



**vcuarts**

**Master of Fine Arts  
Design: Interior Environments**

Department of Interior Design | School of the Arts  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Richmond, Virginia

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Thomas Kennedy, 2016

## Program Retention and Achievement Data

### Job Placement

100% of the students that graduated in May 2019 were employed within their first year after graduation

### Acceptance into Graduate Programs

No MFA students applied for another graduate program after their graduation.

### Graduation Rates

78% of the students from the class of 2019 graduated within two years.

### Retention/Attrition

89% of the students enrolled during the 2017-2018 academic year returned for the 2018-2019 academic year.

## Student learning outcomes for this program

- Student will demonstrate professional values.
- Student work will demonstrate advanced design theory.
- Student work will demonstrate advanced knowledge of interior design.
- Student work will demonstrate effective communication.
- Student will demonstrate a foundation in business and professional practices.

# Program Overview

The Department of Interior Design offers a Professional Entry Level Master of Fine Arts in Design with a specialization in Interior Environments. The goal of the program is to produce competent creative designers whose design solutions are based on human response in the contemporary environment.

The Professional Entry Level M.F.A. in Interior Environments is an Intense and rigorous, highly sequenced program for second-degree seekers who have a proven record of academic excellence and are interested in pursuing a career in interior design. Brief program details include:

- 60 credit program
- 2 years and two summers
- Full-time enrollment
- Fall semester entry only
- Professional Entry Level track

You will enter the program by attending the Introduction to Interior Design Workshop held approximately six weeks before the fall semester begins. You must successfully complete the workshop to begin the fall semester courses. If you do not pass the summer workshop or candidacy review, you will be invited to apply to the B.F.A. program. At the end of the first year, you must pass a candidacy review to advance into the second year of the program in you are in the First Professional track. An internship is required during the second summer in the program. You are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA while in the program.

This program is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA).



An Liu, 2017

# How to Apply

## Deadline

February 1st for entry into the fall semester of that calendar year.

## Requirements

Review application requirements at [arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/](https://arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/). Review the VCU Graduate Admissions Protocol section and also the specific Requirements for this program. Some points are:

- An interview is recommended, but not required.
- Previous university/college transcripts (one official copy)
- Three letters of recommendation to be submitted electronically through the online application process
- Essay: 3-5 page (minimum) sample of academic writing
- Written personal statement (1-2 pages)
- Resumé is required.
- TOEFL - 600paper/2500 computer/100 internet (Int. students only)

## Portfolio

If you have a previous art or design-related degree, you should upload a portfolio. You will be directed to [app.art.vcu.edu/portfolio](https://app.art.vcu.edu/portfolio) to login and upload your portfolio images and/or video.

Please note that all application information, other than transcripts, should be submitted online to the university.

If you have any questions about the admissions process or the application, please contact the VCU Office of Graduate Admissions. Contact information can be found at [graduate.admissions.vcu.edu/contact/](https://graduate.admissions.vcu.edu/contact/).

## Technology Requirement

A laptop computer is required for admission to the Interior Environments Professional Entry Level Track Program. Information about the current computer and software requirements is available at [arts.vcu.edu/computers](https://arts.vcu.edu/computers). Prior to purchasing a laptop, visit this webpage and select Interior Design from the list for the latest minimum configuration recommendations.

# Tuition + Fees

Visit [www.enrollment.vcu.edu/accounting](https://www.enrollment.vcu.edu/accounting), where you can access a tuition and fees calculator and find the most current tuition and fees information.

Some additional program-related estimated expenses include:

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Summer Interior Design Workshop<br>(one-time, payable to the Department of Interior Design) | \$2,500       |
| Laptop computer and software  | \$1,500-2,500 |
| Books, materials and supplies   | \$1,000-1,500 |



Lauren Prisco, 2017

# Plan of Study

For current curriculum information, review the program information in the VCU Bulletin online at [bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-arts/interior-design/](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-arts/interior-design/). Information in the VCU Bulletin will supercede curriculum information on these pages.

