In the early twenty-first century, “design” is no longer a term used simply to describe surface aesthetics or ornamentation. Design, as a field, now encompasses a wide range of human interactions with the technologies, devices, environments, and communities that shape daily life. The largest company in the world (by market capitalization) is fundamentally a design company. Apple Inc.’s products inspire feelings of love and devotion (as well as frustration) with few rivals in any cultural sphere. Design is central to the company’s identity and success. A former Apple engineer observed that when a designer joined a meeting it was “like being in church when the priest walks in.”

Our current historical period, described by some as the “digital revolution” or a “postindustrial society,” relies heavily on media and design, which embed technologies increasingly within everyday life. If you consider the number of screens in your immediate vicinity, it becomes evident how substantial an impact media arts and design have on the ways we learn, work, and play. The design of screens (in their aesthetic, interactive, and technical dimensions) affects how we think, act, and communicate. Extraordinarily rapid developments have changed the character of contemporary life—in ways that remain largely opaque and demand ongoing study, critique, and experimentation. The University of Chicago is now in a position to establish new practice-based research that combines analytical and creative approaches to understanding these problems and to solving them.

Minor in Media Arts and Design

Distribution Requirement

The minor is comprised of six courses. Of those six courses, students must take at least one course in each of the following core areas: (1) Media Theory, (2) Media History, and (3) Media Practice and Design.

Courses that qualify for each distribution requirement are listed here.

Electives

Students will also need two elective courses from offerings in areas such as video game design, transmedia puzzle development, electronic sound design, digital storytelling, algorithmic theater, data visualization, computational imaging, speculative design, and media history and theory. Any MAAD course may count; students may use outside courses with approval of the director.

Senior Colloquium and Portfolio

To complete the minor, students must enroll in MAAD 29400 Capstone Colloquium. As part of the colloquium, this student cohort would also be required to prepare a portfolio of digital media artworks and/or historical and theoretical writing that they would submit by the end of Winter Quarter of their final year.

Summary of Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>One Media Theory course</td>
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<td>One Media History course</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Media Practice and Design course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two electives</td>
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<td>MAAD 29400 Capstone Colloquium</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Portfolio</td>
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<td>Total Units</td>
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Advising and Grading

To apply for the minor, students must receive the director's approval on a form obtained from the College adviser. This form must then be returned to the College adviser by the end of Spring Quarter of the student's third year.

Courses in the minor program may not be (1) double counted with the student’s major(s) or with other minors or (2) counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

Media Arts and Design Courses
Media Arts and Design Courses

MAAD 11005. Problems in the Study of Gender and Sexuality: Media Wars. 100 Units.
In our contemporary moment, we have become accustomed to terms such as 'counter-terrorism' that signal an effort to resist internal and external threats, and those suggesting that we live in an age of 'post-truth' dominated by 'corporate-media,' 'fake news,' and 'fact-challenged' journalism. Taking this platform as our starting place, this class explores how these terms and their use have been gendered; have situated both gender and sexuality as either weapons of resistance or objects of destruction. This class will be historically organized insofar as we will begin our discussion with ways that media - broadly conceived to include cinema, print and visual-cultural forms, television, and the internet - have aimed to 'counter' patriarchal, heteronormative, and hegemonic systems of representation of gender and sexuality.

Instructor(s): J. Wild; L. Janson Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 20400, CMST 40400, GNSE 11005, GNSE 31105

MAAD 11320. Philippe Parreno's Media Temporalities. 100 Units.
In the 2013 exhibition "Anywhere, Anywhere Out of the World, the French artist Philippe Parreno (b. 1964) turned the monumental space of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris into a living, evolving organism, where music, light, films, images, and performances led visitors through a precisely choreographed journey of discovery, based on the idiosyncratic body of work that he had created since the early 1990s. This course is devoted to an in-depth study of Parreno's work and the highly original form of media thinking that informs it. Rather than focusing on the properties of distinct media or on multimedia forms or presentation, his works explore the new forms of life and social existence that result from the various ways in which 20th- and 21st-century media technologies store, manipulate, and produce time. This is a form of thinking and artistic creation that addresses the realities of formats, programs, and platforms rather than media apparatuses and messages, and that engages everything from architecture and design to social situations, natural worlds, and virtual beings. (The course will be taught in collaboration with Jörn Schaffaf).

