

University of North Texas
College of Visual Arts and Design
Department of Art Education and Art History

BA in Interdisciplinary Art and Design Studies Manual

Welcome to the Interdisciplinary Art and Design Studies major!

This manual explains the steps you need to complete for your BA in Interdisciplinary Art and Design Studies (IADS). Be sure to follow these instructions carefully to avoid delays in graduating.

The BA in Interdisciplinary Art and Design Studies is a genuinely interdisciplinary study of art and design with coursework in such diverse fields as Anthropology, Archeology, Communications, Art History, and Sociology. The program introduces students to the breadth of artistic and design media and the interpretive strategies employed to decipher them. The degree teaches students to understand images as objects to be read for their visual, physical, technical, social, and historical properties. It explores the social, philosophical, and psychological reasons why humans make and need images as well as how humans have used images to communicate throughout history and around the globe. The degree prepares students to understand the power and significance of images in the world around them.

Undergraduate Program

The program consists of 120 semester credit hours. All students complete the College of Visual Arts and Design Core program, acquiring general skills in art, design, and art history. Students then select from a menu of introductory courses in specific studio art and design disciplines to gain more specific knowledge of two of these fields. During the next stage of the degree, students take courses outside the School of Visual Arts, selecting from an array of classes that address images and visual communication from different perspectives. They also complete a broad selection of advanced art history courses to gain a deeper understanding of the history of images from around the globe, and the analytical tools used to study them.

As part of the 120-hour program, students complete a Minor outside of the College of Visual Arts and Design. The minor is intended to complement the major degree program and offer a different perspective on the use of art and design. Students are strongly advised to consider a minor in Anthropology, Journalism, Foreign Language, History (including area and gender/sexuality studies), or Sociology.

The specific program requirements, tailored for the current catalog year, is found at http://art.unt.edu/img/uploaded/file/curriculum_sheets/IADS.pdf.

Completing the Degree Plan and the IADS Portfolio

To declare your IADS major, attend the IADS information meeting held twice during each long semester (fall and spring). You should do this as early as possible in your university career in order to receive the most effective advising. Sign up in Art Building Room 217. **Bring your unofficial transcripts** to the meeting (printed out by the registrar in Eagle Student Services).

At the IADS meeting, we will discuss the degree and the courses you will complete. Since the IADS major is tailored to the interests of each individual student, pay attention to the guidelines for selecting non-CVAD classes. We will also register you on the IADS Blackboard site.

The meeting will also present the **IADS Portfolio** that each student must submit in order to graduate. The Portfolio is a requirement for internal program assessment. In other words, your work is used to help us to determine the major's success, not yours. The work you provide will not be graded by the department and will not keep you from graduating. **NEVERTHELESS, you must complete it or you will not be permitted to graduate.**

The IADS Portfolio is completed on a Blackboard (WebCT) site at <http://ecampus.unt.edu>. Once you are registered, you will have access to the site until you graduate. Work on the portfolio each semester to avoid losing material, forgetting about classes, etc. When you file for graduation, we will check to make sure that your portfolio is complete.

The IADS Portfolio consists of the following parts:

- For each class in Menu 2, Menu 3, and the Art History Categories, you will submit several artifacts. **Note: You will likely need to scan these and save as pdf files unless you have electronic copies.**
 - A copy of the **syllabus**.
 - **Two examples of your work.** These should be culminating assignments (final project, final exam, research paper, etc.) and **must be your own work**. If all of the work in the class is group work, note this in your essay answers (see below).
 - Written responses to several **short essays** about the class as it relates to the IADS major. Download the Word document, enter your answers, and upload it along with the other artifacts.
- A final **reflective essay**. In your last semester, you will complete a final reflective essay in which you reflect on your experience in the major. Download the Word document, enter your essay, and upload it.

Choosing Classes

The IADS courses should be tailored to your individual interests. Each Menu and Category has several options. **Be aware that not every class is available every semester, so plan ahead and take classes when they are available.**

The IADS major also permits **substitutions**. To substitute a class, keep the following principles in mind:

- Have the possible substitution reviewed by Dr. Donahue-Wallace **before enrolling!** Don't waste time and money on a class that won't count toward your major. You may be asked to provide a syllabus if the catalog description is not sufficiently informative.
- The class must be of the same level. Only a 3000- or 4000-level class can substitute for another 3000- or 4000-level class.
- The class must take images, visual communication, and other examples of material culture (man-made objects, such as maps or buildings) as **a central question of the course**. At least 50% of the class must address images. For example, a course on election-year politics will not be accepted as a substitution **but** a course on representations of elections in film will. Another example: a sociology class on the Mexican-American experience will not count **but** a class on representations of Mexican-Americans in film, literature, and art will.
- If the class is an acceptable substitution according to Dr. Donahue-Wallace, fill out a Substitution Form (available on the IADS Blackboard site) and submit it after you successfully complete the class. Unless you are in your final semester, we will not fill substitution paperwork until you have passed the class.

Choosing a Minor

Many of the classes in Menu 3 require that you minor in that area or have significant lower-level prerequisites that make a minor worth your time. The minor you choose can further your career aspirations. Think carefully about what types of knowledge you want to acquire before you finish your degree. Think about what type of graduate program you may want to pursue. Some minors will add time to your career at UNT, but will be worthwhile in the long run. The minor is your decision, but give it some thought before you choose.

Final Thoughts

- IADS is a degree that requires you to find your path and take charge of your own learning.
- But, avoid surprises! Seek advising in Art 111 regularly.
- Keep track of the number of advanced hours (3000- and 4000-level classes) you take. Because of our accreditation requirements, the IADS degree requires less than the state-mandated minimum number of 42 advanced hours. In most cases, you should simply take an extra advanced class in your minor.
- Pay attention to university deadlines and check your Eaglemail account regularly (or set it up to forward to an account you check on a daily basis).