

MFA Industrial Design Program guide 2021

The degree of Master of Fine Arts (MFA) with specialization in Industrial Design prepares you for a professional career in design practice, management and higher education. The program of study is highly individualized in order to help you achieve professional excellence by matching your interests, skills, and career goals with the challenge of higher-level study in design, also acknowledging the range of opportunities for interdisciplinary study at the University. The program is international in scope and stresses the development of design solutions that are human-centered and culturally appropriate. Two or three year study options are available.

Both study options are available for those with undergraduate degrees in industrial design or a relevant discipline (Graphic design, Architecture, Engineering or Business) and ideally with appropriate professional experience. The two year program requires full-time enrollment on campus for four regular semesters and provides advanced professional study. The three-year program prepares graduates for University teaching or research positions. Enrollment for the three-year program is full-time on campus for six regular semesters. A limited number of teaching assistantships and/or scholarships may be available for three-year MFA students. Teaching assistantships or funding are not available for two-year MFA students although opportunities for GA or RA positions do occur from time to time

Industrial Design graduate students have workspace in the Graduate studio in Flagg Hall with access to workshop facilities. The electronic technologies laboratories located in the Art and Design Building provide the opportunity to work with a full range of computer software and output devices. Access to other specialized facilities across the university may be possible

Relevant people and titles

David Weightman, Professor, Graduate Coordinator for Industrial Design

Suresh Sethi, Professor, Program chair Industrial design

Ellen de Waard, Coordinator of Graduate Academic Affairs, School of Art and Design

Members of the ID Graduate Faculty

Carlos Aguiar, Cliff Shin, Suresh Sethi, Simrun Sethi, Salman Raheel, Jim Kendall and David Weightman.

Alan Mette, Director, School of Art and Design

Laurie Hogin, Associate Director, School of Art and Design

Melissa Pokorny, Associate director, School of Art and Design

David Akins School Facilities Director, School of Art and Design

Jenell Hardy, Assistant Director, Business Services, School of Art and Design

Yunling Man, Accountant , School of Art and Design

Program philosophy

Industrial Design is the human centered design activity that determines the nature of products, services and experiences produced by industry. This approach to design reconciles the needs of the user and the producer, combining desirability, viability, feasibility and responsibility. Industrial designers also champion the use of design thinking, a user-centered approach which has broad application in many social and business contexts. Our definition of Industrial design extends to include the design of interfaces, interactions and user experiences.

The MFA Industrial Design Program aims to educate you about the theoretical basis of Industrial Design as well as developing your abilities as a designer. The program combines a broad educational approach with in-depth professional studies, to expand your skills in research, creation, implementation and communication, enabling you to function in many diverse situations.

The three year MFA is recognized as a terminal qualification in design which enables you to teach Industrial design at University level. That program includes the opportunity to assist faculty and to teach courses to undergraduate students. It also acts as a preparation for advanced research degrees. There are some funds and scholarships available for study in that program Study time on the program is limited to 12 hours per week to allow for the demands of TA appointments. It is possible for students to take this program without funding

By contrast, the two year MFA is an advanced professional qualification suited to developing your future design career in practice. The content of both programs is largely identical and students on both programs are in the same classes and studios. However, there are no funding opportunities for students on the two year program except for occasional GA and RA appointments. Internships with local or national companies are possible and encouraged, subject to visa stipulations at the time

Course Credits and degree requirements

The MFA in industrial design requires 64 hours of graduate credit for both the two and three year MFA study options, distributed as follows

ID studio courses – (all 6 credit hours each) ARTD 501, 502, 503, 504, 505 & 506 are required plus ARTD 599 Thesis preparation.
 Elective courses totaling 24 hours are required, of which 8 hours must be Design studio electives from Art and Design, Architecture or Engineering (approved by Graduate Coordinator)
 Seminar courses can be taken to make up the Elective total, if available. Four hours of electives (one course) must be in an academic area (rather than a studio area)

ID studio courses	36 hrs
Approved Design studio electives)	8 hrs
Electives (including seminars).....	16 hrs (4 hrs in an academic area)
Thesis preparation.....	4 hrs
Total.....	64 hrs

The ID Graduate Coordinator will advise you from the outset to develop a plan of study including elective and seminar courses. This plan will be a working document updated as you go through your graduate studies following periodic meetings and reviews with the Graduate advisor.

