

Design Studies, B.S.

Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Science

Nature of the Program

The BS Design Studies program provides the opportunity for cross-disciplinary study by pairing design thinking and design process courses with an approved minor or approved area of concentration of the student's choice. Students meet with their academic advisor upon entering the program to determine a plan of study for their major. Students must participate in a minimum of six credit hours of internship. Internships are allowed only after completion of a minimum of 50% of their minor coursework, and completion of the required third-year design studies coursework and typically occur during the summer between the student's third and fourth years. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Admissions for 2025-2026

- First-Time Freshman are admitted directly into the major.
- Students transferring from another major within WVU are directly admitted to the major if they are in good academic standing (2.0 overall GPA) or with departmental approval.
- Students transferring from another institution are directly admitted to the major if they are in good academic standing (2.0 overall GPA) or with departmental approval.

Major Code: 3719

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	University Requirements	47
	Design Studies Program Requirements	9
	Design Studies Major Requirements	64
Total Hours		120

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8		
Outstanding GEF Requirements 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6		19
ANRD 191	First-Year Seminar	1
General Electives		27
Total Hours		47

Design Studies Program Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
MDS 270 & 270S	Effective Public Speaking and Effective Public Speaking Studio (GEF 4)	3
Foreign Language Requirement		6
Total Hours		9

Design Studies Major Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum grade of C- and minimum GPA of 2.25 is required for all Design Studies Major Requirements.		
DSGN 130		3
DSGN 140	Sustainable Living (GEF 7)	3
DSGN 220	Design Thinking	3
DSGN 320	Design Ethics and Social Responsibility	3
DSGN 420	Professional Preparation	1
DSGN 480	Designing Innovative Futures (fulfills Writing and Communication Skills and Capstone requirements)	3
DSGN 491	Professional Field Experience: Capstone	6
Approved Minor *		15
Restricted Electives (as advised) **		18
DSGN Electives **		9
DSGN 160	Visual Communications	
DSGN 200	Information Communications	
DSGN 270	Product Design Foundations	
DSGN 280	Sustainable Design and Development	
DSGN 300	Product Design	
DSGN 310	Product Design-Footwear	
DSGN 470	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Systems	
Other DSGN courses may be available		
Total Hours		64

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Approved minors are chosen in consultation with your Advisor and are intended to broaden/enhance your experience in relation to your anticipated career path. Depending on the minor, more than 15 credit hours may be required.

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A minimum of 12 hours must be 300 level classes or above between the Restricted and DSGN Electives.

Suggested Plan of Study

The following minimum requirements are set to insure that students who graduate from the program will have the appropriate skill level and knowledge to succeed in their chosen field of professional work. Design studies require a minimum of 120 credit hours for graduation.

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
ANRD 191		1 DSGN 160	3
DSGN 130		GEF 3	3

DSGN 140 (GEF 7)		3 GEF 5		3	
ENGL 101 (GEF 1)		3 Minor Course		3	
GEF 2		4-6 General Elective		3	
		11		15	
Second Year					
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours		
DSGN 200		3 DSGN 220		3	
ENGL 102 (GEF 1)		3 Foreign Language		3	
MDS 270 & 270S (GEF 4)		3 Minor Course		3	
Foreign Language		3 Restricted Electives		6	
GEF 6		3			
		15		15	
Third Year					
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
DSGN 320		3 DSGN 420		1 DSGN 491	6
DSGN Elective		3 Minor Course		3	
Minor Course		3 General Elective		9	
Restricted Electives		6			
		15		13	6
Fourth Year					
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours		
DSGN 480		3 General Electives		7	
Minor Course		3 Restricted Electives		6	
General Electives		8			
		14		13	

Total credit hours: 117

Program Requirements

Students take a core of design courses to learn and understand the design language. A minor, certificate, or approved area of concentration (e.g. Associates Degree) is required to focus their area of study and provide a context for their design thinking. Finally, design-related requirements and recommended electives are chosen to support the understanding of design in a variety of contexts. The capstone requirement will be met with a one-hour seminar course to prepare for the internship experience, a six-hour professional field experience or external study and a final course where students synthesize and present their experiences in the work environment. Each student meets individually with her/his advisor to determine the most appropriate coursework choices for all requirements at the beginning of the semester in which they declare Design Studies their major.

Curriculum for the Design Studies major is determined by the area of interest chosen by the student's career interests. That career interest is explored through an approved minor. A list of approved minors are chosen in consultation with your Advisor and are intended to broaden/enhance your experience in relation to your anticipated career path. Additionally, students may pursue a second minor or certificate program in consultation with an advisor.

NOTES

1. Minors may require courses to be taken in summer. Check your specific minor for schedule requirements.
2. All Design Studies majors must complete nine hours of Minor Related Electives at the 300 level or above (see advising booklet and requirements for specific minors).
3. GEF choice options and electives are to be determined in consultation with an advisor.

FIRST-YEAR LEVEL

Students should begin the Design Studies program with an introduction to design and first-year courses. Students should make an appointment with the program chair at the end of the first semester to determine course selection based on a chosen required minor, certificate or concentration area. Design studies is an open-enrollment major for incoming freshmen. Students may also transfer into the major during either fall or spring semesters as long as they meet the minimum entry requirements. Transfer students must have an overall GPA of a 2.5, or department approval, to apply for acceptance into the Design Studies major.

SECOND-, THIRD-, AND FOURTH-YEAR LEVELS

All design studies students are required to maintain at least an overall 2.25 GPA to remain in the program with good academic standing.

- Students' grades will be monitored each semester.
- Any student who has an overall GPA below 2.25 will be notified and put on academic probation for the upcoming semester. It will be necessary for the student to raise their GPA to the required 2.25 in order to continue in the design studies major coursework.
- Students who have an overall GPA below the required 2.25 will not be allowed to enroll in DSGN coursework until the GPA has returned to the minimum required.
- Students who have not been permitted to enroll in design courses because of a low GPA may enroll in design courses after they have met the appropriate GPA, space permitting.
- All Design Studies students are required to earn at least a C- in each required DSGN course.
- Students' grades in DSGN courses will be monitored each semester.
- Any student who has earned a grade of "D" or lower in any of the DSGN courses will be notified of the problem and will be expected to repeat the course and earn a grade of C- or above prior to graduation.

Major Learning Outcomes

DESIGN STUDIES

The primary student learning outcomes for the Design Studies major include preparing students to:

1. Integrate design thinking into the business context provided by their minor course of study,
2. Synthesize knowledge gained through coursework and experiential activities effectively, and explain its application to real work situations within the design profession and selected area(s) of interest in verbal and written formats,
3. Effectively evaluate and use research in the context of a design problem,
4. Share work experience with others and gain a greater understanding of design in a variety of contexts,
5. Understand the daily realities of their professional design area and how those realities relate to the expectations of other design contexts.