ABOUT

Degree in 3 is a pilot program that allows Graphic Design and Retail Merchandising students who entered their programs in fall 2013 to earn their degree in less time, for less money.

Students in the Degree in 3 pilot program will study for eight consecutive semesters, including summers, thereby trimming one year off of the typical four-year undergraduate degree time frame and enabling students to enter the workforce or pursue a graduate degree more quickly.

Degree in 3 students receive a more affordable education over the typical four-year degree track through potential savings in any tuition increases and cost-of-living expenses that can occur in year four of an undergraduate program – an average of $13,000 in potential savings.

Because this is a University pilot program, over $100,000 in scholarships is available for summer terms 2014, 2015 and 2016 to students who are admitted to and pursue the Degree in 3 option.

TIME

Is this an accelerated program?

Yes and no. Yes, in that students complete the program sooner than students following the regular four-year program because they take full academic loads for two summers. No, in that students take the same courses/credits in the same number of semesters (8).

Sample 3-Year Degree Plans:
Graphic Design
Retail Merchandising: General Track
Retail Merchandising: Apparel Track

How does the program work?

Eligible students may apply to the Degree in 3 program in early spring term 2015. Once admitted, students must continue taking a full course load for the remaining 6 consecutive semesters. Commencement for Degree in 3 students will be in May of their third year (2017).
For Degree in 3 students, the College of Design will hold seats in the appropriate College of Design classes (i.e., RM, ADes, GDes and DES courses). This will be for each term as long as the student is in good standing and follows the Degree in 3 curriculum. Students not in the Degree in 3 program, but who meet course prerequisites, may register for a class(es) if space is available.

If, for any reason, a student is unable to follow the Degree in 3 curriculum, s/he might not be able to continue in the Degree in 3 program. This will depend on a variety of factors and will be determined on an individual basis. If a student returns to the traditional program, s/he will work with their academic adviser to create a plan to allow progress towards timely graduation.

The College of Design will review students’ grades immediately following each semester. Prerequisite courses and courses required in the major must be passed with a C- or better in order to continue with planned coursework. Earning a failing grade in a major course may put the student off track in terms of timely graduation.

I'm a transfer student and plan to graduate in fewer than four years anyway. May I still be in the Degree in 3 program?

**Graphic Design:** Given the sequential nature of the Graphic Design curriculum, it may be difficult to shorten the program. However, depending on which of your previous courses are accepted toward liberal education and/or major requirements, you may be able to finish your degree in fewer than 8 semesters. You will need to consult with your academic adviser to plan out your remaining courses.

**Retail Merchandising:** Yes. You will need to work with your academic adviser to map out a course plan that fulfills your remaining degree requirements.

**Important dates:**

- January 1, 2015: Application for summer housing contract available online
- February 16, 2015: Application deadline for the Degree in 3 program
- April 8, 2015: Registration begins for summer and May term
- April 10, 2015: Registration begins for fall term
- May 13, 2015: Graphic Design Portfolio Review – special review session for Degree in 3 applicants. Results are expected to be emailed on May 15.
- June 15 – August 21, 2015: Summer Session dates for the 10-week College of Design courses for the Degree in 3 program

**Note:** Course dates for non-College of Design courses (e.g., liberal education classes, major classes offered by other colleges such as the College of Liberal Arts or the Carlson School) will vary.

**PILOT PROGRAM**

Why is the College of Design doing this pilot program?
Students’ educational needs are increasingly diverse, and the University wants to meet those needs wherever possible. The Degree in 3 program may be an appealing and feasible option for some students.

The Degree in 3 program provides flexibility and opportunity for students who have the desire and motivation to graduate in three years. Also it may be financially and/or professionally advantageous for a student to graduate and enter the job force as early as possible.

**What does being a “pilot” program mean?**

The Retail Merchandising and Graphic Design Degree in 3 programs are serving as test cases for the University. The outcome will help determine the feasibility of creating Degree in 3 programs for other majors.

