



The Ohio State University College of the Arts and Sciences
Department of Design

Master of Fine Arts Program

Graduate Studies Handbook

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Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Purpose of the Graduate Studies Handbook	
The Graduate School	
The Graduate Studies Committee	
Department Mission and Goals	4
Goals of the Graduate Program	
General Structure	5
Structure for the Graduate Program in Design	
Design Research and Development	
Digital Animation and Interactive Media	
Master of Fine Arts Degree Program Plans	
Curriculum Organization for the Graduate Program in Design	
Graduate Student Advising	7
Faculty Mentor in the first year	
Thesis Advisor	
Graduate Faculty	
Thesis Committee Members	
Change of Thesis Advisor or Committee Members	
Responsible Research	8
Protection of Human Subjects in Research	
Course Load and Scheduling	9
Student Course Load	
Registration Procedures	
Course Work Plan	
Requirements for Formal Progress Reviews and Graduation	10
Master of Fine Arts Examination and Progress Reviews	
First Year Review	
Thesis Committee Review	
Master's Examination	
Thesis or Project Presentations	
Application for Graduation	
Time Limit / Dismissal Policy	11
Leave of Absence	
Grievances and Resolutions	
Graduate Associates	13
Stipends and Fee Authorizations	
Work Load	
Term of Appointment	
Reappointment	
Departmentally Funded Graduate Associateships	
Criteria and Procedures for Evaluating and Reporting	
Graduate Associate's Performance	
Space and Facilities	
Graduate Fellowships	
Addendum	16
Thesis Committee form	
First Year and Thesis Committee Review forms	
Thesis Expectations and Structure	
Graduate Credit Checklist	



Purpose

Purpose of the Graduate Studies Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to define the expectations of graduate student performance as it relates to the Department of Design's philosophy, goals, policies, and procedures.

The Graduate Studies Handbook has been developed by the Design Department's Graduate Studies Committee with cooperation from the Design Graduate Faculty to provide information on policies and procedures pertinent to graduate study in the Department of Design.

This document is a supplement to regulations contained in The Ohio State University Graduate School Handbook (Edition 2012-13), and the Department of Design Patterns of Administration and generally does not duplicate the standard policies and procedures presented in those documents.

The Graduate School

The Graduate School at Ohio State is comprised of university faculty authorized to give graduate instruction (the Graduate Faculty), the Graduate Council, and the Graduate School office.

Rules, policies, and guidelines relating to graduate education are established by the Graduate Council, which includes graduate faculty and graduate student members.

In addition, the Graduate School serves graduate students, graduate faculty, and the university community through professional development programs and administrative services that support all stages of a graduate student's program.

Additional information on the Graduate School, including the Graduate School Handbook may be found at <http://www.gradsch.osu.edu>.

The Department Graduate Studies Committee

The Department Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for the conduct and administration of the Department's graduate program. The chair of the committee maintains all confidential records for each student. The committee is also responsible for hearing and resolving grievances registered by graduate students.

The committee formulates rules and procedures relevant to the Department's graduate program within the policies established by the Council on Research and Graduate Studies of the Graduate School and the graduate faculty of the Department. Actions taken by the Committee are subject to approval, modification, or reversal by the graduate faculty in the Department.

Other responsibilities of the Graduate Studies Committee are identified in Section XIV of the Graduate School Handbook.



Department Mission and Goals

The Department of Design's advanced degree program focuses on the development of experts and professionals who are knowledgeable about design processes and methods of discovery.

Unique to the Department of Design is an interdisciplinary approach to design activity and research. Candidates are expected to evaluate relevant factors from the humanities, social and natural sciences, and technology, with the creative ability to reach a tangible embodiment, and to insure its appropriate implementation. On the basis of current technical and professional needs, design must be a cross-disciplinary activity engaging and aligning with the broader range of social, economic, and scientific fields of study and application.

Goals of the Graduate Program

The program of graduate study leads to a Master of Fine Arts, the terminal degree in design practice. It is aimed at achieving the following goals in the areas of professional orientation, professional development, and professional contribution.