## Year 1

### Summer Term Hours

IDES 500 Introduction to Interior Design Workshop 0

### Fall Term Hours

IDES 501 Introductory Graduate Studio I 6  
 IDES 511 Introductory Graduate Graphics I 3  
 IDES 521 Adv. Materials and Textiles for Int. Env. 2  
 IDES 631 Ethics and Business Procedures 2  
 IDES 651 History and Theory of Int. Environments I 2

Term Hours 15

### Spring\* Term Hours

IDES 502 Introductory Graduate Studio II 6  
 IDES 512 Introductory Graduate Graphics II 3  
 IDES 522 Environmental Factors for Interior Environments 2  
 IDES 611 Advanced Graphics for Interior Environments I 2  
 IDES 652 History and Theory of Int. Environments II 2

Term Hours 15

\*Candidacy / Portfolio review takes place during the second semester

## Year 2

### Summer Term Hours

IDES 693 Interior Design Internship 4-6  
 XXX XXX Open Elective 3-4

Term Hours 6-10

### Fall Term Hours

IDES 601 Advanced Graduate Studio - CDs 6  
 IDES 623 Design Research Thesis 3  
 IDES 612 Advanced Graphics for Interior Environments II 2  
 IDES 626 Adv. Light and Color for Interior Environments 2

Term Hours 13

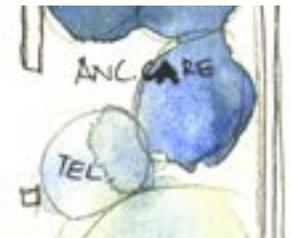
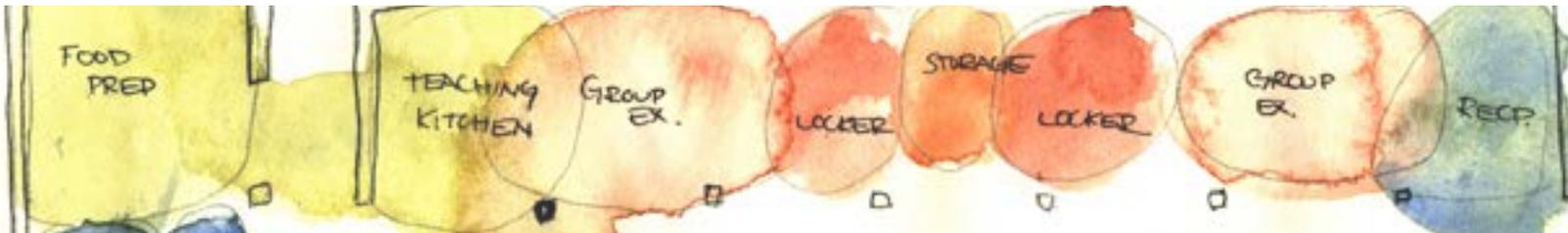
### Spring Term Hours

IDES 699 Creative Thesis / Project 6  
 IDES 690 Graduate Seminar 3  
 XXX XXX Open Elective 3-4

Term Hours 9-12

**60 Minimum required program hours**

Rose Peck, 2015



# Summer Workshop

The summer session workshop typically starts five weeks prior to the start of the fall semester and runs for four weeks, Monday through Thursday, 8:30 am-4:30 p.m.

## Purpose

This workshop provides necessary design fundamentals to you while entering the Professional Entry Level Track in Interior Environments. During the workshop, three major components of the program are introduced:

1. Interior design studio practices
2. Design graphics practices
3. Professional issues and practices

## Interior Design Studio

Through a series of exercises in applied design you will develop ability, process and design thinking skills. Emphasis is placed on applying the elements and principles of design through design analysis, critical thinking, process, ideation and realization.

## Design Graphics

You will be introduced to basic design graphics including sketching, basic architectural drafting, orthographic drawings, and computer graphics programs such as Adobe Photoshop and InDesign.