Instructor(s): I. Blom Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course does not satisfy the general education in the arts requirement.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 31320, CMST 23412, CMST 33412, ARTH 21320

MAAD 11730. Science, Technology and Media via Japan. 100 Units.
This course will explore issues of culture, technology, and environment in Japan through the lens of Science and Technology Studies (STS) and Media Studies. The course is designed for undergraduate students. Its overall aim is to introduce students to some of the fundamental concepts, themes, and problematics in these fields via the particular social and historical circumstances in Japan. Some of the central concerns will be around issues of environment, disaster, gender, labor, media theory, gaming, and animation. In addition, we will devote attention to the recent emergence of the term media ecology as a framework problematizing technologically engineered environments.

Instructor(s): M. Fisch Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course qualifies as a "Discovering Anthropology" selection for Anthropology majors.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 21730, EALC 21730

MAAD 12320. Critical Videogame Studies. 100 Units.
Since the 1960s, games have arguably blossomed into the world's most profitable and experimental medium. This course attends specifically to video games, including popular arcade and console games, experimental art games, and educational serious games. Students will analyze both the formal properties and sociopolitical dynamics of video games. Readings by theorists including Ian Bogost, Roger Caillois, Nick Dyer-Witheford, Mary Flanagan, Jane McGonigal, Lisa Nakamura, and Katie Salen will help us think about the growing field of video game studies. This is a 2018-19 Signature Course in the College. (Theory)

Instructor(s): Patrick Jagoda Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 27916, GNSE 22320, ENGL 12320, SIGN 26038

MAAD 12800. Theories of Media. 100 Units.
This course will explore the concept of media and mediation in very broad terms, looking not only at modern technical media and mass media, but at the very idea of a medium as a means of communication, a set of institutional practices, and a habitat in which images proliferate and take on a "life of their own." The course will deal as much with ancient as with modern media, with writing, sculpture, and painting as well as television and virtual reality. Readings will include classic texts such as Plato's Allegory of the Cave and Cratylus, Aristotle's Poetics, and modern texts such as Marshall McLuhan's Understanding Media, Regis Debray's Mediology, and Friedrich Kittler's Gramophone, Film, Typewriter. We will explore questions such as the following: What is a medium? What is the relation of technology to media? How do media affect, simulate, and stimulate sensory experiences? What sense can we make of concepts such as the "unmediated" or "immediate"? How do media become intelligible and concrete in the form of "metapictures" or exemplary instances, as when a medium reflects on itself (films about films, paintings about painting)? Is there a system of media? How do we tell one medium from another, and how do they become "mixed" in hybrid, intermedial formations? We will also look at recent films such as The Matrix and Existenz that project fantasies of a world of total mediation and hyperreality.

Instructor(s): W. J. T. Mitchell Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Any 100-level ARTH or DOVA course, or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 37800, ARTV 20400, ARTH 25900, ENGL 32800, ARTH 35900, AMER 30800, CMST 27800, ENGL 12800
MAAD 14110. Digital Cinema. 100 Units.

Since the 1970s, movies have become increasingly dependent on digital technologies. This course explores a range of issues related to the digitization of cinema's production, distribution, and exhibition, including the cultural contexts and aesthetic practices surrounding these technological shifts as well as their experiential and political dimensions. In particular, we will explore such topics as digital cinematography's relation to cinematic realism, emerging trends in editing practices, the political implications of digital special effects, and the ways that other digital media influence cinematic techniques. Texts discussed include works by Lev Manovich, Stephen Prince, Kristen Whissel, Hito Steyerl, Steven Shaviro, and Vivian Sobchack. Screenings include works by Lana and Lilly Wachowski, Agnes Varda, Bong Joon-Ho, Michael Bay, Brad Bird, and Leos Carax.

Note(s): This course does not satisfy the general education in the arts requirement.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 27110

MAAD 14205. Computers, Minds, Intelligence & Data. 100 Units.

How are we co-evolving with our machines? How do we teach ourselves and our computers how to learn? What kinds of human intelligences do we promote in liberal education in comparison with artificial intelligence(s)? Through our distributed cognition with tools of all kinds, as we engage in participatory culture using digital computers and networks, we provide information that generates the basis for big (and small) data. At the crux of our investigation on the one hand into reading and conversation and on the other hand into algorithms and information theory—are issues about human action and the multifaceted agency of the universal Turing machine—as mobile phone, laptop, internet, robot.

Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 25205

MAAD 15425. Censorship, Info Control, & Revolutions in Info Technology from the Printing Press to the Internet. 100 Units.

