

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 faculty mentor and academic advisor upon entering the program to determine a plan of study for their major. Students must participate in a minimum of three credit hours of professional field experience. Professional field experience is allowed only after completion of a minimum of 50% of the minor coursework, completion of the required third-year design studies coursework, and typically occurs during the summer between the student's third and fourth years. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Admissions for 2026-2027

- First-Time Freshmen 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		63
Design Studies Major Requirements		57
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
ART 191	First-Year Seminar	2
General Electives		42
Total Hours		63

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.		
ART 121S	Visual Foundations 1	3
ART 122S	Visual Foundations 2	3
DSGN 140	Sustainable Living (GEF 7)	3
DSGN 220	Design Thinking	3
DSGN 320	Design Ethics and Social Responsibility	3
DSGN 480	Designing Innovative Futures (fulfills Capstone requirements)	3
DSGN 491	Professional Field Experience: Capstone	3
JRL 432	Social Media Strategy	3
COMM 270 & 270S	Presentational Speaking and Effective Public Speaking Studio (GEF 4)	3
Minor *		15
Recommended Electives **		15
Total Hours		57

*

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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In consultation with your Advisor and in accordance with your career objectives, select a minimum of 15 hours from courses within the College of Creative Arts and Media with a maximum of six hours at the 100/200 level and minimum of nine hours at the 300/400 level.

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
ART 191		2 ART 122S	3
ART 121S		3 GEF 3	3
DSGN 140 (GEF 7)		3 GEF 5	3
ENGL 101 (GEF 1)		3 Minor Course	3
GEF 2		4 General Elective	3
		15	15

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
DSGN 220		3 DSGN 320	3
ENGL 102 (GEF 1)		3 Minor Course	3
COMM 270 & 270S (GEF 4)		3 Recommended Elective	3
GEF 6		3 General Elective	3
Minor Course		3 General Elective	3
		15	15

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
Recommended Elective		9 JRL 432	3
Minor Course		3 Minor Course	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	6
		Recommended Elective	3
		15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
DSGN 480		3 General Electives	15
DSGN 491		3	
General Electives		9	
		15	15

Total credit hours: 120

Program Requirements

Students take a core of design courses to learn and understand the design language. A minor, chosen in consultation with the student's Advisor based on the student's career interests, 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 three-hour professional field experience 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 appropriate minor. Minors are reviewed and selected in consultation with your Advisor and are intended to broaden/enhance your experience in relation to your anticipated career path. Additionally, students may also pursue a second minor or certificate program in consultation with an advisor.

NOTES

1. Minors may require courses to be taken in summer. Some minors are fully online. Check your specific minor for schedule requirements.

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 academic advisor 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 course.
- Students' grades 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.