Preamble:

- The Master in Design (Communication Design) - M.Des. program at DA-IICT is a full time two-year program (four semesters) open to graduates in any discipline.
- The study program aims to develop in students technological proficiency along with the cultural and creative sensibility required for successful communication of ideas and information within specific social contexts.
- Students will learn to create effective solutions for problems of communication, and apply them to deal with the rapidly changing world.
- The program also seeks to respond to the growing need to design information products and services in such a way that they become meaningful links to related knowledge bases.
- Communication designers must look at information as the key to much larger systems of knowledge and be aware of potential applications in domains such as education, culture, society and entertainment.
- There are many institutions that teach multimedia technology in different ways and intensity, but M.Des. program at DA-IICT is distinct in seeking to relate technology with issues of society, culture and design.
- The M.Des. Program at DA-IICT with its unique faculty aims to bring students to an understanding of both the design and aesthetic components of Information Communication Technology (ICT) as well as the social and cultural contexts which give it meaning and relevance.

Goals and objectives of the program

- To create a unique creative individual who would be capable of using digital technology, (among others) to integrate various channels, forms and media of communication in a culturally sensitive manner that is crucial for meeting the challenges of the modern world.
- To train individuals who are thoughtful, creative and have an understanding of techno-aesthetic. The aim is to produce individuals capable of carving a unique position for themselves in the world of ICT by equipping them with the knowledge of multi-disciplinary approaches to issues of communication.
- To situate ICT in a domain of intellectual engagement that arrives at a more effective understanding of the multiple cultures of communication that hold societies together.
• The training provided at this Institute is aimed not at just providing students with skills required in the market but to make them learn and apply the ever-increasing tools of communication in culturally sensitive ways.

• Given the growing and ever changing demands of the market, the program wishes to direct the creative potential of its students to two major areas of specialization viz. ‘Visual Communication Design’ and ‘Interactive Communication Design’. Both areas of specialization would be built upon a strong foundation that will impart training in basic design sensibility, the uses of digital technologies and the cultural and aesthetic components of communication practices.

Eligibility for the program

• This is an intensive and innovative program that demands motivated students.

• The program is suitable for students who have a technology background but seek a cultural and artistic orientation to become successful communicators, as well as students who have training in fields other than science and technology but aspire to gain some technological skills to become more creative and effective communicators.

• A candidate should have a Bachelor’s degree from any statutory university or equivalent.

• Applicants from fields of Technology, Science, Humanities, Social Science, Applied Arts, and Performing Arts are eligible for this interdisciplinary program.

• Candidates must have minimum of 55% marks or CPI of 6.0/10.0 in the qualifying degree examination.

• Individuals who have work experience are also encouraged to apply for the program.

Employment opportunities

• Students with such a degree will find places in the media, in the entertainment industry, in Government and non-Government organizations as well as academic and research institutions, information publication and production houses, corporate consultancy sectors and publicity outfits.

• Students trained in this program would also be in a unique position to contribute to the growing future of e-education and infotainment both within and outside India.

• Some of our graduates have found that their training has been strong enough to start their own freelance work and work as independent communication designers.
Sequence of Courses

**Semester 1. Foundation**
1. Approaches to Culture & Communication
2. Fundamentals of Design - I
3. Object Oriented Programming
4. Principles of Interaction Design
5. Writing, Presentation and Communication skills

**Semester II. Extension of Foundations**
1. Research Methodologies – Ethnography and its Applications
2. Introduction to Narratology
3. Fundamentals of Design - II
4. Web Design: Applications, Interconnectibility
5. Open Elective

**Semester III. Joining concepts and applications**
1. Animation
2. Games, Simulations and Modeling
3. Thematic Seminar/Workshop OR RR (Reading/Research) course if no thematic Seminar/Workshop is offered
4. Research Application: Constructing Narratives
5. Research Proposal Seminar: Rationale, Process, Outcome

**Semester IV. Individual design Project**

Pedagogical Principles

- Initial one semester foundation component is proposed to bring students with varying background to one benchmark level.
- Each semester’s course content will try to include project work.
- Integration of theory and practice will be stressed throughout the program.
- The teaching approach for each course would comprise a combination of lectures, seminar, studio, and practical sessions. Lectures would mainly focus on basic ideas and concepts, which would be substantiated and discussed through seminars, engaging students in active participation project work. Lecture sequences in a course may be conducted by multiple faculties, and the seminars would be designed to provide a bridge between the lectures and the practical sessions. Emphasis would be that students learn how to learn what is needed and when it is needed in an environment of ever-changing needs and technologies.
- For each course, emphasis would be on research and project work that utilizes the methods and ideas learned from other courses.
- Each course is not a stand alone learning experience but it would be expected that in course of study the connections, both vertically and
horizontally, are made by the student culminating to their final semester's project.