The digital revolution is triggering a wave of new information control efforts and censorship attempts, ranging from monopolistic copyright laws to the "Great Firewall" of China. The print revolution after 1450 was a moment like our own, when the explosive dissemination of a new information technology triggered a wave of information control efforts. Many of today’s attempts at information control closely parallel early responses to the printing press, so the premodern case gives us centuries of data showing how diverse attempts to control or censor information variously incentivized, discouraged, curated, silenced, commodified, or nurtured art, thought, and science. This unique course is part of a collaborative research project funded by the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society and is co-organized with digital information expert Cory Doctorow. The course will bring pairs of experts working on the print and digital revolutions to campus to discuss parallels between their research with the class. Classes will be open to the public, filmed, and shared on the Internet to create an international public conversation. This is also a Department of History "Making History" course: rather than writing traditional papers, students will create web resources and publications (print and digital) to contribute to the ongoing collaborative research project.

Instructor(s): A. Johns & A. Palmer Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Making History courses forgo traditional paper assignments for innovative projects that develop new skills with professional applications in the working world. Open to students at all levels, but especially recommended for 3rd- and 4th-yr students. This course fulfills part of the KNOW core seminar requirement. PhD students should register for KNOW 40103 to be eligible to apply for the SIFK dissertation fellowship.

Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 25425, KNOW 25425, HIST 35425, HIST 25425, SIGN 26035, BPRO 25425, CHSS 35425, KNOW 40103, HREL 35425

MAAD 16600. Chance in Performance. 100 Units.

The course will cover the historical, theoretical and practical issues surrounding the use of chance in artistic production, with an emphasis on how these techniques have been used in live performance. We begin with the historical avant-garde, particularly Dada and Duchamp, continue with mid-century experiments by Cage/Cunningham and Fluxus artists, and finish with contemporary work like "No Dice" of Nature Theatre of Oklahoma and "Algorithmic Noir" by Eve Sussman. By creating performance projects using, or responding to, the techniques studied, students will have an opportunity to develop their own critical and practice-based point of view.

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 22600, TAPS 32600

MAAD 16718. Approaches to Live Electronics. 100 Units.

Hand-built circuits, tape loops, feedback, filters, ring modulators, turntables, live-processing software environments, microphones, and human-machine interface designs. In this course, we will study current and historical approaches to the performative use of hardware and software environments in music, and will follow the practice as it continues to redefine music composition and improvisation in the 21st century. Study will be repertoire-based, drawing from the work of artists ranging from David Tudor to Herbie Hancock to Grandmaster Flash to Kaija Saariaho.

Instructor(s): Sam Pluta Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 36718, MUSI 26718
MAAD 20700. Alternate Reality Games: Theory and Production. 100 Units.
Games are one of the most prominent and influential media of our time. This experimental course explores the emerging
genre of "alternate reality" or "transmedia" gaming. Throughout the quarter, we will approach new media theory through the
history, aesthetics, and design of transmedia games. These games build on the narrative strategies of novels, the performative
role-playing of theater, the branching techniques of electronic literature, the procedural qualities of video games, and the
team dynamics of sports. Beyond the subject matter, students will design modules of an Alternate Reality Game in small
groups. Students need not have a background in media or technology, but a wide-ranging imagination, interest in new media
culture, or arts practice will make for a more exciting quarter.
Instructor(s): Patrick Jagoda, Heidi Coleman Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing. Instructor consent required. To apply, submit writing through online form
at http://bigproblems.uchicago.edu; see course description. Once given consent, attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Questions: mb31@uchicago.edu.
Note(s): English majors: this course fulfills the Theory (H) distribution requirement.
Equivalent Course(s): BPRO 28700, ENGL 25970, TAPS 28466, CMST 25954, ARTV 30700, CMST 35954, ARTV 20700,
ENGL 32314

MAAD 20900. Computers for Learning. 100 Units.
Over time, technology has occupied an increasing role in education, with mixed results. Massive Open Online Courses
(MOOCs) were created to bring education to those without access to universities, yet most of the students who succeed in
them are those who are already successful in the current educational model. This course covers technology, psychology
(e.g., motivation, engagement), and pedagogy (e.g., constructivism) as they apply to educational technology so that students
can design and build an educational learning application. Labs focus on developing expertise in technology, and readings
supplement lecture discussions on the human components of education.
Instructor(s): D. Franklin Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): CMSC 15400
Equivalent Course(s): CMSC 20900

