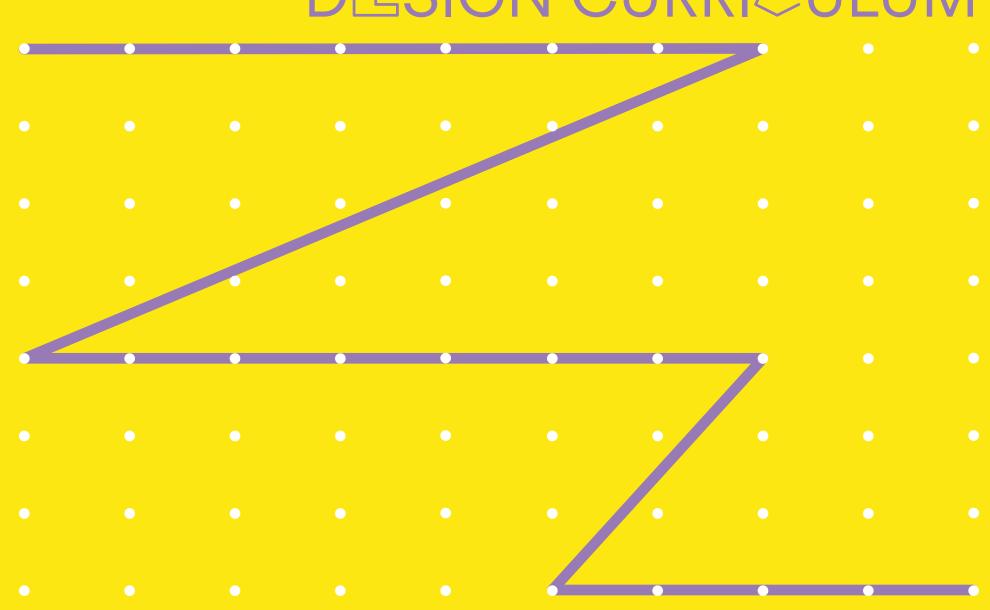


FORWARD-THINMING DESIGN CURRICULUM





MFA/CD

The master of fine arts (MFA) in communication design is a pioneering low-residency program emphasizing conceptual thinking, experimentation, and investigation.

Students engage in a broad spectrum of visual communication practices, including typography, digital experience, socially engaged design, and design pedagogy, and emerge ready to contribute to the field of communication design as professional practitioners and educators.

Positioned within the School of Art and Design, the MFA in communication design offers the advantages of a public research institution, including a passionate and active faculty, opportunities for interdisciplinary study, and affordability. A robust design lecture series promotes the exchange of ideas and perspectives across a wide range of specialties.

Our unique low-residency model arises from a longtime investment in remote learning. Courses are primarily online and conducted by faculty experienced in building community and engagement from a distance.

Students and instructors come together each semester on campus for a conference-style residency with critiques, lectures, workshops, and exhibitions. This structure provides flexibility for working professionals and remote students as part of our commitment to inclusivity and belonging.

Over 60 credits, students cultivate curiosity and critical thinking through a well-rounded, forward-looking curriculum. The MFA in communication design brings interdisciplinary approaches to the field across national and global perspectives to form a graduate-level education befitting a terminal degree.







The School of Art and Design

The School of Art and Design is one of five academic units within the College of Fine Arts and Communication, which also includes the Department of Communication Studies, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, the School of Music, and the Department of Theatre and Dance.

The School of Art and Design offers degree programs in studio art, photography, art education, art history, and communication design. These programs cross-pollinate, compelling students to search for deeper connections among disciplines. The school supports more than 80 faculty members dedicated to fostering the conceptual and technical abilities of its more than 900 declared School of Art and Design majors.



Texas State University

Texas State University is a doctoralgranting, student-centered institution dedicated to excellence and innovation in teaching, research, creative expression, and service.

The university strives to create new knowledge, to embrace a widerange of ideas, to foster cultural and economic development, and to prepare its graduates to participate fully and freely as citizens of Texas, the nation, and the world. In pursuing our mission, we, the faculty, staff, and students of Texas State University, are guided by a shared collection of values:

- → Teaching and learning based on research, student involvement, and the free exchange of ideas in a supportive environment;
- → Research and creative activities that encompass the full range of academic disciplines—research with relevance, from the sciences to the arts, from the theoretical to the applied;
- → The cultivation of character, integrity, honesty, civility, compassion, fairness, respect, and ethical behavior in all members of our university community;
- → A wide-range of ideas, a spirit of inclusiveness, a global perspective, and a sense of community as essential conditions for campus life;
- → A commitment to service and leadership for the public good;
- → Responsible stewardship of our resources and environment; and
- → Continued reflection and evaluation to ensure that our strengths as a community always benefit those we serve.







