



KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
COMMUNICATION DESIGN

Course Descriptions of Core MFA Curriculum

CDE 501: Personal Exploration Seminar

This course will allow each MFA candidate to explore individual style, projects, visual techniques, academic, social, cultural interests and intellectual content that has personal meaning to the student. This course will focus on personal creative design exploration. Coursework will emphasize individual visual/creative experimentation and projects created and authored by the student. The MFA candidate will challenge him/herself to resolve complex problems in advertising, interactive, illustration, graphic design and/or other design-related fields in the student's own unique style. This course will require research, visual and conceptual investigation towards the development of the MFA candidate's own voice. Significant analysis will be needed to design the materials for the appropriate target audience.

CDE 502: Professional Exploration Seminar

This course will allow each MFA candidate to review and evaluate his/her concepts, knowledge and skill set and to focus forward to explore new areas of interest that could be utilized in professional practice. Each MFA candidate will be researching advertising design, illustration design, interactive design, graphic design and/or related design fields. Each MFA candidate will select an area for further professional development.

CDE 503: Unconventional Typography

Typography is the art of utilizing letterforms to communicate, to influence and to interpret ideas. Each MFA candidate will explore new and historical interpretations of expression through typography. Emphasis will be placed on expressive typography and experimentation with type. The MFA candidate will use both historic and innovative typographic techniques and media to create unique typographic communication. Typography will be used to communicate as both art and message through experimentation, photography, innovative media, kinetic type, time-based type, expressive artistic creation and computer manipulation. The MFA candidate will be responsible for the research, conception, creation, and manipulation of letterforms in a creative project.

CDE 504: Design Pioneers

Designers are social commentators of their time. We create in response to the events that are happening around us. A design pioneer is someone who has transformed, or is currently transforming the design industry through his/her aesthetic sensibility, media used and/or technological innovation. This course will assist each MFA candidate in a journey of self-discovery to identify his/her own design influences. Design Pioneers examines graphic designers and movements that are of specific interest to the MFA candidate. This course emphasizes creating a visual project to personally interpret the ideas and concepts presented by past and present design pioneers.

CDE 505: Contemporary Topics

This graduate seminar will focus on current and emerging issues in the design industry as a whole. The course content will require research into topics or issues being widely discussed in relevant publications, conferences, and professional groups and through the broad online community of design and design-related professionals. The research topic areas may span many different disciplines such as advertising, graphic, interactive, industrial, and product design as well as other areas yet to be added to the design field through new technological innovations. The research generated by each MFA candidate will then be transformed into a meaningful and appropriate form that communicates a position, educates a targeted audience and/or raises professional or public awareness of the design related topic or issue.

CDE 506: Emerging Media

This graduate seminar will focus on emerging technological advancements as they relate to the Communication Design industry and design-related fields. Each MFA candidate will analyze how emerging technologies are used to complement and enhance existing methods of communicating for the creation of media solutions. The course content will delve into the newest technologies relating to print, film, video, photography, computer applications and other devices that are moving from experimentation to being adopted by a mainstream audience. Each MFA candidate will create a content message that can be delivered via emerging technologies and media.

CDE 510: Thesis 1 — Research (hybrid distance)

Thesis I: Research Studies will assist students in identifying a thesis topic suitable for long-term development. The MFA candidate will be guided through proposal writing and editing, thesis research, and media exploration. The MFA candidate will be required to fully research and present his/her findings in writing to the Thesis Advisor and the MFA Graduate Review Committee for defense and approval. His/her research findings will serve to expand the field of Communication Design. Ultimately the thesis is submitted as a written document supported by visual examples.

CDE 512: Thesis 2 — Creative (hybrid distance)

Thesis II: Creative Studies will be the exploration and development of a media-appropriate, information-based project. This course emphasizes exploring alternative methods and media to best communicate the written thesis material. The MFA candidate will continue researching and finalizing his/her thesis. The MFA candidate will also determine the visuals, messages, campaigns, illustrations, photography, etc. appropriate to communicate his/her thesis topic. The MFA candidate will be required to submit and present a thorough plan for the production, presentation and exhibition of the finding of the thesis research to his/her Thesis Advisor and the MFA Graduate Review Committee for defense and approval.

CDE 513: Thesis 3 — Exhibition/Production (hybrid distance)

Thesis III: Production/Presentation/Exhibition will be the production; defense and presentation of a unique final exhibit displaying the process, creative thesis project and findings of his/her thesis research. This exhibition is the culmination of research, development and visual work created during the previous two theses courses, CDE511 Thesis I: Research Studies and CDE512 Thesis II: Creative Studies. There are three components to this class. First, each MFA candidate will produce a final creative project communicating the findings of his/her research. Second, each MFA candidate will present his/her work through a public lecture, gallery talk and/or podcast. Third, each MFA candidate will develop a method of exhibition that is relevant to the topic of his/her thesis. The body of work could be showcased at the Miller Art Gallery, in appropriate alternate spaces on campus, in the community, online or any combination of exhibition methods. Each MFA candidate will produce the exhibition itself including supporting materials and the finished creative work. Each MFA candidate will also be responsible for submitting the final research and exhibition for professional publication and/or presentation at a design-related conference so that it reaches a broader audience beyond the venue of the Kutztown University campus. The MFA candidate will be required to communicate and present the creative thesis project and final exhibition plan for approval to the Thesis Advisor and the MFA Graduate Review Committee for defense and approval.