PC based programs but not at the cost of developing a solid background in design. Participate in local or campus design contests.

#### THREE DIMENSIONAL DESIGN

Signage  
Signage Systems  
Packaging  
Exhibition Design  
Environmental Design  
Promotional Display Design

Design firms  
Product design divisions of large corporations  
In-house creative departments  
Advertising agencies  
Museums and attractions  
Government agencies  
Self-employed (freelance)

Find an internship in a design studio that specializes in 3D design especially for signage, exhibition, promotional display and environmental design which are very specialized. Gain skills in model building and three-dimensional design. Develop a willingness to experiment. Join a related professional association such as the Package Designers Council. Develop excellent computer skills and strong written and oral communication skills. Participate in design contests.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### ELECTRONIC MEDIA DESIGN / 4 D DESIGN

Digital  
Multimedia  
Film Title  
Television Graphics  
Video Games  
Computer Graphics  
Motion Graphics  
Animation  
Website Design  
Interactive Media

Film studios  
Motion picture production firms  
Television stations  
Computer systems design firms  
Video game designers  
Software firms  
Video production houses  
Internet media companies  
Online publishers  
Online retailers

This is a highly specialized area of design that is not widely taught in all design programs. Research programs carefully to find ones that emphasize this area. Consider attending specialized programs in order to learn about television and motion graphics, animation and video game design. Develop excellent computer skills in a variety of platforms and design software. Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs and internships. Volunteer to design the website for a student or local community organization. Work for the campus television station. To work in television and film, consider relocating to areas of the country where the entertainment industry is more prevalent. Stay current with media and cultural trends. Participate in design contests.

### ADVERTISING

Creative Services  
Art Direction  
Production  
Copywriting  
Corporate Identity Design  
Branding  
Logo Design

Advertising agencies  
In-house creative departments  
Television  
Radio  
Newspapers  
Magazines

Supplement curriculum with course work in advertising or business. Complete an internship in an advertising agency. Work on the campus newspaper in the advertising division. Learn to work well in team environments and to communicate your ideas effectively. Develop the ability to meet deadlines and work under pressure. Be prepared to move to larger cities for the most job opportunities. Learn to work with a variety of media. Create a strong portfolio of a work samples.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Carefully research design programs to find one that fits your career goals. Programs vary in terms of the areas taught so not all programs will prepare students for all areas of design.
- Approximately 3 in 10 graphic designers are self-employed. Freelance designers must develop strong abilities in networking, sales and persuasion.
- Graphic designers work in countless industries on a wide array of projects. Research the field thoroughly to learn about career options and the experiences and skills necessary to work in those areas. Some graphic designers choose to specialize their work while others complete a variety of projects.
- Be prepared to start entry-level and work your way up the career ladder. Take a first job based on the industry and type of design you desire to work with because work from your first job will comprise your professional portfolio.
- Some graphic design areas cross in multiple media such as educational design, identity design, information design and systems design.
- Graphic designers must be able to tolerate criticism and direction in their work, since much of their work involves creating a product for a customer.
- Graphic designers are typically artistically skilled, imaginative, and effective problem-solvers.
- Develop a solid background in communications theory.
- Learn to listen effectively to client needs and communicate ideas effectively.
- Subscribe to and read graphic design materials such as Print, Eye, Communication Arts, Step into Graphics, Griphis, Computer Graphics and Applications, and others relevant to your interests.
- Student design magazines such as, CMYK and Creative Convocation, solicit student work and have regular competitions. Try to get your work published.
- Join major design organizations and societies, e.g. The American Institute of Graphic Arts, The Society of Publication Designers, University and College Design Association, New York Directors Club, Society of Illustrators, or the Graphic Arts Technical Foundation.
- Become familiar with as many computer graphics and design software packages such as Quark, Photoshop, and Illustrator. Plan to stay up-to-date on new developments in the industry.
- Successful graphic designers are well-read and in-touch with changing consumer preferences and can react to new trends. Learn about your product and who will use it. A liberal arts education helps designers learn a little about a lot of things. Additionally, graphic designers should develop good research skills, work well on a team, and learn a foreign language if working in international design.
- Graphic design is moving towards a more user/viewer way of thinking that allows the user/viewer to contribute to the design.
- Many design schools are shifting towards a more activist attitude teaching ethical behavior, green-uses of design, and using the power of design to rally people behind causes that affect us all.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

- [American Institute of Graphic Arts](#)
- [The Society of Illustrators](#)
- [Industrial Designers Society of America](#)

## **OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK INFORMATION**

- [Graphic Designers](#)
- [Commercial and Industrial Designers](#)
- [Desktop Publishers](#)
- [Prepress Technicians](#)

## **MISCELLANEOUS CAREER INFORMATION**

- [\\*What is Graphic Design by AIGA](#)
- [What in the World is Graphic Design](#)
- [Graphic Designer Career Information](#)
- [Art and Design Jobs with the Federal Government](#)
- [Graphic Arts and Printing Career Links](#)
- [All Graphic Design](#)
- [The ArtSchools.com Guide](#)
- [Design: Talkboard](#)
- [The Art Directors Club](#)
- [Eye Magazine](#)
- [Design Observer](#)

## **JOB POSTINGS**

- [Graphic Design Jobs](#)
- [Coroflot](#)

\* = Recommended Sites