Students are expected to have achieved these goals upon completion of the program:

To develop a deeper understanding of the history of the design field with a focus on design research, achieved through study of professional literature, significant writings, and coursework.

To demonstrate critical thinking and contextual analysis in which precedents, established and emerging theory and practices are a basis for the understanding of where one's own work is situated in the field.

To demonstrate effective communication through writing and verbal presentation, with the expectation of a written thesis paper that is comprehensive, reflective, and meets the standards of professional and higher academics research.

Competency in the skills for making; demonstrating the ability to identify appropriate tools, technologies and methods for the creation of tangible and visual forms with proficiency in execution and presentation.

To demonstrate the ability to identify and design tools and methods for the research process that are appropriate to the topic and goals of a project.

Competency in the skills of problem identification and formulation within interdisciplinary and collaborative settings, involving active participation in a community within the department and the broader university environment, as preparation for future interdisciplinary practices.



General Structure

Structure for the Graduate Program in Design

The department offers a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree, requiring a total of 60 credit hours, in the following two areas of emphasis:

Design Research and Development (DRD)

Individual and collaborative research is devoted to the development of knowledge and skills possessed by successful designers, such as the critical factors of environmental and social awareness, novel methods for human-centered and systematic analysis, and creative problem-solving. An emphasis is placed on the creation of outcomes that address and contribute to contemporary issues in a global society.

The program is centered on design research with the objective of developing new concepts theories and outcomes that are tested with methods of evaluation for performance, usability, and user satisfaction. The techniques and tools applied may be those traditional to design practice, or those evolving from experimentation and/or electronic media. Critical to this discovery process is the engagement of a primary research effort.

The Design Research and Development track also supports a focus in Design Management and Planning, and Design Education.

Digital Animation and Interactive Media (DAIM)

In collaboration with the Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD), the DAIM program provides opportunities for experienced animation students to develop his or her own creative vision in a research environment for multidisciplinary and collaborative activities. In DAIM, digital animation may extend beyond traditional forms with exploration of new and emerging technologies. Real time graphics and virtual environments, performance animation, game art, responsive and interactive media and installations are approaches which expand the definition and application of digital animation, providing new ground for the design and creation of meaningful content by the animation designer.

Pursuing a PhD with an MA in Design

With design practice becoming more interdisciplinary, the Department of Design offers a Master of Arts (MA) in Design for students who are enrolled or have an academic plan for enrollment in a PhD program that is a complementary area of study at OSU.

This affords an opportunity for deeper exploration in the areas of analytical methods to design problem solving; empirical methods for the evaluation of product and systems designs, experimental design concepts; and advanced design concepts and methodologies.

Entry into the Design MA program, or conversion from the Design MFA to an MA, is subject to approval by the Department Graduate Studies Committee upon acceptance to the program or after recommendation by the student's Faculty Mentor or Thesis Advisor.



Master of Fine Arts Degree Program Plans

The Department of Design offers two Master's degree options: Thesis or Non-Thesis. Both plans require the consistent development of a cohesive body of work related to Design. The distinction between the two plans lies in the mode of documentation and level of research conducted relevant to the production of creative work.

Thesis Plan

A thesis is the documentation of a substantial, cohesive body of scholarly work produced in standard thesis paper format, as specified by the Graduate School. Both research-based theory and research-based conceptual applications (such as a project) may form the basis of the research leading to the thesis. Theses are publications, and as such are accessible to researchers, scholars, and others interested in the subject. Theses are contributions to the knowledge base in design.

Non-Thesis Plan

The conversion to a Non-Thesis plan is at the discretion of the Thesis Advisor and the Thesis Committee, in cases where the committee concludes that the student's proposed project or depth of research topic does not merit expectations of a research-based thesis. In this case, the documentation of the body of work need not follow the Graduate School's specific guidelines for preparing theses. Rather, it is a documentation of the design process or a report of the procedures followed in preparation of a design-related project. The student in consultation with the Thesis Advisor determines the content and format.

