

Portfolio Review for students seeking a BFA in Communication Design

All students intending to major in the B.F.A. in Communication Design (CDES) need to initially declare a B.A. in Art (ART) or a B.A. in Art History, Theory, and Criticism (ARTH) degree when they are admitted to MSU Denver. A sophomore level portfolio application is required for admittance into the B.F.A. in Communication Design degree.

BFA Portfolio application requirements:

- Complete or transfer all 12 credits (four classes) of Level I general studies; Written Communication, Oral Communication, and Quantitative Literacy.
- Complete or transfer all 18 credits of Art Foundations; ART 1101, ART 1141, ART 1501, ART 1531, ARTH 1600, ARTH 1700
- Complete 3 additional credits (one class) in CDES, ARTH (or ART, ARTE), for a total of 21 credits in the major
- Students applying to the B.F.A. in Communication Design are required to have a minimum of 3.00 G.P.A. in the Communication Design major requirements – the G.P.A. listed in a “what-if” Communication Design degree Progress Report under the student’s catalog year and “Major in Communication Design”– at the time of submission. (*Transfer students must have an MSU Denver G.P.A. – See below. **)

Deadline: Portfolio submissions are due by the end of the 6th week of either fall or spring semesters.

Submission Process:

Students who meet the above requirements need to set up an account at msudenver.slideroom.com to submit their portfolio application materials. Students are required to affirm their authorship when applying. A Faculty committee conducts portfolio reviews without the student being present and students are notified two weeks after the application deadline, in time to make registration decisions for the following semester.

Acceptance: Students who are accepted into the B.F.A. in Communication Design program must meet with their assigned CDES faculty advisor to change their major from B.A. in Art to the B.F.A. in Communication Design.

Reapplication: Students who are not accepted into the B.F.A. in Communication Design program should meet with a CDES faculty advisor for guidance about coursework and other recommendations for improvement of application materials. If the application is not successful after three attempts, the student must complete the B.A. in Art which requires a declared Minor or select a different major.

***Transfer Students:** Transfer students are directed to meet with a Communication Design faculty advisor well in advance of submitting a portfolio application to resolve the transfer of Art, Communication Design, and Art History courses. A G.P.A. at MSU Denver must be established in CDES, ARTH (and/or ART, ARTE), coursework before submitting a portfolio for review, thus a transfer student cannot apply to the B.F.A. in Communication Design in their first semester at MSU Denver.

Transfer students should also make an appointment with a general Arts Advisor by calling the Department of Art at 303-615-0300 to resolve the completion and/or transfer of Level I General Studies; Written Communication, Oral Communication, and Quantitative Literacy.

Degree Progress Reports will be run to ensure students meet the minimum requirements: any degree exceptions or transfer issues must be resolved prior to the portfolio application. Students who apply but do not meet the minimum requirements for application are subsequently denied use of one of three opportunities to apply.

Access Center – Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Metropolitan State University of Denver is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students, including those with disabilities. Students with a diagnosed condition/disability which may impact their BFA portfolio application or ability to meet the BFA Portfolio requirements should contact the Access Center, located in the Plaza Building, Suite 122, 303-615-0200, accesscenter@msudenver.edu. The Access Center is the designated department responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. If warranted, students may provide an Accommodation Notification Letter obtained from the Access Center to the Chair of the Portfolio Review Committee. If the student does not know who the chair of the portfolio review committee is they can contact the Department of Art at 303-615-0300. Information pertaining to a student’s disability is treated in a confidential manner; however, all members of the BFA review committee, which includes the Chair of the Department of Art, will be furnished a copy of any relevant academic documentation by the Chair of the Portfolio Review Committee. Further information is available by visiting the Access Center website [www.msudenver.edu/access](https://msudenver.edu/access). “ADA BFA Statement” above available at <https://msudenver.edu/access/facultyinformation/>

Standards for acceptance:

Portfolios are evaluated according to evidence of Research, Execution, and Articulation. Evaluation of each criteria is assigned a value of Beginning, Developing, Accomplished or Exemplary by the faculty jury. An example evaluation rubric is available at msudenver.edu/art/programs/offerings/portfoliorequirements. It is suggested that students review this rubric and identify submission materials that demonstrate evidence of the rubric criteria. Any criteria that is unclear can be explained further by attending one of three portfolio submission workshops held each semester prior to the submission deadline, or by making an appointment with a CDES faculty advisor. A student determined to be “Beginning” in any of the three areas will not be accepted. Candidates must be evaluated at a minimum of “Developing” in all three areas for admittance. Students admitted with “Developing” evaluations in any of the three criteria should be aware that improvements in those areas are expected over their time in the program so that student attain a rating of “Accomplished” or above by the time of graduation.

Suggestions for success on the portfolio:

The portfolio is a collection of a student’s best, most recent completed works and should reflect their potential, or emerging interests, skills, and willingness to explore, experiment, and express themselves. We are most interested in how students communicate ideas and demonstrate concept, process, and material use. We encourage students to take risks and be inventive in problem solving. Any work relevant to studies in Art or Communication Design are valid to include in the portfolio. It is expected that a candidate with only one Communication Design class completed would have a portfolio mostly representing work in 2D, 3D, 4D and Drawing media with one or two works of Communication Design. However, students more advanced in their study of Communication Design, either at MSU Denver or at a transfer institution would be expected to have a portfolio mostly representing work in Communication Design and not limited to: typography, identity and systems design, branding, interactive design, print collateral, design research, infographics, and video or animation.

Submission materials:

Written Content: *It is in students’ best interest to write the Statement of Intent and Project Annotations ahead of time in a text editing application, spell check and proofread, or even make an appointment with the writing center. Written content needs to be entered into the SlideRoom interface. Do not design written content onto your visual submissions.*

Statement of Intent:

Write an essay no longer than 250 words explaining your ambitions as a professional designer. Why are you a strong candidate for the B.F.A. in Communication Design? The statement should reflect a professional discussion, which addresses your design practice, while elaborating on the process and research supporting your work.

We are interested in:

- Design Philosophy; relationship to the discipline and thematic areas of interest
- Relevance of research, materials and processes
- Historical or contemporary influence of artists and designers and how their work relates to yours
- Theoretical or cross-disciplinary influences
- Experience with exhibitions, Internships, experience in the field and community art or design projects

Project Annotations: Evidence of written articulation should be demonstrated in brief, relevant, and detailed project explanations. Explain project concept, project problem, process of problem solving, audience considerations, historical or theoretical references, and contextual themes. Include descriptions of relevant formal elements used to reinforce your concept, design principles, typographic use, grid use, and color selection as relevant. Annotations should include course number and assignment title where appropriate.

Portfolio Content: 10 total images/slides formatted for landscape orientation at a size of 1280 x 800 pixels and under 5 megabytes each. Complex or systems-based projects can be 1280 x 1600 or 2400 pixels resulting in scrolling to view. Video or animation content can be uploaded to SlideRoom if they are under 250 megabytes or shown in an image based storyboard format.

- 7 examples of your best, most recent completed works, in any media as selected from studio course assignments from MSU Denver or transfer institutions
- 1 example of a self-directed or personally derived project
- 1 example showing detailed and intentional sketches from one of the above projects
- 1 example showing detailed and intentional sketches for a new or speculative project still under development