## Design Profession and Practice

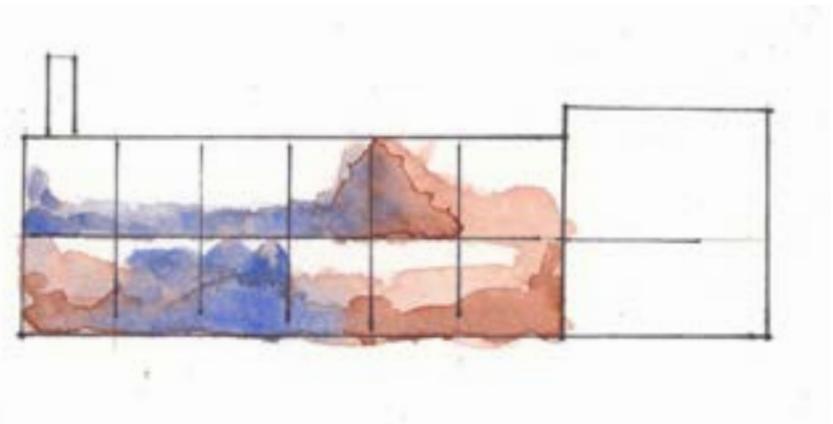
Through a series of daily lectures you will be introduced to the practice, vocabulary and principles of interior design.



Alexis Holcombe, 2017

## Workshop Topics:

- Intro to drafting and orthographic projection
- Intro to freehand sketching
- Abstraction
- Concept
- Elements and principles of design
- Design vocabulary
- Critique and discussion
- Model-making techniques
- Basic color
- Intro to human dimension, scale and ergonomics
- Intro to issues in design: universality, sustainability, health.
- Introduction to techniques and materials
- Intro to scanning, printing, Adobe InDesign, modes of presentation
- Orientation to sources: materials library, Cabell Library, print lab, and more



Lauren Prisco, 2017

# Candidacy Review

## Purpose

Candidacy review is the second of three formal reviews in which the graduate student participates during the program of study. The purpose of the candidacy review is to assess the progress of the graduate student and to evaluate whether they have achieved an appropriate level of skill and knowledge in interior environments to proceed to the thesis stage.

## Process

Candidacy review occurs at the end of the second semester of enrollment in the program. The date for the review is scheduled by the Graduate Director during or after exam week.

The graduate student applying for candidacy assembles their work to date. All projects completed by the students should be represented including work done for support classes and electives.

Each student will gather all their materials and arrange them in an orderly and professional fashion on a row of desks. Location and time will be assigned to this process each year.

## Evaluation

The faculty will assess the work and vote as to whether each student should be admitted to candidacy. Assessments of the work will be based on knowledge, skills, insight, originality, scope, depth, completeness, quality, and organization. *Students cannot proceed to the thesis phase without achieving candidacy.*

The faculty review will result in one of the following decisions:

- The student meets the department requirements, is recommended for candidacy, and continues in the program.
- The student does not meet departmental requirements, is recommended for additional study, and has candidacy deferred until the next semester or academic year.
- The student does not meet departmental requirements, is not recommended for candidacy, and does not continue in the program.

# Thesis/Creative Project

## Thesis/Creative Project Guidelines

The thesis/creative project for the Professional Entry Level Track is a design project investigating a specific problem in relationship to the design of an interior space. In this project students develop both the questions and answers to their problem through the completion of a fully realized interior. The project is also the means by which students demonstrate their mastery of specific skills required to be an interior designer and the appropriate level of competency to be awarded the Master's of Fine Arts degree in Interior Environments.

## Thesis Proposal Process

In the second year of the program, during the Fall semester, each student will present an initial proposal for their thesis project for faculty review. This initial proposal should include:

- A description of the area of focus and the design problem
- Ideas about an appropriate site or building for the project
- A review of their research to date on their problem and discussion of future research directions

The site chosen for the project should be one for which existing drawings and information can be obtained and that the student can visit personally to verify and observe site conditions.

The faculty will review the initial proposals which will then be approved, recommended for revision, or rejected. Upon receiving approval for the initial thesis proposal, the student will work to develop a full proposal under the guidance of faculty in IDES 623.

The fully developed proposal book will include:

- Site documentation and analysis
- Precedent studies and research
- Initial programming
- Bibliography
- Concept development

The proposal book in addition to documentation of the finished thesis project will become the thesis document.