Curriculum Organization for the Graduate Program in Design

The content and structure of the Design MFA is based on a 60 credit hour degree program. Credit hours must be taken from four general modules of study, which are:

- Thesis application courses (Design 7998, 7999)

- Foundation seminar courses (e.g., Design 6200, 6300)

- Graduate Design Studios and Seminars (e.g., Design 6100, 6400, 6500)

- Specialization or elective courses in the categories of:

 - History/Theory/Critical Analysis,

 - Interdisciplinary/Collaborative,

 - Studio/Labs.

Specialization and elective courses are to be related to the student's thesis research and may be in departments other than Design.

Common to both the DRD and DAIM emphasis, department core courses address the specific methods, theories, and practices related to the development of design solutions. Studio and laboratory courses facilitate the implementation of theory and concept.

Specialization or elective courses may be Design courses in some cases, but it is encouraged that courses be taken in areas such as the Department of Computer and Information Science, Psychology, Communication, Integrated Systems Engineering, Business, Education, History, English, Film Studies, and the Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD). Electives may be selected as they relate to specific research interests, and must be approved by the student's Thesis Advisor or Faculty Mentor (see next section).

The distribution of credits for each module is different for Design Development and DAIM. Refer to the Graduate Credit Checklist forms which are an addendum to this document. These forms must be maintained and updated in consultation with the Faculty Mentor and/or Thesis Advisor. Candidates must complete the appropriate Graduate Credit Checklist form which is an addendum to this document.

Faculty Mentor in the First Year

Upon the arrival of first year graduate students, a faculty Mentor will be designated. The faculty Mentor is available to assist the student in acclimating to the university environment and department procedures, and assists with course enrollment and other student matters. First year students are expected to discuss thesis interests with his or her Mentor as a means to help identify research directions, resources, and other Design faculty members whose research activities may be a good match with the student.

Thesis Advisor

During the first year, students must begin to transition to a formal relationship with a Thesis Advisor. This may or may not be the same faculty member who served as mentor. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for a permanent Thesis Advisor during residency. This can be done at any time once a faculty member has been identified. The Thesis Advisor also serves as the student's Thesis Committee Chairperson.

It is recommended that a Thesis Advisor and a full thesis committee be confirmed at the beginning of the autumn semester of the second year. This confirmation must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator using the Thesis Committee Form signed by all committee members. The Thesis Committee Form is an addendum to this document.

The mandatory Thesis Committee Review in spring semester of year two requires that the full committee be established prior to this review. The student should consult with his or her First Year Mentor, Thesis Advisor, or the Graduate Program Studies Chair if there are any delays or complications in confirming a full committee.

It is important that the student take the time and effort to meet with graduate faculty and discuss his or her research interests in context to the expertise of the faculty. A Thesis Advisor should be arranged based on these mutual interests so that guidance in the student's research can be effective and productive. In some circumstances, faculty may approach a graduate student to convey interest in thesis advising, but this is not to be expected. A Thesis Advisor is arranged through mutual agreement and is not assigned by any individual. The best advantage for a student to insure success and a rewarding experience in the program is to work with a Thesis Advisor that is a good match with the planned research activities.

The Thesis Advisor:

- Provides general help and guidance to the student in his or her graduate studies and related activities.
- Approves or rejects the content or actions proposed by the graduate student in any required plans or forms.
- Conducts all formal reviews pursuant to the First Year Review with the participation of the Thesis Committee members, including the final Master's Examination.
- May request access to the student's records maintained by the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

In consultation with the Thesis Advisor, it is the student's responsibility to:

- Maintain knowledge of the rules, regulations, and policies set forth in the Graduate School Handbook and Department Graduate Studies Handbook.
- Stay informed of all department and graduate school correspondence, requirements, and deadlines.



