

Master of Fine Arts in Design Studies

Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar

Accepting applications for Fall 2009

Application deadline: 15 April 2009



VCUQatar

Virginia Commonwealth University

The MFA in Design Studies is the first graduate program in design in the Gulf Region. The program will provide an educational environment where self-directed students with diverse knowledge sets in design and related disciplines collaborate and challenge the definition and development of design problems, processes, and solutions. Students will expand and deepen their abilities and increase their motivation to contribute directly to innovation, education and leadership in design thinking and making. Graduates will approach design on a strategic level to provide a high degree of constructive and sustainable value to the economic, social and cultural contexts of the global community. This MFA track is pending VCU approval.

The program acknowledges that design is a professional discipline that is broadly based and highly collaborative, incorporating the transfer of knowledge across traditional domains to create products and processes of manufacture, environments, forms of communication and the organization of information. Only six students will be accepted into the program each year. Students in the program will receive individual mentorship throughout their course of study.



Degree Requirements

The Design Studies track requires 60 semester credit hours of study. Students are expected to complete a thesis project of complex scale and scope and present a written thesis that will complement the work undertaken in the thesis studio. Course work in the degree is comprised of 9 semester credits of theory, 21 semester credits of studio, 13 semester credits of applied research, 3 credits of practicum/internship, 9 credits of thesis studio and 6 elective credits. This Master of Fine Arts degree is recognized as the terminal degree in design and meets the accreditation standards established by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design in the United States (NASAD).

Individualized Program

Graduate students are expected to develop an individualized program of study within a context of cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural design issues including but not limited to the design of built and digital environments; product development and marketing; usability; ergonomics; semiotics of visual form; persuasive informative, and poetic uses of visual communication; as well as contemporary theories of design and sociology. Full-time residency preferred. Part-time study is possible depending on individual need and space availability.

Admission Requirements

Preference is given to male and female applicants holding an appropriate bachelor level degree in design or a closely related discipline from an accredited university. The admissions decision is also based upon the ability of the applicant to present a portfolio demonstrating knowledge of design issues and a clear statement of intent. English language proficiency (the equivalent of 570 or higher on the paper and pencil version of the TOEFL) and a successful interview are required. Provisional acceptance may be granted to applicants not able to fulfill all of the admissions requirements.

Detailed admissions information is available at:

Office of Admissions
Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar
P.O. Box 8095
Doha, Qatar

vcuqadmissions@qatar.vcu.edu
+974 49 27 238
www.qatar.vcu.edu

Course of Study

First semester

DESI 601 Interdisciplinary Design Seminar
DESI 520 Design Research Methodologies
DESI 611 Design Studio One
DESI 510 Materials and Methods Studio

Second semester

DESI 602 Advanced Design Seminar: Design Criticism
DESI 612 Design Studio Two
DESI 605 Design Strategies and Ethics for Business
DESI 521 Design Research Applications

Third semester

Approved Studio Elective*
DESI 630 Teaching Practicum in Design
OR
DESI 631 Design Internship
DESI 613 Design Studio Three
DESI 620 Design Research Studio - Thesis Formulation

Fourth semester

Approved Elective*
DESI 690 Thesis Studio
DESI 621 Design Research Studio – Leadership & Entrepreneurship

Total Credits Required: 60

*The 6 credits of approved electives can be selected from a variety of 500-600 level courses offered at VCUQatar, VCU in Richmond, another Education City university, or another internationally accredited university anywhere in the world.