# Thesis/Creative Project

## Thesis/Creative Project Exhibit

The thesis project will explore the design problem by means of fully designed interior spaces. The work will take place in both IDES 690 and IDES 699 in the final semester of the program. As the capstone project for the Professional Entry Level curriculum it must demonstrate your proficiency in the following areas:

- Design research and your analysis
- Programming
- Architectural drawing and drafting (both by hand and computer)
- Model making
- Knowledge of materials and furniture
- Lighting design and specifications
- Presentation techniques, graphics, signage
- Design's relation to social issues and human behavior
- An understanding of design history and theory

It is a requirement for the MFA that you exhibit the thesis/creative project. Therefore, the final product must be in a format that can be presented for an extended period without your presence.

## Thesis Defense

At an appointed time, you will meet with your committee to defend your thesis project. You will present the project and then answer any questions put forward by the reviewers. After the review, the committee will vote to pass, pass with revisions, or fail the project. Passing the defense is a necessary requirement for the successful completion of the degree.

After receiving approval signatures for your thesis, you must submit their thesis electronically to the Graduate School. Information about this is available on the Graduate School website at [www.graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html](http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html).



2016 MFA Exhibit



Professor Emily Smith and Thomas Kennedy, 2016 MFA Exhibit



Ashley Whitehead, 2016



Elaine Warren, 2016



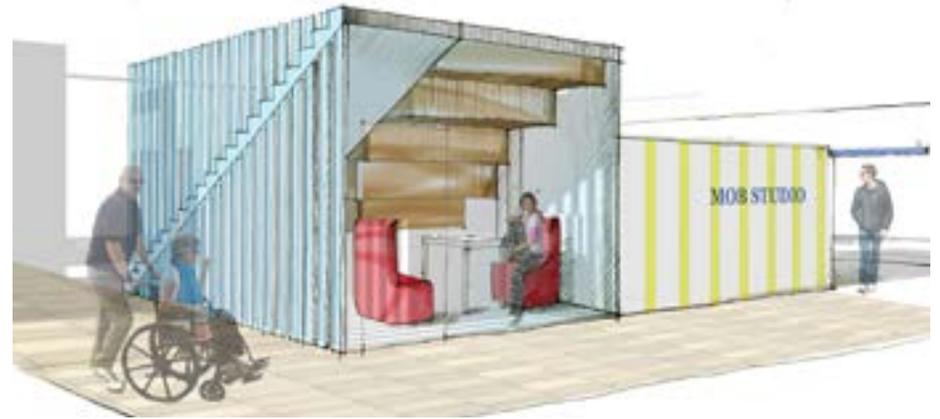
Lucy Dabney 2017



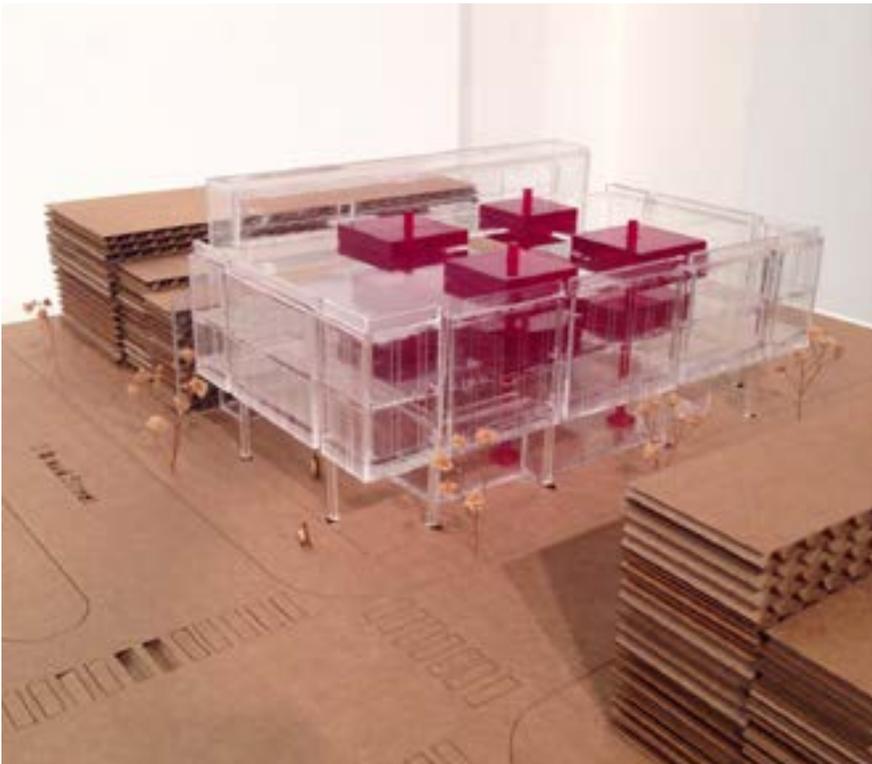
Merian O'Nei, 2016



Alexis Holcombe, 2017



Xuan Liu, 2014



Thomas Kennedy, 2016



Jessie Walton, 2016



Sarah Webb, 2016

# Course Descriptions

## **Summer Workshop: Introduction to Interior Design**

Provides necessary design fundamentals to students entering the Professional Entry Level Track in Interior Environments. There are three major components of the workshop: introduction to interior design studio practices; introduction to design graphics practices and introduction to professional issues and practices.

## **IDES 501, 502 Introductory Graduate Design Studio I and II**

Provides accelerated studio instruction for designing interior environments for the entering Professional Entry Level Track student that does not have previous experience in Interior Design. Coursework is highly sequenced and accelerates in complexity as the semester progresses and combines the development of technical skills with conceptual thinking and design development.

## **IDES 511, 512 Introductory Graduate Graphics I and II**

Provides accelerated manual and computer graphics instruction for designing interior environments for the entering Professional Entry Level Track student that does not have previous experience in Interior Design graphics. Coursework is highly sequenced and accelerates in complexity as the semester progresses.

## **IDES 521 Advanced Material Studies for Interior Environments**

Learn investigation, selection, and practical application of materials and textiles in interior environments.

