Master of Arts in Design

(Graphic / Product / Media)

Profile of the Study Program

Far from conventionalism, the GIU **Faculty for Design** seeks to support the development of creative individuals with a strong personality, an increasing capability to perceive and observe economic, ecological, technological and cultural scopes. With a general understanding of the functions of design and aesthetics, the faculty develops critical perspectives of research methods to bring insights into the needs and potentials of society. Interdisciplinary research methods are offered that expand the understanding of the role of design regionally and internationally. Through its distinctive academic content, the program has a practical nature, which stimulates students' capacity for reflection, and identifies opportunities to both create new and transform existing experiences in the everyday lives of our society. It aims at establishing a center of excellence supporting the scientific and economic cooperation between Germany and the international design industry and business communities.

The study program **Master of Arts in Design** contributes to the university's mission of providing an anchor for cooperation with German partners and partner universities abroad through research-oriented professorships and contemporary study programs, thus opening new possibilities for knowledge transfer, student exchange, making significant contributions to international cooperation between science and industry. The overall study program objectives are to:

1. Apply the principles of design in the fields of Graphic Design, Media Design, or Product Design with a sound exploration of multicultural approaches
2. Demonstrate the ability to create and develop design solutions in the light of current research findings

3. Utilize a methodological approach to the human-centered design process and project implementation
4. Develop an understanding of different methods in design thinking and design research related to current philosophies and best practices in the field
5. Enable the student to work in teams and communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, in a multi-cultural environment to achieve objectives
6. Demonstrate the ability to document the design process and results
7. Build and refine personal skills in critical thinking, problem analysis and problem solving

The **qualification goals** of the postgraduate study program in Design are:

1. Demonstrate depth of knowledge to maneuver effectively through complex problems associated with the field of design
2. Investigate and analyze contemporary design problems both in local and international contexts
3. Identify, integrate and synthesize information that contributes to decision making
4. Demonstrate specialized theoretical knowledge and research techniques in Graphic Design, Media Design, or Product Design
5. Implement scientific methods and updated technical tools to develop and evaluate of project outcomes
6. Communicate a critical understanding of design issues in real-world contexts
7. Master a collaborative and participatory co-design process

The **teaching methods** encompass a combination of lectures, tutorials and practical sessions, self-studying, assignments and projects. These various forms include class participation, demonstration, brainstorming, hands-on work, collaborative discussions, receiving feedback, or combination of these. In the lecture and tutorial, students focus on Theory concepts, design concepts development, knowledge of techniques and materials and their implementation, presentation methods, concept generation, design specifications, brainstorming, proposing ideas, sketching and prototyping. The practical sessions offer unique hands on work, where they transform the proposed design into a final product. The practical sessions are conducted in the faculty's studios and workshops where students build and test their products, get feedback, critique sessions and iterate until reaching the final product. The teaching language is English throughout the entire curriculum. The program aims to educate young design professionals with a global awareness and local understanding.

Specialization / Majors

Graphic Design

Graphic Design is visual and verbal creation with a communicative intention. It enables the transmission of information in a more intelligible, convincing and effective manner. The focus of the study program and its scientifically-based methodology is on learning, applying and refining the appropriate artistic, critical and technical means. The commercial nature of graphic design, together with the scope and form of our disciplines, clearly distinguishes our activities from disciplines such as fine art.

The foundation of the study program is an in-depth examination of the basic processes of graphic design, their technical prerequisites and areas of application. In a wide variety of courses, students are introduced to the history and theory of design, art and popular culture, as well as to methods of project and design management. The knowledge they acquire is put into practice in project work and consolidated in critical discussions. The practical training always aims to promote skills in theoretical argumentation and criticism.

Personal designs and the designs of others are discussed in their manifold (cultural, social, economic, technological, etc.) aspects and therefore seen as modifiable. The ability to place oneself at a (theoretical or experimental) distance to traditional materials and the ways they are used stimulates innovative designs which are not merely the continuation of existing traditions.

Students gain competences to:

- Develop, realize and present visual communication concepts
- Formulate a personal creative position
- Develop self-direction and research based learning strategies
- Apply design thinking strategies and research methods
- Explain the role of design in creating and transforming culture

The aim of the study program is to enable designers to find orientation in various cultural and professional environments and to design appropriate visual communication strategies on the basis of a developed visual training and outstanding media-related skills. It is intended for students who may work in the areas of corporate identity, branding, publishing, advertising, packaging, illustration and interactive media.

