

# SOPHOMORE PORTFOLIO REVIEW GUIDELINES



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## INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

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(updated Spring 2025)

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**WHAT, WHEN & WHY**

## WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio is the collection of a designer's best work. A designer's portfolio is the primary media for securing a job, attracting clients and marketing themselves. You will always be updating and improving your portfolio for the duration of your designing career. After your sophomore-level coursework is complete, you will need to submit a "sophomore portfolio" so faculty can evaluate your preparation for upper-division coursework. Upon graduation you will leave with a portfolio to help you with your job search and the quality of that portfolio will dictate the quality of job you get. This is why the faculty places such a great deal of importance on the portfolio development of students.

## WHY IS A PORTFOLIO REQUIRED MID-PROGRAM?

The sophomore portfolio is a chance to provide evidence that students can succeed in the IND major, and subsequently in the profession. The emphasis for this is on potential as indicated by quality work submitted to address the key skills and competencies required in the program and profession. Students must pass the review in order to continue in subsequent advanced studio courses.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PORTFOLIO REVIEW?

There are several purposes for the sophomore portfolio review. The main purpose is to review the work of the student to see if they have a basic grasp of design concepts. Without these basic concepts, students find it difficult to handle the rigors of the program and the professional field later on. The second purpose is to meet the assessment standards set by the university. Assessment measures the growth of each student in the Industrial Design program. Assessment is important when re-newing accreditation by the National Association of School of Art and Design (NASAD).

## WHEN IS THE SOPHOMORE PORTFOLIO REVIEW?

Sophomore portfolios can be submitted upon completion of all re-quired sophomore-level course work, and at the end of Fall or Spring semesters. Reviews typically occur the week after finals week. **Please refer to the department website, and department email communications, for specific semester deadlines.** Portfolios submitted after the posted deadline will not be accepted.

**FIRST THINGS FIRST**

## PREREQUISITE COURSES

Completion of the following courses is required before portfolios can be submitted. A minimum 3.0 current GPA (IND core only), as evidenced on the official Degree Progress Report, is required in order to submit a portfolio for review. This GPA must be maintained through the semester of review.

IND 1000-1	Introduction to Industrial Design
IND 1100-3	Materials I: Materials & Fabrication
IND 1300-3	Materials II: Materials & Fabrication
IND 1450-3	Technical Drawing and CAD
IND 1470-3	Design Drawing Techniques
IND 2100-3	Digital Composition
IND 2450-4	Beginning Industrial Design Studio
IND 2830-3	Manufacturing Materials & Processes
IND 3050-3	Advanced Sketching
IND 3480-3	Industrial Design Model Making
IND 3660-3	Computer Aided Modeling
ART 1101-3	Studio Foundations: 2D
ART 1141-3	Drawing I: Black and White
ART 1501- 3	Studio Foundations: 3D

† For catalogs 2020 and earlier, please see your advisor for prerequisite requirements.

Additionally, students must complete the following courses, or have completed equivalent transfer courses. If missing TWO during the semester of review, students will be allowed to participate in the portfolio review if they enroll in those classes for the following semester.

General Studies - Written Communication-6 (*ENG 1010 recommended*)

General Studies - Oral Communication-3 (*COMM 1010 recommended*)

General Studies - Quantitative Literacy-3

General Studies - Natural & Physical Science II-3 (*PHY 1000 recommended*)

ARTH 1500-3 - Art and Visual Literacy

ARTH 1700-3 - World Art History II (*fulfills Global designation requirement*)

Students who receive blanket transfer credit from a previous degree should meet with the department chair to analyze their transcripts. Transfer credits must be tied to the specific general studies classes required for the major and portfolio review. This must be accomplished in time to be reflected in the Degree Progress report included with the portfolio submission.

# THE PROCESS



## WHEN CAN I SUBMIT MY SOPHOMORE PORTFOLIO?

Upon completion of IND 2450: Beginning Industrial Design Studio, and all prerequisite courses, students are eligible to submit the sophomore portfolio of their work. In accordance with NASAD requirements, and in order to maintain high quality standards, students with sub-standard sophomore portfolios will not be allowed to continue study in the ID major. Sophomore portfolios that do not score a composite average of at least 80 out of 100 points will be considered sub-standard. ***Faculty decisions on the sophomore portfolio's quality are not subject to appeal.***

The student must submit their digital, PDF formatted, sophomore portfolio to be reviewed by the Industrial Design faculty, but they will not be present during the review. Students will be notified about the results via campus email soon after the sophomore portfolios have been reviewed by the faculty.

