

UNIST Design Graduate School Study Guide

For current & future students

Revised and released by Academic Committee, Department of Design, UNIST 13 Mar 2025

This document applies to students enrolling from the 2025 spring semester and onwards. Students who enrolled prior to the 2025 spring semester should refer to the regulations in effect at the time of their enrollment. For clarification, please contact Student Affairs staff lead: https://design.unist.ac.kr/staff/

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1. UNIST Design

Vision

The goal of the Department of Design at UNIST is to cultivate creative designers who can lead the design of technology-driven products, services and product-service systems. We provide interdisciplinary courses on design knowledge, methods and techniques, including problem definition, user research, market analysis, needs finding, creative idea generation, form and function development, design engineering, and prototyping.

Students majoring in design will play an essential role as integrative change-makers in future society by employing user-centered design and research methods to drive the development of innovative design interventions.

Education Provision

Our hybrid education model provides students with a diverse education through courses, project-based learning, and hands-on experience. Real-life design and research projects within labs complement UNIST Design's educational provision.

Our students become transdisciplinary design experts through experience of a variety of fields and diversity of education provision unique within design schools nationally. Our courses reflect such diversity and allow our students to become adaptable designers and researchers. As a department of design located within a specialized institute of science and technology, the UNIST Design curriculum aims to integrate design with engineering and technology expertise.

Design and research opportunities are centered on our labs' diverse interests, with students and professors working together on industry, public-sector, and government funded design and research projects

2. Faculty members & labs

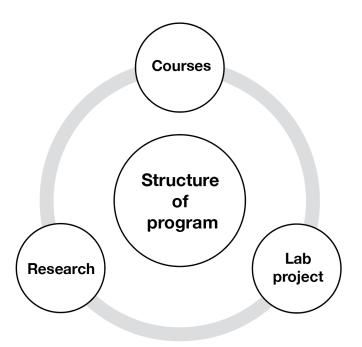
Name	Position	Laboratory
Chajoong Kim	Full Professor	Emotion Lab
Dajung Kim	Assistant Professor	Design Futures Lab
HongYeul Eom	Assistant Professor	Disruptive Experience Innovation (DXI) Lab
Huisung Lee	Associate Professor	Design & Electronic Convergence System (DECS) Lab
Hwang Kim	Associate Professor	OND Lab
James Andrew Self	lames Andrew Self Full Professor Design Thinking Research Lab	
Kwanmyung Kim	Kwanmyung Kim Full Professor Integration & Innovation Design (I+ID) Lab	
Kyungho Lee	Assistant Professor	Expressive Computing (EXPC) Lab
Seungho Park-Lee	Assistant Professor	New Design Studio (NDS)
Youngwoo Park	Associate Professor	Interactive Product Design (IPD) Lab
Henri Christiaans	Emeritus Professor	-
Myunwoo Lee	Emeritus Professor	_

^{*} For more information, see Department of Design website: **People** > Faculty > Link of each labs https://design.unist.ac.kr/professors/

3. Study

Structure of the program

Undertaking graduate degree programs at UNIST, our students take courses, conduct research towards a thesis, and participate in lab projects. These three educational aspects provide a breadth of learning opportunities unique to UNIST.



Courses

- Available courses and their descriptions can be found in the UNIST Graduate Course Guide, available https://design.unist.ac.kr/education/ > click 'Catalog'.
- The course credits required to graduate depend upon the program of study. Course credit requirements for the three graduate programs offered within the department are as follows:
- MS requires 15 credits (5 courses)
- PhD 12 credits (4 courses)
- MS-PhD Combined 24 credits (8 courses)
- You may take courses from both graduate and undergraduate programs at UNIST, including those from the Department of Design and other departments across UNIST. However, if taking undergraduate courses, a maximum of 6 credits (2 courses) will be counted towards your course graduation requirement.
- The Department of Design encourages graduate students (especially those who have completed undergraduate studies in other fields) to take undergraduate courses to enhance design skills and foundational knowledge as required.
- A recommended course list from other departments is provided on page 8.