You must register for at least 12 hours of credit each semester to maintain fulltime student status (particularly important for visa status). The two year program averages out as 16 credits a semester to make up your 64 credits required for graduation. The three year program involves study for 12 credits for five of the semesters and only 8 credits for Thesis completion in the final semester, often taken on a part time basis. Requests for part time status must be made before the semester needed by contacting Ellen de Waard in the School Graduate office

	MFA 3 yr		MFA 2 yr	
Semester 1	ARTD 501	6	ARTD 501	6
	ARTD 502	6	ARTD 502	6
			Elective	4

Semester 2	ARTD 503	6	ARTD 503	6
	Design elective 300/400	0	Design elective	4
	Seminar/ pedagogy	2	Elective	4
			Seminar	2
Semester 3	Design elective	4	ARTD 504	6
	Design elective	4	ARTD 505	6
	Elective	4	Design elective	4
Semester 4	ARTD 504	6	ARTD 506	6
	Elective	4	ARTD 599	4
	Seminar / IS	2	Seminar	2
			Elective	4
Semester 5			Finish	64
	ARTD 505	6		
	ARTD 599	2		
	Elective	4	Studio + thesis	40
			Electives	16
			Design Electives	8
Semester 6			Academic content	8
	ARTD 506	6		
	ARTD 599	2		
	finish	64		
	Studio + thesis	40		
	Design electives	8		
		Electives / seminars	16	
		Academic content	8	

In the diagram the 300/400 course in Semester 2, 3 yr program counts for enrolment not credit
Academic content is defined for NASAD, is not additional courses

Learning outcomes for the MFA program

At the end of the program, you should demonstrate the following....

Inquiry and insight...the ability to select and use appropriate research and experimental methods, to access existing data or to generate new data, to analyze and draw insights, with a particular emphasis on user needs

Ideation...the ability to produce creative proposals to identified design opportunities, using design thinking, modelling, and prototyping strategies, with an appropriate integration of functional, technical, ergonomic and visual factors

Implementation...the ability to select and use appropriate making and manufacturing processes with an understanding of the potential of new technologies, and the demands of sustainability

Informing...the ability to use visual and verbal communication, to explain and persuade, as appropriate for different audiences

Self development...the ability to carry out independent learning and reflexive evaluation of your work, as well as to plan and implement action, effectively managing self and others. For Three year MFA students, this includes developing your own teaching and curriculum design practice

Contextualisation...the ability to locate your own activity within the multiple contexts of design practice, including the theoretical, professional, cultural, environmental and technological contexts your own practice, with the aim of improvement.

Reviews and evaluation of progress

Each course syllabus will inform you about submission and assessment requirements. Graduate studio projects tend to be longer than undergraduate projects, sometimes occupying the whole semester. There will be final presentations for each project as well as intermediate presentations within longer projects. There may also be multiple activities going on in parallel so you will need to become familiar with managing your activities to meet deadlines. At the end of each semester you will present your work in the semester to all ID grad students and faculty, as well as an External reviewer that we bring in to give a broader perspective to the review process. Your grades for each course go to make up your GPA on the course. If your work in a particular course is not up to the required standard, you may be asked to do additional work, repeat the course or in very extreme cases, to leave the program. There are School processes to appeal and resolve such decisions. Courses in other departments have similar assessment processes although they may use more conventional academic means of assessment

We use a model of the design process which is based on a six step sequence....Inquiry, Insight, Ideation, Involvement, Implementation and Informing , The program is pre-dominantly project based with a mixture of individual and group working

Core course descriptors

ARTD 501 From inquiry to ideation

After a quick benchmarking exercise to determine your current level of design skills, this course focusses on the first stages of design thinking using research and analysis to determine user needs and going on to ideation and creative thinking strategies to respond to those needs

ARTD 502 From involvement to implementation

This course continues to include user involvement for feedback, and on to prototyping of design solutions in resolved design proposals. Due consideration will be given to responsible and sustainable manufacturing. Additionally we will consider communication strategies involving users and other stakeholders

ARTD 503

This course puts all the aspects of the research and design process together into a holistic design project intended as a rehearsal for your Thesis investigations and a beginning to establishing a personal direction for your work

