The Master of Science in Design + Innovation program is an interdisciplinary degree combining engineering, business, human ecology, user experience, and art. It is a collaboration between the College of Engineering, School of Human Ecology, School of Business, the Art Department within the School of Education, and the Information School in the College of Letters & Science. The degree will prepare students to solve complex problems by providing them with a robust set of design thinking strategies and tools from multiple perspectives. Graduates will be equipped to work across disciplines and innovate in their respective field. Coursework will include hands-on learning opportunities and is intended to be completed in 12 months.

ADMISSIONS

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/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>This program does not admit in the fall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>This program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>February 1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record</td>
<td>Not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g.,</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of Recommendation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Rolling admission will begin after October 1, with a final application deadline of February 1.

Application Process

Applications are accepted for the summer term only. Applications will open approximately one calendar year prior to the start of the term. Rolling admission will begin after October 1, with a final application deadline of February 1.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements (GPA, test scores, etc.)

1. ALL applicants must meet the general Graduate School Requirements for Admission (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/).

2. GPA: A minimum 3.0/4.0 GPA on the last 60 undergraduate credits is required.

3. Degree: A bachelor degree (or equivalent), in any relevant subject area, is required before the start of the program. The degree is not required to be complete at the time of application.

4. Creative Brief: Submit creative brief as described below.

5. English Proficiency Scores (TOEFL/IELTS) – required for those whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English. See Graduate School Requirements for Admission (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/) for more information and exemption policies.

Required Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted online through the Graduate School’s application portal (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/). Do NOT send any paper copies of documents by mail (email or paper mail) unless specifically requested to do so by the Graduate Admissions Team. Applications must be complete to be reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Team.

1. Online application: https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/.

2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

3. Creative Brief: We require submission of a creative brief that includes three parts: a) a Statement of Purpose, b) a short Design Prompt, and c) a Portfolio of Past Work. This creative brief must be uploaded in the online application “Statement” tab as one PDF document and cannot exceed 4 MB.
   a. Statement of Purpose: In 250-500 words, please respond to the following question: “Why are you interested in the Master of Science in Design + Innovation program and what do you hope to get out of the program?”
   b. Design Prompt: In 250-500 words, please answer the following prompt: “If you could redesign anything (think broadly: product, process, service, brand, experience, etc.), what would it be? Why? What are the first three things you would do to get started?”
   c. Portfolio of Work: In no more than 10 pages/slides, please tell the story of 2-3 recent projects of which you are proud. Be as visual as possible, including project images and sketches. Make sure to explain project context, key insights, and the design and innovation process you used. Note: The MDI admissions committee recognizes that students from different disciplines will have different portfolios of work. The goal of this submission is to demonstrate your ability to think through a project conceptually and concretely, as well as your ability to tell the story about your work.

4. Unofficial transcripts: All applicants must upload a copy of their transcript from their undergraduate institution and other previous higher education institutions, including other graduate studies. An official transcript is not part of the online application process unless specifically requested in writing by the Admissions Team.

5. Two (2) letters of recommendation: Enter the recommender email contact information into the online application. Recommenders will receive an email with instructions for the survey and recommendation letter upload process. We do not accept recommendation letters via email, paper format, or online portfolios.

6. English Proficiency Scores (TOEFL/IELTS) – required for those whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English. See Graduate School Requirements.
for Admission (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/) for more information and exemption policies. Scores are accepted if they are within two years of the start of the admissions term for which applicants are applying. TOEFL scores should be electronically sent directly from Educational Testing Service (ETS) to institution code 1846 (no department code is needed). IELTS scores should be electronically sent directly from IELTS to UW-Madison, Graduate Studies.

7. Application Fee

8. Personal Interview (if necessary) - A personal interview with MDI program staff (in the form of a telephone call or video chat) may be required.

**FUNDING**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

Students enrolled in this program are not permitted to accept teaching assistantships, project assistantships, research assistantships or other appointments that would result in a tuition waiver.

