

MA
Interior
Design
4+1
Application
Packet

SAMPLE 1-YEAR PROGRAM PLAN

Qualified students may apply for entry into an articulated BA/MA (4+1) degree program the last year of undergraduate study at WSU that leads to a master's degree completed in one year of graduate study. The BA/MA degree culminates in a master's project with accompanying documentation. The degree is intended for those who wish to advance their understanding of a specific area of design informed by research. The required courses are based on the policies of the Graduate School and the Interior Design program. Any variation from the required courses must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

ID 525	Design Research Studio	5 credits
ID 526	Graduate Project Studio	5 credits
ID 530	Philosophy/Theory of the Built Environment	3 credits
ID 540	Research Methods	3 credits
ID 580	Instructional Practicum	3 credits
ID 598	Topics in Interior Design	3 credits
ID 702	Master's Research	4 credits
	Supportive Electives	6 credits

Applications for the 4+1 program are accepted each fall semester. Interested students should work closely with their advisor in preparation of the application and admission process. Below is a recommended schedule to complete the required coursework.

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Senior Year	Prepare application to 4+1 program.	+ID 540 (Research Methods 3cr) Complete all remaining requirements for BA degree.	Enter graduate school. ID 598 (Topics in Interior Design 3cr)
Graduate Year	ID 525 (Design Research Studio I 5cr) ID 530 (Philosophy/Theory 3cr) ID 580 (Instructional Practicum 3cr) Supportive Elective (3 cr) ID 702 (Master's Research 2cr)	ID 526 (Grad Project Studio 5cr) Supportive Elective (3cr) ID 702 (Master's Research 2cr)	

+ Students may reserve a maximum of 9 credits of 500-level coursework for use on a non-thesis master's program of study. Credits must be in addition to requirements for the BA degree and a grade of "B" or higher must be earned. The ["Reservation of Graduate Credit" form](#) must be turned in prior to enrollment in the courses.

OUTCOMES

The purpose of the master's Thesis or the master's Project in a professional program such as interior design is to demonstrate the candidate's mastery of the field. This is accomplished through a focused research exercise involving the application of analytical and synthetic skills, taught in the graduate core curriculum, to an aspect of interior design of special interest to the candidate. The quality of the thesis or project represents the competence of the graduate candidate. It must be conceptually clear, carefully designed, and thoroughly executed. The product must be presented, both written and illustrated, in a style that reflects the candidate's ability to complete and polish the work. The effort involved must be impeccably documented both in oral defense and in the finished product submitted to the School of Design and Construction and the Graduate School.

Within the written master's Thesis or through a master's Project, the following six criteria are critical outcomes that must be met at the mastery level for successful completion of the degree:

1. Student defines problem as it relates to the field of Interior Design:
 - a. demonstrates understanding of a problem that has relationship to the interior environment
 - b. demonstrates understanding of complexity of problem in relation to health, safety, and/or well-being of occupant of an interior environment
 - c. assesses complex relationships and makes recommendations for application
2. Student understands the meaning and impact of design as it relates to human interaction, technology, theoretical frameworks, and interdisciplinary efforts:
 - a. assesses design options based on an understanding of human needs and behavior
 - b. demonstrates understanding of specific individual, group, society and/or cultural issues
 - c. assesses technological options and applies based on an understanding of performance criteria
 - d. integrates and combines appropriate theories to inform design solutions -- uses existing theoretical framework to develop research question or hypothesis to be tested
 - e. assesses design options based on knowledge and theories from multiple disciplines -- delves into other disciplines as exploration of design topic
3. Student effectively analyzes information, evaluates issues, and sets priorities:
 - a. demonstrates a logical research methodology
 - b. completes a thorough literature review
 - c. demonstrates a thorough understanding of current research on chosen topic
 - d. combines and classifies information in a logical manner
 - e. establishes a hypothesis or research question
 - f. sets project or research goals and objectives
 - g. demonstrates application of research
4. Student explores and generates creative solutions via a systematic and coordinated process:
 - a. Uses theoretical framework to integrate multiple perspectives and concerns
 - b. Develops clear and logical programmatic requirements for design solutions
 - c. Demonstrates understanding of complexity of design process
 - d. Demonstrates understanding of impact of design at the macro and micro-levels of analysis
 - e. Shows evidence of and is able to defend design solutions through critical, analytical, and strategic thinking
5. Justifies and defends solutions as they relate to social-economic and global issues:
 - a. identifies and clearly states conclusion, implications and consequences
 - b. expands justification to larger social, economic, and global issues
 - c. objectively reflects upon own assertions and/or responses to the thesis.
 - d. integrates and explains the interrelationship between design, the built environment and the larger society
6. Conveys intent in a professional manner appropriate to the audience.
 - a. visually integrates complex information clearly using appropriate techniques, including but not limited to technical drawing, 3 D drawing or models, written material
 - b. verbally demonstrates command synthesis of specific and focused subject matter
 - c. written component demonstrates command synthesis of specific and focused subject matter

