

The MFA Design Program Objectives

The MFA Design Program is a five-term 56-unit studio-based program that is designed to support the development of a personal design practice that is both unique and sustainable. Students work closely with USC Roski's internationally acclaimed Design faculty, as well as an expanded community of leading professional designers, artists, historians, critics, curators and culture makers who participate in weekly Visiting Designer/Designer-in-Residence Forums. The scope of the program will provide graduate design students with a critical examination of the issues, theories, and ideas that are relevant to contemporary design and a studio practice in design, with a focus on the following objectives:

- Increase the ability to analyze graphic design (along with architecture, fashion, art and other cultural production) including describing them with appropriate vocabulary, examining their formal elements, and engaging in research to understand their contexts (both contemporary and historical);
- Expand the knowledge about the creative process, as exemplified by the study of specific works in design history, with a focus on understanding various creative methodologies. These methodologies become apparent in the historical projects, yet they can be applied in any contemporary, creative pursuit.
- Deepen the understanding of how political, cultural, and social conditions affect the practice of graphic design. You will have an opportunity to see how various practitioners in the field create work to speak to specific audiences using innovative graphic forms (both images and typography).
- Enrich the discernment of graphic design by understanding the theoretical, historical, and aesthetic decisions behind a range of work.
- Increase the understanding of the field of graphic design (along with architecture, fashion, art and other cultural production) in order to enhance your ability to create work and establish a practice that is engaged with the world at large.