ARTD 504/505/506 Thesis

This sequence covers all stages of the Thesis project development, with 504 being devoted to Research, 505 to Ideation and design investigation and 506 to Implementation and detail execution

ARTD 599 Thesis completion

This academic course covers the production of the written Thesis document which describes the research, investigation and execution of the Thesis project. This is a substantial document which fully describes the process and significance of your thesis work, prior to deposit in the graduate College when it becomes part of the academic record and available publicly. The thesis will normally be submitted at the end of the last semester of attendance

Elective and Seminar Courses

Electives expand your knowledge, and enable you to exploit the resources of the School, College and University including business, art and design, and technology courses. Eight hours of electives must be approved Design studio electives from the School of Art and Design or elsewhere in the University. You also need to take 16 hours of electives or seminars of which 4 hours must be in an academic course. There are a number of electives in the School available each year, which may be of interest to you.

Elective courses that count toward the MFA graduate requirements must be at the 400 or 500 level. Courses taught only for undergraduate credit, while they may be taken, will not count toward MFA graduation requirements. Students on the three year program will need to do one 400 level course in the School to meet student status requirements although it will not count towards graduation credits. Some Undergraduate Art and Design courses are available to graduate students to do additional work for graduate credit. Courses may be restricted or require prerequisites but talking directly to the appropriate departmental advisor or course instructor can often result in admission. It is also possible to enroll in ARTD 591 Special Problems in Design (2-8 credits) where you study independently with a faculty member.

Seminar courses typically are non-studio classes offered periodically in industrial design and other programs in the School and the University Check with the ID Graduate advisor or the A+D Graduate Office during registration for available seminar courses. This handbook will include a list of possible electives that we will refine, augment and develop over this academic year

An incomplete list of possible electives

SE402 Computer aided product realization

This course is run by the Systems Engineering dept with input from ID Faculty. It introduces you to Autodesk Fusion 360, Scanning and 3D printing, culminating in a design project done in groups comprising ID students and Engineering students. It is available for Grad credit and is regularly taken by ID grad students. It counts as one of your studio electives

ARTD 499 Color materials and finishes

This course aims to explore CMF in the product development process. Color, Material, and Finishing have been critical components in the current design industry. Because of the nature of CMF, 3D visualization skills, and understanding of the design process are essential. Counts as a Studio elective

ARTD 499 Artificial intelligence and design

This course will use advanced technology to explore the possibilities of using AI as an impersonator, collaborator and creator. Students will learn to use the most popular AI tools for art and design and engage in AI-related projects like style transfer, portrait editing, photo and painting restoration, and creative content generation. Beyond utilizing existing technologies, students will also consider providing insights of AI-Design collaboration to narrow down the gap between AI and Design. Counts as a studio elective

ARTD 270 Design Research Methodology / Seminar

This seminar coordinates readings in design theory and the processes and principles of human-centered design with graduate students' emerging thesis research interests. Students will address the role of design research methodology in establishing design practice and design pedagogy.

ARTD 426 Product Innovation

Presents an overview of the product development process from concept generation to design for manufacturing and project management. The emphasis is on product definition, innovation, the early phases of development, and the designer's role in new product development.

Other courses TBA

Details of the MFA Thesis project

MFA Thesis preparation guidelines ...

Each graduate student in the MFA program is required to complete a Thesis project to fulfil the degree requirements. This normally takes three semesters for the three year program, and two semesters for the two-year program, involving the ARTD 504, 505 and 506 Studios. You also have to produce a written Thesis document which describes your project, submitted to the Graduate College and the School, to be catalogued, deposited and available on line in the University library.

An MFA Thesis project is not just another design studio project. The Thesis project is expected to reflect an area of specialization and to include a research proposition to be evaluated, investigated and demonstrated. The project will begin with a documented survey of appropriate prior designs, with existing research findings from the literature. Your individual research program will generate findings and insights which will form the basis for design innovation. The thesis project will normally have a design outcome demonstrated in the form of drawings, models, prototypes etc. The special knowledge area investigated will serve as the basis for your career development as a professional designer or educator. The Thesis project is an opportunity to take on a design challenge at a significantly higher level than your undergraduate projects, with much higher expectations about depth, rigour, innovation and execution. As it will involve you in at least a year of concentrated work, you should pick the topic carefully and the faculty will assist in that process. As a guide though, we advise you to identify a design problem or opportunity rather than just take on a re-design of an existing product or service.

