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 the many ways photography can be produced and experienced by artists, designers, and professionals in the creative culture industry. 

Graduate Certificate
- Arts Management and Cultural Entrepreneurship (catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/arts-management-cultural-entrepreneurship)

Courses
Art – Design Courses
ARTD 5001. Arts in the Public Sphere Seminar 1. 4 Hours.
Examines a multitude of approaches to the creation and study of arts in the public sphere, including theory, methods, aesthetic debates, and professional practices as they have evolved in the field over time. Includes regularly scheduled critique, review, and defense of the students’ ongoing bodies of work, as well as group experiential learning projects that allow students to interact with leading practitioners, curators, and institutions in the field. The course paves the way toward the development of a thesis project and seeks to foster growth as practicing artists, designers, and professionals in the creative culture industry. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

ARTD 5002. Arts in the Public Sphere Seminar 2. 2 Hours.
Continues the study of arts in the public sphere from ARTD 5001. Prereq. ARTD 5001 and senior or graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

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. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

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. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

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 creative research interactive technologies used in contemporary-generated 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. Prereq. ARTD 5101 and graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

Programs
Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
- Information Design and Visualization (catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/information-visualization-mfa)
- Interdisciplinary Arts (catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/interdisciplinary-mfa)
- Studio Arts—School of the Museum of Fine Arts (catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/arts-media-design/art-design/interdisciplinary-mfa)
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. Prereq. Junior, senior, or graduate standing.

ARTE 6210. Theoretical Approaches to the Visual Arts. 4 Hours.
Examines a multitude of approaches to the study of art. The critical study of the visual arts is defined by the history of methodology and theoretical constructs. Topics include connoisseurship, style, psychoanalysis, feminism, Marxism, semiotics, and poststructuralism.

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.

ARTE 6962. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.

ARTE 6964. Co-op Work Experience. 0 Hours.
Provides eligible students with an opportunity for work experience. Prereq. Restricted to MFA students in interdisciplinary arts.

ARTE 6966. Practicum. 1-4 Hours.
Offers eligible students an opportunity for practical experience.

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.

ARTE 6984. Research. 1-4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to conduct research under faculty supervision.

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. Prereq. ARTD 5002; restricted to MFA students in interdisciplinary arts.

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. Prereq. ARTE 7100; restricted to MFA students in interdisciplinary arts.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing.
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. Prereq. Graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Information design and visualization students only.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Graduate standing, also undergraduate seniors 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. Prereq. Graduate standing, also undergraduate seniors 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. Prereq. Graduate standing, also undergraduate seniors with permission of instructor; understanding a design process and knowledge of studio critique practices are 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. Prereq. ARTG 5100; information design and visualization students only.

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. Prereq. Information design and visualization MFA students only.

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. Prereq. ARTG 6100; information design and visualization students only.

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. Prereq. Information design and visualization MFA students only.

ARTG 6320. Design of Information-Rich Environments. 4 Hours.
Explores methods of information organization, presentation, and navigation in physical space. Introduces concepts of wayshowing 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. Prereq. Information design and visualization MFA students only.
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. Prereq. Information design and visualization MFA students only.

ARTG 6900. Special Topics in Information Design. 4 Hours.
Explores focused research topics relevant to the graduate program curriculum. Prereq. Information design and visualization MFA students only.

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. Prereq. Information design and visualization students only.

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. Prereq. Information design and visualization students only.

ARTG 7996. Thesis Continuation. 0 Hours.
Offers students continuing thesis supervision by members of the department. Prereq. Information design and visualization students only.

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 globalization—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. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing.

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 historiographically, topics such as conceptualism, earth art, appropriation, installation, street art, identity politics, activist art, performance, globalization, relational art, and new media. Offers an overview aimed at helping students negotiate the relationship between their own artistic practice and global art worlds. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing.

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 digitized 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. Prereq. (a) ENGW 1111, ENGW 1102, ENGL 1111, ENGL 1102, or graduate standing and (b) senior standing or graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing.

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. Prereq. Senior or graduate standing.

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 term and are announced in the semester’s course listings. May be taken up to two times with unique topics.

ARTH 6962. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.

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.

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.) Prereq. Senior or graduate standing; arts, media and design students only.

ARTS 5000. 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. Prereq. Restricted to NU-only MFA students.

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. Prereq. ARTS 6000 or SMFA 6000; open to NU/SMFA and NU-only MFA students.