**FEDERAL LOANS**

Students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents may be eligible to receive some level of funding through the federal direct loan program. These loans are available to qualified graduate students who are taking at least 4 credits during the fall and spring semesters, and 2 credits during summer. Private loans are also available. Learn more about financial aid at their website (https://financialaid.wisc.edu/).

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

For information on International Student Funding and Scholarships visit the ISS website (https://iss.wisc.edu/students/new-students/funding-scholarships/).

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Credit Requirement</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>16 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>At least half of degree coursework (15 out of 30 total credits) must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Grade Requirements</td>
<td>Students must earn a C or above in all coursework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students may not have any more than two incompletes on their record at any one time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS**

None

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

No language requirements.

**REQUIRED COURSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS 641</td>
<td>Advanced Design Thinking for Transformation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTEREGR 477</td>
<td>Tools for Prototyping and Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTM 760</td>
<td>Managing by Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTER-HE 940</td>
<td>Collaborative Capstone I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTEREGR 941</td>
<td>Collaborative Capstone II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LI S 707</td>
<td>Data Visualization and Communication for Decision Making</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or DS 620</td>
<td>Visual Thinking for Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specializations

1
Students select one specialization in addition to the Core Courses. Students may select courses across the specialization lists with approval of their faculty advisor. 12 credits minimum required.

### Product Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I SY E/PSYCH 349</td>
<td>Introduction to Human Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 439</td>
<td>Introduction to Robotics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M E 449</td>
<td>Redesign and Prototype Fabrication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M E 549</td>
<td>Product Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I SY E/COMP SCI/DS 518</td>
<td>Wearable Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### UI/UX Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L I S 552</td>
<td>Human Factors Engineering Design and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M H R 734</td>
<td>Venture Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M H R 741</td>
<td>Technology Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKETING 737</td>
<td>New Product Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART 346</td>
<td>Basic Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART 409</td>
<td>Digital Fabrication Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART 428</td>
<td>Digital Imaging Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART 429</td>
<td>3D Digital Studio I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS 527</td>
<td>Global Artisans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNSR SCI 657</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communication Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I SY E/COMP SCI/DS 518</td>
<td>Wearable Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I SY E/PSYCH 549</td>
<td>Human Factors Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M H R 734</td>
<td>Venture Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M H R 741</td>
<td>Technology Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>ART 346</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Digital Imaging Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART 429</td>
<td>3D Digital Studio I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Credits

**30**

1. These tracks are internal to the program and represent different pathways a student can follow to earn this degree. Track names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

2. DS 620 may be counted as credit in the specialization area only if it was not taken as a Core Requirement. Students may NOT double count DS 620 for the Core Requirement and the Specialization.

3. L I S 707 may be counted as credit in the specialization area only if it was not taken as a Core Requirement. Students may NOT double count L I S 707 for the Core Requirement and the Specialization.

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**Policies**

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies...
beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the
degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can
be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

Students will not be permitted to use credits from previously earned
graduate coursework.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

With advisor approval, up to 6 credits numbered 300 or above may be
counted toward the degree specialization areas (not the core degree
requirements). These credits may be counted toward the minimum
graduate coursework (50%) requirement if they are in courses numbered
700 or above. No credits may be counted toward the minimum graduate
residence credit requirement. Coursework earned five or more years prior
to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW–Madison University Special

With program approval, and payment of the difference in tuition, students
are allowed to count up to 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or
above taken as a UW–Madison Special student toward the minimum
graduate residence credit requirement and the minimum graduate degree
credit requirement. These credits may be counted toward the minimum
graduate coursework (50%) requirement if they are in courses numbered
700 or above. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission is
not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who
earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300
or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result
in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being
suspended from the Graduate School.