- Plan a course of study that is based upon both the department's recommended structure for graduate study, and the needs of the individual student.
- Ensure an appropriate course load which reflects considerations of the student's Graduate Associateship, fellowship, or external employment situation, previous academic record, and the nature of the courses to be taken.
- Submit all necessary forms (formal progress reviews, Thesis Committee, etc.) to the Chair of the Department Graduate Studies Committee.

Graduate Faculty

Graduate faculty are those who have a status of Category M (for Master's advising) or Category P (applicable to Ph.D. degrees) as appointed by the Graduate School. The appropriate category status is required for the faculty member to serve as a Thesis Advisor or Thesis Committee member. In the case of the Design MFA, a category M is required.

Thesis Committee Members

The Thesis Committee shall consist of three members*, of which a minimum of two must be graduate faculty from the Department of Design. The third committee member should be a graduate faculty member from a department other than Design, whose research and advice is relevant to the student's thesis topic. Practicing designers or other professionals may be invited as a fourth committee member or through a petition process to the graduate school as a third committee member.

It is the student's responsibility to meet regularly with each member of his or her Thesis Committee. The student is the primary means of communication between the committee members, and should not underestimate the importance of seeking guidance and feedback from each. The student is responsible for keeping each committee member informed of progress in his or her studies.

The committee shall collectively meet at least once prior to the final Master's Examination. Specifically, the committee must meet to conduct the formal Thesis Committee Review which must be scheduled during the spring semester of the second year.

* Note: In the case of Master of Arts (MA) program plan, the MA committee is required to have a minimum of two members of the graduate faculty in Design.

Change of Thesis Advisor or Thesis Committee Members

Occasionally a student or graduate faculty member may feel that it would be beneficial for the student to change the committee chair or committee members. This might be due to a desire to change specialization or dissatisfaction on the part of either party. Changes of this nature are infrequent and are subject to approval by the Graduate Studies Committee. The change requires the agreement of the Thesis Advisor and the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee. The student shall initiate the change by submitting a written request to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Responsible Research

Protection of Human Subjects in Research

All research activities involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by an OSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) unless the Office of Responsible Research Practices (ORRP) prospectively determines that the research falls into a category of exemption established by federal regulation.



An application for review or exemption must be submitted by the student and receive approvals before conducting any research covered by the IRB. In most cases, a graduate faculty member will serve as Principle Investigator (PI) for the study and the student serves as Co-Investigator. Any faculty member that serves as PI or otherwise advises in a study involving human subjects must be certified through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) web-based human research course.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure all forms are completed appropriately and submitted under review and approval of the participating faculty. For more information on the IRB, see <http://orpp.osu.edu/irb/about/>

Course Load and Scheduling

Student Course Load

The student and the Faculty Mentor or Thesis Advisor mutually determines the courses and number of credit hours taken each semester.

Graduate courses are designated with a "G" in the course offerings bulletin. Generally, courses at 5000 level or above may be applied if taken in departments other than Design, while graduate courses within Design must be 6000 and above to apply. Courses that appear with a "UG" designation only may not be applied as graduate credit. Specifics are noted in the Graduate Studies Handbook in Section IV.1.

In some cases (fellows, graduate associates, and international students) minimum requirements apply. In these cases, minimum enrollment requirements are:

- Graduate Associates 8 credit hours (4 in summer)
- International students 8 credit hours (4 in summer)
- Fellows and Trainees 12 credit hours (6 in summer)

A student may not enroll for more than 16 credit hours per semester, including audited courses, without Mentor or Thesis Advisor and Graduate School approval. Enrollment in excess of 16 credit hours may incur additional fees

Registration Procedures

Registration procedures for the Department of Design follow those for the Graduate School and are described in Section III of the Graduate School Handbook.

Course Work Plan

The student will begin to develop a course work plan of study during the first semester of residence. The first draft of the course plan is completed in concert with Design 6200 and the student's Faculty Mentor. Once the student has selected a Thesis Advisor, the course plan may be revised to reflect the needs of the individual student as well as follow the recommended structure for the Design Research and Development or Digital Animation and Interactive Media track.