4. Our curriculum

The timing of course offerings may vary depending on various circumstances within the department and faculty. Upon admission, please discuss with the academic admin staff and establish a study plan in collaboration with your supervising professor. Below is the course credit graduation requirement table for Masters, Doctoral, and Combined Master's-Doctoral programs at UNIST Design. Please refer to the UNIST Graduate Course Catalog available here for more.

1. Graduation Requirement [졸업 이수요건]

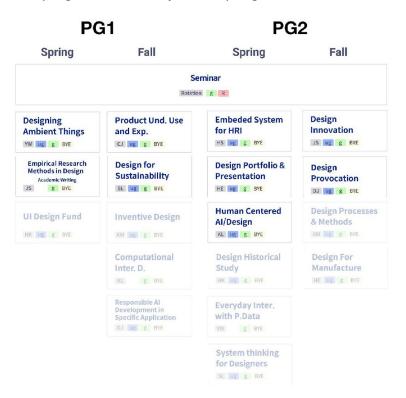
Major	Program	Course Credit	Research Credit	Total Credits
	Masters Program	At least 15 credits	At least 13 credits	At least 28 credits
Design	Doctoral Program	At least 12 credits	At least 48 credits	At least 60 credits
	Combined Master's-Doctoral Program	At least 24 credits	At least 36 credits	At least 60 credits

The table below shows the course list for graduate programs within the Design Department. In the list you can see DES590 Seminars is a required course for all graduate students. This course consists of a series of seminars provided by visiting and internal speakers. Courses DES691 (Master Graduation Project) and DES891 (Doctoral Research) are required credits. These credits are awarded to students each semester by their supervising professor. Credits are awarded on agreed progress of your graduate thesis project.

2. Curriculum [디자인학과 교육과정]

Category	Classification	Course Code	Course Title	Course Title (Kor.)	Cred. -Lect. -Exp.	Remark
		DES590	The Seminars	세미나	1-1-0	
Required	Research	DES691	Master Graduation Project	석사졸업과제	Value of credit	
		DES891	Doctoral Research	박사논문연구	Value of credit	
		DES503	Design Innovation	디자인 주도 혁신	3-3-0	DES415 [Iden.]
		DES505	Product Understanding, Use and Experience	제품의 이해, 사용과 경험	3-3-0	DE\$403 [Iden.]
		DES506	Computational Interaction Design	컴퓨테이셔널 인터랙션 디자인	3-3-0	
		DE\$507	Designing Ambient Things	앰비언트한 것들의 디자인	3-2-2	DES417 [Iden.]
		DES508	Ul Design Fundamentals	사용자 인터페이스 기초	3-2-2	DES418 [Iden.]
		DES510	Design for Sustainability	지속가능성을 위한 디자인	3-3-0	DE\$419 [lden.]
		DES513	Design for Responsible Al Development	책임있는 AI 개발을 위한 디자인	3-3-0	DE\$412 [Iden.]
		DE\$517	Inventive Design	발명적 디자인	3-2-2	DES409 [lden.]
		DE\$591	Special Topics in Design I	디자인 특론	3-3-0	
		DES592	Special Topics in Design II	디자인 특론॥	3-3-0	
		DES593	SpecialTopics in DesignIII	디자인 특론!!!	3-3-0	
Elective	Lecture	DES601	Empirical Research Methods in Design	디자인 실증 연구 방법	3-3-0	
		DES603	Everyday Interaction with Personal Data	개인 데이터와 일상적 인터랙션	3-2-2	
		DES604	Embeded Systems for HRI/HMI	HRI/HMI를 위한 임베디드 시스템	3-2-2	DES442 [Iden.]
		DES605	Human-Centered Al and Design	인간중심 AI 및 디자인	3-3-0	DE\$404 [Iden.]
		DES609	Historical Studies in Design	디자인 역사 연구	3-3-0	DES411 [Iden.]
		DE\$611	Design Portfolio & Presentation	디자인 포트폴리오와 프리젠테이션	3-2-2	DES405 [Iden.]
		DE\$612	Design for Manufacture	양산을 위한 디자인	3-3-0	DES414 [Iden.]
		DES614	Design Provocation	디자인을 통한 도발	3-3-0	DE\$416 [Iden.]
		DES615	Systems thinking for Designers	디자이너를 위한 시스템 사고	3-2-2	DES407 [Iden.]
		DES616	Design Process & Methodology	디자인 과정과 방법론	3-3-0	DES413
		SLA590	Writing in Acedemic Disciplines	전공영어 쓰기	3-3-0	[ideii.]
		SLA591	Technical Writing in English	영어논문 작성법	3-3-0	