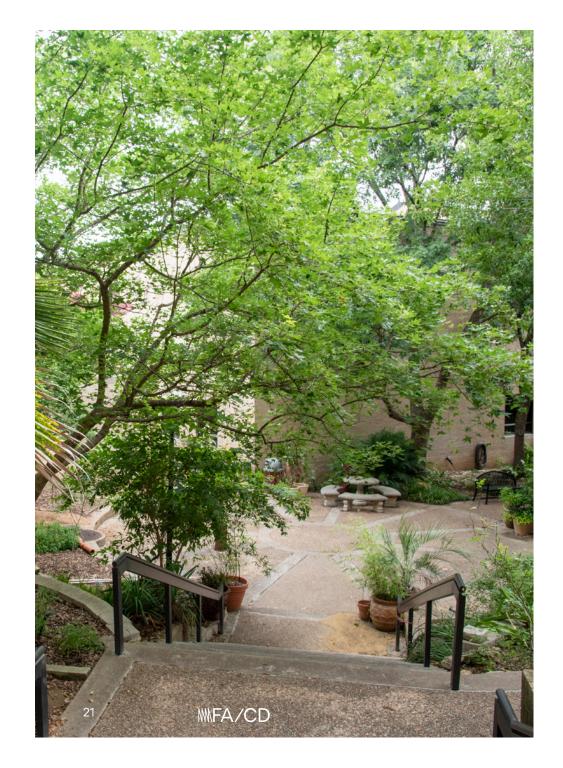
The Graduate College

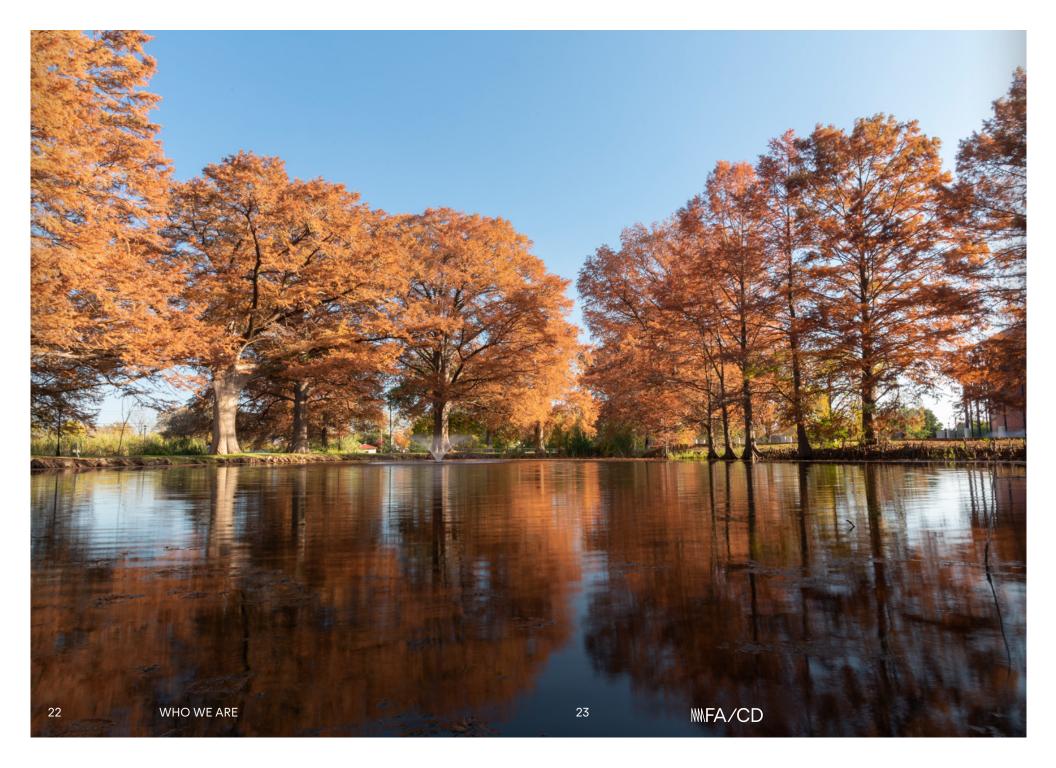
Texas State University is a public, student-centered Emerging Research University dedicated to excellence in serving the educational needs of the population of Texas and the world beyond.

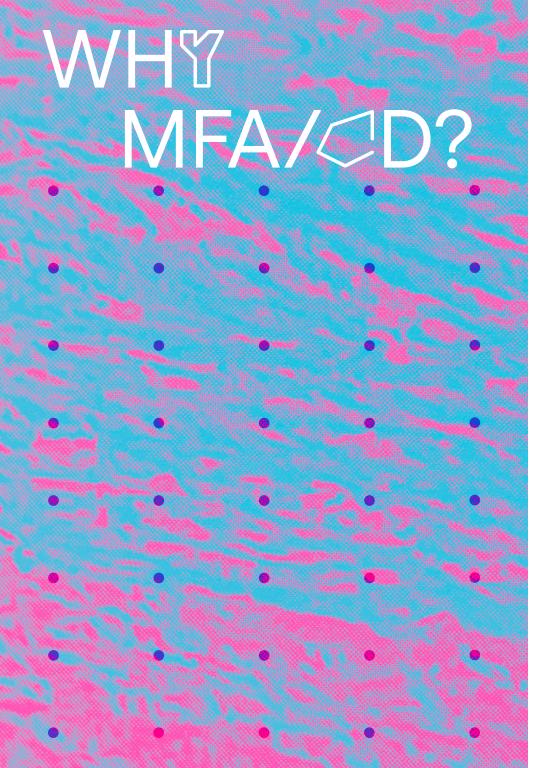
Students in the Graduate College participate in education and research with relevance to the world beyond the university. Nationally recognized faculty lead the way with applied, interdisciplinary scholarship. The mission of the Graduate College is to provide vision, leadership, and direction for excellence in graduate education at Texas State University, along with the appropriate infrastructure and learning environment for the training of innovative and successful scholars, teachers, and professionals.

