

CIS Individual Major Proposal Draft:
Graphic Design

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Class: Junior, class of 2021

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The “working title” and description of your proposed individual major. What is your topic/area of study?

- The name of this major is “Graphic Design”. This title is specific to describe the focus on developing a design oriented mindset, that pays careful detail to the combination of visual and textual elements to best convey and elevate a certain message.
- ***“Graphic design: Critical design thinking**
 - “Design thinking refers to the cognitive, strategic and practical processes by which design concepts are developed by designers and/or design teams”
- “Graphic Design and Visual Communication”
- “Graphic Design “In a transforming Media Landscape”
 - With the entrance of social media, the platforms, mediums, and pallet for entertainment, information, and communication have drastically changed. Growing up in this environment, I have experienced both sides of this transition; Social media has become my primary source of news and entertainment, but has also impacted my attention span and self control. In contrast, I still love and read magazines and publications, and have been educated through textual influences. This presents the duality graphic design at this moment. The field has embraced the entrance of technology as a means of creation

A set of important questions that you want to pursue. Include “big questions” in the overall area of study, as well as more specific questions that will guide your own studies and learning in the major.

- Some questions:
 - What relationship does visual aesthetics play in the reception of a message?
 - How can typography and image indirectly tell a story?
 - How has the influence of social media changed the landscape for visual communication?
 - What makes something stand out, when attention spans last seconds?
 - In what ways can physical publications/media thrive in a technology forward entertainment sphere?

- How can graphic design be abstracted to apply to different mediums or theories?
- Is “easier” boring? Is simple more?
- In what ways can good design help change the way people understand concepts?
 - Can good design help reeducate ?

A list of 11-12 courses, seminars, independent studies, and/or experiential learning that will become the “requirements” of your major, including brief explanations of how each contributes to the goals of the major. We recommend that you present your proposed courses under different categories or subtopics, not simply by their department or program affiliation.

- **Indicate courses completed or currently enrolled, and when you expect to take the remaining courses.**
- **At least two courses must be advanced work (Level III).**
- **The senior project adds one course credit (IS 392) in the spring of your senior year; some students choose to include a senior project course (IS 391) in the fall.**
- **You may also include a list of other related or supporting courses.**

COURSES:

- categorized in technique
1. Photography: Art 205 art
 - This course exposes the student to the field of photography, both film and digital. Through this course, I have learned the importance and depth of imagery. Given both a film digital cameras, the course challenged me to align my technique with my creative vision, and execute photos centered around a desired theme or prompt. Beyond taking photos, the course also asks the student to interact with the medium, either developing film in a dark room, or editing photos on Adobe Photoshop. This course is vital to an education in graphic design, for it is a head first dive into understanding the presence photography and images can hold.
 2. Foundations 2D Media: art 102
 - This course works with a variety of mediums, from paints, to collage, charcoal, and pencil. The variety of projects each allowed different concepts to be explored by the changing medium. Painting with oils and gouache tested color theory. Collages developed style and taste, utilized images, and provided room to play with composition. Finally the course introduced me to the idea of iteration, which is essential to artistry, especially in finding what works best in the field of design.
 3. Intro to Art History: art 153

- This course was an overarching historical presentation of art and its influence across the world. To enter any discipline, it is important to historicize the content being learned, and understanding how historical actions and influences have persisted to the contemporary. Learning about the paths different cultures have taken to represent life fosters an appreciation for the adversary and diversity of art.
4. Sociology of Colonialism: Soan 233
 - This class analyzed the severe damage colonialism has caused human society, and how such impacts persist in the contemporary. This course nurtured a critical and curious eye, challenging the presupposed notions, texts, and processes I take for granted. Being able to reeducate and reflect on my own position in history has been a powerful academic experience.
 5. Urban Sociology: Soan 269
 - This course looks at the relationship people have to space, specifically with the design and occupation of cities. Coming from an urban environment, this course was intriguing, and was close to home. With dense urban environments, graphic design plays a crucial role in communicating and navigating the city, populating maps, street signs, advertisements, and graffiti. Understanding how the ways people occupy space relates to how to present information to that same audience.
 6. Graphic Design: Art 236
 - A no brainer. This course specialized on the technical skills of the Adobe suite, which are the primary tools of a graphic designer. In addition, this course had an active civic engagement component, where I was a member of a small team of students who developed two projects for our clients, HealthFinders Collaborative. This course solidified my position as a student of design, and helped me gain experience in a client-creative relationship.
 7. Arts Management: Mgmt 229
 - This course covered the managerial concepts necessary to operate or work in an arts organization. Pursuing graphic design, I will probably look to work in creative agencies, which are nonprofit arts organizations. Further, this course also had an ACE component, where I was a member of a small team responsible for writing a grant for the HOPE Center. Grant writing is a common skill to gain funding, and this component also built my ability to communicate with clients.
 8. Social Psychology psych 249:
 - This course specializes in understanding the ways bias affects the human psyche, and how to recognize and deconstruct such biases. When creating or promoting messages through design, it is important to reflect on any internal biases, as well as understand how people's biases affect them.

