



## Freshman Admission Process 2011-2012 GVSU Department of Art and Design

Admission to Grand Valley State University does not automatically include admission to programs in the Department of Art & Design. All incoming freshman are required to submit a portfolio of their work and an assigned essay for evaluation by a departmental admission's committee. **Applicants, however, must already have been accepted to Grand Valley State University in order to participate in the Art and Design admission process.** For Grand Valley's admissions information phone 1-800-748-0246 or visit GVSU's web site at <http://www.gvsu.edu>

The Art and Design admissions committee will be looking for a diverse group of students, who are likely to succeed in our rigorous programs, including foundations, upper level emphasis areas and general education classes. Your portfolio, essay and completed application should provide us with an indication of your skills, experience, academic qualifications and sensitivities in art, along with your personality, work ethic and creativity. The committee evaluates five areas that add up to 100% of your Entrance Portfolio score: eight to twelve pieces of art 50%, essay 25%, extracurricular activity 10%, ACT score 10%, GPA 5%.

We realize that each one of you comes to GVSU with different backgrounds and experiences. If you have very little formal art instruction or feel that your portfolio is lacking, please still apply and give us a chance to get to know who you are artistically. Even with an average portfolio, you may be admitted on an articulate essay, academic strength or an obvious passion in your artwork. We are truly looking for a variety of skills, talents and backgrounds and will be judging applicants on their individual strengths and merits.

### Scheduled Entrance Portfolio Evaluation Dates

#### Art History Major and Minor

Students pursuing the BA degree in art history do not need to submit an application to be admitted to the Department of Art and Design.

#### Studio Emphasis

You may apply to the Art and Design Department in the following two ways:

1. Bring your portfolio to the Calder Art Center between 9:30 A.M. and 12:00 noon on your scheduled date. An optional one-half hour informational session will begin at 10:00 and 11:00. Parents and students are welcome to attend as portfolios are reviewed. An optional tour of the facilities will follow each session. Portfolios will be returned within one hour after delivery. To effectively evaluate us, we encourage you to apply in person so that you may see our facilities, view student work and find out more about our program.
2. If you prefer, you may submit your portfolio by CD at the time you send your other application materials. CDs will be returned if a self-addressed envelope is provided.

No matter which method you choose, please select an evaluation date below. We must receive your completed application and essay at least ten days before the date you select. A letter informing you of your Art and Design application status will be sent within two weeks of the portfolio evaluation. If you have any questions about the admissions process or your admission status, please contact the Department of Art & Design at 616 331 3486.

- Saturday, November 13, 2010 9:30am-12pm  
Completed application form and essay due by November 3
- Saturday, January 29, 2011 9:30am-12pm  
Completed application form and essay due by January 19
- Saturday, March 19, 2011 9:30am-12pm (GVSU Spring Break: March 6-13, 2011)  
Completed application form and essay due by March 9
- Saturday, April 16, 2011 9:30am-12pm  
Completed application form and essay due by April 6
- Friday, June 10, 2011 9:30am-12pm  
Completed application form and essay due by June 1
- Friday, August 12, 2011 (class availability can not be guaranteed)  
Completed application form and essay due by August 2  
(You must bring your portfolio in person on August 12.)

## Portfolio Contents

**Eight to twelve pieces of art work that best represent you as an artist.** Use your portfolio to present depth within one particular direction or a diverse range of media, abilities, and interests. Areas of art and design that could be included are: drawing, sculpture, metalsmithing, ceramics, printmaking, illustration, graphic design, painting, digital media, and visual studies. We strongly prefer seeing drawings from life as opposed to copies from photographs. You may include work done in summer and Saturday classes as well as personal work done without supervision. One of the pieces may be a sketchbook that contains drawings you do for fun, works used to generate ideas, or studies of objects and people. This work, other than sketchbooks, should demonstrate:

Compositional unity and variety	Effective use of the entire image area or space in 3-dimensional work
Sensitive use of materials	Evidence of time and effort spent to complete work
Creative expression of ideas	Drawing from life (if drawings are included)

Any paintings should be dry, and three-dimensional work should be sturdy enough for evaluators to handle. All work should be clearly labeled with your name.

Do not go to the expense of having your artwork mounted, matted or framed, although it should be protected. You should spray art with fixative when the drawing material can be easily rubbed off. Messy drawing materials can also contaminate your other work as well. You can also use cover sheets to protect two-dimensional work. Cover sheets go on top of the art and should be the same size as the sheet of paper they are covering. They should be attached to the art with tape at the top only. The tape should touch only the back of the artwork. Taping the cover sheet on more than just the top edge makes it difficult for us to uncover your art and increases the chances of damage to the work.

