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The graduate programs in the Department of Art + Design are designed to cultivate capacity and fluency in a range of disciplines and practices to create and deliver value and benefit for an increasingly connected and diverse world. Spanning many subjects, interests, and intentions across disparate fields and manifold practices of art, media, and design, our master’s and certificate programs will challenge and inspire you to push the boundaries of cultural production and stewardship and social and civic impact. We strive to empower you to bring your ideas to life through design conversations, media making, and artistic expression and enjoy richly rewarding careers and lives.

Programs

Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

- Experience Design (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/experience-design-mfa)
- Information Design and Visualization (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/information-visualization-mfa)
- Interdisciplinary Arts (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/interdisciplinary-mfa)

Master of Science (MS)

- Experience Design (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/experience-design-ms)

Graduate Certificate

- Arts Administration and Cultural Entrepreneurship (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/arts-management-cultural-entrepreneurship)
- Cultural Entrepreneurship (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/cultural-entrepreneurship-graduate-certificate)
- Experience Design (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/experience-design-graduate-certificate)
- Information Design and Visualization (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/information-design-visualization-graduate-certificate)

Courses

Art + Design Courses

ARTD 5001. Art, Context, Action 1. 4 Hours.
Offers an advanced studio-seminar to foster the creation and understanding of contemporary interdisciplinary art, emphasizing its role in reflecting and shaping its social contexts. Course activities include viewing, reading, and discussion of key projects, theories, methods, and professional practices as they have evolved over time, as well as regularly scheduled critique of the students’ ongoing bodies of work. Experiential learning opportunities allow students to interact with practitioners, curators, and institutions in the field. Offers students an opportunity to grow as practicing artists, designers, and arts professionals.

ARTD 5002. Art, Context, Action 2. 4 Hours.
Continues the study of interdisciplinary arts theory and practice begun in ARTD 5001.

ARTD 5101. Interactive Media Arts 1. 4 Hours.
Examines in-depth the issues involved in new media performance and interactive technologies that are used in or mediate performances, artworks, or installations. Emphasizes the ways in which current art intersects with ideas in the larger cultural context. Introduces methods of creative research and thematic development that results in a unique individual and/or stylistic expression. Offers students an opportunity to develop an individual approach to the interactive media art form that results in original works of art. Introduces concepts and practices of scripted interactive media including, but not limited to, Processing, Flash, JavaScript, and hardware such as Arduino.
ARTD 5202. Photographic Media in Cultural Context. 4 Hours.
Offers a practice-based course that gives students an opportunity to refine their photographic practice and to respond to contemporary photographic theory in conjunction with their portfolio work. Explores the many ways photography can be produced and experienced by investigating current cultural influences and technologies. Requires students to demonstrate an understanding of the various criteria used for making critical judgments about the visual arts, including the relationship of visual culture within a societal context. Using this individual approach to their photography, students are expected to develop a body of work that expresses their intent.

ARTD 5301. Independent Research Project 1. 4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to independently create practiced-based design of new media performance or experiences. Explores students to independently research interactive technologies used in contemporary-based artworks. Under faculty mentorship, students independently explore methods of creative research and thematic development that result in a unique individual and/or stylistic expression in original works of art. Includes student presentations of ongoing research and works in progress to faculty for assessment.

ARTD 5582. Collaborative Video and Community Engagement. 4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to explore the process of collaborative video making with a focus on the ethics and social dynamics of civic engagement in this video production course. Aspects students to independently research interactive technologies used in contemporary-based production labs that mix theoretical analysis and technical training. Examines different forms of authorship, video genres, and digital tools for collaboration ranging from crowdsourcing to remix platforms. Offers students an opportunity to produce reflection papers on the process of collaboration and engagement with activity, as well as video art projects for organizations working on campus and in the Boston area.

ARTD 6001. Art, Media, Participation 1. 4 Hours.
Offers a graduate studio-seminar to foster the creation and understanding of contemporary interdisciplinary art, emphasizing how varied media strategies foster audience interaction and public engagement. Course activities include readings and discussions of key projects, theories, and professional practices as they have evolved over time, as well as scheduled critique of the students’ ongoing bodies of work. Experiential learning opportunities allow students to interact with practitioners, curators, and institutions in the field. Paves the way toward the development of a graduate thesis project and offers students an opportunity to grow as practicing artists, designers, and arts professionals.

ARTD 6002. Art, Media, Participation 2. 4 Hours.
Continues the study of interdisciplinary arts theory and practice begun in ARTD 6001.

ARTD 6101. Interactive Media Arts 2. 4 Hours.
Continues ARTD 5101. Focuses on further research and creative development of a thematic approach to interactive media and installation as an art form. Offers students an opportunity to continue to develop an individual approach and expression in the media art that results in original artworks, installation, or digitally mediated experiences. The course goals are to advance interactive media practices resulting in unique exploration in the creation of innovative systems, installations, or experiences. Continues the study of methods for creative research and thematic development that results in a unique individual and/or stylistic expression.