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Media studies, art history

- **Technique**
- **message/audience**
- **purpose**

A rationale for the major that 1) explains the coherence of your plan and its relation to other areas of study; 2) addresses the opportunities for focused study of your subject at St. Olaf; 3) justifies the major as integrative, not simply interdisciplinary, study; and 4) connects your subject to the values and mission of the college. Why is this a good liberal arts major for a college like St. Olaf?

1) explains the coherence of your plan and its relation to other areas of study

Curating a graphic design curriculum, requires the collection of communication skills, creative problem solving skills, with the technical ability to translate an idea to media. The major itself focuses on developing each of these components through specified classes. Each component of the curriculum can be best learned and understood from different departments, ranging from art, to psychology, sociology, and management.

Here at St. Olaf, there are many indirect opportunities to focus an education in graphic design. With a limited art department, and only one graphic design course being seasonally offered, many of the opportunities to focus specifically on design rest on the student outside of the classroom. Studying at university, I am lucky enough to have free access to the Adobe Suite. This range of computer programs is a necessary and expensive tool used in the graphic design field. Having unlimited access to this is a luxury here at St. Olaf that I routinely rely on to deepen my abilities to convert creative and abstract ideas to concrete visuals. Finally, outside the classroom, there are many needs for graphic design on campus. As the lead graphic designer for SGA's marketing and communications division, I routinely practice the technical aspect of design, while also fulfilling my student work award. One opportunity is to utilize this school's investment in study abroad. That is why for my junior interim and spring semester, I am studying abroad in the graphic design program at DIS Copenhagen. This program is specialized in graphic design, and is located in one of the most design oriented cities in the world. Because the aspect of formal technical education was fairly absent at St. Olaf, it was important to hone technical skills while studying abroad.

A description of your learning and life experience leading up to this proposal. Why does this major make sense for you? Include factors that show how well prepared you are to carry out an independent plan of study and a complex independent capstone project.

Here at St. Olaf, I have grown closer to being a New Yorker. Growing up in Manhattan, I was constantly immersed in intentional urban design, as well as an exposure to both extreme luxury and extreme poverty. With this perspective, I could not be naive social issues, and as a creative person, have always looked to the city for inspiration. At home, my mother is an urban planner, and my father is a civil attorney. They each have contributed an enormous amount to the way I carry myself, and I can proudly say that my affinity towards aesthetics and ethics can be tied to nurture. I have been creative my entire life, that only continued when coming to St. Olaf. I began my education undecided, before changing to a Studio Art and Sociology major, before transitioning to a CIS major to specify my passion for design over an education in fine arts.

Travelling to a new state, not knowing a single person, has been a big step in building independence, as well as solidifying my identity. Carving my own academic path with an independent study is the next step in this process, and will round out my education. Further, a studio art major struggles to articulate my ambition and skill set oriented for graphic design. The individual major is the last step in my study of graphic design here at Olaf. After taking the course last interim, I have committed to focusing my education towards design. I intentionally chose upcoming fall courses to support the construction of an individual major, I took a graphic design internship over the summer, I applied and been accepted to study abroad in a graphic design intensive program, and have taken a student work position as a graphic designer. The intention and agency of a CIS major makes it both appealing but applicable to my education and self.

A preliminary description of at least two potential senior integrative projects, including their relationship to your other work in the major; the format for the final product(s); resources you would need; possibilities for public presentation; and how it would be evaluated. What kind of work do you envision doing?

One potential senior integrative project I have thought of, is the creation and production of a magazine. Printed mediums are some of the most successful and lush displays of graphic design. This project does not need to be limited to my own content; a magazine could be a curated selection of a variety of artistry and mediums all centered around a particular theme, message, or brand. Involving other creatives would illustrate my organization and collaborative skills, which all relate to having a good business relationships. Further, there is also an element of branding in the accumulation of a greater message or theme to the magazine. This project would be designed in the Adobe suite compositionally. Physically, there would have to be access to high quality printers, which may be found on campus or can be sourced off campus (maybe

Northfield's print shop?). Here different materials and production methods can be explored. Finally, additional projects, such as maybe advertising the magazine or creating a display for it could be completed during the printing process. This project could be evaluated by variety and execution of the committed ideas, and on the overall professionalism of set magazine.

Another idea for a cumulative senior capstone project could be to use graphics to make a product packaging design, and possibly see through with production. This could maybe be in association with the cage, or the pause, where a specific product could be rebranded and repackaged. This would show adversity to an unusual form, and also show an ability to rise to a challenging prompt. This could be presented in the print and release of the repackaged product, and having an assessment on sales or general reception?