The Graduate College does so by:

- → Articulating, promoting, and supporting the highest standards of quality in graduate education in keeping with the university's overall mission of teaching, research, and public service;
- → Constructing and maintaining an environment conducive to successful graduate education in concert with all graduate programs;
- → Supporting programs' efforts to foster a student population who participate in a global society;
- → Promoting and supporting rigor in graduate education;
- → Providing key process and procedural guidance and support to graduate programs from admission to graduation;
- → Aiding in student recruitment, application processing, policy monitoring, and degree auditing;
- → Leading initiatives designed to provide best practices in graduate education resulting in timely degree completion;
- → Providing graduate student support for creative and scholarly activities;
- → Offering professional development opportunities for graduate students at key stages in their graduate school career;
- → Engaging in research on graduate education.







The master of fine arts (MFA) in communication design at Texas State University offers the highest level of education in the field—a terminal degree.

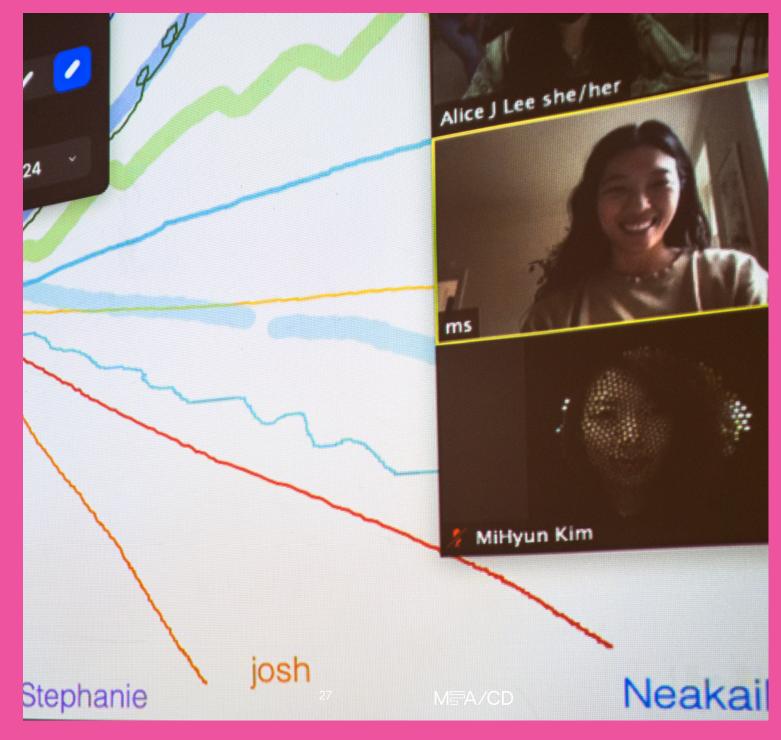
Our low-residency model provides broad accessibility and allows full-time, part-time, and out-of-state enrollment. Many of our students work full-time, and our courses are offered online in the evenings.

Most of the program's course work is supplemented with a multiday, on-campus residency at the end of each semester.

The MFA/CD Residency features in-person workshops, critiques, and visiting designer lectures.

Located halfway between Austin and San Antonio, Texas State University's San Marcos campus provides quick access to many design opportunities and Texas's beautiful Hill Country.

Our tuition rates, even for out-of-state students, are lower than most MFA programs in communication design. We have graduate assistantships that provide up to \$15,940.08 annually with possible pay increases and other benefits. Additional scholarship opportunities can be found through the Graduate College and College of Fine Arts and Communication, and the MFA/CD program makes research and travel funding available to students.



We Offer

- Terminal degree—master of fine arts
- Low-residency—most course content delivered online with an on-campus multiday residency at the end of semesters
- Affordability, including on out-of-state tuition
- Graduate assistantship opportunities
- Passionate and active faculty
- Dynamic programming with visiting designers
- Research funding
- Production labs, equipment for rent, and other resources
- Creative research
- Community engagement

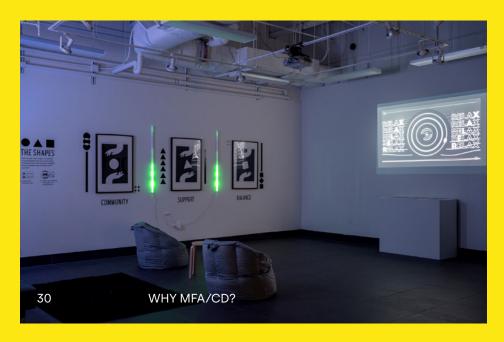
We Value



Neakail Tolbert

One of the factors that made me apply to the MFA/CD program was the presentation of work and explanation of the classes. I always enjoyed reading about the courses offered before I joined the program, and the MFA/CD program had a very multifaceted structure of classes, along with a high-quality portfolio of students' work that made me want to be a part of that portfolio and be able to say, "I did that!"

The biggest advantage I feel I get out of the MFA/CD program is the faculty gets to know you as a student, a person, and a designer. You are never left in the dark or alone; you're always communicating and learning how to improve your skills. You are being taught, not lectured at; if you don't understand something or need help, the faculty makes time to help you. Whether after class or on the weekend, they are there for you.





Mariangela Rodriguez

I liked the broad and different classes offered by the MFA/CD program compared to other graphic design programs, and it seemed much more indepth with a good range of topics. I hadn't figured out my specialty yet and felt this was the best route for a well-rounded education and experience.

My favorite experience in the MFA program has definitely been residency. Since classes are primarily online, our time together at residency is that much more fun. The workshops and hangouts in between are the best part.

This program has the greatest educators and peers I have come across. It is a supportive network and community that uplifts and inspires one another.