Media Design

Media Design is dealing with time-based media focusing video and animation. The key dimension is the design of processes in time. In addition, students acquaint themselves with a wide media spectrum covering photography, sound, interactive media as well as media installation.

Students gain aesthetical, technical, methodological and theoretical competences in the field of time-based media. Various media will be investigated in terms of their own rules and the interrelation with each other. The design of time-based media considers visual and dramaturgical means.

Teaching focuses the students' thematic priority that enhances their variety of perception and ability to express them in a creative way. Dynamics between creative idea, media specific conditions, narrative concepts and communicative strategies are investigated.

Design practice and theory are interrelated. Projects emphasize the theoretical competence in techniques, research methods, history, aesthetics and theory of digital media. The practical work is inspired by and reflected in theoretical seminars focusing on media theoretical, historical, philosophical and cultural questions.

Primal fields of work are conception, planning and realization of videos and animations for the industry, culture and research sector like advertisement, short films, and corporate documentations. By acquiring professional competences, the students will be enabled to actively shape the constantly changing media fields.

They gain basic competences to:

- − Develop, realize and present media work
- − Format one's own creative position
- − Work self-directed
- − Combine theory and practice
- − Explain design as creating and transforming culture

Graduates of the Department of Media Design are awaited by a complex occupational field. Primal fields of work are conception, planning and realization of media products for the industry, culture and research sector: institutions and organizations, media production companies, trade fairs, events, showrooms; advertisement; documentation; education; television.

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Product Design

In a rapidly changing and connected world, the specialization of Product Design seeks establishing the future identity of a designer facing evolving challenges. Our aim is to educate designers with the ability to research, apply knowledge and to develop critical thinking and their individual creative position. Knowledge enables them to act in an appropriate way considering both the overall situation and the needs and desires of the individual as well as the sum of individuals within a given environment. Knowledge is the key factor for directed creativity in order to improve people's lives.

The process of design involves problem finding and analysis, followed by the development and evaluation of solutions guided by a deep sensitivity for environmental concerns, human-centered aesthetics, cultural and functional needs. The designer needs to have an excellent ability to understand and visualize human emotions in order to address human perception.

The design process requires communication across a wide range of disciplines. Students are enabled to develop concepts and specifications that optimize the function and value within a system for the mutual benefit of both user and manufacturer. The integration of Product Design Department into the total educational landscape of the GIU encourages different processes for research and the development of interdisciplinary work. The use of workshops as well as new technology enables students to expand their application of the design process and fosters the motivation to develop their own understanding of what design is in order to gain the following competencies:

− Develop, realize and present products and product design concepts

− Apply knowledge of physics, materials, tools and construction in designs

− Develop a personal creative position and critical thinking

− Apply design thinking strategies and research methods

− Development of methods to facilitate a deeper understand of complex scenarios and systems

− Ability to define strategies and concepts to improve complex situations

− Ability to describe features of the system, process or product as a set of functional principles of how the system, process or product will work and a set of shaping principles of how to visualize and realize it

− Ability to define design aspects of a system, process or product that relate to users, perception, usability and ergonomics

− Enabling the future designer to access the market and to develop their own business within a challenging environment

In a period of rapid technological change, our program guides the student to consider options and possibilities, addressing them appropriately to the needs and wants of the individual as well as of the sum of individuals within a particular environment. In that view, students will look at the wider context of the system, process or product, which includes ecologic, social, and economic questions.

Curriculum

L = Lecture, T/P = Tutorials/Practical (all in contact hours)

Students select one of the specializations: Graphic Design / Media Design / Product Design

Semester 1

Code	No.	Course Name	L	T/P	ECTS
TH	M101	Advanced Research Methods	2	0	4
TH	M102	Communication Strategies	2	0	4
GD/MD/PD	M101	Advanced Design Project I (Graphic, Media or Product)	2	6	22
		Total	6	6	**30**

Semester 2

Code	No.	Course Name	L	T/P	ECTS
TH	M201	Design and Organization	2	0	4
TH	M202	Design and Economy	2	0	4
GD/MD/PD	M201	Advanced Design Project II (Graphic, Media or Product)	2	6	22
		Total	6	6	**30**

Semester 3

Code	No.	Course Name	ECTS
GD/MD/PD	M301	Master Thesis	30
		Total	**30**

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