Please do not wrap your art. Wrapping makes it difficult for us to unpack and pack your portfolio. You want the evaluators to spend their time admiring your work, not your packing materials. For ease of handling, 2-dimensional work should be delivered in an inexpensive portfolio carrying case and 3-dimensional work in boxes.

### Photographic Images

If you choose to send your work digitally, please provide us with clear, sharply focused images on CD that give a true representation of the surface and color of the art work. Inexpensive cameras tend to take poor quality and distorted photographs. We recommend using a high quality digital camera. Three-dimensional work may be represented by two to three images shot from different angles. Detail images may also be submitted for larger 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional work. If you send your work digitally, you may submit work on Macintosh compatible CD's. Website URL addresses and or HTML files are acceptable as well. Work should be presented in Powerpoint or as jpgs. The size of each image should be 800 x 1100 pixels with a resolution of 72 ppi. Videos should be submitted as Quick Time movies. Be sure to put your name on CDs.

Have the artwork fill the image area as much as possible and make sure that the background is neutral. Make sure that the artwork is evenly lit and has no glare spots. Don't use a flash. Three-dimensional art should be lit somewhat from the side, so that surfaces are defined for the viewer through light and shadows. The background should be neutral and contrast with the 3-dimensional work. Remember that if you submit photographed art, we have never seen the original work, so we are totally dependent on the quality of your images. A good piece of art improperly photographed is likely to be judged as poor work.

### Scholarships

All applicants will automatically be considered for freshman art scholarships. Letters of awards will be mailed to recipients during the last week of April.

## Essay Instructions

GPA, test scores, and portfolio materials give the art and design faculty key information about your educational background and skills, but an essay helps us to know you better as an individual and as a student. Choose one of the following topics listed below and compose a type-written (250-500 words) response to the prompt. There is no right or wrong answer for these essays, but we are looking for essays that are clearly written, well organized, and demonstrate a student's thoughtful consideration of the topic.

Please write the question at the top of the first page of your response and include your name at the top of each page. Submit the essay with your application form.

How is art and design related to daily visual experience?

OR

Discuss a work of art or creative endeavor that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.

## Application Checklist

- Acceptance to GVSU
- Completed Art & Design application form.  
(To be sent in 10 days before one of the schedule dates on front page.)
- Essay (Completed at home and sent in with application form)
- Portfolio: 8 to 12 original pieces of art to be brought to campus  
or  
Portfolio: 8 to 12 pieces of art represented by CD to be sent with other materials.

**\*Reminder:** New students must attend a university registration/orientation. Reserve a date with Admissions immediately. If you don't reserve a spot, you will lose your admission to Grand Valley State.



# GVSU Art & Design Freshman Application

Please print clearly  
Mail or fax the completed form to:

**Portfolio Review Committee  
Department of Art & Design  
1105 Calder Art Center  
1 Campus Drive  
Grand Valley State University  
Allendale, MI 49401  
FAX: 616-331-3240**

### Acceptance to the university must precede application to the art department.

The Art & Design Department must receive this application at least 10 days before your portfolio evaluation date.

Name (first, middle, last): \_\_\_\_\_

GVSU Student # \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

High School GPA \_\_\_\_\_ ACT Score \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Applying For (circle one):      Fall      Winter      Spring/Summer      Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Portfolio Evaluation Date      1st Choice \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Emphasis Area: Check the studio area that interests you. If you are interested in more than one area, prioritize your choice numerically, with one as your first choice. Descriptions of studio areas are enclosed.

- |   |   |   |                                       |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Education  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ceramics                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design               | <input type="checkbox"/> Illustration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metalsmithing  | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Printmaking                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided,<br>2-D Preference | <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided,<br>3-D Preference |                                       |

Academic and Studio Honors, Awards and Organized Extracurricular Activities (work, sports, clubs, volunteer service, etc.) Attach an additional sheet if needed. Be concise but thorough. This will be scored.

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## **DEGREE PROGRAMS AND EMPHASIS AREAS**

The Grand Valley State University Department of Art and Design cultivates the philosophy and personal vision of each student in preparation for a professional career and continued education in the visual arts. Students focus on the philosophical, communicative and aesthetic relationships of diverse media and technology, and are nurtured with individual attention by faculty composed of nationally recognized practicing professionals. The department prepares undergraduate students to be literate and intellectually flexible within a complex and expanding profession, in order to become capable of meaningful visual communication within our society and culture.

The program is oriented toward individuals interested in pursuing careers in art and design, within the academic context of a broad arts education, aided by state-of-the-art facilities and technology. A rigorous core Foundation Program instills motivated students with the necessary formal and conceptual skills to succeed in a NASAD-accredited program.

