visual communication design | *bfa portfolio review*

general information and policies

A BFA degree from the Department of Visual Arts is a professional degree offering the opportunity to develop depth and specialization in a creative art practice. Conversely, a BA degree from the Department of Visual Arts is a general studies degree offering breadth of understanding through exposure to an area of artistic activity; a minor or area of concentration outside the major is required for a BA to help achieve this. The degrees vary slightly in total number of credits required (BA: 121 credits; BFA: 122 credits); the main difference is in the make-up of the requirements.

The Visual Communication Design BFA degree offers a deep, comprehensive scope of study and a competitive advantage in portfolio development. The degree carries a level of distinction, and as such, has requirements for eligibility and elevated standards for completion.

Art 299 – Portfolio Review is the mechanism through which a student applies for candidacy to a professional BFA studio arts program within the Department of Visual Arts. Portfolio Review is a critique forum where a student's progress and skill level in their studio work and over all performance are evaluated for acceptance into the BFA program.

Eligibility All Visual Communication Design students intending to earn a BFA are required to go through Art 299 Portfolio Review. A student is a candidate for a BA in Visual Communication Design until they pass Portfolio Review. To be eligible for Portfolio Review, a student must have earned 60 credit hours prior to the review, must have a 3.0 GPA average in Visual Arts major courses, and a 2.5 GPA over all. BFA candidates must maintain these GPA minimums through graduation to obtain the BFA degree.

portfolio requirements

The portfolio should contain a mixture of approximately 15 projects representative of the student's strongest work as outlined below:

❍ **Visual Communication Design — 10 projects** from any of the following courses:

ArtG 225: Introduction to Graphic Design

ArtG 226: Introduction to Typography

ArtG 317: Intermediate Typography

ArtG 323: Intermediate Graphic Design

ArtG 330: Interaction Design for Visual Communication

ArtV 325: Techniques in Visual Communication Design (previously titled 'Production for Graphic Designers'); and/or

ArtG 417, 425, 426, 427 (if taken)

❍ ArtD 310: **Intermediate Drawing — 1 project**

❍ ArtO 210 or 211 **Basic Photography — 1 project**

❍ ArtP 230 **Painting I — 1 project**

❍ **Student choice — 1 or 2 projects** from any of the above-listed courses or other studio classes taken within the Department of Visual Arts at NKU

❍ Written responses to the questions appearing page 2 of this document

❍ Sketchbooks / evidence of the design process

❍ Hard copy of the student's unofficial transcript; student to note the *major* GPA on the transcript.

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review process: what to expect

(continued) Registration: Students must be enrolled in Art 299 at the time of the review; therefore, students register for Art 299 along with the classes they'll take in the semester that they go through the review. The review is held each fall and spring on a Friday near mid-term. A schedule sign-up sheet for the Friday review day will get posted near the visual communication design classrooms two weeks before the review date. Once posted, individual students who are currently enrolled in Art 299 can sign up for a time slot. On the day of the review, the portfolio is to be brought in with the student and laid out neatly up to a half hour before the start time of their review. The student meets with the full-time design faculty in a 20-minute, conversational interview over the portfolio beginning at the time that the student signed up for. The student must be prepared to verbally explain their process and ideas on several projects in the portfolio, as well as their responses to the written questions. The student collects and removes their work at the end of this meeting period.

Admission to the BFA program is based on the work of the student and the review meeting. Criteria that are considered include: concepts / creativity, design process, color, typography, design, craftsmanship, verbal communication, professionalism, presentation skills, attitude and commitment to learning as demonstrated in classes, class participation and class preparation. Admission requires a unanimous vote by the full-time Visual Communication Design faculty. An evaluation form is used for each candidate that indicates the results of the review; students receive a copy of this form in the mail. Students who do not pass the review and intend to reapply are eligible to do so a second time. It is recommended that they meet with a VCD faculty member to discuss the results and a plan for reapplication. Students are permitted to seek advice from the VCD faculty while preparing their portfolio in the months/weeks ahead of the review date.

Students must process a form in the Office of the Registrar to officially change the major from BA to BFA in their university file and are encouraged to do so in the same semester after passing.

Students will receive details pertaining to the review through Blackboard — such as dates and email messages — once they are enrolled in Art 299.

written questions*

Candidates must provide written responses to the questions below (approximately 1–2 paragraphs per question). A PDF of the final, type-written document must be submitted by the student via email to each of the full-time VCD professors one week prior to the portfolio review date (brauert@nku.edu, mader@nku.edu, and schellhash@nku.edu).

1: Include an artist's statement / design philosophy.
2: What resources do you use for your ideas?
3: What motivates you to make art or to design?
4: How do you view your craftsmanship?
5: How do you use color, space, form and other dynamics in your work?
6: What do you consider to be your strengths?
7: Are there skills you feel need further development?
8: How does your work relate to historical precedents and contemporary trends?
9: What are your expectations of yourself over the next five years?
10: Why do you want to be an artist / designer?

*Use your personal letterhead so that your name is included. It should look like a designer crafted the written document(s).