

Frequently Asked Questions about Lane's Graphic Design Program and Admission Process into the Second Year

1. How many students usually apply for the second year and how many are accepted?

Generally 35 to 45 apply for some 20 to 25 positions.

2. Why is there a selection process?

The field of graphic communications is very competitive and our program is intense and rigorous. The screening process has been developed to help insure that those admitted have the skills and knowledge to succeed in the second year of the program and to meet their goals after graduation.

3. Why do GPA and the essay count so much in the screening process?

The graphic design program engages both the left and the right sides of the brain. Students need to be creative to solve communication and technical problems but there is also a large amount of technical information that needs to be mastered. Your GPA and your essay are used to help determine whether you have the academic, organizational and communication skills necessary to be successful in our program.

4. If I got mostly A's in my first year art courses, can I assume that I'll be accepted into the second year?

There are no guarantees to getting selected into the second year. Good grades will certainly help your overall admission score, but by themselves they do not indicate your suitability for the program. Also, it is common to find that instructors in first year art courses don't grade as strenuously as those in the second year of the graphic design program.

5. If I am not accepted into the second year but am placed on the waiting list, what are my chances of being accepted?

We generally place no more than 3 or 4 applicants on the waiting list because we very rarely have more than that many openings. It is not uncommon, however, to have a few places open up over the summer or during the first days of fall term. Nonetheless, being on the waiting list is not a guarantee of eventual acceptance so you should have a backup plan.

6. What happens if I am accepted into one of the required sequences for the second year but not all of them?

Because many students choose to take two years to complete the second year courses in the program, the openings in the three major program sequences (design, production, computer technology) may vary. As a result, you could be admitted into one sequence but placed on a waiting list for another. For students who make it clear that they need to take all of their required courses in one year, we do our best to accommodate them.

7. What are the three program "sequences?"

- a. Graphic design classes (Graphic Design 1, 2, and 3—Art 221, 222 and 223)
- b. Production classes (Graphic Design Production 1, 2, and 3—Art 227, 228 and 229)
- c. Computer classes (Digital Design Tools, GD: Digital Illustration, Web Production and Design Concepts for the Web—Art 216, 225, 289 and 290)

8. If I am a three-year student, when should I take the computer “sequence” of courses?

Generally, students take the computer classes the same year as the production classes. If not, the computer sequence should be taken before the production courses.

9. How does the Cooperative Education requirement fit into the “sequences?”

Program students are required to take a minimum of two 3-credit Cooperative Education internships. Students should take their Production and Computer Sequence courses either before or concurrently with internships.

10. What does it mean if I am not accepted into the program?

It could mean several different things. Perhaps you haven’t taken the required prerequisite courses. Perhaps you need more work on the fundamentals. Perhaps your GPA was a factor. Perhaps there were simply a number of people who applied this year who happened to have stronger qualifications than you. You are welcome to make an appointment with the program coordinator to review your scores and to discuss their implications.

11. What are my options if I am not accepted into the program?

Among the options for those who have not been admitted into the program are the following:

a. Reapply next year

If you decide to pursue this option, it is very important that you approach it strategically and seriously. Meet with the program coordinator to review your scores and portfolio and to determine areas for improvement. Take classes aimed at those areas. It may be wise to retake courses that you took last year. In the meantime, use the extra year as an opportunity to get as many of your other required courses out of the way as possible.

b. Transfer to a four-year institution

If your goal was to transfer to a four-year school after completing our program, investigate the possibility of transferring sooner. For more information on this possibility, contact the department and admissions office at schools you were considering.

c. Transfer to another community college

There are many other fine graphic design programs in the Willamette Valley. Many students, for example, have transferred into Linn Benton’s program in Albany, which is a 45-minute drive away.

d. Consider changing your major

If you haven’t been accepted into the program this year, it makes sense to take a good look at whether this is really the right career for you. The level of competition you faced during the admission process is likely to be similar to that you will face when looking for employment.

Many students have used this “setback” as an opportunity to reevaluate their goals and switch to a program that they are more suited for. Many have switched to the Multimedia Program here on campus and find it is a satisfying choice.

12. What happens if I am accepted but have to drop out of the second year of the program?

Students who drop out of the second year of the Graphic Design Program because of grades, health, or personal reasons will need to reapply for admission into the second year should they wish to return to the program in the future.

13. What is the second year of the graphic design program like?

The second year of the graphic design program is time-consuming and very demanding. The core courses have extensive homework that often must be completed outside of class hours. Also, grading standards are generally much harder than in the first year. Working students and students with family commitments often find that time is very limited. It is recommended, therefore, that students limit outside obligations as much as possible while completing the second year of the program.

14. Can I complete the GD program by taking only evening or online courses while I work full time?

Unfortunately no. Most of our required program courses are offered during the day and none of our program courses are currently available online.

15. Do I need a computer at home?

Having a computer at home is a great asset, but it is not essential. We have open hours in the Mac labs on the main campus each day.

16. I have a PC at home. Do I need a Mac?

Since Macintosh is the platform of choice for most design professionals, we teach our courses using Macs. However, graphics software is available for both PC and Mac and most files transfer between the two platforms.

17. What software will be used in the program?

InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator and DreamWeaver. All of our Macintosh computers now run using system OS X.

18. If I intend to be a three-year student, which sequence should I sign up for next year?

There is no one answer to this question.

Some students prefer to take the production sequence during their final year in the program to insure that their technical knowledge and computer skills will be fresh when they graduate and enter the workforce.

Others prefer to take the production and technical courses first because they believe it will help them do better work in their design courses.

19. What does it mean that you may not be admitted into the program if you haven't taken the prerequisites for the second year courses?

Because our students go through the program at their own pace and because many of our students have trouble getting into all of our first year courses, we try to be as flexible as possible with our admission process.

We often do not have much flexibility, however, when it comes to the prerequisites required for some of the second year classes.

Web Production (Art 289), for example requires CIS 125H Software Application: HTML. However, since Web Production isn't offered until winter term, there is time during the fall to take the required HTML course.

20. How important is it to meet the admission deadlines?

Very.

Your success in the field of graphic design will be largely determined by how successful you are in meeting deadlines. If this is a problem for you or if this seems too stressful, you may want to consider another career.

Failure to meet the precise deadlines is taken very seriously as we try to determine who is most likely to succeed in the program and the career.

As a result, applicants who are late in meeting the application or portfolio deadlines will need to submit an essay explaining why they should still be considered for the program before their materials will be considered.

One minute late, by the way, is still late.

21. Is advising for the program available over the summer?

The program coordinator is not available during the summer break and there is no one else on staff in the summer who is qualified to answer specific questions. Refer general questions to the Art Office.