1. Good standing (progressing according to standards; any funding
guarantee remains in place).
2. Probation (not progressing according to standards but permitted
to enroll; loss of funding guarantee; specific plan with dates and
deadlines in place in regard to removal of probationary status).
3. Unsatisfactory progress (not progressing according to standards; not
permitted to enroll, dismissal, leave of absence or change of advisor
or program).

A semester GPA below 3.0 will result in the student being placed on
academic probation. If a semester GPA of 3.0 is not attained during the
subsequent semester of full time enrollment (or 12 credits of enrollment
if enrolled part-time), this will be deemed unsatisfactory progress and the
student may be dismissed from the program or allowed to continue for
one additional semester based on advisor appeal to the Graduate School.

ADVISOR

All students will be assigned an advisor who assists them in planning a
course sequence that meets degrees requirements and who will discuss
career objectives with the students.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more
consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their
absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students
completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that
coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

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/)
• Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all
students to seek grievance assistance and support)
• 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://
employeedisabilities.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)
• 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)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with
questions about grievances.

OTHER

1. Students enrolled in this program are not permitted to accept
teaching assistantships, project assistantships, research
assistantships or other appointments that would result in a tuition
waiver.
2. Students in this program cannot concurrently enroll in other graduate
or certificate programs.
3. Students in this program cannot take courses outside the prescribed
curriculum.
4. Additional Prior Coursework Policies (these policies are in addition to
the prior coursework policies listed above):

  a. Graduate Program Credits earned in other UW-Madison Graduate
Programs: With advisor approval: a) Students with an earned
UW-Madison MS degree may be permitted to use up to 7 credits
toward the MS in Design + Innovation program. b) Students
without an earned MS degree, but who have completed MS credits, may be permitted to use up to 12 credits in the MS in Design + Innovation program. c) Students with PhD credits or an earned PhD degree may be permitted to use up to 12 credits in the MS in Design + Innovation program.

b. Undergraduate credits from other institutions: Undergraduate credits from other institutions are not permitted to be used in the MS in Design + Innovation program.

c. MAD-UX Certificate Credits: With program approval, and payment of the difference in tuition, students are allowed to count up to 9 credits. Courses must be 300 level or above, earned "B" or better grade, and earned less than 5 years prior to the start of the MS in Design + Innovation program.

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.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate creative, independent problem solving skills and entrepreneurial thinking.
2. Apply design tools and strategies on interdisciplinary teams and projects.
3. Communicate effectively both visually and orally.
4. Implement an iterative design thinking process.
5. Demonstrate a hands-on, iterative process that includes making, creating and designing.
6. Gain depth in a field of study that can be applied in a social, global and design context.
7. Apply principles of ethical and professional conduct in a field experience.

PEOPLE

Carly Benish, College of Engineering, Shop Manager
Lee DeBaillie, College of Engineering, Program Director
Kristin R. Eschenfelder, Information School (iSchool), College of Letters and Science, Professor and Director
Sara Hladilek, College of Engineering, Graduate Student Services Coordinator
John Hitchcock, Art, School of Education, Professor, Associate Dean for the Arts
Michelle Kwasny, School of Human Ecology, Academic Director
Christopher C. Luzzio, Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering, Associate Professor
Dennis A. Miller, Art, School of Education, Professor
Meghan Marie Mitchell, Art, School of Education, Associate Professor

Robert G. Radwin, Industrial and Systems Engineering, College of Engineering, Professor
Lennon P. Rodgers, College of Engineering, Director of Grainger Engineering Design Innovation Lab
Lesley H. Sager, Design Studies, School of Human Ecology, Faculty Associate
John Surdyk, Management and Human Resources, School of Business, Director of the Initiative for Studies in Transformational Entrepreneurship and Faculty Director of the Entrepreneurial Residential Learning Community
Karl Joseph Williamson, College of Engineering, Shop Manager

ACCREDITATION

National Association of Schools of Art and Design (https://nasad.arts-accredit.org/)

Accreditation status: Planned 2025-2026