The MFA/CD degree requires a minimum of 60 credit hours, as well as a formal thesis, which represents students' original research inquiries and contributes to the field of communication design.

The program takes three years to complete as a full-time student, and up to six years as a part-time student.

- → 30 credit hours (10 courses) of communication design studio electives
- → 12 credit hours (4 courses) of communication design history
- → 6 credit hours (2 courses) of professional practice
- → 6 credit hours of graduate-level courses from any discipline
- → 6 credit hours of thesis research
- → Thesis
- → Comprehensive exam (thesis defense)

MFA/CD Course Offerings

MFA/CD course offerings include interactive design, typography, professional practice, and more such as:

- Publication Design
- Web Design
- Design for Motion
- The Experimental Book
- Contemporary Issues and Criticism
- Design History
- Design Seminar
- Typeface Design
- International Perspective in Typography
- Alternative Printing Methods
- Design Futures
- Design Practice
- Research Through Making
- Generative Design



Graduate Assistantships

The MFA/CD program offers a limited number of graduate assistant positions to qualified students to help fund their graduate education.

Most assistantships in the School of Art and Design allow selected students to gain experience teaching in the undergraduate communication design program by becoming instructors of record for two classes in the fall and spring semesters. This experience is invaluable for graduate students who wish to consider a career in academia. A limited number of nonteaching graduate assistantships are also available to support areas of the School of Art and Design including risograph printing, MFA/CD marketing, and the Multidisciplinary Innovation Lab.

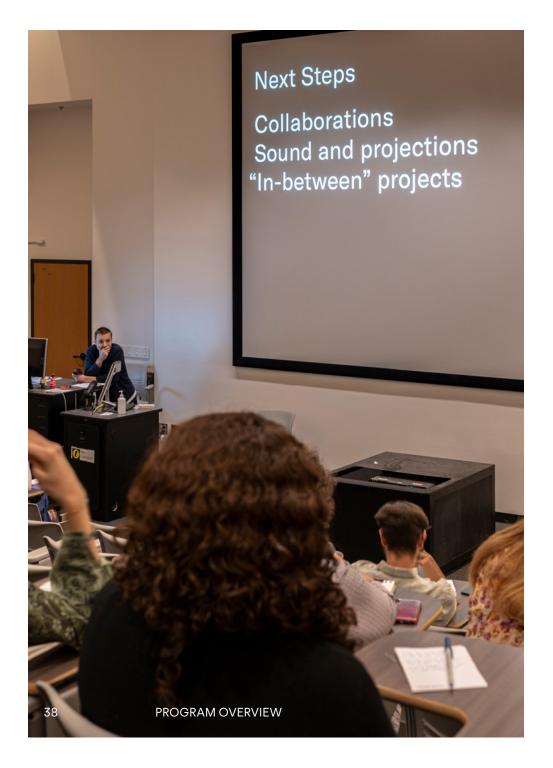
Graduate assistants are paid a stipend for 20 hours per week and provided office space with the latest technology. In addition, nonresident students are eligible for in-state rates.

Criteria for Graduate Assistants

- → Unconditional acceptance to the MFA/CD program;
- → Full-time enrollment (9 hours of graduate course work per fall and spring semesters);
- → Must be in good academic standing (no probation or suspension);
- → Must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher;
- → If a newly hired international student: must have approval from the International Office to work as a graduate/doctoral assistant;
- → Completion of graduate assistant application.

2022-23	Graduate	Assistant Sal	lary Schedule
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Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)	Full-Time Annual Salary	No Summer	\$15,940.08 Nine months contract × \$1,771.12 monthly
Graduate Instructional Assistant (GIA)	Full-Time Annual Salary	No Summer	\$14,346.18 Nine months first year minimum × \$1,594.02 monthly
Graduate Assistant (GA)	Full-Time Annual Salary	No Summer	\$11,634.48 Nine months first year minimum × \$1,292.72 monthly



Available Funding

MFA/CD Student Research Funds

As an MFA/CD student, you can apply to have your graduate research supported by the MFA in communication design program. We have funding to support travel to conferences, materials for projects and exhibitions, and thesis research.

Graduate Student Travel Funds

Let us help you share your work at professional conferences around the globe! The Graduate College provides funds to support student participation in conferences in Texas, the United States, and beyond.