For more detailed information on current graduate course curriculum, please see the UNIST Design Course Catalog available here. As a reference example of course distributions across the academic year, below is an illustration of course openings for the 2025 academic year. PG1 refers to year 1 of the graduate program, and PG2 year 2. Spring and Fall show the two teaching semesters of each year.



As illustrated above, the department will open 5 courses in the 2025 Spring Semester, and 4 in the Fall Semester. Above is a recommended schedule for when you may wish to take courses, and which ones across the years of your program. The Seminar runs every semester, and you can choose when to take it. You need to take the Seminars course only once. The green 'g' indicates the course as a graduate course. The blue 'ug' indicates the course is also open to undergraduate students in their 3rd or 4th year of study. The grey initial shows which professor within the department will teach the course. For example 'YW' indicates Prof. YW Park will instruct the course. For Doctoral and Master's-Doctoral combined students it is recommended to complete your course credit requirements within the early years of your degree program. In all cases, it is recommended that you discuss which courses to take when with your supervising professor.

5. Recommended courses from other departments

While undergraduate students can enroll in cross-listed courses from other departments, graduate students have the freedom to take any course from any other UNIST department. Nonetheless, we provide a list of recommended courses below as appropriate for our design programs.

Cross-listed from other department undergraduate courses:

Biomedical Engineering

- Brain and Human Behavior T Common to humans
- Color Science and Engineering
- Introduction to Human Factor Engineering
- Sensation and Perception
- Experimental Design

Business Administration

Marketing Management

Civil, Urban, Earth, and Environmental

Urban Development

Computer Science and Engineering

- Introduction to Human Computer Interaction
- Information Visualization
- Artificial Intelligence
- Introduction to Robotics

Mechanical Engineering Department

- Artificial Intelligence Based Digital Manufacturing
- 3D Printing
- Intro to Robotics

Liberal Arts

- Blockchain and Cryptocurrencies
- Design and implementation of data-driven machine learning

Recommended from other department's graduate courses:

Biomedical Engineering

- Al-based Affective Engineering
- Experimental design

Business Administration

- Managing Innovation and Change
- Entrepreneurship and Venture Management
- Research Methodology
- Marketing Research & Analysis

Civil, Urban, Earth, and Environmental Engineering

• Theory of Planning

Computer Science and Engineering

- Information Visualization
- Advanced Information Visualization
- Advanced human-computer interaction
- Artificial Intelligence

Graduate School of Al

- Introduction to AI
- Principles of Deep Learning
- Al Toolkits

Mechanical Engineering

- 3D Printing
- Artificial Intelligence
- Based Digital Manufacturing
- Introduction to Robotics

6. Research & lab projects

Research

- As a Graduate School that pursues a balance between design practice and academic rigour, we provide an environment where students can learn from both practitioners and researchers.
- Research credits are earned by taking the following courses:
 - The Seminars
 - Master Graduation Project (MGP hereafter)
 - Doctoral Research
- The Seminars course is to be taken only once, but students are encouraged to attend seminars from invited speakers as part of their program.
- Research credits are provided each semester under the condition students are conducting academic research under the supervision of their supervisors.
- For example, if you are an MS student: 1 credit (The Seminars) + 3 credits (MGP) X 4 Semester = 13 research credits + 15 course credits.

Lab Projects

- Professors in each lab provide diverse opportunities to participate in design and research projects funded by industry and government sponsors.
- By contributing to these projects as a designer or researcher, you
 gain hands-on experience essential for your professional and
 academic growth. The data, skills, and insights from these projects
 often serve as valuable foundations for your own research
 endeavors.
- Our faculty members have a strong collaborative culture, occasionally leading to cross-lab projects. These collaborations allow you to learn from professors beyond your primary supervisor, broadening your expertise and perspective.
- Additionally, your participation in projects is linked to your graduate stipend. The amount of stipend varies based on the project type, time spent, and your role. Funding sources include the National Research Foundation, international research organizations, industry-academic partnerships, and local or national government grants.

