Welcome! We are excited that you are applying to the Department of Art & Art History to study Graphic Design. We encourage students with a range of creative backgrounds to apply, which might include those interested in art, design, and/or technology. Due to the large number of submissions received each year, admission to the program is highly competitive. Acceptance is limited to a select number of applicants who demonstrate the greatest potential for successful completion of the program. After reading these guidelines carefully, email any questions to: aahadmissions@uncc.edu

**NOTE:** If you intend to study Studio Art, please use the Entrance Portfolio Guidelines for Art Majors.

**Eligibility**

- All applicants must be officially accepted to UNC Charlotte in order to submit an Entrance Portfolio for admission to the Department and Graphic Design major.
- Enrollment in all Foundation Studio or Major courses is open only to students that have been formally admitted to the Department during the annual Entrance Portfolio Review.
- If currently enrolled at UNC Charlotte, applicants must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher evidenced on their academic transcript.

**Application Process**

1. **Apply to UNC Charlotte using Common App** by posted deadlines and choose Graphic Design as your major. For more details and deadlines:
   - [Incoming First-Year Student Application Requirements](#)
   - [Transfer Student Application Requirements](#)

2. **Apply to the Department using Slideroom.com** and submit your Entrance Portfolio by posted deadlines.
   - Once accepted to the University, incoming First-Year Students and Transfers will be emailed a link to the Application on Slideroom.com for the Graphic Design major.
   - Current UNC Charlotte students who wish to change their major to Graphic Design must request a link to the Application via email: aahadmissions@uncc.edu

**Department Deadlines**

1. **Priority Review: Wednesday, February 15th, 2023 by Noon**
   - Since admission to the program is highly competitive, all eligible students are strongly encouraged to apply to this deadline and review.
   - Students who submit to this deadline will be given priority status in the selection process.
   - If admitted, students are eligible for earlier advising, orientation and course registration.
   - Incoming First-Year and Transfer students should apply to the University no later than Wednesday, January 31, 2023.
2. **Space Available Review: Wednesday, April 5th, 2023 by Noon**

- For students who submit to this deadline and those Waitlisted during the Priority Review, admission will be based on the number available spaces left in the major.
- Since admission to the program is highly competitive, *all eligible students are strongly encouraged to apply to the Priority Review.*
- If admitted, choices regarding advising, orientation and course registration will be more limited.
- Incoming First-Year Students and Transfers should apply to the University no later than *Wednesday, March 1, 2023.*

**Portfolio Requirements**

Submit your portfolio by adding images to your online application in Slideroom.com. Your portfolio should include:

- **Images of 10 Works** – Each ‘work’ is an individual design project or artwork that will be entered separately in your portfolio on Slideroom.com. You may include multiple images/views of one work, but your portfolio is limited to a total of 20 images. (see FAQ #11 for more details)
- **For Each Work** – Add a Title, Year Created, and Media.
- **Descriptions** – In 1,000 characters or less, briefly introduce each work, the class it was completed in (if applicable), and describe your solution with a *focus on your ideas or creative processes.*
- **Responsible use of Intellectual Property** – In your descriptions, you should note use of any found, appropriated, or provided imagery and content, and document the original source for any images used as a reference. (see FAQ #8 for more details)

**Sample Portfolio**

If you would like to view a few work examples, please download the *Graphic Design Entrance Portfolio Slide Examples* from the Dept. Admissions page. Note that this sample portfolio is not formatted the way Sliderroom.com will format your submission. These examples are provided to illustrate good documentation of art and design works as well as sample Descriptions of those design or artworks.

**Works to Include**

Your Entrance Portfolio should represent your best work, include at least ten separate design projects or artworks, and demonstrate your readiness for Foundation Studio classes and your potential for success in the Graphic Design major. (see FAQ #’s 1 and 2 for more details)

- Eligible examples include any original (2D, 3D, 4D) work completed in high school, college-level courses, private classes, workshops, camps, and/or self-initiated.
- Must include at least 2 drawings from direct observation. (see FAQ #’s 6 and 7 for more details)
- May include several works from a specific media or a variety that show a range of processes. (see FAQ #9 for more details)
- Please include work from any AP or college-level courses you may have taken in Graphic Design, Foundations, or Studio Art, especially Transfer students. (see FAQ #3 for more details)
- Do not include any work that is not original. (see FAQ #8 for more details)
Portfolio Review Criteria

The review committee will assess your portfolio based on how well the works demonstrate:

- Readiness for Foundation Studio classes
- Potential for success in Graphic Design major
- Application of design elements and principles
- Creative use of media and/or technology
- Problem solving and/or conceptual ability
- Technical ability and craft
- Ability to articulate ideas in writing
- Responsible use of intellectual property (see FAQ #8 for more details)

Decisions & Notifications

- Applicants to the Priority Review will receive notice of Admittance, Non-admittance, or may be Waitlisted until the Space Available Review for further consideration.
- Applicants to the Space Available Review and those who were Waitlisted during the Priority Review will receive notice of Admittance or Non-admittance.
- Approximately 3 weeks after each deadline, incoming First-Year Students and Transfers will be notified by mail and current UNC Charlotte students by email.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What kind of work will best demonstrate that I am ready for Studio Foundations?** Since Graphic Design majors must complete the Foundations Studio courses, (Drawing 1, 2D Design, 3D Design, and Digital Foundations), you should include works that demonstrate relevant skills and abilities. These might include, but are not limited to: basic digital skills, drawing from direct observation (see FAQ #7), creating 2D compositions, constructing 3D objects or spaces, using color, patterns, and textures. Media you might include but are not limited to are: digital drawing, graphite pencil, charcoal, pen and ink, markers, acrylics, watercolors, collage, clay, plaster, and cardboard or wire constructions.