The pilot program is a temporary opportunity that includes over $100,000 in scholarships that will not be available to students after the pilot program ends. The pilot program is designed to run a total of four years, covering two cohorts, and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

While we have made every effort to consider all possible questions and impacts, there will be times when we need to revise or develop new procedures and guidelines during the program.

**If I begin the Degree in 3 program and decide I don’t like it, may I change back to the traditional program?**

Yes. While we encourage students to complete the Degree in 3 program, you may return to the traditional program. In that case, you should consult with your academic adviser regarding course enrollment so that you stay on track toward timely graduation.

**May I do a minor or a double-major with the Degree in 3 program?**

Yes. You would need to plan it carefully, just as is true with the traditional program.

**Will on-campus housing be available for the two summer terms?**

There will be a limited number of spaces held for Degree in 3 students in the 17th Ave. hall. These will be available on a first come, first served basis. Refer to the housing handout for further information.

**APPLY**

**How do students apply to the Degree in 3 program?**

If you wish to apply, send an email to degree3@umn.edu to request a link to the application, which will be a Google Form.
You will receive a response email containing a link to the online form. Consultation with your academic adviser is required as part of the application process. Group advising sessions will be scheduled, but you may schedule an individual appointment with your adviser.

The application form contains an electronic signature, which indicates you understand the requirements and expectations of the Degree in 3 plan.

- Application deadline: February 16, 2015
- Notification of decision: No later than February 27, 2015

Who is eligible to apply?

**Pre-Graphic Design students are eligible for the program if they:**

- are officially enrolled as a Pre-Graphic Design major
- entered the Pre-Graphic Design program in fall 2014
- have a cumulative U of M GPA of 2.50 or higher
- completed or are enrolled at the point of application in the following courses: Des 1101W, Des 2101, GDes 1311, GDes 1312 and GDes 1315.
- passed portfolio review at the end of their second term (i.e., spring 2015) NOTE: Students who are admitted to the Degree in 3 program will participate in Portfolio Review during finals week of spring 2015. Passing Portfolio Review at that point is required to continue in the Degree in 3 program.

Space is limited to 22 current Pre-Graphic Design students who have passed portfolio review.

**Retail Merchandising students are eligible for the program if they:**

- are officially enrolled as a Retail Merchandising major
- entered the Retail Merchandising program in fall 2014
- have a cumulative U of M GPA of 2.00 or higher

Up to 50 Retail Merchandising majors may be admitted to the Degree in 3 program.

What’s the selection criteria for admission to the Degree in 3 program?

Because Degree in 3 is a pilot program and new available option, we encourage all qualified students to apply. However, in the event there are more eligible applicants than spots available, admission decisions will be made on the basis of academic performance.

What if I have an approved reduced credit load?

In order for students to complete the Degree in 3 program on time (i.e., in eight semesters), they are required to enroll for a full course load each term. Transfer credits (either from a previous institution or from high school, such as AP, IB, CIS, etc.) may fulfill some liberal education
courses, allowing for a student to enroll at less than full time once all of the other liberal education and writing requirements have been fulfilled.

**SCHOLARSHIPS and COSTS**

**Will there be scholarship money for the Degree in 3 program?**

Yes. The Degree in 3 pilot program has over $100,000 in scholarship funding available to students for summers terms 2014, 2015 and 2016. We encourage all applicants to apply for a scholarship by simply indicating your interest on the application.

**What will the cost be? Will my financial aid package change?**

If you are interested in applying for the Degree in 3 program and have questions regarding how your financial aid package might be affected, please contact Meg Calabrese in the Office of Student Finance at schmi138@umn.edu or 612-624-0824.

General information regarding tuition and fees includes the following:

- Tuition for a full credit load during summer term will be the same as for fall or spring terms, i.e., the 13-credit tuition band is still in place. If, for some reason, you enroll in fewer than 13 credits for the summer, you will be charged per credit.
- Summer fees will likely be lower than for fall or spring terms.
- Wisconsin reciprocity is the same as during fall or spring terms.
- Tuition and fees for May and summer terms are billed together in June and are usually due around July 4. There is no installment plan for summer term.