An important part of the MFA Thesis project is the Thesis document. This will describe your research and design investigations and the outcomes of that process. The thesis document is a written product in which text is supplemented by visual material which can include video and other media. You can refer to catalogued theses in the University on-line library, particularly those in industrial design and architecture, for examples of suitable formats. In a Thesis project, it is required that the work is original and innovative,

and that the Thesis project and its documentation be of value to others in furthering work in the particular subject area.

MFA Thesis approval procedures

By the end of the semester before your thesis work commences,(the close of ARTD 503) you will need to have done five things.....

1 Negotiate a Thesis topic

In the semester preceding your Thesis semesters, all thesis students are asked to make a short presentation to the ID faculty on their proposed thesis topic. Following this presentation and a discussion the ID faculty work together with you to define this topic and to form an appropriate committee. The exact nature of the Thesis is negotiated by you with your Thesis committee via the process outlined below

2 Identify a Thesis Committee Chair

The Thesis Committee Chair is your Principal academic advisor, responsible for working closely with you throughout the entire project, providing appropriate direction and advice to you on a regular basis. This includes being the primary contact for review of the written thesis document.

Most full-time faculty members will be willing to take on up to two Thesis Committee Chair roles each year. Some faculty with heavy teaching or research loads may not be able to do this and it may not always be possible for you to secure your first choice of Thesis Committee Chair. Selection of a thesis project or topic, securing agreement from a faculty member to be a Thesis Committee Chair, and from the other committee members, is your responsibility.

3 Define the Thesis project

Working with the Thesis Committee Chair, you work to define the thesis project that will be undertaken. The Chair will advise on the selection of the other faculty members appropriate to the thesis research. You then prepare a final proposal of the project/thesis and a detailed work plan complete with an estimated timeline for completion of the various steps of the thesis. The Committee Chair ultimately has to approve the Project topic

4 Form a Thesis committee

At least three faculty serve on the thesis committee, including the Chair. The other two members of your committee will normally play lesser roles but will be asked to attend progress presentations and to review and approve advanced copies of the written thesis. The Chair of the Thesis Committee and one member of the committee must be Industrial design program faculty. The third committee member can be an ID faculty member but more often is an outside expert whose background and experience provides special knowledge supporting the thesis work. While additional committee members may also be asked to serve, the larger the committee, the more difficult it is to schedule meetings and reviews that all can attend. The full committee will review and approve the proposal and work plan. This stage should be reached before the end of the ARTD 503 class

You will be meeting with your committee every four weeks or so, throughout the thesis semesters, and those meetings should ideally be with the whole committee, not just with individual members. Consultation with Committee members during the summer period will be subject to special arrangements and may prove problematic

5 Complete a Thesis proposal Form

The Thesis Proposal Form is completed at the end of the semester prior to the initial thesis semester. This involves preparing a thesis title (maximum of 10 words), a short thesis statement (maximum of 50 words) and a description of the project and methodology to be used (maximum of 500 words). The Thesis Committee Form should be completed and returned to the ID Graduate advisor at the same time as the Proposal form. Failure to meet this deadline will affect your completion and graduation schedule

We do need to point out that all expenses associated with the Thesis project and the document, e.g., exhibition material, models, drawing material, electronic copies, film, typing, photocopying, telephone, travel, photography, etc., are borne by you

Final assessment of the thesis project

A formal presentation of the final thesis project to the ID program faculty is required. This is scheduled by the Graduate Coordinator and will normally include the Visiting Critic, invited by the program in order to give feedback and provide an external view of the program. All faculty and Thesis Committee Members and guests are invited. You are also expected to display your Thesis work in a public Exhibition, usually held in the Krannert Art Museum around early May

This final review of your work at a meeting of your thesis chair and committee will result in a final grade for ARTD 506. Prior to that review, you should have produced the final draft of your Thesis document. You should also have discussed your document with your committee and they will be involved with editing prior to deposit. We encourage all students to complete their Thesis document within the last semester, rather than delay it into the summer.