### **ART EDUCATION**

Art education explores the connections between the visual arts and learning. The discipline integrates the practices of artmaking, art criticism, and an understanding of contemporary visual culture as foundations for teaching art in primary and secondary schools. It also stresses the importance of the visual as a tool for participatory learning across the pre-college curriculum and in community settings. The program approaches teaching as an art form that requires the exercise of creativity, sensitivity, and highly developed skills in visual and verbal communication.

Art education students complete rigorous training in studio art complemented by courses in the theory and methods of art education. In addition, they complete GVSU's general education curriculum and courses required by the College of Education. The program places an emphasis on the application of theory in diverse educational environments as well as a commitment to social responsibility. Students regularly coordinate activities for school children and arts agencies giving majors experience with project design and execution. During the last year of the program, art education majors complete their professional training with semester long assisting and directed teaching opportunities at regional schools.

### **ART HISTORY MAJOR AND MINOR**

Students interested in the role of art in society should consider majoring in art history. The field encourages them to explore how societies and individuals have used the visual arts to convey the ideas and values were important to them. In addition to information about artists and their work, art historians study interpretations of and contexts associated with visual material. The discipline also helps students improve their skills of oral and written communication, inquiry, as well as critical thinking which are increasingly important in our changing world.

The program encourages students to develop a broad-based knowledge of the visual arts from a global perspective. The curriculum emphasizes the application of historical, social, cultural, and theoretical methods to works of art and how those approaches have changed over time. Students are also encouraged to investigate study abroad and internship opportunities as they plan their course of study.

## **CERAMICS**

Students choosing an emphasis in ceramics at GVSU can explore traditional as well as contemporary methods of working with clay. They gain an understanding of all phases of working with the medium including clay making, hand-building, wheel-throwing, slip-casting, raw material study, glaze calculation, as well as kiln loading and firing. As students develop their technical abilities, they also enhance their conceptual skills. The curriculum includes the rigorous development of a student's individual approach to ceramics through the integration of ideas, materials, and processes. As students advance through the program they experiment with different conceptual frameworks including function, design, sculpture, mixed-media, installation, and performance. Students are encouraged to explore various approaches to clay while drawing from other art and design disciplines.

The ceramics facilities are state-of-the-art and include ample work spaces for group and individual projects as well as individual studios for B.F.A. majors. The studios provide a complete array of resources for students including clay production, throwing wheels, materials for glaze preparation, as well as gas, electric, and woodfire kilns. The recent addition of an artist-in-residency program in ceramics gives students the opportunity to work with national and international artists on the GVSU campus.

## **GRAPHIC DESIGN**

Through the cultivation of ideas and exploration of conceptual and expressive methods, students in the design program at Grand Valley develop a personal visual language. The curriculum provides majors with the intellectual and technical abilities to create meaning within commercial and personal design contexts. In their coursework, students are encouraged to coordinate typography, image, symbol, and color to communicate information, meaning, and thought-provoking ideas. The design faculty conscientiously prepares majors for the realities of a design career through technological proficiency, analytical versatility, and practical experience necessary for the competitive and diverse opportunities that lay ahead of them.

The program is committed to providing students with technological support in three Macintosh computer labs outfitted with industry standard hardware and software applications. The department also houses a digital print shop for large-format projects. A separate lab classroom offers space for group projects and fosters cooperation and dialogue between students. These facilities allow design students to gain expertise in digital typography, letterpress production, photo manipulation, vector-based art, and design for web environments.

Students interested in pursuing an emphasis in graphic design must participate in a secondary admissions process after successful completion of the foundations review. Selection for the program is based on an assessment of their work completed in the foundations courses.

## **ILLUSTRATION**

The professional world of illustration is competitive and stylistically diverse. Only illustrators with broad-based knowledge, good business sense, superior research skills, technical facility, and sustained commitment will succeed. The curriculum for this emphasis is designed to help students become adept in these areas.

The introductory course gives students an overview of illustration techniques that offers majors a foundation for them to make informed decisions about their educational and professional goals. In subsequent classes, students learn to balance historical perspectives of the field with an awareness of contemporary practices. In addition, majors are encouraged to balance aesthetic sensitivity with

professional practicality and traditional craft with individual creativity. With guidance from academic advisors, peer critiques, and discussions with professionals, students cultivate their unique personal and artistic strengths to establish a focus for their professional work. A sense of community between students is also fostered in the illustration studios where many majors have personal studio spaces that encourage lively and informal discussions about their work.

Students interested in pursuing an emphasis in illustration must participate in a secondary admissions process after successful completion of the foundations review. Selection for the program is based on an assessment of their work completed in the foundations courses.