Tuition and fees for 2015-16 are expected to be quite similar to the current year (2014-15) tuition and fees, which can be found at:

- [Academic year tuition and fees info](#)
- [Summer 2014 tuition information](#)

**I was awarded a multi-year scholarship. Will it pay for summer term?**

*University of Minnesota Freshman Scholarships*

If you were awarded a multi-year scholarship through the University of Minnesota and are registered for at least 6 credits during May/Summer Term, Admissions will disburse funds in the summer. For example, if you received a 2-year scholarship upon admission for fall 2014, it is intended to cover 4 semesters. If you participate in the Degree in 3 program, then, the scholarship would be disbursed for the fall 2014, spring 2015, summer 2015 and fall 2015 semesters.

Usually, the summer disbursement occurs on an individual basis when a student requests an exception. However, the College of Design will collaborate with the Office of Admissions to
identify Degree in 3 students with multi-year scholarships and request the exception on their behalf.

*College of Design Legacy Scholarships*

If you were awarded a 4-year (8 semester) Legacy Scholarship, summer terms will be covered for the Degree in 3 program.

*President's Emerging Scholars (PES)*

PES students who complete the program will receive the final “year” scholarship will have the funds disbursed during their final 2 terms of their degree program.

*Scholarships Awarded from Outside the University of Minnesota*

If you are admitted to the Degree in 3 program and were awarded a multi-year scholarship from any organization outside of the U of M, please contact the funding organization to ask about receiving funds to cover the summer term.

**Will I be able to utilize campus resources during the summer?**

- [Summer Housing Information](#)

Yes. Most campus resources are open during the summer, though some may have limited service (e.g., the UCCS office in Minneapolis has fewer counselors on staff during the summer). One exception to this is Student Writing Support, which is closed over the summer.

Summer service at the Boynton clinic in St. Paul has not yet been determined, but the Minneapolis clinic offers full service. You may receive services at Boynton during the summer as long as you (a) are insured either through the University or private insurance and (b) you were enrolled during spring term. (Your spring term student fees also cover the summer term.)

**MORE QUESTIONS**

**Is study abroad still an option?**

Yes, study abroad is still an option for both May Term and semester-long programs, and it is encouraged. It may, however, require more careful planning regarding coursework and travel dates.

**When will I do the required internship?**

Your required internship will be completed while you take courses, as opposed to having the option to do it in the summer with no other courses. Many students already do it this way.

**Will major courses and/or study abroad still be offered during May Term?**
**Major Courses:** ADes, Des, GDes and RM courses will not be offered in May Term 2015, but other U of M departments may offer courses that fulfill your degree requirements.

**Study Abroad:** Neither Graphic Design nor Retail Merchandising have study abroad programs planned for May Term 2015. The U of M offers a variety of programs each May, which you may participate in as long as you return to campus in time for your summer term classes.

**May I still be in the University Honors Program?**

Yes. The requirements are equivalent to the traditional 4-year program and are broken down as follows.

First 4 semesters (equivalent to years 1 and 2): fall 2014 – spring 2015 – summer 2015 – fall 2015:

- complete 4 Honors Experiences by the end of summer 2015 in order to receive a transcript notation for the first-year Honors requirements
- complete 8 Honors Experiences by the end of fall 2015 in order to receive a transcript notation for the first- and second-year Honors requirements
- Note: Earning the first- and/or second-year notation is not required in order to graduate with Latin Honors.

Last 4 semesters (equivalent to years 3 and 4): spring 2016 – summer 2016 – fall 2016 – spring 2017:

*Complete 6 Honors Experiences in order to graduate with honors, to include:*

- at least 2 Honors courses
- completion of a thesis
- a 3.50 minimum cumulative gpa maintained over the final 60 credits

*For Graphic Design, these requirements may be met by completing:*

- GDes 4361V
- GDes 4362H
- a thesis
- an internship (which is also required for the major)
- two additional Honors Experiences

*For Retail Merchandising, these requirements may be met by completing:*

- Two semesters of RM 4160H
- a thesis
- an internship (which is also required for the major)
- two additional Honors Experiences