

GRDS

GRAPHIC DESIGN FOUNDATION

FOUNDATION / ELECTIVES

FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES

YEAR ONE

DSGN 101 ⁽³⁾
Meaning-making in
Design

DSGN 102 ⁽³⁾
Design as visual
message-making

DSGN 103 ⁽³⁾
Principles, Processes
Applications of Design

DSGN 150 ⁽³⁾
The Idea of Design
(AH)

DSGN 200 ⁽⁰⁾
Portfolio Review

FYS 101 ⁽¹⁾

ENGL 101/118 ^{H (3)}
(WC)

ENGL 102 ⁽³⁾
(WC)

VOL CORE ELEC ⁽³⁾

VOL CORE ELEC ⁽³⁾

VOL CORE ELEC ⁽³⁾

TERM ONE:
min 15 CH

TERM TWO:
min 12 CH

uTrack Requirements

In the initial year, students pursuing a Graphic Design degree will take the School of Design foundations program - a year-long investigation into design as a making and communication field. Work conducted during this year prepares students for applying to pursue the upper division of the Graphic Design program.

DSGN 101: Introduction to the principles, processes and applications of meaning-making through design. Students explore the language of design, how it is influenced by form, content, audience, message and context in various applications relative to communication

DSGN 102: Introduction to the principles, processes and applications of image making through design. Students explore the language of design, how it is influenced by form, content, audience, message and context through visual representation. Simultaneous introduction to image production through computer systems and software.

DSGN 103: Introduction to the principles, processes and applications of design across various applications. Students explore the language of design, how it is influenced by form, content, audience, message and context in two, three and four dimensional forms.

VOL CORE CURRICULUM: Through the Vol Core Curriculum requirements, students in the Graphic Design Foundation program explore parallel interests that both fulfill the mission of general education while also providing an expanded understanding of their strengths, skills and interests. Vol Core provides students with the foundation for successful academic study, lifelong learning, and actively engaging in the duties of local, national, and global citizenship. The university's general education curriculum is designed to help students better understand themselves, human cultures and societies, the natural world, as well as contribute to their personal enrichment.

DSGN 150: An overview of design as visual message-making and as an act of cultural interpretation. Contemporary and historic design and its forms are examined, along with an introduction to design and creative concepts.

DSGN 200: PORTFOLIO REVIEW This is a benchmark review to gain admittance into the upper division Graphic Design degree courses. Students will present specified projects from the foundational courses and conduct an interview with the Graphic Design faculty. Faculty take great care in determining the outcome of this review with every student who has applied, providing valuable feedback and guidance, regardless of outcome.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE | COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN GRAPHIC DESIGN | 4 YEAR CURRICULUM

2025-2026

DSGN
FOUNDATIONS

(12)

School of Design
Foundations

YEAR ONE FOUNDATIONS YEAR	
FALL (15)	SPRING (12)
<div>DSGN 101 Meaning-making in Design (3)</div> <div>DSGN 102 Design as visual message-making (AAH) (3)</div> <div>DSGN 103 Principles, Processes Applications of Design (AAH) (3)</div> <div>DSGN 150 The Idea of Design (AH) (3)</div>	
	<div>DSGN 200 Portfolio Review (0)</div> <div>*Must receive a pass in DSGN 200 in order to move into the upper division of the GRDS degree program.</div>
<div>FYS 101 (1)</div>	
<div>ENGL 101 (3) (WC)</div>	<div>ENGL 102 (3) (WC)</div>
<div>ELECTIVE (3) (QR)</div>	
<div>ELECTIVE (3) (OC)</div>	<div>ELECTIVE (3) (GCUS)</div>
min 12 CH	ENGL 101 Pass GRDS 200

GRDS

(40)

Graphic Design
Studio

(9)

Art / Design
History / Theory

(9)

Studio Electives

(9)

Design / Professional
Electives

(6-7)

Practicum

(30-35)

Vol Core
Requirements

YEAR TWO DESIGN PROCESS & METHODS	
FALL (17)	SPRING (14-15)
<div>GRDS 271 Principles and Concept Development (4)</div> <div>GRDS 255 Beginning Typography (4)</div>	<div>GRDS 272 Visual Theory & Design Vocabularies (4)</div> <div>GRDS 256 Interaction Design (4)</div>
<div>ART & DSGN History Elective* (3) (GCI)</div> <div>*Any Art History (ARTH) course *Any CoAD design history course (ARCH, IARC, INDS, LAR)</div>	
	<div>Studio Elective* (3)</div> <div>*Any CoAD course w studio, lab or workshop component *Any 200-level course in the School of Art</div>
<div>ELECTIVE (3) (NS)</div>	
<div>ELECTIVE (3) (EI)</div>	<div>ELECTIVE (3-4) (QR)</div>
Min 30 CH	ENGL 102

YEAR THREE RESEARCH & COMPLEXITY	
FALL (15)	SPRING (16)
<div>GRDS 371 Research Methodologies & Audience and Context (4)</div> <div>GRDS 355 Advanced Typography (4)</div>	<div>GRDS 372 Representing Information & Visual Complexity (EI) (4)</div>
	<div>ART & DSGN History Elective (3)</div>
	<div>Studio Elective* (3)</div>
<div>GRDS Design/ Professional Elective (3)</div> <div>*Select from GRDS 425, 444 and/or 444R and/or GRDS 455, GRDS 491, GRDS 493 * Courses in other departments subject to approval.</div>	<div>GRDS Design/ Professional Elective (3)</div>
<div>ELECTIVE (4) (NSwL)</div>	<div>ELECTIVE (3) (WC)</div>
Min 60 CH	9 UD hours (300-400 level)

YEAR FOUR SYSTEMS & CAPSTONE	
FALL (17)	SPRING (16)
<div>GRDS 471 Identity & Systems (EI) (4)</div>	<div>GRDS 472 Capstone (AOC) (4)</div> <div>GRDS 452 Professional Practice (AOC) (3)</div>
	<div>ART & DSGN History Elective (3)</div>
	<div>Studio Elective* (3)</div>
	<div>GRDS Design/ Professional Elective (3)</div>
<div>GRDS 451 or GRDS 444/or GRDS 455 (3)</div>	<div>GRDS 451 or GRDS 444/or GRDS 455 (3-4)</div>
<div>ELECTIVE (3) (SS)</div>	
24 UD hours (300-400 level)	42 UD hours (300-400 level)

(120) TOTAL CH

(CH)

REQUIRED COURSE
(ELEC/GEN ED)

Required Vol Core
for GRDS Program

VOL CORE CATAGORIES
(AH) Arts & Humanities
(AAH) Applied Arts & Humanities
(EI) Engaged Inquiry
(GCI) Global Citizen - International Focus
(GSUS) Global Citizen - US Focus
(NS) Natural Science
(NSwL) Nat'l Science with Lab
(OC) Oral Communication
(AOC) Applied Oral Communication
(QR) Quantitative Reasoning
(SS) Social Science
(WC) Written Communication

uTrack Requirements