### **JEWELRY AND METALSMITHING**

The program in jewelry and metalsmithing at GVSU fosters a student's engagement with technique and craft while reinforcing a dedication to innovation and experimentation. Students are introduced to business and trade practices in their coursework. Regardless of whether they adopt traditional or contemporary practices, undergraduates gain an understanding and knowledge of the art and its historical context. Beginning level courses teach the essentials of metal fabrication, surface embellishment, and simple stone setting. As students advance, they gain expertise in the processes of casting, generating multiples, forging, container forms, and hollowware production. Opportunities to experiment with mixed-media techniques encourage students to develop a personal approach to the medium that integrates their chosen practices with a strong conceptual focus. Majors receive the preparation necessary for working in such diverse areas as fine-art jewelry, sculpture, and production design.

The metalsmithing studio and department shop offer extensive fabrication and technological resources to support a student's development as a professional and independent artist. Those pursuing a B.F.A. in this emphasis have personal studio spaces in a common area that builds a strong sense of collegiality between undergraduates working in three-dimensional media. Individual workstations, supportive faculty and staff, as well as an interdisciplinary approach all foster students' abilities to synthesize their work as individuals with the broader spheres of artmaking.

### **PAINTING**

The goal of the painting program is to shape the development of thoughtful, capable, and inventive painters. In addition to learning the techniques of painting, the program encourages undergraduates to examine the broader social and cultural contexts in which they create their work. This emphasis on meaningful learning encourages artists who consider the relationship between their individual practice and the world of art beyond an undergraduate education.

At the introductory level, students establish a professional groundwork in media, materials, and processes necessary for their development as painters. As they continue in upper level courses, each student's efforts to cultivate a personal approach to the medium are supported by faculty mentors, peer critiques, and visits to regional museums.

The painting facilities at Grand Valley have been recently expanded to include three large studio classrooms with ample natural light, a common area for critiques, and individual work spaces for B.F.A. students pursuing an emphasis in painting. This combination of formal and informal environments offers students rich opportunities for reflective and engaged learning.

## **PRINTMAKING**

Through a sequence of six courses, students explore the expressive, descriptive, and conceptual potential of printed artmaking in today's world. A range of methods is introduced at the beginning level including intaglio, relief, digital, and screenprinting. At intermediate levels students work to develop a personal approach to the medium as they learn autographic, photo-based methods, as well as complex color and layering processes. No single style, technique, aesthetic or conceptual agenda is stressed in the program. This independence allows students to take charge of their personal artistic direction as they advance through the courses. A student's articulation of ideas and the clarity of communication become the central measures of one's achievement.

There is a well-established tradition of dialogue between printmaking and other visual arts. Typically, classes have a mix of students from many areas, including graphic design, illustration, photography, and art education. The department has exceptionally spacious, well-equipped printmaking studios with twenty-four hour access and individual work stations for most students. In addition, the emphasis has a robust visiting artist program including artist's talks and workshops with Sue Coe, Enrique Chagoya, Steven Sorman, and Deborah Riley.

## **SCULPTURE**

The sculpture program at Grand Valley provides an open environment for student learning. It combines training in established methods with the exploration of non-traditional strategies by incorporating new materials and technologies, installation, as well as experiential contexts. The curriculum fosters intellectual inquiry, creative activity, and practical skills in making as well as thinking about art. Activities in and out of the studio help students develop individual approaches to the medium. In addition, they are encouraged to incorporate other studio processes such as metalsmithing, ceramics, or printmaking into their sculpture practice.

Students have access to well-equipped wood working, metal fabricating, and foundry facilities. Three-dimensional computer modeling technologies are also incorporated into the curriculum. Art majors in this emphasis area have individual studios adjacent to the common work spaces which create an environment that is conducive to communication between peers and faculty.

## **VISUAL STUDIES**

The field of visual studies combines established methods of contemporary art such as digital, temporal, interactive, and presentation practices with the theoretical discourses specific to these modes of production. This emphasis area incorporates interdisciplinary approaches and stresses the role of digital media and context as primary considerations for the production and analysis of visual works. Working with their academic advisor, students develop individual learning plans which combine courses specific to the emphasis with other studio classes. This integrated approach equips artists with an essential array of technical, conceptual, political, and social capacities needed for effective cultural work.

The visual studies program incorporates work inside and out of the traditional classroom setting. The primary lab classroom includes workspaces as well as critique areas for discussion and production. There are also ample technological resources for students' work in video, sound, curatorial, and digital image-based media. The visual studies emphasis also encourages interaction with the local community. Neighborhood-based workspaces and installations facilitate students working collectively and interpretively with their civic environment.