ARTD 6201. Interactive Mobile Art Apps. 4 Hours.
Focuses on the creation of interactive art-based mobile apps and media. Drawn from a conceptual focus on interactive narrative and experiences, offers students an opportunity to explore mobile media as a vehicle for creative expression. Seeks to reinforce student knowledge of user-centric design processes and interaction strategies with the goal of understanding psychological and behavioral aspects of user experience as applied to conceptually oriented art and narrative projects. Surveys mobile apps in multiple environments, and introduces codebase libraries, resources, and methods for the creation of engaging interactive media content.

ARTD 6301. Independent Research Project 2. 4 Hours.
Continues ARTD 5301. Following through with creative and thematic development in practice-based research modality, offers students an opportunity to work independently to develop a creative project in an area related to public artworks that are interactive, audience- and viewer-responsive, or investigate how artworks define or alter public space. Under faculty mentorship, students work independently to develop and pursue a topic through to completion and presentation. The expectation is that realizable art, design, or media work; creative development; scholarly presentation; or other recognizable tangible result is achieved and presented to the faculty and to the public.

ARTE 5901. Special Topics in Art and Design Studio. 4 Hours.
Offers an opportunity for the intensive study of specialized themes in areas of research in studio and aesthetics related to art and design. Instructor determines format and content. May be repeated without limit.

ARTE 6210. Research Methods for the Creative Arts. 4 Hours.
Introduces major methodologies commonly used in contemporary, interdisciplinary creative practice. Emphasizes blended methods drawing on the humanities, qualitative social sciences, and design, such as the use of archival sources, visual and discursive analysis, interviews and participant observation, and human-centered and participatory design. Emphasizes questions of power and the ethical implications of creative work as framed through various theoretical lenses. Provides a venue for the design of a creative research project in support of the graduate thesis.

ARTE 6211. Art Criticism by Artists. 4 Hours.
Studies the writings of twentieth- and twenty-first-century artists about their art in relationship to their work. Considers artists ranging from Wassily Kandinsky to Robert Smithson to Adrian Piper as both critics of their work and as creators. Also considers how these roles interrelate.

ARTE 6961. Internship. 1-4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity for internship work. May be repeated up to four times.

ARTE 6962. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

ARTE 6964. Co-op Work Experience. 0 Hours.
Provides eligible students with an opportunity for work experience. May be repeated without limit.

ARTE 6966. Practicum. 1-4 Hours.
Offers eligible students an opportunity for practical experience. May be repeated up to four times.

ARTE 6976. Directed Study. 1-4 Hours.
Offers independent work under the direction of members of the department on a chosen topic. Course content depends on instructor. May be repeated up to four times.
ARTE 6984. Research. 1-4 Hours. 
Offers students an opportunity to conduct research under faculty supervision. May be repeated up to four times.

ARTE 7100. Thesis Proposal. 4 Hours.
Offers candidates an opportunity to select a topic and present a proposal for a topic of study/research to a faculty committee for approval. A definition of the scope of the project, the methodologies for the research, and the assumptions being questioned or analyzed are determined. The thesis research proposal must demonstrate the student's ability to carry out sustained and independent research to develop critical and specialist knowledge of contemporary topics in a field related to public art. Research includes aspects of scholarship in some or all of the following: theory, semiotics, ontology, phenomenology, and social or critical approaches to cultural studies.

ARTE 7990. Thesis. 4 Hours.
Offers the candidate, working with a thesis advisor, an opportunity to continue to complete the research project defined and proposed in ARTE 7100. The research is carried out in an independent manner, with periodic presentations to the thesis committee. These presentations define the benchmarks for determination of successful progress in the project. The ultimate result is an exhibition, screening, performance, or other form of public display or presentation, together with a thesis paper or written corollary.

ARTE 7996. Thesis Continuation. 0 Hours.
Offers continued work on the thesis project.