The course work plan of study is a "living document". Once established, the course work plan of study may receive minor modification and alteration through the mutual agreement of the student and the Thesis Advisor as based upon sound rationale and reason.



Successful fulfillment of the course work plan of study constitutes completion of the course work requirements for Master's degree candidacy. In situations where the Design MFA program structure changes, the student will be given the option to modify his or her plan of study. Students have the option to adhere to the program structure and the Graduate Studies handbook that is in place the year of entry in the program.

Requirements for Formal Progress Reviews and Graduation

Master of Fine Arts Examination and Progress Reviews

Two formal progress reviews and a final Master's examination presided over by the Thesis Committee are required. Other informal progress reviews may be conducted as deemed necessary by the Thesis Committee. It is recommended that the graduate student consult with the Thesis Advisor in preparation for each review. All Design faculty are invited to attend these reviews.

First Year Review

Graduate students pursuing the MFA degree are subject to a formal First Year Review scheduled near the end of spring semester of the first year. All graduate faculty participate in the review. The schedule and format of the review is determined by the Graduate Studies Committee. In general, each student will have a designated area throughout the day of the review, and is expected to display and/or present work produced during the first year of study and to engage in discussion with faculty about potential research directions.

The purpose of the First Year Review is to determine satisfactory progress in the program. If the decision of the Graduate Faculty is that satisfactory progress has not been made, the student will be placed on probation for one semester, and a second progress review will be scheduled to take place during the next semester in which the student is enrolled. The review committee for a probationary review will consist of the Graduate Studies Committee or department Graduate Faculty appointed by the committee. If that review is not satisfactory, the student will be denied continuation in the program.

Thesis Committee Review

Graduate students pursuing the MFA degree are required to have a formal review by their Thesis Committee during the spring semester of the second year. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the Thesis Committee Review with all committee members present.

The purpose of the Thesis Committee Review is for the student to present a thesis proposal for review by his or her Thesis Committee. Approval by the committee advances the student towards completion of the thesis and/or thesis project, and the MFA program.

A formal written document must be given to all members of the Thesis Committee at least one week prior to the review. This proposal must include:

- A proposed thesis title
- A stated argument or claim with supporting data
- A proposed contribution and definition of audience
- Relevant references or sources
- Description of approaches that were considered prior to final direction
- Description of a primary research activity (generation of research, practice or experimentation)
- A proposed methodology
- Next steps (course plans, production schedule, thesis outline, etc.)



In the event that the Committee rejects the proposal, the graduate student will have one semester to reformulate the proposal based on the Committee's recommendations. A second progress review must be scheduled the following semester. A student may only have one such supplementary progress review. The Thesis Committee Review Form and a written progress report must be approved by the Thesis Committee and filed with the Graduate Studies Committee by the end of the semester. The Thesis Committee Review Form is an addendum to this document.

Master's Examination

The purpose of the Master's Comprehensive Examination is to determine the candidate's qualification to be granted the degree (see Section VI.2 in the Graduate School Handbook.) The content of the examination generally concerns, but is not limited to, the area of study pursued. Unanimous approval by the Master's Examination Committee is necessary for satisfactory completion of this requirement.

All members of the Thesis Committee must be present for the Examination. A Master's Examination in Design is a maximum duration of two hours. The Thesis Advisor determines the format and conducts the proceedings of the Examination. The format typically includes a presentation by the student followed by questions from the committee.

All Design faculty may attend Master's Examinations. Design Graduate Students may also elect to attend. The student has the option of inviting additional guests in consultation with the Thesis Advisor. The Thesis Advisor has the option of dismissing all visitors during the committee's question and answer session. In all cases, comments or questions by visitors can be made only when allowed for and called upon by the Thesis Advisor.

The Graduate School accepts thesis documents in electronic format only. Hard copies of the thesis or project documentation are required for submission to the Design Department, in addition to hard copies for the Thesis Advisor and members of the Thesis Committee.