Thesis Research Support Fellowship

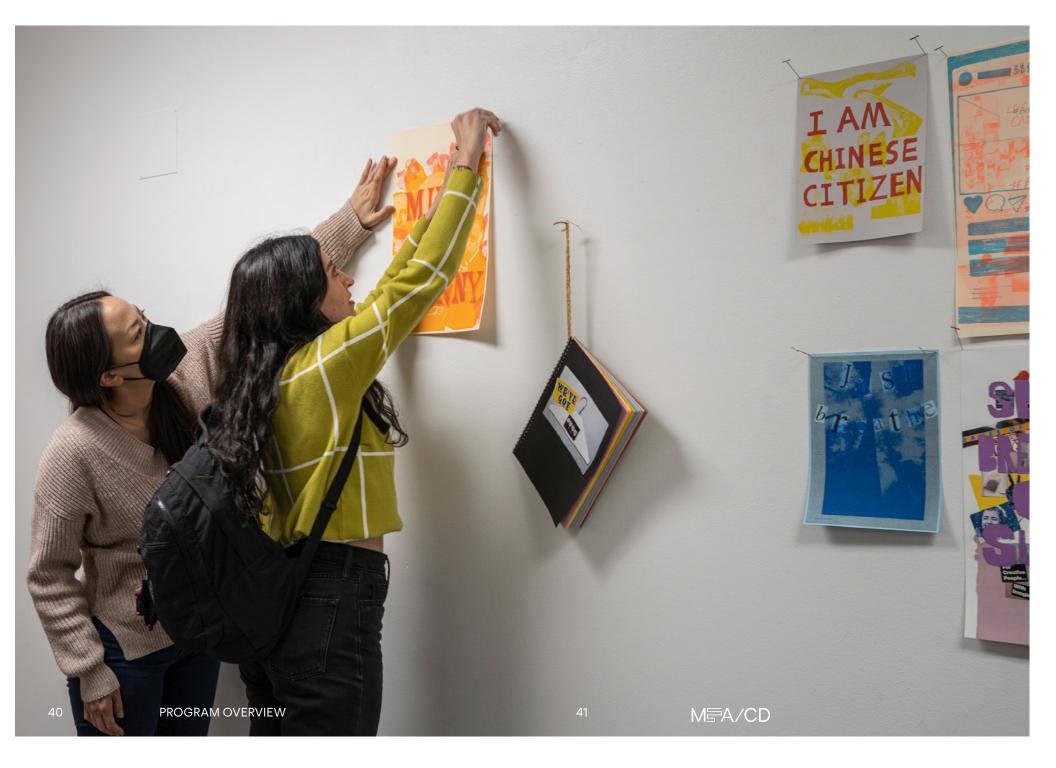
Thesis Research Support Fellowships are competitive fellowships that support master's-level student thesis research. The fellowships are available for continuing master's students enrolled at Texas State University and are offered twice yearly.

Graduate Merit Fellowship

Texas State's Graduate Merit Fellowships are prestigious awards intended to recruit master's students of the highest quality to Texas State University. These fellowships can be combined with graduate assistantships or departmental scholarships to create an attractive financial aid package for top applicants; however, applicants cannot apply directly. Graduate advisers must identify and nominate eligible applicants. Texas State's Graduate Merit Fellowships provide \$3,000 to new master's students for their first academic year (paid in early September, January, and June). Approximately 35 awards will be made each year.

Friends of the Fine Arts and Communication

Every year, the Friends of Fine Arts and Communication support our students with scholarships that help them pay their tuition, travel to competitions and conferences, and participate in unique learning opportunities.



A PIONEERING LOW-RESIDENCY PROGRAM





The low-residency model provides hybrid courses that combine synchronous and asynchronous online learning with a multiple-day in-person residency each semester.

The MFA/CD Residency enables students to study with highly acclaimed international and national experts in the communication design field without uprooting their lives. Furthermore, the program provides in-person educational and community-building opportunities that enhance the flexibility of the online learning experience. Students present and exhibit their work from the semester, share meals, and participate in critiques and workshops with faculty and visiting designers.

Residency Guest Designers

Guest designers join each residency to lead workshops and give lectures about their work, introduce students to new ways of thinking and making, and bring collaborative and community-building experiences to the residency programming.

Previous Residency Guest Designers

Type & Paper: Negative and or Positive

• Tasheka Arceneaux-Sutton



For Agitation

Danielle Aubert



Procedural Design with Machine Learning

Jonathan Hanahan



Bound Together

Elaine Lopez



Dictionarium

Jimmy Van Luu



How Type Works

Tré Seals



On Gathering in Five Chapters

Mindy Seu



Residency Spotlight

Bound Together Elaine Lopez, Spring 2022

When was the last time you had an intimate conversation with a stranger—like those with a chatty rideshare driver or while waiting for the bus? Even though it can seem that we are more connected than ever through social media and video calls, most online interactions can feel transactional and goal-oriented, leaving little room for casual connection and intimacy. This workshop re-created the opportunity to connect with new people on a personal level as a way to get back in touch with our humanity. It was meant to be easy, fun, and carefree.

Elaine Lopez elainelopez.design/



This workshop was a participatory mural installation that focused on logic and process using intelligible computational rules created by workshop participants. The workshop fostered strong collaboration and unpredictable end results in an open environment. The mural remained open to the general public to participate in the creation after the workshop so that it continued to expand and grow like plants or fungus.

MiHyun Kim mihyunkim.org/ Alice J Lee alicejlee.com/







80%

Part-Time Students

100%

Live Off Campus

53%

Students of Color

53%

Ages 21–29

26%

Ages 30-39

20%

Age 40+





Designer Lecture Series

The MFA/CD Visiting Designer Lecture Series invites contemporary designers and artists from varied practices, backgrounds, and locations to campus. Each semester, the faculty programs virtual lectures related to the courses offered that term, and the lectures are free and open to the public.

Previous Speakers

AK/OK, Lizania Cruz, Marc Fischer, Eric Gunther (SOSO), Cyrus Highsmith, Cavan Huang, Lizzie Garrett & Minjeong Kim, Faye Levine, Elaine Lopez, Klehwetua Rodney Sayers & Emily Luce, MGMT, Manuel Miranda, Kiel Mutschelknaus, Kimberly Sutherland, Thick Press, Track and Field, Leo Vicenti, and Matthew Wizinsky.

School of Art and Design Lecture Series

As part of the School of Art and Design here at Texas State University, the Art and Design Lecture Series introduces students to a broad range of international practitioners, including artists, curators, critics, and historians. The School of Art and Design is committed to inviting innovative professionals to speak about their practices as part of the public lecture series open to the community.

