The Design major at the Art Academy integrates contemporary design education, fine art studio practices, and liberal arts experiences. Design is regarded as a process of inquiry that leads to creative solutions for a variety of visual communication challenges. We provide each student the intellectual and technical preparation needed to achieve success as professionals in the field. Our unique cross-disciplinary approach emphasizes the development of strong research skills, a broad knowledge of image-making tools, design thinking as a tool for problem-solving, proficient verbal and writing skills, and individual voice and vision. These, in combination, prepare students to have livelihoods as visual artists and designers who literally design their own paths.

Students majoring in Design learn to manage ideas, artistic processes, audience expectations, composition, typography, and imagery to create sophisticated and transformative design solutions. Through professional and personal experiences, students encounter a range of challenges in areas such as brand identity, publication, environmental, product, promotional, interactive, and Web design. Many AAC graduates work at local, regional, national, and international design firms or in related fields such as architecture, fine arts, exhibit and display, marketing, film, and the entertainment industry.

**DESIGN CURRICULUM**

**Educational Goals | Design Major**

**CREATIVITY**
Design majors engage in a diverse range of processes that produce creative and relevant results. Creative design solutions are the result of engagement with artistic process, with collaborators, and with the nature of the problem itself.

**CURIOSITY**
Through their commitment to inquiry, research, and experimentation Design majors explore, test, recycle, and execute their visual ideas. Ultimately, they discover the reasons/rationale that substantiate and support their artistic assertions. The result is a successful outcome for their clients.

**INDIVIDUALITY**
Design majors seek unique solutions for communication and experience based design challenges. Empowered with strategies and methods used in the industry to solve design problems, Design majors develop a strong work ethic that supports their vision and voice. They develop self-reliance and personal confidence through thoughtful practice.

**EDUCATION**
Design majors learn the value of collaboration in the pursuit of original ideas. Each new challenge offers an opportunity to learn new ways understanding and reinventing how they work. Students learn ways to adapt to the ever-changing world of technology, language and economies that drive the creative industry.

**HISTORY**
Design majors learn to develop relevant contexts for their work and professional interests. They also develop connections within their profession and with the larger community.

**COMMUNITY**
Community is about making professional and personal connections that both support your interests and improve the quality of life for all in it. Design majors engage in partnerships that provide the opportunity to make a difference locally, regionally, and beyond.

Artwork: Dylan Robinson
Educational Objectives | Design Major

Introductory to Intermediate

» Develop skills used in the design process that include concept development, ideation, analysis, and execution
» Understand how choices of form, media, and imagery affect communication of a specific message
» Develop skills used in the design process from concept and thumbnail sketches through ideation and, finally, through completed projects and presentations
» Explore a variety of possible solutions to a visual communications problem through inspiration research, reference research, and audience profile research
» Apply the principles and elements of design to composition
» Design a logotype or logo
» Set type and operate a letterpress
» Discuss the modern history of design
» Identify design concepts and theories that form a basis of their work
» Explain the results of a design process in an oral presentation and a written statement
» Demonstrate proficiency in use of appropriate software such as Adobe CS6
» Explore a variety of possible typographic concepts through study sketches and online research
» Apply basic typography skills to design compositions
» Identify and apply 20 or more typefaces
» Develop a design rationale
» Write a project development plan
» Create a portfolio

Intermediate to Advanced

» Create self-driven work in a multi-disciplinary and conceptually diverse atmosphere
» Discuss design work in the context of the world of art and design
» Critically assess the development of one’s own work and that of others
» Develop methods for organizing and utilizing design processes
» Apply project development strategies to personal design initiatives
» Apply semiotics (semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic) to design projects
» Investigate the professional opportunities in the visual communication design profession
» Design multi-faceted solutions to complex visual communication challenges
» Compare the benefits of collaboration to produce creative solutions to design challenges
» Explain the purpose of a design rationale
» Write personal goals
» Utilize design thinking as a tool for visual problem solving
» Demonstrate willingness to take risks
» Site and discuss relevant influences/sources from design history
» Discuss and distinguish multiple viewpoints
» Demonstrate a proficiency in evaluating works of design
» Create motion graphics
» Design a branding system
» Compose a professional resume
» Present a strategic rationale to support design decisions
» Interact with a professional client
» Give a public gallery talk
» Learn relevant information concerning taxes, finance, insurance, grant writing, art handling, graduate school, creating a start-up company, navigating the commercial art world, and how to set up a studio.
» Write an exhibition proposal application or grant application (mock or actual)
» Create and publish a portfolio or website
» Demonstrate learning at the Art Academy by completing a thesis paper and producing work that is the basis for a visual thesis exhibition, which provides a capstone experience
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, DESIGN MAJOR
Course descriptions for SA491 Studio Arts Advanced Tutorial 1, SA492 Studio Arts Studio Arts Advanced Tutorial 2, and SA482 Senior Seminar 2 are located in the Studio Course Descriptions portion of the catalog. Students may enroll in any studio course as an elective with permission of the instructor.

**DS201 TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN (3)**
Typographic Design examines type terminology, anatomy, hierarchy, composition, and typographic history in terms of the relationship between visual and verbal language. In the process, the communicative, expressive, and informative qualities of typography are explored in both personal and applied design contexts, while also addressing typography’s social and historical significance. Students will work with Adobe CS6 software and will learn applications of InDesign. (Prerequisite: FO101)

**DS202 COMMUNICATION DESIGN (3)**
Communication Design explores basic communication theory; visual syntax, semantics, and semiotics with an eye towards the development and understanding of a range of design experiences from strategic to poetic. While students explore the relationships between communication, form, and content, they develop a visual vocabulary through both photographic and pictographic imagery. Students gain experience with image research, graphic reduction, and principles of composition in the generation of visual symbols and metaphors. Client-based work will be incorporated into class work. (Prerequisite: FO101)
DS301 Design Methods (3)
In Design Methods, students explore a variety of visual communication design contexts. Students will delve deeper into ideation and visualization to produce and execute refined and sophisticated solutions to complex problems while exploring, investigating, and analyzing greater conceptual considerations in both assigned and self-defined projects. The course includes 2D, 3D, and 4D design components. (Prerequisite: DS202)

DS302 Systems Design (3)
In Systems Design, students explore and create design systems within and across various platforms. Design expressions may include posters, promotional communication, and corporate and brand identity. (Prerequisite: DS202)

DS303 Experience Design (3)
Experience Design serves as a bridge between intermediate design coursework and Advanced Tutorial and Senior Seminar coursework. Students will participate in a range of design experiences with a focus on user experience, empathic practices for understanding audience expectations, divergent thinking and collaborative practice. In addition, students will research and investigate best industry and ethical practices and applications. As students move from external parameters to defining their own personal vision and voice, they begin the process of developing their own unique design philosophy. Course content includes client-based work. (Prerequisite: DS202)