MASTER'S PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

A Master's Project is the application of research to a specific design project. This design is supported by published literature establishing an analytical framework for investigating the selected subject—commonly an adaptation of the framework to a specific design project. The end product includes a document in which the proposal and project design articulate research findings. It is composed of text and images and summarizes the premise and resolution of the design project. This document is to be submitted as a bound copy and CD to become part of the school's permanent records but is not submitted to the Graduate School. Copies of previous project documents are located in the School of Design and Construction Resource Room.

Substance and Scope of the master's Project

The Master's Project may focus on any of a wide range of design problems. The method for approaching the research project is the design process. A clearly defined analytical framework will be required to guide this process. You will develop this framework in consultation with your faculty mentor (Chair) based on the state of knowledge and theory regarding the topic, as well as the feasibility of your research project. The following categories and frameworks suggest some of the possibilities that you might consider, bearing in mind the areas of concentration of the faculty: **History, Theory & Criticism, Physical Design, and People & Place**. They are neither exhaustive nor limiting.

1. The design of spaces for special populations
2. Sustainable issues in the built environment
3. Universal design solutions
4. Technical issues in the near environment
5. Environment and behavior
6. Aesthetics
7. Functionalism
8. Socio-Cultural considerations

Essential Components of the master's Project

There are several activities that must be accomplished during the preparation of the master's Project. Some of them are initiated early and some are continued throughout the process. You must document the entire design process as part of your final product. The following comments highlight key components of the process.

1. **Literature review.** The literature review must be initiated early during the exploration of possible topics because you need to determine what is already known (and what is not known) about the topic and how others have studied it. The literature review is essential in the development of your analytical framework. The literature review is a broad library search drawing from monographs, journals and other published reports. Your search should be thorough and should include the most recent and relevant material. Also, you need to be sensitive to the quality of literature reviewed. You must judge among inconsistent or contradictory information and determine what is applicable to your design project.

The literature review usually involves several categories of literature. First there is information regarding the topic of investigation itself. Next there is information regarding the relevance of the topic to interior design or design in general. Of equal importance is information regarding the design strategy or analytical framework for the master's Project. An important task during the literature review is the classification of appropriate material.

Documentation of the literature review must be incorporated in your final product. Most typically a chapter is dedicated to literature review. However, documentation of the literature may be distributed throughout the paper.

2. **Course review.** One purpose of the research project is to synthesize your understanding of the field. A thoughtful review of coursework with your faculty mentor (Chair) supports your exploration of topics for the research project. You should screen both required courses and elective courses for ideas, approaches, and techniques that can be applied in the research project. Specifically, you should look for relationships among the material taught in different courses that can be used in the development of the research project.

The course review contributes directly to the literature review in that it identifies both categories and sources to include and helps you define the design process. While it contributes directly to the development of your research project, it does not appear as a written chapter in your final product.

3. **Proposal and committee.** A written proposal becomes a contract between you and your faculty mentor (Chair) regarding the focus, the framework and the schedule for completion of your master's Project. It represents a transformation or narrowing of a general topic into a specific design proposal. This proposal should be well thought out and well written so that there is no question how the work is to be pursued. It is a plan and a commitment on both your part and your mentor's. You want your mentor to be satisfied that the proposal is clear, that the approach is manageable, and that you have the capability and the resources to complete the work. The following points should be covered:
 - a. Design statement. This should clearly and succinctly describe the design problem.
 - b. A justification of the relevance and importance of the topic to interior design or the design disciplines in general.
 - c. Brief discussion of the theoretical context or the analytical framework that will guide your design work.
 - d. A thorough explanation of the design process to be followed. This should include site identification, building footprint, and other relevant details.
 - e. Identification of information sources.
 - f. Specification of product or outcomes.
 - g. Tentative chapter outline for report.
 - h. Schedule of work program.
 - i. Identification of any necessary support services or special circumstances (e.g., human subjects approval).
 - j. Literature review or annotated bibliography.