Completed sophomore portfolio evaluation forms will not be available for students to view directly, but the overall results may be shared with students during personal sessions with their departmental advisors.

A minimum 3.0 current GPA is required for all courses taken in the IND core and must be maintained through the semester of review. Because of this, the students will not be notified about the review results until after semester grades have been posted.

## WHAT IF I DON'T PASS?

Sophomore portfolios that do not demonstrate the critical skills and proficiencies necessary to perform successfully in upper-division courses will not pass the review. Students who do not pass are not abandoned by the industrial design program, however they will be ineligible for upper level studio courses until they have passed the sophomore portfolio review.

If the sophomore portfolio is not accepted, but shows potential, students may be allowed to attempt another review the following semester or subsequent semesters after the sophomore portfolio has been updated to better meet the required evaluation criteria. Acceptance of the sophomore portfolio is at the sole discretion of the ID program faculty. Students must consult with the faculty to retake selected major courses, rework their sophomore portfolio, or otherwise cooperate with the faculty recommendations.

# EVALUATION

## WHAT IS BEING EVALUATED IN THE REVIEW?

Each student's sophomore portfolio will be evaluated by the criteria delineated in the evaluation rubric included with these guidelines. Students should select work samples to address all the evaluation categories in the rubric. Remember, you are making a case for your potential to succeed in the ID profession!

Submit work that demonstrates your design and innovation abilities. Include examples of projects that show your process and how you develop your ideas into the project results. Of primary importance are exploratory sketches that show a variety of solutions and ideas for each product presented.

The faculty look for each student's abilities to:

- Think and operate within the scope of the projects.
- Take a systems approach to design solutions.
- Write and communicate effectively.
- Envision and produce broadly desirable 3D objects and projects.
- Produce a reasonable level of aesthetic sensibility in production; e.g., style, proportion, shape, material, color, etc.
- Draw and/or otherwise visualize new ideas.
- Identify important opportunities and needs.
- Research, investigate and analyze design topics.
- Experiment, think laterally and engage in creative idea generation activities.
- Develop desirable solutions for real needs and problems that create value for the human condition.
- Exploit and employ appropriate technologies.

**PLEASE NOTE:** a 3.0 GPA (IND core only) is a minimum requirement but it does not guarantee you will pass the review.

# PREPARATION

## WHAT CAN I DO NOW?

Development of your sophomore portfolio begins the first day of your first class. Don't wait until the end of your second year to start considering what materials to put in it. Treat every assignment as a potential portfolio piece because the more effort you put into all of your assignments the better your portfolio will be!

This booklet provides a listing of requirements, suggestions and comments to help students better prepare for the portfolio review. They include ways of presenting work, expectations of the faculty and insights on past successes. However, these strategies are only suggestions based on best practices and following them does not necessarily guarantee acceptance of your portfolio.

Don't sit back and wait for a project to be assigned in class. Explore design and other interests on your own. Work that shows your passion will stick out from the rest of your work.

You cannot design effectively in a vacuum. Talk to other designers. Talk to faculty. Ask others about design and how to improve and refine your design skills. Look at books and magazines. Peruse other's student's works and portfolios. Learn from the better works that others have produced.

Challenge the problem, don't just solve it. Push the limits of your individual skills and existing designs. Accept the responsibility for expanding the quality, insight, and innovation of the profession.

**DOCUMENT EVERYTHING!** Keep all of your sketches, photograph your work, and record your thought processes.

While this is not a graphic design program, graphic layout and typographic design skills are essential to creating portfolios and class presentations. Present your work in a clean, well thought out composition. *Photoshop*, *Illustrator*, and *InDesign* are your friends. Learn them. Ask about them. Use them.

# REQUIREMENTS

## HOW SHOULD I PRESENT MY WORK?

The best approach is to present your work in a straightforward manner, organized according to the Sophomore Portfolio Screening Evaluation Sheet. Each category should be clearly addressed with quality work that shows ability and potential for growth in that particular area.

