The master of fine arts program in communication design at Texas State University is a nationally recognized program that provides advanced study in corporate advertising, art direction, graphic design and digital media design.

Graphic Design USA magazine has listed Texas State among the 29 “Select Top U.S. Graphic Design Schools.” It was the only Texas school on the list and one of only a few public universities. Others honored were renowned private art and design schools, including Parsons, the Ringling College of Art and Design, and the Rhode Island School of Design.

Texas State’s revolutionary approach puts the needs of working designers on equal footing with full-time students. Rather than starting with a textbook approach to learning, the program uses next-generation technologies for e-learning, engaging seminars and directed study.
Course Work
The degree will require a minimum of 60 semester credit hours, 18 credit hours of core curriculum, 30 credit hours of prescribed Communication Design studio electives, 6 credit hours of free electives, and 6 credit hours of thesis. The communication design graduate program curriculum is designed to provide advanced study in the areas of corporate advertising art direction, graphic design and digital media design. The program provides learners with advanced problem-solving methodologies, updated technological advancement relating to communication design, and examination of historical events within the discipline and emerging theoretical constructs.

For students seeking a career in higher education, the program provides the appropriate academic credential and the terminal degree in the discipline of visual communication design: the M.F.A. degree.

Working professionals benefit from the program's convenient course-delivery systems, which include:
• online instruction
• extended weekend seminars
• evening and Saturday courses
• summer seminars
• directed study

Mid-program Portfolio Review
Once students complete 30 credit hours, they undergo a review that consists of a visual presentation of 20 completed design works and an oral exam. The program director and core graduate faculty review the work and rate it. Students with satisfactory ratings may continue in the program. Students with unsatisfactory ratings are allowed to revise and resubmit their work for reassessment one time only.

Professional Practice
Students must complete six hours of work in an advertising agency, graphic design firm or digital media studio.

Thesis
Students must write a formal thesis that represents researching, creating, designing and documenting an original hypothesis in communication design.

Admission Policy
Admission to the program is selective. Applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree with a major in communication design (i.e., advertising, art direction and design, digital media design, graphic design or illustration) from a regionally accredited university and satisfy specific admission criteria. A minimum of 36 undergraduate semester credit hours in communication design is recommended. A minimum of a 2.75 GPA on the last 60 undergraduate hours of letter grade work earned before receipt of a bachelor’s degree is required.

Submit the following to The Graduate College:
• the online Graduate College application through ApplyTexas
• application fee
• one official transcript from each senior-level, post-secondary institution attended
• letter of intent (cover letter)
• résumé or curriculum vitae
• academic and professional statement of purpose (300-500 words). Applicants will be evaluated on:
  1. written communication skills
  2. alignment of goals with offered courses
  3. past student and professional experience
  4. recognition for local, regional, national and/or international design projects
• three letters of recommendation
• digital portfolio (professional and/or student) consisting of a minimum of 20 works in communication design. The work should be accompanied by an annotated list indicating communicative message or project mission, media, and publishing information. Assessment factors:
  1. Ideation/design/presentation
  2. Role and scope of work
  3. Peer-review (state, regional, national or international)

A PDF document with the portfolio URL must be submitted online.

Additional documentation will be required for international applicants. Please visit the Graduate College International Information website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Prospect_Students/Intl_Info.html.

Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply for access to an online application, where to submit application documents and more details. The application deadline is April 30 for the fall semester and October 31 for the spring semester.

Financial Assistance
A limited number of graduate assistantships are available to qualified applicants. Recipients must take a nine-hour course load to qualify for financial assistance. Contact the program advisor for application information.

For information about scholarships, financial aid and application deadlines, visit Texas State’s Graduate College website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on Financing Your Graduate Education. Please note that program admission priority deadlines must be met in order to be considered for scholarships, fellowships and assistantships.

Contact
Graduate Advisor and Program Director
Department of Art and Design
Texas State University
College of Fine Arts and Communication
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666-4684
Phone: 877.545.E.MFA
E-mail: mfacomdes@txstate.edu

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/mfacomdes