

KU MA Communication Design Requirements

The MA in Communication Design encourage students to think innovatively and use in-depth investigation to solve design problems and formulate creative expression. The program promotes a well-rounded education and professional focus through the study of design history, contemporary topics, typography, emerging media, and the exploration of professional goals. Students choose a specialization in either Research-Driven Design, Design History, or Design Studio.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Solve communication challenges by identifying the issues, targeting audience, researching, and/or developing innovative solutions.
2. Create and develop visual solutions in response to communication challenges.
3. Determine audience objectives based on a spectrum of human factors; test audience response; and/or assess the outcomes.
4. Apply the contexts of past, current, and future design.
5. Communicate with other creative professionals through research-based, cohesive, and persuasive rhetoric.

Note that all students must achieve 30 graduate credits.

Required MA Communication Design Core Courses – 15 credits

CODS 502 Professional Exploration (3 credits)

CODS 503 Unconventional Typography (3 credits)

CODS 504 Design Pioneers (3 credits)

CODS 505 Emerging Media (3 credits)

CODS 506 Contemporary Topics (3 credits)

Studio Electives – 9 credits

CODS 516 Graduate CD Studio (1)* (3 credits)

CODS 516 Graduate CD Studio (2) (6 credits)

Specializations (choose 1) - 6 credits

Research Driven Design

CODS 517 Graduate Research Project (6 credits)

Design History

CODS 550 Historical Survey of Graphic Design A (3 credits)

CODS 551 Historical Survey of Graphic Design B (3 credits)

Design Studio

CODS 516 Graduate CD Studio (3)† (6 credits)

** CDE 516 Graduate CD Studio is a repeatable course up to 6 cr in a single semester, 15 cr overall.*

† Student may substitute with 2 3-credit CDE 516 Graduate CD Studios, or 1 3-credit CDE 516 Graduate CD Studio plus 1 graduate-level Academic Elective. Other substitutions by permission of the Program Director. Substitutions may result in an extended completion date.

Program Plan Code: MA_COMD

Effective Semester: Spring 2026