- Courses in the third semester (second year) are focused more on individualized work rather than classroom sessions in order to apply the theory and practice in preparation for the final student project. The final student project must be completed in the fourth semester.

Course Abstracts

Semester I. Foundation Semester

1. Approaches to Culture and Communication: (3-0-0-3)

This course will introduce students to a series of lectures and discussions on the role of technology and culture in communication. It aims to explore the ways in technology mediates and transforms cultural meanings in practices of social communication. The primary focus of this course would be on identifying specific fields of social communication, and understanding the kinds of design problems and solutions these can generate. It will introduce students to a range of analytical frameworks derived from studies of both aesthetics and semiotics. These frameworks would apply to understanding communication practices in Indian as well as in cross-cultural contexts. Students will be encouraged to understand that an appreciation of the intent of communication is a significant factor in the process of effective communication design and that it is important to develop the ability to decode 'point of view' and 'perspective' in relation to meanings. The course which will be organized through readings, lectures, and seminar presentations aims to help students to intellectually integrate the domains of design and technology with society and culture. It will provide the essential foundations for them to undertake their individual projects in the second year when they would be oriented to develop a more in-depth understanding of the principles of communication through either Visual Design or Interaction Design.

2. Fundamentals of Design – I (3-0-2-4)

Design is an interdisciplinary activity – characterized by the constant preoccupation of co-relating disciplines, dealing with and trying to understand the complex and interesting worlds of the physical, biological, imaginary, and human all of which are multivariate in character. The Fundamentals of Design course is an attempt to sensitize students to this complex, dynamic and multidimensional scenario. The main objective of this course is to acquaint students of Multimedia Design to the means and methods of approaching, investigating and solving problems creatively by providing them with appropriate design and conceptual skill sets. The course would emphasize the latitude and value of individual thinking and the students' ability to observe and see which would enable them to apply themselves creatively in solving problems. The areas that would be covered would be drawing – a process of observation, recording and representation which would include various kinds of representation for 2D. Objective of this course is in
providing the student with a foundation in the grammar for design for communication based on ideas and concepts like color, composition, typography and layouts/space, illustration for specific needs. The course would culminate in a project that student would integrate skills and aptitude acquired in the course.

3. Principles of Interaction Design (3-0-2-4)

Interaction Design involves designing for meaningful interactions between humans and their artifacts and this idea is easily extended to include interactions between humans with the help of their artifacts. Designing for interaction requires understanding human engagement and communication with technology and to use that knowledge to design artifacts within specified contexts and constraints that create more useful and satisfying experience for the users. With the explosive growth of digital technology, interaction design is now being applied largely to interactions with digital artifacts. Interaction design includes elements from the fields of human factors; human computer interaction, collaborative work and learning, digital design, cognitive ergonomics, informatics, information systems, and interface design. This course will cover the underlying principles of a wide range of issues, and includes empirical studies with design implications and extensive work on lab and field based exercises. This course is designed to cover the breadth of the field and to enable the students to be adept and competent in grasping and dealing effectively with design issues involving interaction with a range of devices, services and users. This course requires the students to investigate a specific area or a context in depth and develop understandings and design implications in order to deliver an innovative proposal and prototype.

4. Object Oriented Programming (3-0-4-5)

The course is designed to impart knowledge and develop skills required to solve real world problems using object oriented approach with java language as a tool. It aims at developing skills in programming, software design and development. It would introduce the concepts of object oriented programming and java like, basic structures in java, abstraction, objects and classes, inheritance, polymorphism, encapsulation, reusability of class, interface, GUI programming, deploying java applications and accessing databases in java.