Previous Speakers

Adrian Anagnost, Miguel A. Aragón, Regine Basha,
David Bate, Michael Berryhill, Christie Blizard, Maru
Calva, Adam Chau, April Felipe, Frankie Flood, Jenny
Gheith, Monica Haller & Matthew Rezac, Tatiana
Istomina, Dr. Andrea Kantrowitz, Deanna Ledezma,
Rebecca Morgan, Ziddi Msangi, Robyn O'Neil, Everest
Pipkin, Ronald Rael, Jessi Reaves, Christina Rees, Becky
Duval Reese, Sean Ripple, Jay Rutherford, Ed Schad,
Aram Han Sifuentes, Soda Jerk, Astria Suparak, Anthony
Luvera, Ulises, William Wilson, and Mario Ybarra Jr.



Student Spotlight



Tyler Rico

MFA/CD is a flexible and challenging program that you can tailor to your individual needs and work/life requirements. The faculty are inspiring and help you develop and evolve your practice while taking care to understand your personal goals.

Beyond spending dedicated time making my own work, MFA/CD has provided me the opportunity to teach in the undergraduate communication design program. This experience has been invaluable as I consider my future beyond the program.



Jordan Steyer

I'm so grateful for the opportunities that come with the program. When I started, I was unsure about myself as a designer, and what I wanted out of design, but MFA/CD has teaching and graduate assistantships. When I got the opportunity to become a graduate assistant in the RISO Room, I think it changed everything! I found my passion and the path I want to take in design. I think the affordability of a state school, the wide-range of faculty and staff, and the resources are the biggest advantages of the program.











Joann Cole Mitte Building

The Joann Cole Mitte (JCM) Building houses the School of Art and Design, including the MFA in communication design studio—a workroom dedicated to MFA/CD students, faculty, and staff.

JCM communication design facilities include computer and print production labs, digital printing access including a risograph printer, equipment for checkout that includes cameras

and iPads, a lighting studio, and the Multidisciplinary Innovation Lab, which is equipped with a laser cutter/engraver, CNC routers, 3D printers, and die cutters.











GTA Office

The GTA Office is a shared working space for graduate teaching assistants in the MFA/CD program. Resources available in the GTA Office include computer stations, office supplies, laser jet printer, Epson printer, and a kitchenette.

MFA/CD Studio

The MFA/CD Studio is the meeting and working space solely for MFA/CD students. Resources available in the studio include a kitchenette, modular conference table, couch, projector, video conferencing equipment, LaserJet 700 printer, a growing collection of graphic design books, and an iMac.

Fabrication Room

The Fabrication Room offers equipment and space for print production. Large tables with self-healing cutting mats, paper guillotines, and binding machines provide the tools for making books, zines, packaging, and other projects.

Multidisciplinary Innovation Lab (MiL)

The Multidisciplinary Innovation Lab (MiL) is a digital fabrication space for currently enrolled Texas State University School of Art and Design students. Here, students learn how to operate the equipment for school-related projects. The MiL has a laser cutter, die cutter, 3D printers, and a CNC router.

62 FACILITIES 63 MFA 🖊 D





64

The Texas State Galleries' FLEX space invites Texas State Art and Design students, faculty, staff, or alums to envision and assemble well-considered, visually engaging, and conceptually stimulating exhibitions and events. Selected proposals represent the unique creative vision of the Texas State Art and Design community and its relevance to the larger art world.

Each semester, graduating MFA/CD students are invited to install their thesis work as part of the MFA/CD Thesis Exhibition in the FLEX and as off-site projects in the community. The exhibition presents the culminating work of MFA/CD students' practice-based thesis projects engaging critical discourse in communication design and beyond.



RISO Room Instagram: @riso.txst

The RISO Room includes a two-cylinder risograph printer, vinyl cutting machine, large format printer, and color laser printer. The risograph is a print technology using rice-based inks that come in vibrant colors not achievable on inkjet and laser printers, and the printer is available for MFA/CD students to use on thesis research and school-related projects.

"TXST RISO Room is just a small corner of this universe, taking small steps toward solving some of these problems through community-based printing."

–Jordan Steyer, MFA/CD student and graduate assistant

FACILITIES



Alkek One

Alkek One is a hub of technologyfocused spaces on the first floor of the Alkek Library. Our spaces feature a variety of technologies that support the maker culture, immersive reality, time-based media, geographic information systems, and digital design. Alkek One supports skills exploration across disciplines. Students are encouraged to collaborate and take advantage of the connection between the physical spaces, the community of experts, and the foundational concepts and skills that enable them to innovate using these technologies and tools.

Available tools include: Microsoft
Surface Pro II workstations, Mac Pro
workstations, Phantom 4 PRO V2.0,
Sequoia + Sensor, GPS units and
more, Oculus Quest Headset, Vive
Cosmos Headset, Microsoft Hololens,
Holobox Holographic display, ASUS
ROG Mothership computer, BOXX
computer, DeepFrame, Voxon,
tablets, 3D printers, electronics,

