

GRAPHIC DESIGN, B.DES.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: University Park

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

Mission: Penn State Graphic Design prepares creative designers and visionary leaders who build engaging experiences and sustainable relationships among people, places, services, and communities.

Vision: Designers of tomorrow anticipate an evolving context for professional practice through innovative problem-solving at different scales—from objects to systems—engaging with people-centered research and theory, ethical practices, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Goal:

- Goal 1: Build transformative graphic design education and experiences.
- Goal 2: Advance innovative design practices in teaching and learning, research, creative activity, and professional practice.
- Goal 3: Develop strategic alliances, partnerships, and collaborations to broaden the impact of graphic design.
- Goal 4: Establish a culture of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for all students, faculty, and staff.

What is Graphic Design?

Graphic design is a professional field that uses visual communication and complex problem-solving to shape how we experience the world. Designers do more than "make things look good"; they integrate typography, imagery, and interaction into visual languages that inform, instruct, elevate, and persuade.

There are many practices that fall under graphic design, including developing compelling brand identities, intuitive user interfaces, and immersive physical spaces. The ultimate impact of this work is connection: using creative thinking and deliberate practice to bridge the gap between people and ideas, making the world more navigable, informative, and inclusive. It is an ever-evolving practice dedicated to advancing the human experience through intentional, visionary design.

Is Graphic Design relevant with the advent of AI?

Absolutely. AI can generate images, but that is not really what graphic design is about. Design is problem-solving.

The hardest part of any design problem is understanding people whose needs you are addressing: how they think, what confuses them, what they want, and what they feel. That demands empathy, ethics, and strategic judgment.

AI will change how designers work. But the ability to understand people deeply, to communicate with them clearly and honestly, and to solve knotty problems is the work designers do, and it is more relevant and essential than ever.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You're curious about the world and energized by new ideas, including where technology is heading and what it makes possible.
- You notice what other people walk past: a typeface on a storefront, the way a sign makes you feel, why one app feels effortless and another is frustrating.
- You care about people and you want the things you make to genuinely help them navigate, understand, and experience the world a little better.
- You're ready to work hard, think deeply, and develop a creative practice that's entirely your own.