Application for Graduation

The candidate must complete an Application for Graduation by the 3rd Friday of the semester of graduation. This form, along with the Course Credit form approved and signed by the Thesis Advisor, must be approved by the Graduate Studies Chair. The Application for Graduation may be downloaded at the Graduate School's web site <http://www.gradsch.osu.edu>

Time Limit / Dismissal Policies

Time Limit

The entire work for the Master's degree must be completed within a period of four calendar years from the date of entry into the Graduate program in Design. If the time limit is exceeded, the student must formally re-apply to the program if he or she wishes to continue. Re-admittance is not guaranteed and is based upon evaluation by the graduate faculty.

Under exceptional circumstances, a student may request that this rule be waived by submitting a request in writing to the Graduate Studies Committee. This request should specify the circumstances warranting the waiver and the semester and year in which the student plans to graduate. The Graduate Studies Committee will review the request and make a recommendation to the graduate faculty. A vote by the faculty constitutes a final decision in waiving the time limit.



Leave of Absence

Unexpected circumstances may at times require a student to suspend his or her course of study for an extended period. In such cases, a written request for a leave of absence must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee. When a leave of absence is approved by the Committee in advance, the duration of the leave is not counted against the time limit.

Dismissal Policy

Grounds for dismissal from the Graduate program in Design include failure to receive approval from the graduate faculty and/or Thesis Committee for the following formal reviews:

- First Year Review
- Thesis Committee Review
- Final Master's Examination
- Final Thesis paper/project documentation

See the appropriate sections in this handbook for details on requirements of the formal reviews.

Additional grounds for dismissal relate to deteriorating performance, ethical standards, and/or academic misconduct, as defined in the Graduate School Handbook, Section V – Academic and Professional Standards.

In cases where graduate faculty and/or the Thesis Committee give an extension after failing to pass a formal review, a limit of one additional review is granted and must be conducted prior to the end of the following semester. Any exceptions to this rule must be petitioned in writing by the student and addressed to the Department Graduate Studies Committee, and accompanied by a written response to the request from the student's Thesis Advisor.

Grievances and Resolutions

All grievances regarding time limits or dismissal from the program must be submitted in writing to the Department Graduate Studies Committee. Decisions regarding grievance resolutions are made by the committee in consultation with the Chair of the Department of Design and the Design Graduate Faculty.

To petition decisions made by the Department regarding Master's Examinations, a student may file a grievance with the Graduate school. The Dean of the Graduate School will not review such petitions if the above departmental review process has not yet been conducted. For more information, see Appendix C – Graduate Student Grievance Review Guidelines, in the Graduate School Handbook.



Graduate Associates

Rules pertaining to Graduate Associates (GAs) within the Department of Design are in accordance with those established by and administered through the Graduate School and the Office of Human Resources. Rules established by the Graduate School are listed in Section IX of the Graduate School Handbook.

Stipends and Fee Authorizations

There are three types of Graduate Associateships (GA) available in the Department of Design: Graduate Administrative Associate (GAA), Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA) and Graduate Research Associate (GRA). Availability of a GA position is related to budgetary resources of the Department and come under the jurisdiction of the Chairperson of the Department of Design. Stipends and work hours follow the accepted standards in the University and are assigned at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Department in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee. All appointments are made conditional on the availability of funds.

All GAs receive a fee authorization that includes the instructional and general fees, and nonresident fees as relevant. The student must pay any other mandatory fees (e.g., COTA bus fee, computing fees, etc.) unless the contract provides otherwise. Students who hold an appointment for two consecutive semesters are also eligible for a summer semester fee authorization (fee waiver).

Work Load

Two possible appointments are available. Appointments are typically made on a semester basis. A 50% appointment involves 20 hours per week, and a 25% appointment involves 10 hours per week. (A 25% appointment includes only a 50% fee authorization.) This includes time spent in preparation, in classroom and laboratory, and in counseling students, or any combination of these activities, depending on the type of appointment.