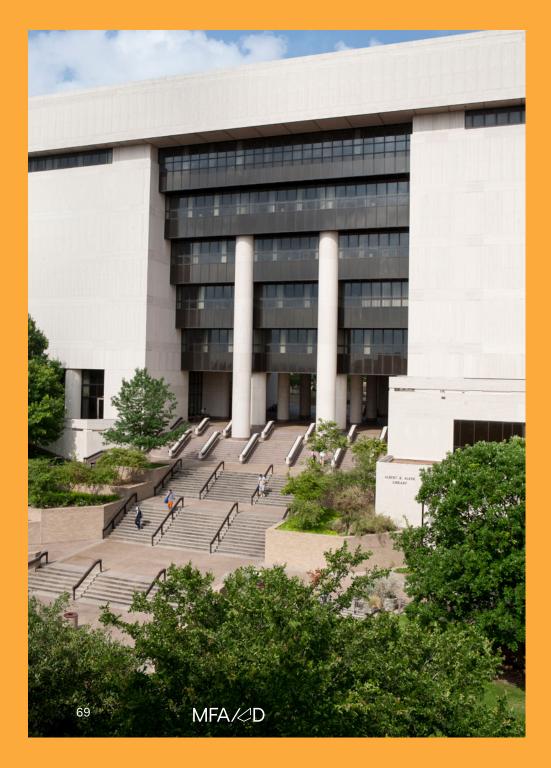
cutters, painting/finishing, hand working, fibers, laser cutters, basic camera kit, 360 camera kit, camera tripods, Lavalier mics, Traktor Pro 3 soundboard, ring lights, Maschine MK3 soundboard, Sony headphones, and memory cards.

Alkek Library

The Alkek Library collection comprises books, audiovisual materials, periodicals, electronic books, journals, microfilm, maps, and digital collections.

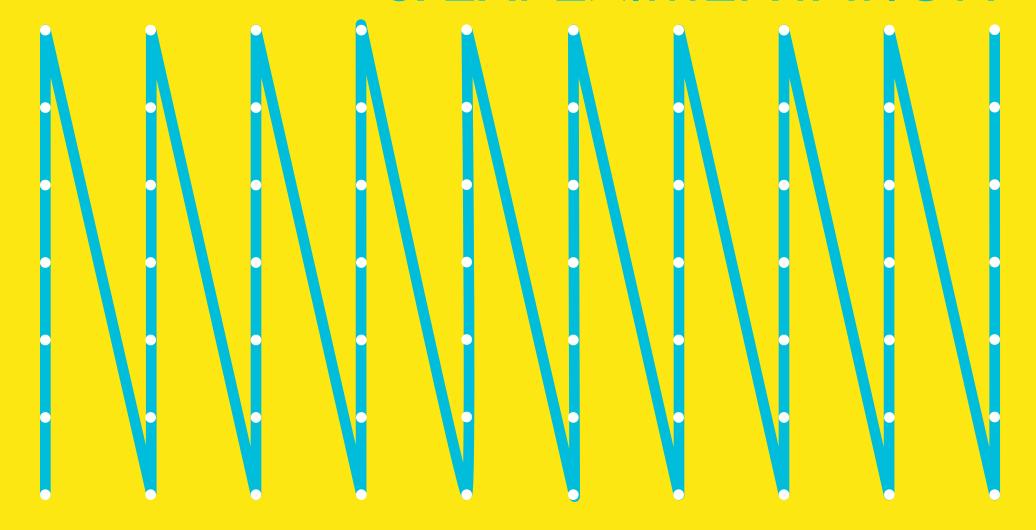
The library hosts a digital collections repository, a digital archive of scholarship produced by the university's faculty, students, and staff. The library is home to the University Archives and the Wittliff Collections, including the Texas Music Collection, the Southwestern Writers and Mexican Photography Collection, a literary archive reflecting the culture of the Southwestern United States, and the Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection. The library's Artist Book Collection houses nearly 800 rare and unique art, design, and photography artists' books.

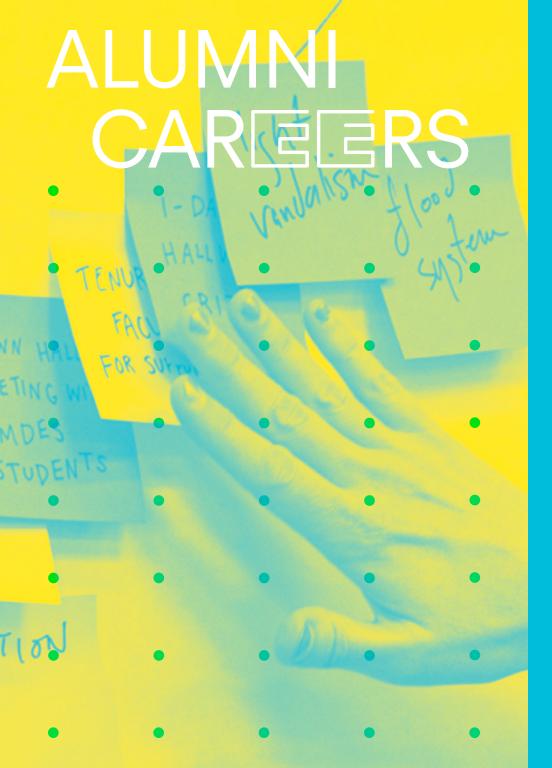
To accommodate the university's academic calendar, Alkek Library offers extended hours, especially during final exam periods. An online catalog accessible via the Internet provides information on the library's holdings. Interlibrary loan and document delivery services are provided, and cooperative borrowing agreements with other libraries are maintained. Through TexShare, a statewide library resources sharing program, Texas State faculty, students, and staff can obtain a TexShare library card, which grants library privileges at most of the public university and community college libraries in Texas.



A PROGRAM THAT EMPHASIZES CO//CEPTUAL THINKING

& EXPERIMENTATION





MFA/CD students have various potential career paths, such as becoming graphic designers, UI/UX designers, design researchers, typographers, and educators.