5. Writing, Presentation and Communication Skills (1-0-2-3) (P/F course)

This course is meant to underscore the significance of written and verbal skills in the processes of conceptualizing and designing communication. The course will combine a seminar and workshop format where students will be focusing on one specialized aspect of written or verbal communication every week. They will be introduced to both the formal conventions of academic and technical writing as well as the wider range of styles associated with creative writing. Their verbal skills will be developed through exercises involving group discussions, extempore speaking, and formal presentations. This course aims to help students formulate ideas, and articulate these to appropriate target audiences and contexts.
Semester II. Extension of Foundations

1. Fundamentals of Design – II (3-0-2-4)

This course deals with the advanced aspects of color, composition, virtual 3D spaces, Typography as image, Illustration for information design, and Digital Photography as means of explore, visualize and communicate complex ideas with high levels of data density. This course would present an entry point to moving image and sound analysis, structure, methodology, concepts and experimentation for communicating specific ideas as well as to explore the possibilities/potential of each medium. Consideration of ‘mediums’ would focus on moving image scenarios that would include cinema, animation, multimedia and Sound Design and for 2D and virtual 3D environments. Students should acquire from the field of ‘Design History’ the understanding of visual language that is applied for range of visualization essential for practice of sketching, photography, film and animation.

2. Research Methodologies – Ethnography and its Applications (3-0-0-3)

Contemporary information technologies are often said to be immersive, creating distinctive and highly detailed virtual experiences. Thus the discipline of ethnography, which teaches researchers to understand social activity through immersive exposure, seems particularly appropriate to study of communication design. Ethnographic analysis provides powerful tools to understand how communication systems deeply affect individuals and societies. The course introduces the foundations and basic methods of ethnography derived from the fields of visual anthropology and cognitive anthropology. It will look at several applications of these disciplines to current communication practices. Students would be expected to undertake fieldwork assignments and related applied activities such as collection of empirical data, qualitative data, contextual inquiry and usability testing that provides the foundations for user-centered interaction and visual design. The objective of the course is to provide the student the intellectual tools to develop research capacity for the final design projects they would have to undertake.

3. Introduction to Narratology (3-0-2-4)

This course will introduce students to the critical place of narratives in communication practices. The theoretical starting point of this course will be an understanding that narratives are found and communicated through a range of media such as verbal and written language, gestures, music, visual art and film. Narratives have also acquired in new and complex forms in computing environments and digital networks. Beginning from a range of questions related to simple forms of story-telling, students in this course will be acquainted with the more sophisticated insights of practitioners of what is known as “narratology”. Starting from the theoretical propositions of Vladimir Propp (Morphology of the Folktale 1928) the course will survey the writings of Claude Levi Strauss, Gerard Genette, Roland Barthes, and Mieke Baal among others. By the end of the course
students will be expected to develop a deep understanding of both the thematic and modal aspects of story-telling. In other words, they will be engaging with both the structure of the narrative and the manner of its telling. This course is intended to prepare them for a subsequent course on the construction and translation of narratives in different media.

4. Web Design: Applications, Inter-connectibility (2–0–4–4)

Through discussing various examples students would be introduced to Web Concepts and Design. What are the basic technical requirements and production processes needed for a basic web site development and construction. Topics include site design, image processing, visual web editors, html and layout, interface design and basic behaviors. Along with this aspects of connecting to a network would be provided as hands on experience. As a class project, students would start setting up a site that would become a context to apply things they learn and present the work for others. Through this process the student will learn to combine various software that are available and that must be utilized to create a multimedia content. As each multimedia approach requires a different combination of software the students need to understand the potential advantage and disadvantages of specific software, their compatibility amongst each other, cross-platform applications and the optimum manner in which they can be used with minimum generation-loss of end product. The rationale behind this course is that hardware–software compatibility for the optimum communication is essential and it is best understood by a hands-on, lab-based exploration of multimedia fundamentals. Emphasis will on end product design, concept development and collaborative techniques as used in professional multimedia prototyping. Additionally, students will learn about a variety of hardware and software options including, but not limited to, image editing, digital video and input/output concerns. This course will consider the concepts, technical requirements and production processes needed for web site development and construction. Topics covered will include interface design, web animation and interactivity, video and audio for the web and interactive end products. Primary objective is to present and explore concepts and tools for interactivity in multimedia.

5. Open Elective. (**********)

Student will select one open elective offered by the institute. It could be a technical or non technical elective but the individual student will have to make a case and the program coordinator and the course instructor would have to give consent.