MAAD 21500. Metamedia Design Studio. 100 Units.
Computers dynamically simulate the details of any other medium. This course looks past traditional media and engages with
the computer as a "metamedium": an environment with infinite degrees of representation. Relationships between form and
content will be explored and exploited through editing, augmenting, and deconstructing the data that makes up digital media.
Students will digitally improvise with experimental and expanded approaches to creating new media art. Topics surveyed
will include: aesthetics as filters, algorithms as art, metadata as content, glitches as tools, and hysterical dream machines. In
addition to making new media art, we will consider our relationship to contemporary media and the politics of digital agency
in an increasingly connected world.
Instructor(s): J. Satrom Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 25402

MAAD 22502. Data and Algorithm in Art. 100 Units.
An introduction to the use of data sources and algorithmic methods in visual art, this course explores the aesthetic and
theoretical possibilities of computational art-making. Focusing on the diverse and ever expanding global data-feed, we
will craft custom software processes to create works investigating the visual transformation of information. Additionally,
software programming may be deployed independently, without a connection to source material. While placing an emphasis
on creating new work, we will also survey the history of this type of art practice.
Instructor(s): J. Salavon Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): ARTV 10100, 10200, or 10300
Note(s): No prior experience with programming is necessary.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 22502, ARTV 32502

MAAD 22911. Augmented Reality Production. 100 Units.
Focusing on experimental moving-image approaches at a crucial moment in the emerging medium of augmented reality,
this class will explore and interrogate each stage of production of AR works. Students in this production-based class will
examine the techniques and opportunities of this new kind of moving image. During this class we'll study the construction
of examples across a gamut from locative media, journalism, and gameplay-based works to museum installations. Students
will complete a series of critical essays and sketches towards a final augmented reality project using a custom set of software
tools developed in and for the class.
Instructor(s): M. Downie Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 37921, CMST 27911, CMST 37911, ARTV 27921

MAAD 23801. Video. 100 Units.
This is a production course geared towards short experimental works and video within a studio art context.
Instructor(s): S. Wolniak Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): ARTV 10100, 10200 or 10300
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 33801, ARTV 23801
MAAD 23809. Experimental Animation: Digital and Camera-less Production. 100 Units.
Through digital and camera-less production techniques such as scanning, signal manipulation, and appropriation, this course will emphasize image construction, digital effects, and post-production for creation of animated art. It can function as a continuation of Experimental Animation: Exploring Manual Techniques or be a stand alone course. Early video effects and image processing, and a wide variety of digital and abstract animation will be presented as formal and technical examples.
Instructor(s): S. Wolniak Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): ARTV 10100, 10200 or 10300.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 33809, ARTV 23809

MAAD 23930. Documentary Production I. 100 Units.
This course is intended to develop skills in documentary production so that students may apply for Documentary Production II. Documentary Production I focuses on the making of independent documentary video. Examples of various styles of documentary will be screened and discussed. Issues embedded in the documentary genre, such as the ethics and politics of representation and the shifting lines between fact and fiction will be explored. Pre-production methodologies, production, and post-production techniques will be taught. Students will be expected to develop an idea for a documentary video, crews will be formed, and each crew will produce a five-minute documentary. Students will also be expected to purchase an external hard drive.
Instructor(s): J. Hoffman Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 25106, CMST 23930, ARTV 23930, HMRT 35106, CMST 33930, ARTV 33930

MAAD 23931. Documentary Production II. 100 Units.
This course focuses on the shaping and crafting of a nonfiction video. Students are expected to write a treatment detailing their project. Production techniques focus on the handheld camera versus tripod, interviewing and microphone placement, and lighting for the interview. Post-production covers editing techniques and distribution strategies. Students then screen final projects in a public space.
Instructor(s): J. Hoffman Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 23930, HMRT 25106, or ARTV 23930

MAAD 24410. Transmedia Puzzle Design & Performance. 100 Units.
This course will introduce students to the burgeoning field of immersive puzzle design. Students will develop, implement and playtest puzzles that are suited for a range of experiences: from the tabletop to the immersive, from online puzzle hunts to broad-scope alternate reality games (ARG). Students in this course will work directly with master puzzler, Sandor Wiesz, the commissioner of The Mystery League.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 34410, TAPS 24410

MAAD 24415. Games & Performance. 100 Units.
This experimental course explores the emerging genre of "immersive performance," "alternate reality," and "transmedia" gaming. For all of their novelty, these games build on the narrative strategies of novels, the performative role-playing of theater, the branching techniques of electronic literature, the procedural qualities of videogames, and the team dynamics of sports. Throughout the quarter, we will approach new media theory through the history, aesthetics, and design of immersive games, while working in labs with three Chicago-area companies including The House Theater, Mystery League, and Humans vs. Zombies.
Instructor(s): H. Coleman Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 34415, TAPS 24415