Furthermore, the program equips students to move their careers beyond a traditional nine-to-five job and use design to engage their communities. For students seeking a career as an educator in higher education, the program provides mentorship, the appropriate academic credential, and the terminal degree in visual communication design: the MFA degree.

Universities and Schools

Fort Lewis College; Metropolitan State University of Denver; University of Southern Mississippi; Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College; University of Mobile; University of Alabama; Iowa State University; the Art Institute of Austin; the Art Institutes; San Antonio Independent School District; Austin Community College; University of Houston-Victoria; Baylor University; University of Houston; College of the Mainland; Lee College; Austin Peay State University; Texas State University; University of Mary Hardin-Baylor; University of Texas of Austin; Indiana University Bloomington; University of Tampa; Ringling College of Art and Design; Texas A&M University; Texas A&M International University; California State University, Los Angeles; Oklahoma Christian University; National Park College; Old Dominion University; Austin Independent School District; Northwestern University; University of Texas at San Antonio; Southwest School of Art; University of Incarnate Word; Weber State University (Utah)

Tech

IBM; Apple; General Assembly; PayPal; Skills Matter; Software Advice; 3M; AT&T; Mozido; Schlumberger; Truss; Blackbaud; Leviathan Analytics; Cubic Corporation; Hewlett-Packard; Spiceworks; DXC Technology; Hudl; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; Mighty & True; BradfordLawton, LLC; Relativity; Kestra Financial; Frost; BillGO; USAA

Creative Agencies

Group C Inc.; Pierron & Partners; Frog; SparkNerds; Projekt202; Darwork Design; Monigle; Epsilon; Springbox; Invodo; what.it.is.creative; Page Southerland Page, Inc.; Seedhouse Creative; Smoke-n-Pixels Design; Jacobs; Ambient Way; Dynamic Designs Inc; Wildfire Contact

Cultural Organizations

AIGA, Iowa Asian Alliance, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, The Menil Collection

Media

The Daily Dot, O'Reilly Media, Makeready Podcast, Accelerate Change Network, ParentsTogether Foundation, ProgressPop, **Drawn This Way**

Publishing

University of North Carolina Press, Cattywampus Press, Weeva

Other

Acelity, H-E-B, Waste Management, Austin Ale, Everi Holdings, Luminex Corporation, Accenture, Armstrong Transport Group, ES2, Atkins Global, Round Table Companies, Project44, PDR, IAA, Capital Metro, Organized Living, WWE





Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to move close to campus in order to complete my coursework?

No. All of our courses and events are currently delivered online with a multifaceted on-campus residency each semester.

How long does the program typically take to complete?

Depending on how many courses are taken per semester, the average time it takes is about three-and-a-half years to six-years.

How many classes should I take each semester?

Three classes (=9 credit hours) each fall and spring semester is considered full-time by the Graduate College. We do not recommend taking any more than two classes (=6 credit hours) if you work full-time.

Are classes offered in the summer semester?

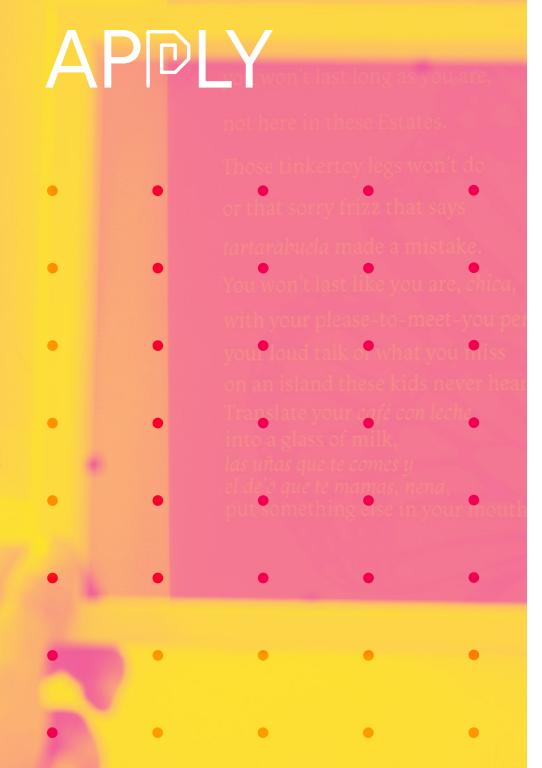
Classes may or may not be offered in the summer, depending on faculty availability, University funding, and student participation.

How long does the thesis take to complete?

On average, students will enroll in Thesis A for one semester and Thesis B for two semesters.

How do you count portfolio pieces?

We count all pieces within a larger campaign as individual pieces.



Admission

Admission to the master of fine arts degree in communication design is selective and designed to identify those applicants who have the ability and commitment to successfully complete the program.

Applicants are chosen through close examination of each component of the application packet, with special emphasis placed on the portfolio of communication design work.

Visit apply.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply/

Visit Campus

Joann C. Mitte Building 601 University Drive San Marcos, TX 78666

Contact

mfacomdes.com

512.245.7450

mfacomdes@txstate.edu

Connect

@mfacdtxst

MFA/CD Viewbook 2023

A PDF edition of the MFA/CD Viewbook is available at bit.ly/3Fxc861

Out-of-State and International Students

Our program meets the requirements for an F1 visa for international students. International applicants should consult International Student and Scholar Services regarding additional considerations in taking online courses at international@txstate.edu or by calling 512.245.7966.

Published

MFA/CD

Texas State University

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Join the program that bridges interdisciplinary approaches to the field across national and global perspectives.