## THE FORMAT

The digital portfolio is recommended to be in an 8.5"x 11" landscape format, but not required. Pages must be organized in such a way that the faculty may easily view and access the work.

Portfolios are limited to 40 pages of content, excluding title pages etc.

The portfolio must be properly packaged into a single file, not exceeding 50MB, with your name and the semester of submission in the file name. Submissions are only accepted via <https://seureshare.msudenver.edu/filedrop/indfiledrop>.

All contents of the portfolio, including graphics and layout, must be completed by the student who is submitting it.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Contact and information page
  - Full name
  - Portrait photo
  - Current address
  - Campus email
  - Semester/Year submitting
2. One page personal statement
  - Why did you choose ID?
  - What is your design philosophy?
  - What are your future plans?
3. Print and Submit official MSU Denver Degree Progress Report via the StudentHub.
  - Current cumulative GPA
  - Adjustments current
  - Highlight required courses
4. [Signed signature form](#) (found on our website)

# SUGGESTIONS



## WHAT SHOULD BE IN YOUR SOPHOMORE PORTFOLIO?

The following section provides suggestions you may use to prepare for the review. These suggestions will not guarantee acceptance of your sophomore portfolio, but will enhance its quality and increase your possibility of passing the review.

You may include any works that relate to the areas of the evaluation. You are also encouraged to include design work from outside the class-room.

### **Suggested work to include in portfolio:**

- Drawings
- 2-D and 3-D design
- Work from the materials classes
- Digital work (2D, computer models, and CAD drawings)
- Inventions, ideas, or innovations
- Supplemental design or artistic work

### **Suggested process for work selection**

Take all the work that you have done during your time in school and lay it out so that you can view it all at once. Examine everything, identify the strongest work, and then set it aside. Look again at your work and pull out the second strongest work, and third strongest. When looking at the remainder of your work, select any additional material that may fulfill the requirements of the various required areas of the evaluation.

### **Suggested setup of the portfolio**

Looking at the three sets of your strongest work consider organizing them in a way that draws the viewer into your sophomore portfolio. One strategy is to place the best work on the first page to get the viewer's attention. The third best material can be placed half way through to keep the viewer's interest. The second best material can be added toward the end of the sophomore portfolio, which will be the last thing the viewer remembers.

### **Suggested development of work**

Work that is considered weak or not design-related should not be included in the sophomore portfolio. Likewise, 2D or 3D work that does not show off your best craftsmanship should not be included. If you have a project that shows promise, but that was not adequately executed, it could be worth your time to further develop the project so it can be included in the sophomore portfolio. Budget enough time to revisit your old projects prior to the sophomore portfolio submission; waiting too long can create unmanageable stress or leave you without the time to produce high quality results.

# CONSIDERATIONS

## WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Remember, the sophomore portfolio development process begins NOW. Don't wait until submission time to find that you don't have enough material to create a comprehensive representation of your work. Don't wait until after you've submitted your sophomore portfolio to find out your work isn't adequate to move forward in the program!

**Look at other portfolios** - via the OneDrive folder provided by your instructor - so you can see the standards being set by the department and the industry as a whole. Do this research now! It will guide you in your efforts to produce high-quality, portfolio-worthy work in all of your upcoming classes.

Sophomore portfolios are evaluated with the consideration of the range of student work across the curriculum, plus the wider body of contemporary design. The department acknowledges that Sophomore work exists at a different level than that of truly experienced design practitioners. However, for the sake of providing a realistic assessment of design work to-date, the bar for the sophomore portfolio review is intentionally set high.

There are no quotas involved in determining which students pass the sophomore portfolio review. Students are not 'competing' for a finite number of 'slots' within the industrial design program.

Although all students may want to pass the sophomore portfolio review, it is likely that not all students will successfully do so. It is therefore both important and healthy to begin thinking about and planning for what next steps you might take in the event that your sophomore portfolio does not pass the review.

Although preparing for the sophomore portfolio review can be very rewarding and enlightening, it is also an extremely labor-intensive endeavor. Mastering one's time-management, remaining open to diverse feedback from peers, and taking personal responsibility for one's performance are crucial qualities to foster and maintain throughout the process.

Your portfolio is always a work in progress. The sooner you start preparing for the sophomore portfolio review, the more progress you will have made over the next few semesters!