Associateship workloads in combination with academic loads are to be reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee and recommendations are to be made to the Department's Chairperson in individual cases. Reference should be made to the Graduate School Handbook for guidelines in these matters.

Students who hold a GA appointment cannot hold any other job, either in or out of the University unless approval is obtained.

Term of Appointment

All Department-sponsored associates are appointed by the Chairperson of the Department of Design, typically for a term of two semesters with possible renewal as determined by the Chairperson and performance reviews. For those associateships funded externally, the needs of the project or research will determine the length of the appointment.

The term of a two-semester appointment runs from August through May. Vacation and sick leave is not accrued during a GA appointment. OSU observed holidays and breaks are detailed in the Graduate School Handbook. No student is required to work on a legal holiday.



Reappointment

Appointment renewals are to be made in accordance with the published policies and subject to the availability of funds.

In general, no graduate student who has accumulated 8 semesters (4 years) of academic study at this University may be awarded a graduate associate appointment.

No graduate student who is currently on probation in the Graduate School may be awarded a graduate associate appointment. A graduate student may petition his or her Departmental Graduate Studies Committee for an extension or waiver of these conditions for appointment. The Graduate Studies Committee will determine the student's eligibility for appointment and will notify the Graduate School of its decision.

Department Funded Graduate Associateships

A limited number of department-funded GAs are available each year. Responsibilities may vary on occasion with regard to the specific course or lab assignment. Responsibilities are as assigned by the Department Chairperson and the graduate associate's immediate supervisor.

The GA titles for these assignments are:

- Graduate Administrative Associate (GAA)
 - Model Lab
 - Computer Labs
 - Departmental Administration
- Graduate Research Associate (GRA)
 - Varies with faculty research projects
- Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA)
 - Varies with need for support to teach undergraduate courses

The qualifications for associateships from externally funded sources will normally be specified in proposals or other documents describing the project. A copy of these qualifications must be provided to the Department Chairperson. The project director must submit his request for assistance in accordance with regular selection procedures.

All graduate associates enrolled in the graduate program of the Department of Design are subject to the procedure and policy guidelines of the Department. Regardless of sponsorship (internal or external funding), all GTAs, GAAs and GRAs are subject to and protected by these guidelines.

Criteria and Procedures for Evaluating and Reporting Graduate Associate's Performance

All GAs are evaluated on a semester basis. Evaluation of performance is based on the job description for that position and the specific tasks as outlined for the associate at the beginning of the semester or the year. Associates should meet with the supervisory faculty member each semester to discuss the performance evaluation.

If a problem arises in the classroom or in the performance of duties, the supervisory faculty member who is working with the student informs the Department Chairperson. A meeting is held between the GA, the supervisory faculty member and the Department Chairperson to discuss the problem.



Appointments are subject to the availability of funds and may be rescinded due to poor performance, withdrawal from the program, inadequate number of enrolled credit hours or other justifiable situations described in Section IX of the Graduate Studies Handbook.

Termination of a GA appointment can occur for the following reasons:

- The GA is no longer enrolled in the Graduate School,
- The GA is registered for fewer than the required hours,
- Performance is determined to be unsatisfactory,
- The GA graduates,
- The employing unit has insufficient funds,
- A research project or special project ends, or
- Other situation determined appropriate by the Chairperson.

The Council on Research and Graduate Studies has published information on grievance procedures, copies of that are available at the Graduate School. These procedures are also described in Appendix C of the Graduate School Handbook.

Graduate Fellowships

Fellowships are awarded at the time of acceptance into the program, and are non-service appointments providing a monthly stipend and payment of resident and non-resident tuition and fees. They are regarded as the most prestigious form of support awarded to graduate students, and they are offered on a highly competitive basis. Graduate School Fellowships are awarded to those applicants who show outstanding scholarly accomplishment and the most outstanding potential for graduate study. Information regarding fellowship structure, appointments, eligibility, terms and benefits can be found in Section X in the Graduate School Handbook.