2. **What kind of work will best demonstrate my potential for future success in the major?** Generally speaking, Graphic Design is a creative process of solving problems to visually communicate ideas across a wide range of media. Include works that best demonstrate your relevant technical skills and sense of craft, as well as your ability to apply design elements and principles, develop original concepts, and solve visual problems. You are encouraged (but not required) to include graphic design specific works such as: Logos and branding, layouts and advertisements, lettering and typography, brochures and posters, signage and packaging, apps or websites, motion graphics, animations, and videos. Other works might include, but are not limited to, media related to graphic design such as original photography, illustration, digital drawing, composited photos, collage, technical or architectural drawing, printmaking, and 3D digital fabrication.

3. **What if I have taken AP or college-level courses in studio Art or Graphic Design?** If you have already taken advanced placement and/or courses at the collegiate level, then please include works from those classes, especially those credits that you wish to transfer in Foundations Studios or the Graphic Design major. (i.e. 2D Design, 3D Design, Drawing 1, Graphic Design 1, Typography 1, Digital Media 1 (4D), etc.) You may also include works that demonstrate your ability to brainstorm, ideate, and/or use the design process.
4. What should I do with multimedia like animations, motion graphics, videos, or audio? Duration of clips should be limited to a maximum of 2 minutes, and file size should not exceed 250 MB. You can upload mp4 files to Sliderroom.com. Encode your files with H.264 video (a.k.a. MPEG-4 AVC) and AAC audio formats are recommended.

5. How should I document digital works and screen based media such as websites or apps? Include a screenshot or mock-up for screen based works such as websites or app wireframes. You may also include a link to an active website or app in the Description for that work.

6. Why do I need to show direct observational drawings?
Working from direct observation means that you are drawing what you see. This process is an important skill because it requires the visual and psychological process of looking at the world around you, interpreting what you see, and then responding to what you observe. The medium you use and the subject you choose is up to you.

7. What could I include for direct observational drawings?
These drawings should demonstrate how you see and respond to objects in space, and should not be drawn from a photograph. Examples might include figure drawings, object studies, still lifes, landscapes, and a self-portrait drawn while looking in a mirror. A simple suggestion would be to arrange a couple of fruits or vegetables on a white piece of paper, set-up a single light source, and draw it in the medium of your choice using line, shape, and value.

8. If I used found, appropriated, or provided imagery, how do I know if a work is original? For either category mentioned below, whether it was a class assignment or self-initiated, you must demonstrate a responsible use of intellectual property and document the original source and/or describe your reason for using it in the Reflective Statement for that work.

   Work that is Not Original
   - Any work that directly replicates any other artist's or studio's work, copies a photograph that you did not take, or uses a grid to transfer an original.
   - Close representations of any copyrighted material, including anime, comics, cartoons, or video game characters.
   - Works produced using a step-by-step tutorial and provided content and/or imagery.
   - For more information, please see the Academic Misconduct Examples in the UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity.

   Work that is Original
   - Works that include existing imagery or content such as text, photos, illustrations, and graphics, that were provided as part of a project or assignment are acceptable if the finished work has been redesigned, reworked, and/or reimagined (i.e. a magazine layout or advertisement that uses an existing article and stock photos).
   - Works that used existing photos for reference only and are not an exact copy, or were collaged/digitally composited with other images, and/or completely reworked.
   - Character designs that you developed and created and/or completely reimagined.
9. Should I submit work that shows my skills across a range of media?
It is important that you make the final decision and submit a portfolio that best represents your ideas, interests, and strengths. Choosing works for the sake of variety or simply to show a range of mediums (such as one charcoal, one pastel, one watercolor, etc.) is not recommended if it sacrifices quality.

10. How should I photograph my work?
Scan or photograph artwork carefully and artfully, while considering the documentation and presentation of each project. Three-dimensional pieces may require views from multiple angles, detail shots, or staging on a neutral backdrop.

Quick tips:
- Photograph the works in outdoor, indirect light to avoid harsh shadows.
- Fill the viewfinder, consider the composition, and keep the background simple.
- Do not use the on-camera flash.
- Using a tripod, or setting your camera on a stable surface, is recommended to ensure sharp focus.
- Color correction and cropping in an application such as Photoshop is encouraged.

11. Can I include multiple images of a work?
You may include up to 20 total images for your Slideroom application. You are only required to submit 10 different works of design or art, so you may include multiple views of some works up to a total of 20 images for your application. You may choose to show an additional view, detail, or a source that further informs the review committee's understanding of the work. Note in the reflective statement that the image is an additional view of another work in the portfolio.

12. Can I show older work to show progress?
Though you may want to include examples of work from past years, especially to demonstrate growth, it is more important to submit work that represents current skills and experiences.

13. Can I submit my portfolio early?
Yes, you may submit your portfolios prior to a submission deadline. However, all submissions will be held and reviewed after that deadline has passed.

14. Can I still submit if I do not have a cumulative GPA of 2.0? (current UNC Charlotte students only)
You should have a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the time of the portfolio review to be fully competitive (i.e. final grades for Spring 2022 will not be included in a GPA calculation at the time of the review). You may still submit a portfolio, but admission to the department and major could be denied because of the GPA requirement.

15. Who should I contact with questions?
Email any additional questions to: aahadmissions@uncc.edu