If you have ANY questions contact your IND faculty advisor or the Academic Coordinator in the main office.

# PORTFOLIO EVALUATION RUBRIC

In addition to the requirements on the preceding pages, each student's sophomore portfolio will be evaluated by the criteria delineated in the evaluation rubric below. Work samples should be selected to address all the evaluation categories in the rubric. Remember, you are making a case for your potential to succeed in the ID profession so take this task of portfolio development seriously!

Scores are assigned as follows:

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4, 8 or 12 = proficient | 3, 7 or 11 = developing  |
| 2, 5 or 8 = inadequate  | 1, 2 or 4 = unacceptable |

Preliminary Sketches	sufficient    insufficient			
• Quantity is sufficient to make a judgment	4			1
• Demonstrates diverse solution concepts	4	3	2	1
• Demonstrates concept refinement	4	3	2	1
• Overall quality of sketches	4	3	2	1

## Presentation Drawings

• Quantity is sufficient to make a judgment	4			1
• Demonstrates perspective drawing ability	4	3	2	1
• Demonstrates technical drawing ability	4	3	2	1
• Demonstrates rendering/illustrative ability	4	3	2	1

## Form Development

sufficient    insufficient

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| • Functional refinement as exhibited by soft mockups, final models, and completed projects | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| • Aesthetic refinement as exhibited by soft mockups, final models, and completed projects  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## Creative Potential

- |  |    |    |   |   |
|--|----|----|---|---|
| • Demonstrates creative problem solving  | 12 | 11 | 8 | 4 |
| • Demonstrates diverse solution concepts | 12 | 11 | 8 | 4 |

## Technical Skills

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Demonstrates technical execution in models and prototypes         | 8 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| • Demonstrates ability to work with diverse materials and processes | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## Portfolio Quality

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| • Demonstrates writing ability                     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| • Visual presentation skills and portfolio quality | 8 | 7 | 5 | 2 |