ARTG 5100. Information Design Studio 1: Principles. 4 Hours.
Explores the theories and practices of information design through studio projects. Investigates visual systems and information structures such as maps, timelines, charts, and diagrams. Emphasizes the creative process of organizing, visualizing, and communicating data by seeking to make complex information easier to understand and use. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5110. Information Design History. 4 Hours.
Investigates the history of visualization practices across disciplines and in relation to technology developments. Critically examines seminal visualizations in social, cultural, and technological contexts by means of discussions and writing activities in a seminar format. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5120. Information Design Research Methods. 4 Hours.
Examines qualitative and quantitative research methods pertinent to information communication systems. Through discussion and writing activities, offers students an opportunity to investigate varied inquiry toward the development of researchable questions, argument formation, and assessment methodologies. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5130. Visual Communication for Information Design. 4 Hours.
Explores graphic and typographic theory, principles, and practices. Introduces students to visual communication design with a primary focus on typography as the fundamental means of conveying content. Readings locate design and typography within the larger history of visual art and writing development. Covers methods of organizing content through hierarchy and spatial organization of grid structures. Considers relationships between positive and negative space, depth perception, transparency, and color theory. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5310. Visual Cognition. 4 Hours.
Introduces human visual cognition as it applies to information design and visualization. Focuses on perception, attention, pattern recognition, information acquisition, memory, and creation of mental models. Explores reasoning, cognition, decision making, and problem solving in relation to visual artifacts. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5320. Statistics Basics for Designers. 4 Hours.
Offers design students an opportunity to obtain the necessary skills to collect, summarize, analyze, and interpret data. Introduces concepts and methods in statistical reasoning and analysis. Topics include data mining, comparison, assessment, and delivery. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 5330. Visualization Technologies. 4 Hours.
Introduces programming languages that allow computational analysis and digital delivery of dynamic information. Examines implications of environmental and personal sensor data sources, mobile collection and analysis of data, real-time networked data sets, and social use of shared data visualization tools. May be repeated once.

ARTG 5600. Experience Design Studio 1—Principles. 4 Hours.
Offers a context for a cohesive experience through interaction, movement, and understanding, which builds on previous knowledge of audiences and applications. Offers students hands-on project development of systems, artifacts, communication, environments, or service offerings focusing on the unique personal experience of the audience exposed to the semester-long project. Experience design is a holistic approach to design that investigates the human experience in specific situations to improve its quality, given an understanding of human goals, needs, and desires. Offers students an opportunity to develop competency in tools used to create the various elements that create the context for experiences in specific situations and events. Undergraduate seniors admitted with permission of instructor.

ARTG 5610. Design Systems. 4 Hours.
Explores a systems-based perspective on our environment by addressing questions that are fundamental to design practice: What is a system, and what are the different types? How do we observe, analyze, and represent systems? What interactions can we have with systems and what are the different types of interaction? Explores structures and processes for the design of systemic relationships between people, artifacts, environments, and activities. Systems may be physical, virtual, social, or a combination. Through discussion, writing, diagramming, and project exercises, offers students an opportunity to learn principles of systems theory and explore the connection between design methods and systems thinking. Undergraduate seniors admitted with permission of instructor.

ARTG 5620. Notational Systems for Experience. 4 Hours.
Examines theoretical foundations, concepts, and methods of visual notational systems used in the effective analysis and communication of existing experiences and in the envisioning of conditions for future experiences. Notational systems are sets of graphic signs and codes that denote or prescribe specific actions, forces, operations, events, or performances that occur over time. Students engage with concepts and models through readings, discussion, case study analyses, and speculative design projects. Evaluates the role that notational systems play in documenting, analyzing, and understanding the human goals, actions, behaviors, and perceptions key to experience and assesses their value in designing for agency and new experiences. Undergraduate seniors admitted with permission of instructor. Understanding a design process and knowledge of studio critique practices recommended.
ARTG 6100. Information Design Studio 2: Dynamic Mapping and Models. 4 Hours.
Continues the exploration of data representations in a variety of media. Focuses on interactive and time-based techniques. Emphasizes computational methods of data collection, manipulation, and encoding. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor. May be repeated once.

ARTG 6110. Information Design Theory and Critical Thinking. 4 Hours.
Examines various theoretical models of information visualization and delivery systems. Evaluates the concepts and effectiveness of the models through discussions and writing activities. Students who do not meet course prerequisites or restrictions may seek permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 6200. Information Design Studio 3: Synthesis. 4 Hours.
Continues the exploration of theories of information design and visualization through focused projects that are intended to lead to development of a thesis project. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 6310. Design for Behavior and Experience. 4 Hours.
Examines the potential of interfaces as mediators between information and users. Explores iterative prototyping and research methods to analyze patterns of behavior and implications of interface on effective communication. Utilizes observation, empathy, ethnography, and participatory design methods to offer students an opportunity to increase their understanding of audiences' and stakeholders' motivations and expectations. Requires graduate standing or permission of program coordinator or instructor.

ARTG 6320. Design of Information-Rich Environments. 4 Hours.
Explores methods of information organization, presentation, and navigation in physical space. Introduces concepts of wayfinding and embodiment and examines the bridging of physical and virtual spaces through the use of mobile and locative technologies. Encourages collaborative studio projects exploring interventions in public or urban environments and in exhibit-based learning environments. Undergraduate students may seek permission of instructor.

ARTG 6330. Information Design Mapping Strategies. 4 Hours.
Examines the relationships between content and context through mapping methods. Emphasizes the impact of geographic information systems, evolving technologies, community mapping tools, globalization, and delivery systems. Undergraduate students may seek permission of instructor.