## **IDES 522 Environmental Factors for Interior Environments**

Contemporary theories and techniques in the design of buildings as related to interior design, small structural considerations, HVAC, acoustics, plumbing, and the attributes of building materials.

## **IDES 601 Graduate Interior Environments Studio**

Provides advanced studio for designing interior environments that incorporates the development of construction documents and detailing.

## **IDES 611 Advanced Graphics for Interior Environments I**

Provides advanced graphics instruction for designing interior environments for the Professional Entry Level Track student. Coursework focuses on the development of technical drawing, rendering and presentation skills for the interior designer.

## **IDES 612 Advanced Graphics for Interior Environments II**

Provides advanced graphics instruction for designing interior environments using the computer. Coursework focuses on the development of computer-based skills and software programs such as Autocad and Revit.

## **IDES 623 Advanced Design Studies**

This seminar familiarizes students with the expanding body of knowledge about design studies as the subject relates to interior environments for the purpose of developing a thesis proposal.

## **IDES 626 Advanced Light and Color for Interior Environments**

Study the illumination and color and its impact on people in interior spaces.

## **IDES 631 Ethics and Business Procedures for Interior Environments**

Advanced study of the interior design profession as related to professional and business practices, including responsibilities, services, ethics, business and project management, and marketing.

## **IDES 635 Teaching Practicum in Interior Environments**

Observation, instruction, and practice to develop skills in the design, organization, and conduct of courses in interior design. Explores multiple teaching strategies, student development, learning styles, and evaluation techniques.

## **IDES 651 History and Theory of Interior Environments I**

Study of the major paradigms, theories, and styles of the built environment (interior design, furniture, and architecture) from antiquity to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **IDES 652 History and Theory of Interior Environments II**

Study of the major paradigms, theories, and styles of architecture, interior environments, and furniture from the beginnings of modernism to the present day. Contemporary analysis of cultural conditions and the manner in which designers and architects respond to those conditions.

## **IDES 690 Graduate Seminar in Interior Environments**

A detailed selected theoretical, historical, aesthetic, and social areas of concern to the interior designer as applied to thesis development.

## **IDES 693 Interior Design Internship**

Provides supervised practical work experiences that are coordinated with professional interior designers under the guidance of interior design faculty. Formal arrangements must be made.

## **IDES 699 Thesis/Creative Project**

The project must test a design idea synthesized through the development of a design process, investigative research in an individual project of complex scale and scope.