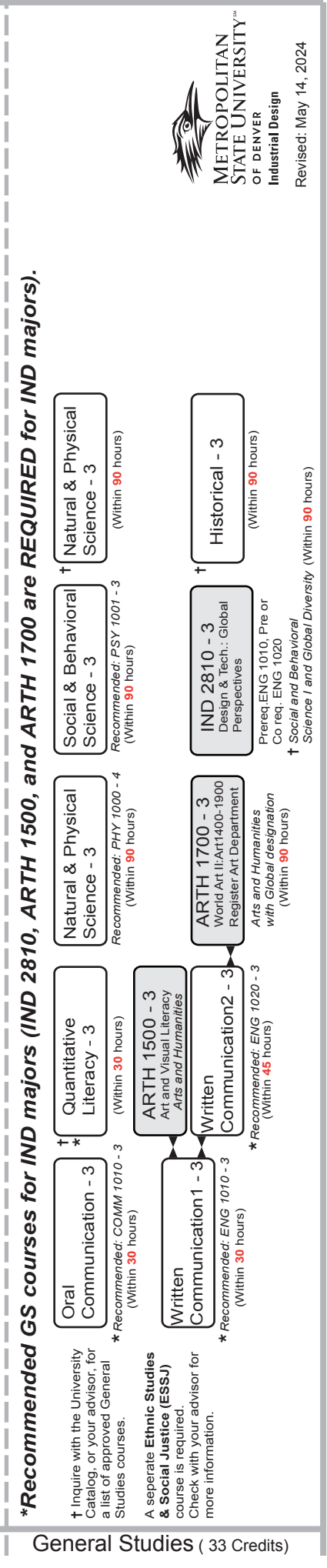
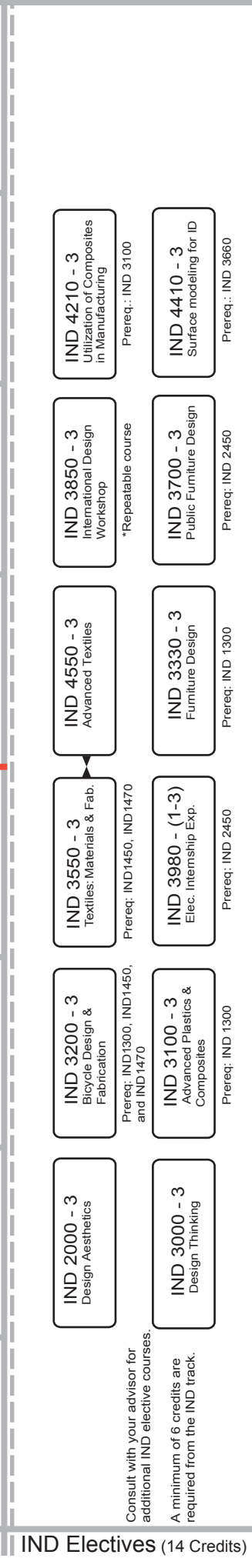
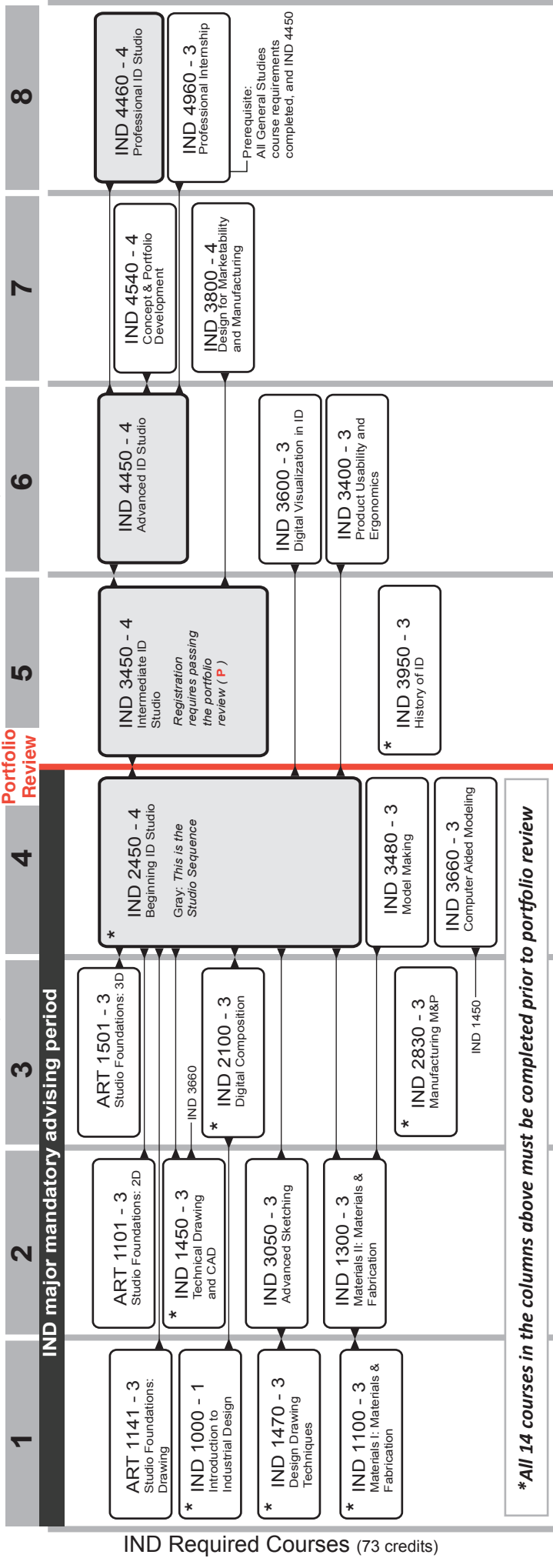
## Overall

- |  |    |    |   |   |
|--|----|----|---|---|
| • Communicates design processes and develops quality solutions | 12 | 11 | 8 | 4 |
|--|----|----|---|---|

**TOTAL SCORE**    \_\_\_\_/100

IND ADVISING MATRIX - 120 Total Credit Hours

This guide accounts for prerequisites and the current portfolio requirement. The guide is for the advisor and the student to work out the student's specific needs. Transfer credits, the opportunity for summer and winterim classes, and course availability affect final schedules.



\*Recommended GS courses for IND majors (IND 2810, ARTH 1500, and ARTH 1700 are REQUIRED for IND majors).

*Please refer to your  
particular catalog year for  
applicable advising matrix.*



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