When you are ready to graduate, you will need to register for graduation through the online [Student Self-Service](#) portal. There are three graduation periods; Spring/May, Summer/August and Fall/December. Each graduation period has a deadline to register for graduation, and a deadline to deposit the Thesis at the [Thesis Office](#). Follow the [formatting guidelines](#) from the Thesis Office: Art and Design does not have any additional formatting rules.

You will be working closely with your thesis committee, especially your chair, to finalize your thesis. You should submit the final and committee-approved version to Ellen de Waard, the A+D Coordinator of Graduate Affairs two weeks before the deposit deadline, for a departmental format review. After passing this format review, Ellen will submit a signed [TDA](#) form to the Thesis Office, which gives you permission to submit your thesis electronically at the Thesis Office. The Thesis Office will perform another format review. You will then incorporate the suggested changes and deposit your thesis by the final deadline in order to graduate. If you have completed all classes except for ARTD 599 you will be able to participate in the Convocation ceremony but you will not formally graduate until you have submitted your Thesis document. This may affect your starting employment that depends on the award of MFA

We do need to point out that all expenses associated with the Thesis project and the document, e.g., exhibition material, models, drawing material, electronic copies, film, typing, photocopying, telephone, travel, photography, etc., are borne by you.

MFA ID program guide / Supplemental information

General information

Transfer of Credit

Credit earned at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign or from another institution prior to admission to the graduate degree program will be accepted for transfer towards the graduate Industrial Design degree subject to review by the Graduate Coordinator

Enrollment

Enrollment for the Fall Semester is conducted at mid-semester of the previous Spring Semester; advance enrollment for the Spring Semester is conducted at mid-semester of the previous Fall semester. You will need to arrange an appointment with the ID Graduate Advisor during the advance enrollment period.

Illinois Research Board (IRB) approval

All research procedures in graduate thesis projects which involve human subjects and are published need to be approved by the University Research Board before the project starts . These procedures are devised to protect the rights of human subjects with regard to safety and confidentiality. As your thesis documentation is filed with the Graduate College on completion these processes must be followed but we can help you through the process as it can be time consuming. It is not possible to get approval retroactively for studies that have already been done so it is important to start the process early

(more detailed guidance to be inserted here)

Financial Aid

The School of Art + Design encourages domestic applicants to apply for financial aid through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for possible Federal Work Study (FWS) Graduate Assistantships. To be considered for this financial aid, applicants should file a FAFSA application electronically using the FAFSA website: www.fafsa.edu.gov. Additional information regarding this financial aid can be found on the University of Illinois Office of Student Financial Aid (OFSA) website: www.osfa.illinois.edu The OFSA will notify applicants electronically if they are eligible for a FWS Graduate Assistantship.

There are three types of financial support: Fellowships, Assistantships and Tuition/Fee Waivers.

Fellowships

All candidates are considered for financial aid including fellowships who check apply for financial aid. A competitive award granted to degree candidates who have demonstrated high scholar and merit and awards. The Graduate Review Committee in the School of Art + Design and the University of Illinois Graduate College determines the candidates for all fellowship awards. A fellowship does not require service and the stipends range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 for the academic year. All fellowships include a waiver of tuition and a partial waiver of university student fees. All students who hold fellowships must enroll for a minimum course load of 12 credit hours in each semester.

A list of the available fellowships, including the Anthony Petullo Design Fellowship will be sent to you by the School. In addition, the School of Art and Design's Research Fund provides small grants to support innovative projects proposed by graduate students. There are also travel grants from various sources within the University that you can apply.

Assistantships

The School of Art and Design offers funding packages that waive the full cost of *tuition* plus a portion of the *campus fees*.

- [See the Graduate College Tuition Waiver Policy.](#)
- See how the university [defines the different roles of graduate assistantships.](#)

1. Teaching Assistantships (TAships) are awarded upon recommendation of the ID faculty. Recipients of 25% TAships serve the Industrial Design Program an average of ten hours per week. Depending upon background, experience, and program needs, TAs may serve as classroom facilitators or graders. After gaining experience, some TAs may teach courses as the instructor-of-record. [See the Teaching Handbook](#)

TAship holders typically receive a full tuition and partial fee waiver and also receive a stipend. Although TAs do not receive a stipend during the summer, they can enroll in summer sessions with a tuition and partial fee waiver. In order to be assigned a teaching assistant, a course needs to have a minimum of 25 students. Any additional multiples of 25 will require an additional teaching assistant.

