

visual communication design | *ba track*

freshman

sophomore

junior

senior

fall

- Art 130: Creating Visual Form (3)
- Art 135 : Creating Visual Order (3)
- ArtH 100: Ren. through Mod. (3)
- General studies (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- ArtV 215: Visual Communication Design (VCD) I (3)
- ArtV 217: Typography I (3)
- ArtV 283: VCD Admit. Review (0)
- General studies: Art 291W (3)
- General studies (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- ArtV 315: VCD II (3)
- ArtH 321: History of VCD (3)
- ArtP 230: Painting I (3)
- Focus (selection #1 of 4) (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- ArtH elective (300+ level) (3)
- Printmaking (ArtR 272 or 375) (3)
- General studies (Sci w/ lab) (4)
- Focus (selection #3 of 4) (3)
- Upper-division elective (3)

[16 credits]

spring

- Art 140: Building Meaning in Visual Art (3)
- ArtD 210 Drawing I (3)
- ArtV 201: Introduction to Computer Graphics for Design (3)
- General studies (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- ArtV 317: Typography II (3)
- ArtD 310: Drawing II (3)
- ArtO 210 Photography I (3)
- ArtH 101: Prehis. through Goth. (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- ArtV 325: Techniques in Visual Communication Design (3)
- ArtV 330: Interaction Design for Visual Communication I (3)
- Focus (selection #2 of 4) (3)
- General studies (3)
- General studies (3)

[15 credits]

- Studio Elective (200+ level) (3)
- Studio Elective (300+ level) (3)
- Focus (selection #4 of 4) (3)
- Upper-division elective (3)
- Upper-division elective (3)

[15 credits]

Total degree credits = 121 > 66cr visual arts major (incl. 3cr gen ed); 34cr remainder of gen ed (foundations of knowledge); 12cr focus (must be outside major, can be replaced by a minor — consult chosen department for requirements); 9cr additional upper-division courses.

important notes

Undergraduate Catalog: Students are responsible for understanding and completing all degree requirements as outlined in their catalog.

| **Upper-Division Requirement:** 45 credits of courses numbering 300-level or above are required of all NKU bachelor's degrees. These credits can collectively come from major, minor, focus, Foundation

of Knowledge (FoK) gen eds, and/or elective courses; many are accounted for in the BFA VCD major requirements. Note that some FoK and/or elective choices may defray the number of 'Upper-division electives' shown above. | **ArtV courses:** ArtV courses are offered in either fall or spring semesters as shown. | ***Art 299 Portfolio Review:** Students apply for BFA candidacy by registering for ArtV 297 in fall or spring of the VCD junior year, as per the VCD BFA track advising sheet.

What is the difference between a BA/BFA in visual communication design?

A BFA degree is a professional degree offering the opportunity to develop depth and specialization in a creative art practice. Conversely, a BA degree is a general studies degree offering breadth of understanding through exposure to an area of artistic activity; a minor or focus* outside the major is required for a BA to help achieve this. A minor or focus is *not* required for the BFA degree. 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 BFA degree is preferred by the profession, the AIGA (the American Institute for Graphic Arts — the largest professional association of visual communication designers), and the accrediting agency NASAD (the National Association of Schools of Art and Design). The Visual Communication Design BFA degree at Northern Kentucky University 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. A student interested in obtaining the BFA must have a cumulative, overall GPA of 2.5 to be eligible. Students must maintain these GPA minimums until graduation to obtain a BFA. Students apply the BFA program in the junior year of design studies by registering for ART 299 Portfolio Review.

What is the most appropriate minor for a design major?

There is no minor in particular that is expected by the profession. When choosing a minor, a student should choose a subject that could align them with a specific design niche they wish to pursue, and/or that they personally feel is interesting and stimulating. Some suggested minors for a Visual Communication Designer major: Anthropology, English, Entrepreneurship, Geography (or other sciences), Marketing, Media Informatics, Philosophy, Popular Culture Studies, and Women and Gender Studies.

What is the “Experiential Component” (CEP 300 or ArtV 496)?

This is language the university uses to describe both internship and co-op opportunities. The term “internship” refers to a part-time position (i.e., 20 hours of work per week for a semester) equivalent to 3 credit hours.

“Co-op” refers to a full-time position (i.e., 40 of work per week for a semester) equivalent to 6 credit hours.

What paperwork do I need to complete in order to graduate?

When a student anticipates graduation, they must file an “Application for Degree Candidacy” form and a “Program Certification” form through the Registrar *approximately half-way through the semester before they intend to graduate* (refer to the Registrar for specific deadlines). Your major advisor must review and sign the Program Certification form *prior* to the Registrar’s graduation application deadline. Consult your catalog and the Office of the Registrar for additional details.

What about a career in illustration?

Sometimes students who want to work in the design industry discover that they prefer to accelerate in drawing or painting compared to design. These students should consider a career in illustration. Illustration is closely associated with the design industry because illustrators, like some photographers, are commissioned to create artwork for commercial projects coordinated by visual communication designers. Drawing, painting, intermedia, printmaking and new media art, among others, are good areas of study for this field of practice.

Where can I learn more about the field of visual communication design?

Visit www.aiga.org for additional, reliable, in-depth information about the profession of graphic design, including how to know if it is right for you.

*Focus: A focus is 4 courses (12 credits) with the same prefix chosen by the student at the 300+ level outside of the major; for example, four 300+ courses in GEO (GEO 301, GEO 306, GEO 314, GEO 415).

**More organizations of interest to design professionals and students include:

- [Interaction Design Association](#)
- [Graphic Artists Guild](#)
- [Letterform Archive](#)
- [Society for Experiential Graphic Design](#)
- [Type Directors Club](#)