MAAD 24530. Staging the Internet. 100 Units.
The theater has often been used as a means to embody psychic spaces, from Medieval mystery plays and other allegorical works to Richard Foreman's attempt to give theatrical form to consciousness itself. This practice-based lab class will propose to 'stage the internet' - what techniques and strategies can we develop to give tangible shape to the virtual world? Our explorations will be catalyzed by readings on data and interfaces, networks and protocols, procedural/algorithmic art, digital labor, and competing notions of the virtual.
Instructor(s): A. Dorsen Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 46530, TAPS 26530

MAAD 24817. Electronic Music II: Introduction to Computer Music. 100 Units.
Electronic Music II is an introduction to computer-based sound art and live electronic music performance. Our primary tool for this course will be SuperCollider, a computer music programming language designed for composition and real-time music applications. Through this language we will explore the foundations of computer music, including digital instrument design, sequencing, live processing, sound diffusion, and various approaches to algorithmic music generation.
Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 36817, MUSI 26817
MAAD 24910. Short Form Digital Storytelling: Creating a Web Series. 100 Units.
This course examines the short form storytelling of the digital web series. Through lectures, viewings and discussions in weekly meetings students will determine what makes a strong web series and apply the findings to writing and polishing the pilot episode of their own web series. Students will write weekly 4-5 page assignments building toward the creation of a 5-6 episode series.
Instructor(s): T. Brown Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 25910

MAAD 24920. Virtual Reality Production. 100 Units.
Focusing on experimental moving-image approaches at a crucial moment in the emerging medium of virtual reality, this class will explore and interrogate each stage of production for VR. By hacking their way around the barriers and conventions of current software and hardware to create new optical experiences, students will design, construct and deploy new ways of capturing the world with cameras and develop new strategies and interactive logics for placing images into virtual spaces. Underpinning these explorations will be a careful discussion, dissection and reconstruction of techniques found in the emerging VR "canon" that spans new modes of journalism and documentary, computer games, and narrative "VR cinema."
Film production and computer programming experience is welcome but not a prerequisite for the course. Students will be expected to complete short "sketches" of approaches in VR towards a final short VR experience.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 27920, CMST 27920, ARTV 37920, CMST 37920

MAAD 25010. Anthropology of the Future. 100 Units.
Two major subfields of anthropology - archaeology and ethnography - have traditionally been oriented around the human past and the human present. But what about the future? Conceptions of the future and future-oriented behavior have long been understood to be a critical plane of difference between political economies, religions, and cultural groups, yet they have rarely been an explicit focus of study. When we shift the temporal frame to the future, questions that arise include: do all cultures have theories of the future? how much about human societies are intentional? how does ideology shape future possibilities? what role do imagined futures play in political life? We will consider theories of temporality, past futures (Aztec, Polynesian, Italian), and movements such as millenarianism, messianic religions, Marxism, Dadaism, utopian communities, Afro-futurism, transhumanism, and today's neo-futurist movements that deploy radical technology and speculative design in response to looming climate change. We will also explore the intimate relationship between speculative fiction (e.g., Ursula K. LeGuin, Kurt Vonnegut) and anthropology.
Instructor(s): S. Dawdy Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2018
Prerequisite(s): PQ: This course qualifies as a Discovering Anthropology selection for Anthropology majors.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 20010

MAAD 26819. Video Game Music as Play and D. 100 Units.
How do we engage with music in video games? What does this music mean—both in games and beyond? And what is the status of such music within broader notions of popular music culture? The emerging status of video game music qua music runs in parallel with the growing field of "Ludomusicology," the study of music and/in/as play, which has lately turned its focus to video games. In this course, we will engage directly with video game music through play and listening, discussing what defines this particular repertoire of music within this particular media form. We will also step outside of games to discuss contextual and sociocultural issues that surround such music and those who engage with it—particularly in ways that traverse the spectrum of serious to trivial. In doing so, we will interrogate the notion of "seriousness" more generally, thinking critically about how we build a "disciplined" academic field around a popular entertainment genre.
Instructor(s): Julianne Grasso Terms Offered: Spring. Tuesday/Thursday 9:30am - 10:50am, Godspeed 205
Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 26819
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

- Times was used instead of Trajan.
- Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.