# Faculty+Staff



**Roberto Ventura**, LEED AP  
*Interim Chair, Associate Professor*  
M.Arch., Miami University  
BA, Math + Physics, Albion College



**Christiana Lafazani**, NCIDQ  
*Interim Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, Associate Professor*  
MFA, Interior Environments, VCU  
BS, Interior Design, James Madison University  
BAD, Business Administration., School of Business Thessaloniki



**W. Camden Whitehead**  
*Associate Professor*  
M.Arch, Architecture, Virginia Tech  
BA, Art, Averett College



**Rab McClure**, AIA, NCIDQ  
*Associate Professor*  
M.Arch, Architecture, Yale University  
BS, Architecture, University of Virginia



**Emily Smith**, CID, LEED AP  
*Assistant Professor*  
MFA, Interior Environments, VCU  
BS, Interior Design, Virginia Tech



**Lexy Holcombe**  
*Assistant Professor*  
MFA, Interior Environments, VCU  
BS, Interior Design, Virginia Tech  
BA, Political Science, Chatham College (now Chatham University)



**Robert Smith**  
*Administrative Director, Associate Professor*  
MFA, Design, Interior Environments, VCU  
BS, Theology, Kentucky Christian University



**Eleanor Campbell-Barton**  
*Adjunct instructor*  
Principal+Director of Interior Design, Glavé & Holmes  
BFA, Interior Design, VCU



**Jillian Chapin**  
*Adjunct instructor*  
MFA, Design, Interior Environments, VCU  
BS, Marketing Management, Virginia Tech



**Sara Desvernine Reed**  
*Adjunct instructor*  
PhD, American Art, University of Delaware  
MA, Art History, VCU  
BA, Art History, University of Colorado at Boulder



**Annie Frankfort**  
*Adjunct instructor*  
MFA, Design, Interior Environments, VCU  
BA, Psychology, Washington and Lee University



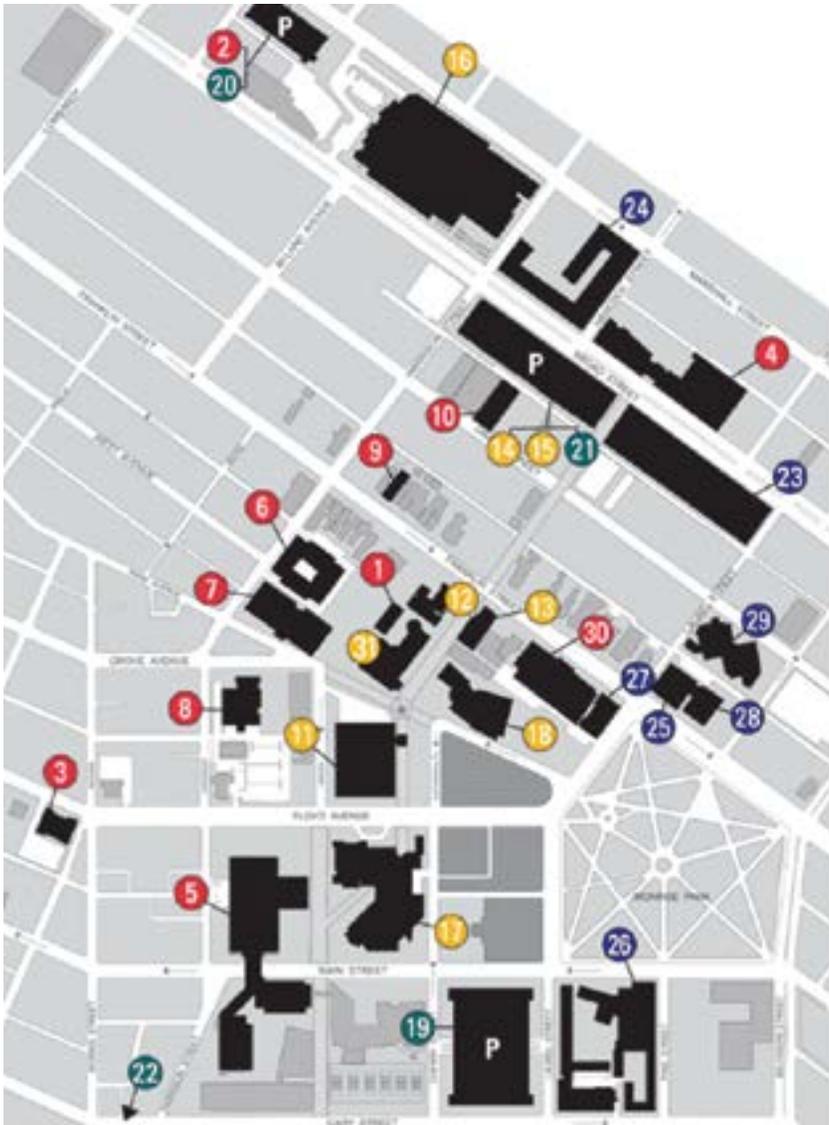
**Tim Hamnett**  
*Adjunct instructor*  
Architectural Designer, Baskervill  
M.Arch, Architecture, University of Washington  
BDes Arch, BA, English, University of Florida