Once the proposal has been approved, a copy should be filed with the Academic Coordinator along with the required form that identifies members of the project committee.

4. **Project execution.** The Master's Project will be carried out in conjunction with ID 526, the final studio in the MA ID curriculum. Your faculty mentor (Chair) will support and monitor the execution of your master's Project based on your proposal agreement. At the same time, you will document the project execution, recording the design process and drafting chapters of your final paper.
5. **Revision, editing and polishing.** As with any research project, your work will be reviewed, critiqued and revised, narrowing to an acceptable design solution and end product. At the same time, your final paper will progress toward a completed document, written, read and revised to become a coherent piece.
6. **Oral defense.** The final stage is the oral defense of the master's Project. The Master's Project should be satisfactory to your faculty mentor (Chair) before the formal defense is scheduled. Your faculty mentor (Chair) will be joined by the committee and outside jurors to review your work. The defense becomes a review of the master's Project, how the design process was executed and the outcomes. Any reservations about the process or question of the design interpretation may be raised. The results of the jury will be reported to your faculty mentor (Chair) and the graduate coordinator, who may accept the work as is, or require corrections before it is officially approved.
7. **Filing.** Final approved copies of your master's Project written document must be submitted to all committee members and the Graduate Academic Coordinator for School of Design and Construction archive.

Admission Procedures and Requirements

BA/MA Interior Design Program

Qualified students (those in their senior year of the WSU BA Interior Design program with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above) interested in pursuing the 4+1 program must make application to the Interior Design program by **5:00pm on Wednesday, December 1.** All materials are to be sent to SDC.Info@wsu.edu with the subject line “4+1 Interior Design Program Application.”

The admissions committee will review all application materials and make recommendation for advancement into the program for qualified students. The following factors will contribute to the admissions decision (*See Page 7 for the 4+1 admission criteria checklist. This is the rubric we will use to evaluate each candidate for admission*):

- To be eligible for admission, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 must be achieved and maintained. Each applicant’s previous performance in interior design courses and studios, as well as overall GPA, will be a very important factor in the admission decision process.
- All applicants must submit a personal statement (250-500 words describing your reasons for pursuing graduate study in interior design at WSU).
- All applicants must submit a writing sample from a previous course (e.g., SDC 250 or 350).
- A scheduled interview will be conducted by at least two representatives from the admissions committee on December 3 and December 6. The interview is to assess the applicant’s strengths and interests in comparison with the goals and requirements of the 4+1 program.
- For the interview, students should come prepared to show samples and discuss a previous design studio project (group projects are acceptable).

Applicants will be notified of decisions via e-mail by **December 10, 2021**. Students who are recommended for admission must complete reservation of graduate credit paperwork to enroll in graduate courses during the spring semester.

Students will also need to apply [online to the Graduate School](#) by January 10, 2022. (Note: If the application deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline is the following business day.) Final admission to the accelerated MA Interior Design program and the Graduate School is contingent upon completion of all requirements for the baccalaureate degree by May 2022, and completion of ID 540 ([reserved for graduate credit](#)) with a grade of B or better. Note, graduate credits are in addition to credits required for the B.A. Interior Design degree.

4+1 MA Interior Design Admission Criteria Checklist

APPLICANT NAME: _____

REVIEWER NAME: _____

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--------|
| 1. Personal statement clear about intentions | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 2. Intentions fit with goals of program | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 3. Research interests align with faculty expertise | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 4. Previous studio grades suggests potential for success | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 5. Transcripts show prior academic achievement | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 6. Writing sample shows evidence of critical thinking and analytical skills necessary for graduate work | (low) | | | | | | (high) |
| 7. Interview demonstrates candidate exhibits maturity, professionalism, and commitment necessary to be successful in Graduate School | (low) | | | | | | (high) |

Total Score: _____

Rank of Candidate from Pool _____

Admit _____

Do Not Admit _____

SUMMARY COMMENTS: