

HUMAN ECOLOGY: DESIGN STUDIES, MFA

This is the only named option within the Human Ecology, MFA (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/human-ecology-school-wide/human-ecology-mfa/>). Students interested in the Human Ecology, MFA should apply directly to this Human Ecology: Design Studies, MFA named option.

The focus of the MFA degree is on creative performance in design. Its goals are to promote strong and creative conceptual thinking, exploration, interpretation, innovation, and overall excellence in design execution.

SPECIALIZATIONS

Students typically focus their work in one of two general areas:

- *Textile and Fashion Design (TFD)*: TFD students focus on the conceptual, technical, and aesthetic possibilities of textiles and clothing.
- *Interior Architecture (IA)*: IA students typically concentrate on the innovative application of aesthetic, conceptual, and expressive design strategies in interior environments.

There are many students who may work across these areas or have an even more idiosyncratic integrative focus. In every case, students formulate a plan of study to suit their individual needs.

The course of study requires the completion of a minimum of 60 credits and includes a substantial studio work component. The curriculum seeks to create a foundation with flexibility to fit student needs. Interested students can view course requirements on this page. (p. 1)

ADMISSIONS

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Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 1
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) n/a

Letters of Recommendation Required 3

The Human Ecology Graduate Program reviews applications once per year after the admissions deadline. The faculty admissions committee reviews all complete applications using holistic admissions criteria. Those selected for an interview will be contacted by email. All admitted students will be invited to attend the Human Ecology Graduate Programs Admitted Student Visit Day held each spring. For more information on the specifics on the timeline, process, and application materials, please see the Human Ecology Admissions Information (<https://grad.humanecology.wisc.edu/admissions/>) website.

FUNDING

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.

Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Funding opportunities for Human Ecology graduate students are available and made possible, in large part, by generous donations to SoHE. Every year, these funds are used to fund teaching or project assistantships, award academic excellence scholarships, and provide students doing their master's or doctoral research or final MFA project with conference travel scholarships and graduate research scholarships. See more funding information for the School of Human Ecology on our program website (<https://grad.humanecology.wisc.edu/funding/>) and enrollment requirements for funding eligibility in our handbook (<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/sohegrad/chapter/enrollment-requirements-2/>).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirementstext>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiestext>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

NAMED OPTION REQUIREMENTS MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW-Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail	
Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	31 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	30 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/)
Other Grade Requirements	n/a
Assessments and Examinations	Required Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Year MFA Exhibition • Second Year Reflection • Third Year Thesis Proposal • Third Year MFA Exhibition
Language Requirements	n/a

REQUIRED COURSES

Code	Title	Credits
Interdisciplinary Human Ecology (InterHE) Courses		
INTER-HE 792	Theories and Perspectives in Human Ecology	1
INTER-HE 801	Special Topics in Human Ecology (Professional Development Seminar)	1
Material Culture, History and Criticism		
Students must complete at least 6 credits in this category. Courses may include, but are not limited to the following list. See below table for more information.		6

AFROAMER/ART HIST 801	Historiography, Theory and Methods in Visual Culture
AFROAMER/ART HIST 802	Visual Cultures: Topics in Visual Cultures
ART HIST 603	Curatorial Studies Colloquium
DS 355	History of Fashion, 1400–Present
DS 421	History of Architecture and Interiors I: Antiquity through 18th Century
DS 422	History of Architecture & Interiors II: 19th and 20th Centuries
DS 430	History of Textiles
DS 501	Special Topics (History: Object Based Learning)
DS/ANTHRO/ART HIST/HISTORY/LAND ARC 764	Dimensions of Material Culture

Design Studies Seminar

Students must complete at least 3 credits of the following course. This is fulfilled by taking at least 1 credit per year for all three years of the program.	3
DS 920	Seminar in Design Studies (MFA Studio Colloquium)

Non-Studio Elective Coursework

Students must complete at least 3 credits in this category. The course should be related to the area of research but outside of the arts. Students must choose a course numbered 300 and above outside of the School of Human Ecology.	3
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Elective Coursework

Students must complete at least 5 credits in this category. Students may select courses numbered 300 and above from within the School of Human Ecology or other departments across campus.	5
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Art Colloquium

Students must complete at least 6 credits of the following course by taking 1 credit each semester (recommended).	6
ART 508	Colloquium in Art

General Studio Work

Students must complete at least 9 credits to develop a strong foundation in studio-based inquiry and applied scholarship. Choose from any studio course numbered 300 or above from any of the following departments (Art, Communication Arts, Creative Writing, Design Studies, Dance, Landscape Architecture, Music, or Theater); or other studio (applied scholarship) courses as determined by the faculty advisor.	9
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Focused Area Studio Work

Complete 17 credits, including at least 8 credits must be with the faculty advisor (1-3 credits recommended each semester). Remaining credits may be with the faculty advisor and/or faculty members on the MFA committee. Students must complete the following course to meet the minimum credit requirement.	17
DS 990	Research and Thesis

Total Credits	51
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Material Culture, History and Criticism Requirement

DS 920 Seminar in Design Studies may fulfill a portion of the requirement. Students may also select other courses in the following departments focusing on material culture, history and/or criticism:

- African Cultural Studies
- African American Studies
- American Indian Studies
- Art History
- Asian Languages & Literature
- Design Studies
- Gender & Women's Studies
- History
- Other departments focusing on material culture, history and/or criticism as determined by the faculty advisor.

Note: Students can transfer in a total of 20 credits from all categories of prior coursework combined.

PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>) policy.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is also the students committee chair and must be MFA graduate faculty in the Design Studies department. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies. An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor.

To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credit maximum. Refer to the Graduate School: Maximum Credit Loads and Overload Requests (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1228/>) policy.

TIME LIMITS

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

The School of Human Ecology Graduate Program Handbook (<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/sohegrad/chapter/conduct-expectations/>) outlines the conduct expectations and grievance process.

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW-Madison Policy Library (<https://policy.wisc.edu/>). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

NAMED OPTION-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer up to 20 credits of graduate coursework taken at other institutions. Prior coursework taken at other institutions may not be used to satisfy the minimum graduate residence credit requirement. Credits earned ten or more years prior to admission to a master's degree are not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer up to 9 credits as a University Special student in coursework numbered 300 or above. These credits are not allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken in coursework numbered 700 or above or are taken to meet the requirements of a capstone certificate and has the "Grad 50%" attribute. Credits earned ten or more years prior to admission to a master's degree are not allowed to satisfy requirements.

- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

OTHER

n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The School of Human Ecology Graduate Program values the professional development of graduate students and provides financial awards to those who are invited to present at professional conferences/exhibits.

The purpose of the support is to encourage participation in professional development, scholarly research, and/or creative endeavor and to help cover expenses not covered by other sources. Students may receive a maximum award of \$650 for travel (\$750 for international travel) to support conference participation in a single academic year. Students are encouraged to seek conference and travel funding from the Graduate School as a first step and apply for supplemental funds through SoHE as needed.

In addition, each academic department within the School of Human Ecology may offer additional professional development grant opportunities. See Programming (<https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/#programming>) and the Events Calendar (<https://grad.wisc.edu/uw-events/>) for the most up-to-date information on professional development opportunities.