**Joanna Gragnani**  
*Program Assistant*  
BA, Art History, University of Virginia

# Campus Map

Monroe Park Campus, Richmond, Virginia



## School of the Arts

- 1 THE ANDERSON 907 W Franklin St
- 2 BOWE STREET DECK 609 Bowe St, 5th Floor  
Art Foundation Program  
Cinema Program Studio
- 3 DANCE CENTER 10 N Brunswick St  
Dance Studios
- 4 FINE ARTS BUILDING 1000 W Broad St  
Craft/Material Studies Department  
Painting + Printmaking Department  
Sculpture +Extended Media Department  
Kinetic Imaging Department Offices
- 5 BUSINESS BUILDING 1015 Floyd Ave  
Communication Arts Department (Illustration)
- 6 THERESA POLLAK BUILDING 325 N Harrison St  
Cinema Program Offices  
Graphic Design Department  
Fashion Design + Merch. Department  
**Interior Design Department**  
Photography + Film Department  
Kinetic Imaging Department Classes
- 7 W.E. SINGLETON CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS 922 Park Ave  
Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall  
Music Department  
Theatre Department
- 8 MUSIC CENTER 1015 Grove Ave  
Music Studios
- 9 BUFORD HOUSE 922 W Franklin St  
Art History
- 10 GRACE ST. THEATRE 934 W Grace St  
  
FRANKLIN TERRACE 812 W. Franklin St  
Art Education Department

## Administrative and Student Services

- 11 CABELL LIBRARY 901 Park Ave
- 12 GINTER HOUSE 901 W Franklin St  
Financial Aid
- 13 FOUNDERS HALL 827 W Franklin St  
Records + Registration
- 14 WELCOME CENTER 1111 W Broad St  
  
...Other Points of Interest
- 15 BOOKSTORE 1111 W Broad St
- 16 SIEGEL CENTER 1200 W Broad St
- 17 STUDENT COMMONS 907 Floyd Ave
- 18 SHAFER COURT DINING CENTER  
810 Cathedral Place
- 31 Hibbs Building 900 Park Ave

## Parking

- 19 WEST MAIN STREET DECK 801 W Main St
- 20 BOWE STREET DECK 609 Bowe St
- 21 WEST BROAD STREET DECK 1111 W Broad St
- 22 WEST CARY STREET DECK 1201 W Cary St

# Online

**Department of Interior Design** [arts.vcu.edu/interiordesign](http://arts.vcu.edu/interiordesign)  
<https://www.facebook.com/vcuarts.interiordesign/>  
instagram @vcuartsinteriordesign  
intdesign@vcu.edu or 804.828.1713

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**Connect** [arts@vcu.edu](mailto:arts@vcu.edu) or 804.VCU.ARTS

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[twitter.com/VCU](https://twitter.com/VCU)  
[viriniacommonwealthuniversity.tumblr.com](http://viriniacommonwealthuniversity.tumblr.com)

**Financial Aid** [finaid.vcu.edu](http://finaid.vcu.edu)  
**Student Accounting** [accounting.vcu.edu](http://accounting.vcu.edu)

For more information about the VCUarts Interior Design MFA program, please contact:

Robert Smith  
Graduate Program Director  
[smithrd@vcu.edu](mailto:smithrd@vcu.edu) or 804.828.1713

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Cover rendering by An Liu, MFA 2017

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