ARTG 6900. Special Topics in Design. 4 Hours.
Explores focused research topics relevant to the graduate program curriculum. Undergraduate students may seek permission of program coordinator or instructor. May be repeated up to three times.

ARTG 7100. Information Design Thesis Seminar. 4 Hours.
Examines emerging research and critical practices in information design and visualization. Offers students an opportunity to develop the visual and verbal expression of the thesis through writing, discussion, presentation, and critique.

ARTG 7990. Thesis. 8 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to develop and produce a written and project-based thesis that integrates and applies their accumulated knowledge to a specific real-world situation. Encourages student participation within a practice and research community consisting of classmates, advisor(s), and external professionals.

ARTG 7996. Thesis Continuation. 0 Hours.
Offers students continuing thesis supervision by members of the department.

ARTH 5100. Contemporary Art Theory and Criticism. 4 Hours.
Introduces the major critical and philosophical approaches that have transformed the reception, interpretation, and production of contemporary art since the 1960s. Examines a range of key interpretive methodologies—including modernism, postmodernism, psychoanalysis, feminism, Marxism, poststructuralism and deconstruction, critical race theory, visual studies, and globalism—designed to provide practitioners with the means to critically frame their own art making within contemporary debates about the meaning and social functions of art.

ARTH 5200. Issues in Contemporary Art. 4 Hours.
Introduces the major artists, movements, and issues that have redefined contemporary art since the late twentieth century. Examines, both critically and historically, topics such as conceptualism, earth art, appropriation, installation, street art, identity politics, activist art, performance, globalism, relational art, and new media. Offers an overview aimed at helping students negotiate the relationship between their own artistic practice and global art worlds.

ARTH 5300. Postmodernism: Theory and Practice in the Visual Arts. 4 Hours.
Surveys the emergence and evolution of postmodernism's challenge to modernism through the work of theorists, critics, and visual artists. Explores recent claims that our current globalized and digitalized era has generated a new, “post-postmodern” stage of cultural production. Requires students to develop an original intensive research topic, analyze methods of presentation, and present the topic in written form.

ARTH 5400. Contemporary Visual Culture. 4 Hours.
Explores the implications of the erosion of the traditional boundary between fine art and mass culture for artistic theory and practice as well as art's place in an increasingly globalized world. Situates contemporary artistic practice within the broader context of visual culture—including film, television, advertising, architecture, and the Internet.

ARTH 5500. Art and New Media: History and Theory. 4 Hours.
Surveys the impact of the emergence and evolution of new media technologies on the production, circulation, and criticism of art in the late twentieth century and in the twenty-first century. Topics include video art, multimedia installation, digital photography, and Internet art, as well as the critical and theoretical frameworks that inspired and responded to them.

ARTH 5902. Special Topics in Art and Design History. 4 Hours.
Offers an opportunity for the intensive study of specialized themes in areas of research in art history, aesthetics, or critical studies. Format and content are determined by the instructor in this elective in Art + Design history. May be repeated once.

ARTH 6212. The History of the Avant-Garde. 4 Hours.
Examines the role of the artistic avant-garde from the mid-nineteenth century to the present as it relates to established artistic institutions and radical politics. Considers the most shocking and innovative art of the last century as defined by critical and public response. Explores theories of modernism as well as critiques of the avant-garde.

ARTH 6901. Special Topics in Contemporary Art. 1-4 Hours.
Offers an opportunity for the intensive study of specialized themes and topics in the area of contemporary art history and criticism, such as globalization, gender, identity politics, critical theory, and art in a museum context. Topics vary each time it is offered and are announced in the semester’s course listings. May be taken up to two times with unique topics. May be repeated up to seven times for up to 8 total credits.

ARTH 6962. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.
ARTH 6976. Directed Study. 1-4 Hours.
Offers directed study of a specific topic not normally contained in the regular course offerings but within the area of competence of a faculty member. May be repeated without limit.

ARTS 5100. Visual Ideation. 4 Hours.
Explores drawing in a variety of media that communicate critical and analytical thinking about arts in the public sphere. Offers students an opportunity to learn how to use drawing and visualization to communicate effectively in a variety of media, either on paper or in digital media. Students can use collage, photo, digital media, and freehand drawing to express ideas for larger environmental and public projects. (Drawing is the way that artists such as Christo propose large-scale projects and is a viable way to secure acceptance of an idea.)

ARTS 6000. Studio. 4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to be mentored by a faculty member while completing the studio art portion of the master's degree. May be repeated up to four times.

ARTS 7896. Studio Continuation. 0 Hours.
Continues Art + Design studio work under the supervision of a departmental faculty member. Culminates for the successful student in approval of a thesis exhibition and/or written corollary for master's-level work. May be repeated up to two times.