New incoming graduate students in A+D who are also first-time TAs participate in a mandatory campus-wide two day [Graduate Teaching Academy](#). Later during the A+D Orientation week, they attend Guen Montgomery's presentation (Graduate Teaching at UIUC) and receive the [Graduate Teaching Guide](#) (to be updated AY21). See also the Graduate Teaching at UIUC/A+D [SLIDES](#).

1. Research Assistantships (RAships) with individual professors are contingent on funding and availability. Faculty with their own research funding may select and hire qualified students to assist them.
2. International students are not allowed to exceed a 50% appointment (due to the student visa status). Domestic students (including Green Card holders) are not allowed to exceed a 67% appointment. Exceeding these allowances will jeopardize your tuition waiver.
3. Assistantships with other colleges and programs on campus may work quite differently. For example, another department might offer a higher stipend but only a partial tuition waiver. If you are looking for an additional appointment outside of Art + Design, it is your responsibility to find out exactly what kind of package you will receive. The publication board for these extra job positions is called the Assistantship Clearinghouse <http://www.grad.illinois.edu/clearinghouse>
 - a. Before accepting an additional appointment from outside A+D, please request permission from your A+D program chair, grad rep(s) and research advisor or thesis committee chair.
 - b. We understand the need for (additional) funding, but *your academic progress must always be your central focus*.

Facilities

ID Graduate Studio

Enrolled students will receive designated desk space in 4xx Flagg Hall. Please be respectful and responsible. Keep your studio space clean and organized; you'll be glad there's less to clean up at the end of each semester, and you'll find it easier to work throughout the year.

The graduate program coordinators have collaborated with A+D administration to develop the following policy on use of the ID graduate studio. In the interest of students' health and safety, all must comply with the rules and regulations listed below. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the loss of studio privileges.

1. Please be mindful of noise levels in this shared workspace.
2. No courses or office hours shall be held in the graduate studio. (Office hours may be held in the community room; see below.)
3. Do not store any materials in the hallway, common areas (east and west ends of the room) or on a desk that has not been assigned to you.
4. Common-area desks may be used freely but must be cleared at the end of the work session so that they will be available to all
5. Students can use the lockers located in the next room to hold valuable items.
6. Do not block the access to doors, windows, or fire extinguishers.
7. Do not hang or attach anything to the lights, ceilings or utility lines.
8. Do not alter the space with temporary walls.

9. No animals except those who meet Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act legislation. <http://disability.illinois.edu/applying-services/service-animals-campus>
10. No smoking, candles or open flames are permitted.
11. No alcohol or other controlled substances allowed in the studio.
12. Aerosols, including spray paint, fixative, and adhesive, may only be used in A+D spray booths.
13. Any materials(s) that occupy an amount of space that is deemed excessive, or any material deemed to be hazardous, must be removed by the owner within 24 hours of notice.
14. Please keep doors and windows closed and locked when not in studio.
15. Studio spaces are assigned for one semester at a time.
16. Full time enrollment is required, except in the case of students who only have their final thesis/dissertations to complete.

A+D Facilities Policy

Studios are also governed by the following policy, which is enforced by A+D Facilities Personnel:

1. Studios may be used only for legitimate activities directly related to University coursework.
2. Spaces must be left in the same condition as when originally occupied.
3. Studios may not be used as residences.
4. Fire codes and University policies forbid the storage of anything in hallways or public areas such as lounges. Do not store any material outside the buildings, or use any University space for storage of personal items.
5. Any toxic and/or flammable materials must be handled and stored in compliance with Department of Research Safety regulations. MSDS information must be filed with Art & Design.
6. All waste must be disposed of in accordance with University and EPA policies. Trash should not be left outside the dumpster because it will not be collected by Facilities and Services.
7. All items from Surplus remain University property and must be returned to the Facilities Manager.
8. Vehicles, including motorcycles, bicycles, and automobiles are not allowed in University buildings.
9. There are costs involved in removing equipment and trash that remains in studios when students move out. These costs will be passed on to the occupant when the studio is vacated.
10. All other University, state, local, federal, good neighbor, and common sense laws apply.

David Weightman Professor / Industrial design / UIUC July 15 2021