Thesis Committee Form

(Updated May 2010)



Date: _____

Candidate: _____

Area of Study: _____

I request the following members of the Graduate Faculty to serve on my Thesis Committee:

_____ Committee Chair (print)

_____ Committee Chair's signature

_____ Committee member (print)

_____ Committee member signature

_____ Committee member (print)

_____ Committee member signature

Note: The 3rd committee member should be from a department other than Design
MA committees are not required to have a third member.

_____ Candidate's signature

_____ Grad Studies Chair's signature



First Year Review (Updated May 2012)
For the MFA in the Department of Design



Date: _____

Candidate: _____

The Design Graduate Faculty members have reviewed the research and coursework of the candidate above during this the second semester of their graduate enrollment.

The results of the review are as follows:

- _____ Continue in the MFA program
- _____ Delay review for one semester (a rationale must be specified on this form)
- _____ Deny continuation in the program (on second review).

A delayed review will cause the student to be placed on departmental probation until a subsequent review that must take place during the following semester, at which time department probation will be removed or the student will be denied continuation in the program.

Recommendations:

Submitted by (print name and sign):

_____ Faculty Mentor or Advisor

_____ Graduate Studies Program Chair



Thesis Committee Review (Updated April 2012)
For the MFA in the Department of Design



Date: _____

Candidate: _____

The undersigned Graduate Faculty members have reviewed the research and coursework of the candidate above during this the fourth semester of their graduate enrollment.

The results of the review are as follows:

- _____ Continue in the MFA program
- _____ Delay review for one quarter (a rationale must be specified on this form)
- _____ Deny continuation in the program (on second review)

A delayed review will cause the student to be placed on departmental probation until the subsequent Thesis Committee Review that must take place during the following semester, at which time department probation will be removed or the student will be denied continuation in the program.

The Thesis Committee Review written requirement must be given to each committee member one week prior to the review and must be attached to this form.

Recommendations: _____

Submitted by (print name and sign):

_____ Committee Chair

_____ Committee member

_____ Committee member

Thesis Expectations and Structure

Updated March 2010

The graduate faculty considers design a process of isolating, defining, and analyzing problems of our physical and virtual environments and of proposing appropriate solutions. Concerns are not only with the traditional conceptualization and development phase of the design process, but also with research methods that ultimately give birth to new theories and concepts, and to testing and evaluation methods for assessing performance. Problem seeking and problem solving work hand in hand in the process of pushing the boundaries of existing knowledge.

Students working in an interdisciplinary environment apply various research methods to reveal problems and propose opportunities and solutions. These solutions are then translated into a form that is understandable and beneficial to others.

These activities lead to the terminal degree of Master of Fine Arts. Within the two tracks of Design Development and Digital Animation and Interactive Media (DAIM) there is an expected degree of rigor that must be present in the candidate's work.

Argument

- An arguable statement or claim
- Data that supports claim
- A linkage between your evidence and your claim

Contextual Understanding

- What else has been done related to your topic
- Use of relevant references or sources

Primary research activity

- Show a mode of inquiry

- Generation of research material which involves the collection of data that does not already exist and/or
- Develop an innovative, comprehensive, tangible result (prototype, film, etc.) through practice or experimentation

Critical Thinking

- Evidence that several aspects to the thesis were considered prior to formalizing a final direction
- An avoidance of personal bias
- Creativity

Methodology

- Define a clear mode of discovery
- An articulation of the process toward results
- An understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of methodologies used

Analysis

- An examination of your data to discover its meaning

Ethics

- Work with honesty and integrity
- Carry out ethical obligations
- Cite references and acknowledge others

Contribution

- A contribution to the body of knowledge in design, supported by evidence

Design research is about investigation and discovery and is applicable to many fields. Design research may focus on design process, methodology, meaning making or form giving. The overall intention is to contribute new knowledge to the field. Design research may occur in several modes.