**Semester III. Joining Concepts and Applications**

1. Animation (3–0–2–4)

The aim is to sensitize students to the structure, nature, systems, and communication potential of the medium of animation. This course would be an
introduction to the fundamentals (principles and dynamics) of motion and movement in animation – both theory and practice. The course would equip students with the basic concepts, methods/means and language to conceptualize and visualize simple ideas through animated sequences/films. Storytelling, Storyboarding, Animatics, Setting a stage, and kinetics would be the main areas to explore the limits of the medium. The course is set to exploring ways to communicate complex ideas and hidden worlds effectively using the language of animation, from entertainment -films and gaming to Instructional material. The course would also introduce students to the art of developing and visualizing characters for animated films. Exploration and experimentation with lip synchronization, aesthetics of sound, track lying, and creating animated sequences with/to sound.

2. Games, Simulations and Modeling (3-0-2-4)

This course will introduce the students to the principles of game design as a process based on ‘situated learning theory’. Students will explore the role ‘play’ and ‘games’ have evolved as a concept of Homo Ludens and the present uses of mobile technology as a medium for learning through game play with multiple players. Games need to be understood as process based systems that produce models and representations algorithmically through player interaction. Students will be exposed to analysis of games as different narrative structures and the importance of rules which help one to play the game as a learning experience. Students, after studying some of the existing games would be encouraged to design games with learning potential. Students will learn the technology aspects by understanding the use of Game programming Libraries, Gaming Application Programming Interface, and Graphics API. (Direct X and Open GL) and Game engines.

3. Thematic Seminar/Workshop or a RR Course (3-0-0-3) P/F course

Faculty involved with the M.Des. program and or visiting faculty would conduct a seminar or a workshop for the students to either learn or explore some new areas of multimedia techniques and applications. If and when required an open elective offered in the Institute may be considered as a substitute for the seminar course. In case a seminar or workshop is not offered the student could take up a reading and research (RR) course with any faculty member after providing the formal plan of arrangement between the student and the faculty concerned to the M.Des. committee. Please note that the focus of this course has been not fixed in order to take advantage of students’ changing interests, faculty’s own research interest and the particular area of expertise that a visiting faculty brings from outside including the design industry.

4. Research Application: Constructing Narratives (3-0-2-4)

This course is meant to encourage students to apply the theoretical insights drawn from the earlier course on narratives and develop their own narrative form around a particular idea or message they wish to communicate. They will
encourage translating narratives from one medium to another and analyzing the differing demands of each. This course will involve a group project wherein students will be tested on their capacities to work together and develop a product that reflects coordinated team work. For example, they can work together to develop a public interest message through paper, voice and screen and develop a keen sense of the narrative as it takes shape through each medium.

5. Research Proposal Seminar: Rationale, Process, Outcome (1–0–4–3)

This seminar’s main focus will be to help students to formulate their final project proposals. Students will be expected to engage in informed discussions about their design problems with the faculty. They will be required to provide a clear rationale for the selection of a project and explain how they intend to implement the skills and aptitudes gained from the courses offered in the program. It is essential that students in this seminar are intellectually capable of integrating the technical component of their design project with questions derived from their understanding of the social and cultural contexts of communication. They are expected to apply the research methodologies learnt in the previous course and write up a concrete proposal in accordance with a set of given guidelines. The primary objective of this seminar is to enable students to make informed decisions about the nature of the project they wish to undertake and the range of intellectual skills they need to work on it. Once they have decided on a proposal, they will in the next and final semester work in consultation with an assigned team of faculty. This course will equip student with the necessary tools to determine appropriate methodology for specific design research needs and teach them how to find supporting resources, and the ability to critically evaluate existing research. This course should help the student to initiate and plan the individual research project in the IV semester

Semester IV. Individual Design Project (0–0–30–15)

The last and final semester is dedicated to developing and completing the research proposal developed in the previous semester (See Semester III). This semester will give a chance for each individual to now undertake and execute the final project for which they have been provided general foundation as well as a specialization developed along with the research and creative outlook. Each student would be responsible to work in close individual collaboration with two faculty members (at least one of them must be a regular faculty of the institute) to complete the final design project. The faculty would evaluate the work done and accordingly submit it for final processing of the project by a jury of examiners.

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