

Graphic Design BFA

First Year Advancement

Portfolio Guidelines

Portfolio Requirements

Your portfolio must be comprised **only** of selections from first-year Art Foundations (ART) and first-year Graphic Design (DESGR) studio courses. If you received transfer credit for any of these courses, you may include work from those courses.

Your portfolio must be a **diverse** selection of 12 (no more, no less) assignments from your first-year studio courses (ART and DESGR). These should reflect a **variety** of media and learning objectives from first-year courses.

It is understood that at the time of application, you may be enrolled in one or two required first-year studio courses. There is no disadvantage for this, and you are strongly encouraged to include any completed work from those courses.

What to Include

Put your best foot forward. If you did well on a particular assignment, you should include it... even if you think it doesn't apply to graphic design. You are encouraged to include technical assignments (perspective drawing, color theory, etc.), even if you think they are too basic or boring. If they are well-executed, then you should consider including them.

Although there is no "magic formula", we are looking for students who exhibit an understanding of the basic principles and elements of art and design, with strong technical ability across different media, who demonstrate high levels of creativity, and who show maturity and responsibility in regard to their studies.

What Not to Include

Do not include graphic design work that you did in high school or professionally. Having graphic design-related work in your portfolio does not ensure or increase your chances of acceptance.

Work which includes immature content or sentimental themes (e.g. cute animals, children, inspirational quotes, superheroes, wedding portraiture, celebrities, drawings copied from photos) is strongly discouraged, even if it is well-executed technically.

Unless you are a new transfer student, do not include work from courses at other institutions for which you have not already received transfer credit. (See the Department of Art & Art History [website](#) for more information about requesting transfer credit.)

Under no circumstances will Graphic Design faculty pre-screen portfolios for students before submission.

Documenting Your Work

You are responsible for digitally documenting all assignments that weren't digital to begin with. This means that you must make the necessary time to take good quality photographs using the appropriate lighting and a high quality digital camera, and/or making high-quality scans.

Although we are not expecting professional-level photography, it is expected that you know the difference between good and poor-quality imagery, and understand how to achieve good results. The cameras on most newer mobile devices are sufficient. If you think your own device isn't adequate, we recommend borrowing one. Again, the goal is to make good quality, high-resolution images that capture the original work as closely as possible.

If you're interested in professional-level art documentation, you can find in-depth information on the department's [Visual Resources page](#). However, these methods are not required.

Here are some examples of what to do and what *not* to do:



YES

- good lighting, exposure
- accurate color
- proper camera angle



NO

- poor lighting with shadows
- improper camera angle (work is in perspective)



YES

- even lighting
- neutral background
- soft shadows



NO

- distracting background
- odd camera angle

(continued on next page...)

Portfolio Format

All work in your portfolio must be documented and assembled and digitally, and submitted as **one multi-page PDF file**, using the template provided. (If you are including a video work, it may be submitted as a separate file in addition to the PDF, or referenced via hyperlink in the PDF.)

Using the Portfolio Template

Use one of the provided templates for Adobe Illustrator or Adobe InDesign, whichever one you are most familiar with. The template is a 12-page document with a page size of 8.5" w. x 11" h.

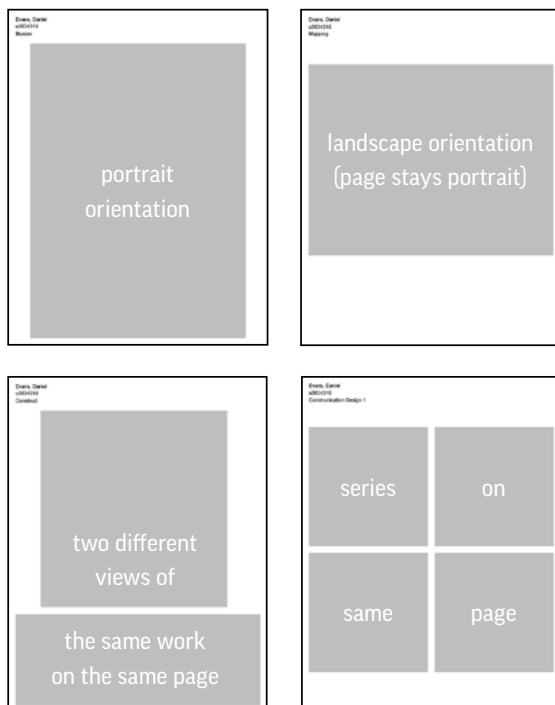
Label each page with your name, UNID, and the title of the course in which you did the assignment.

Show only one assignment/project per page. You may show more than one image for an assignment (such as a series, or an additional detail shot of a 3D project) but these images should be grouped on the same page. If you are submitting a video work, show a still frame image on its own page (and hyperlink, if appropriate.)

Do not change the orientation of the pages or the font used for the label information. Do not add any other design elements.

Make images as large as possible on each page, but keep them within the .25" border. Since your images will likely be different proportions and orientations, they don't need to completely fill the space within the border guides.

For example:



Creating the PDF

Once you're done assembling your portfolio, create the multi-page PDF using these settings...

Illustrator:

- Go to *File: Save a Copy...*
- At the top of the *Save a Copy* dialog box, name your file using your last name, first name, and 7-digit UNID, like this:
Last_First_u0000000.pdf
- At the bottom, choose *Format: Adobe PDF (pdf)*, then *Save*.
- In the next dialog box, choose *[Smallest File Size]* from the *Adobe PDF Preset* menu at the top, then select the *Compression* menu and set *Image Quality* to *Maximum* for both *Color Bitmap Images* and *Grayscale Bitmap Images*.
- Click the *Save PDF* button.

InDesign:

- Go to *File: Export...*
- At the top of the *Export* dialog box, name your file using your last name, first name, and 7-digit UNID, like this:
Last_First_u0000000.pdf
- At the bottom, choose *Format: Adobe PDF (Interactive)*
- In the next dialog box, go to the *Compression* menu and set *JPEG Quality* to *Maximum*
- Click the *Export* button.

Uploading Your Portfolio

1.

Before uploading your portfolio, you must compress (.zip) it. Select all the files you want to zip. (This may be just the multi-page PDF, but may also include video files).

- **Mac:** right-click and select *Compress*
- **Windows:** right-click and select *Send to*, then select *Compressed (zipped) folder*

2.

Make sure the zipped file is named with your last name, first name, and 7-digit UNID, like this: **Last_First_u0000000.pdf**

3.

Upload your file using the Box upload form [here](#).

If you have questions, please contact:

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