	The Seminar s	Research Credits	Required credits for graduation
MS	1 credit	1~3 credits per semester (Master Thesis)	13
PhD	1 credit	1~3 credits per semester (Doctoral Thesis)	48
MS- PhD	1 credit	1~3 credits per semester (Doctoral Thesis)	36

7.

7. Rules & notes

Prohibition of Commercial Activities

(Article 93, UNIST Regulation):

• As a regulation, a student shall not engage in any commercial activities for salary or profit without approval from the UNIST President.

• In practice, this regulation applies to students who receive scholarships funded by the Korean government or UNIST. If your scholarship is funded by other sources (i.e. company, institute, yourself, etc.), you could engage in commercial activities such as an internship, or a part-time job etc. In this case, you must discuss with your supervising professor ahead of a decision so as not to affect your course, thesis project, and lab project commitments.

Conflict of Interests

- At the Department of Design graduate program, students participate in various coursework, a thesis project, and lab project(s). They often engage in team-based work, which can be submitted to conferences or journals, in design awards, or included in their portfolios. Throughout this process, students may encounter various conflicts of interest.
- To prevent potential conflicts, students must discuss authorship and contributions with their supervising professor when publishing any results produced at the UNIST Department of Design. They must then obtain approval from their supervisor (or supervising committee if there are multiple supervising professors) before proceeding.

8. Graduation requirements

To graduate from the graduate program, students must meet the following requirements for the MS, PhD, MS-PhD combined programs.

	Minimum Credits		s	Publication Requirements		Fundink Assets
	Courses	Research	Tota I	Publication F	English test score	
				Choose eit	Choose either ① or ②	
MS	15	13	28	Submission of a journal paper from MGP to a domestic journal or an international conference proceeding as a main author (1st or corresponding). Such as Design-related KCI journals DRS, IASDR, ICED, Design & Emotion, HCI, CHI, TEI, DIS, etc.	 ② Submission of a design work from MGP to an internationally well-known design competition OR a video showcase. iF Award, Red Dot Award, IDEA, etc. CHI video showcase, etc. 	TOEIC: 800
PhD	12	48	60	Both ① and ② At least two doctoral research-related papers published/accepted in the following as the 1st or Corresponding author ② One journal* OR international conference		TOEFL: 80 IELTS: 5.5 OPIC: IH TEPS: 309 G-TELP(Lv.2): 67 G-TELP(Lv.3): 89
MS- PhD	24	36	60	① One publication listed as department L1 publication venue (General Design, HCI) <i>OR</i> indexed in SCI(E), A&HCI, SSCI OR Top 5 in Google Scholar Ranking venues (journal or conference in any category).	proceeding not listed in L1. The final decision regarding the submitted publications' ability to meet the requirements stated above shall be made by the doctoral committee**. *Any journal publication (domestic or international), indexed in KCI, Scopus, ESCI, SCI(E), AHCI, or SSCI. **In exceptional cases that must be accepted by the doctoral committee, any evidence of professional research quality related to his/her doctoral research such as awards, intellectual property and invited exhibition may be considered an equivalent to a publication in an international journal OR conference proceedings not listed in L1.	TOEIC S&W: 270 (One of the above should be submitted before the final defense.)

The above table provides outcomes required for graduation. These achievements are mandatory to graduate.

The regulations for graduation requirements, Green Light, QE, Pre-Defense, and Defense outlined below will apply to graduate students admitted from Spring Semester 2025 onward. Graduate students admitted before Spring Semester 2025 can choose whether to fulfill the graduation requirements under the new regulations or the previous requirements. The differences between graduation requirements before and after Spring semester 2025 are specified in each chapter below.

9. Green Light (MS program only)

In addition to minimum credits, publication requirements, and English test results, MS students must complete and obtain approval for their master's thesis from their thesis committee. The master's thesis evaluation process is divided into greenlight and defense stages. Details of each stage are provided below.

Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
Week 5 of the semester the student plans to graduate.	Nomination of committee	Nominate Committee: 3 persons including supervising professor as committee (Optional: 1 external committee member).	Submit nomination form to the admin staff in charge of Student Affairs https://design.unist.ac.kr/staff/
1 week (7 days) before the green light meeting, no later than Week 8 of the semester the student plans to graduate.	Submission of draft manuscript	Submission Master's Thesis draft manuscript (80% complete), 5,000 (minimum) words in English (excluding references /abstract /appendices). Writing should be distributed between sections: introduction, review, research method, results etc.	 Submit a thesis draft to admin staff in charge of Student Affairs by email: Deadline: Week 8 of semester's Friday 23:59 (7 days prior to Green Light), If the submission is late, the student will be automatically disqualified from Green Light for the semester. Thesis draft must be plagiarism checked prior to submission. The Turn-it-In result must be submitted with the draft. The draft must also be Al checked, with result also submitted.
Week 8-9 of the semester	Green Light meeting proceeds	Proceed formal presentation to committees about the current status of Master's Thesis and research in a structured manner. Introduction Literature review Research gap, aim, question(s) Result Discussion Conclusion	Also submit thesis draft to committees at least one week before the Green Light. • Master's Thesis draft manuscript - 80% complete, 5,000 (minimum) words in English (excluding references /abstract /appendices).

Week 9 of the semester	Submission of	Submission: Green Light meeting evaluation	Submit completed evaluation form via email to the
	administrative documents		admin staff in charge of Student Affairs:
			https://design.unist.ac.kr/staff/

^{*}Before Spring 2025: The regulation for the submission of the Master's Thesis draft manuscript does not apply. All other regulations remain the same.

10. Qualifying Exam (PhD, MS-PhD only)

For PhD, MS-PhD combined students, passing the qualifying exam (hereinafter Q.E.) is mandatory. The detailed guide for preparing for the Q.E. is provided below.

Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
n/a	Q.E. Qualification Requirements (Coursework)	 At least 12 course credits gained from his/her concentration area Min GPA of 3.5 	In the case of students transferring from another major, the Q.E. must be passed by the end of the third semester in the new major - following the UNIST regulation.
n/a	Development of Doctoral Thesis Topic & Objectives	 Candidates have a clearly defining research topic and focus. Selecting, reading, critiquing, and discussing key research literature in the selected area. Conducting and presenting limited initial work on a project pertinent to the selected area. 	In order to achieve these objectives, the Q.E. is explicitly focused on the student's research work and activity rather than examining their knowledge of coursework or assessing their potential.
May 1st (for June Q.E.) or Nov 1st (for Dec Q.E.)	Nomination of Q.E. committee & Submission of Q.E. application form	 Setup Committees: 3 persons including supervising professor as main committee (Option: 1 external committee member) Each applicant should submit a Q.E. application form (application form obtained from staff in charge at Dept. Office). 	Submit form to the Academic & Students Affairs Team admin staff https://design.unist.ac.kr/staff/

Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
May 1st (for June Q.E.) or Nov 1st (for Dec Q.E.)	Submission of Q.E. materials	 For the QE presentation, students can choose to proceed with one of the following two types. In-depth literature review: covering 4-8 articles from chosen research topics to demonstrate knowledge of research specialization, elaborate on research gap(s) in literature the thesis project aims to address. Research project presentation: Research project introduction, including motivations, research questions, methods, expected outcomes and discussion. 	In-depth literature review in presentation slide deck format. Research project presentation in presentation slide deck format. The application can be rejected if the supervisor or committee deems the student to be unprepared - E.g., inappropriate research articles selected, insufficient project work completed. For example, little or no evidence of state-of-the art review, little evidence of plans towards future research works, evidence of positioning, research aim and scope not present.
Week 15 of the semester	Q.E. meeting proceeds	 Q.E. includes a presentation (15-20mins) consisting of: A summary and synthesis of the research articles, describing major topics, themes, and issues in the research area. A research project presentation detailing (preliminary) project work to date. Q.E. includes a Q&A (40-45 minutes) including: A student's knowledge of the research papers and, more generally, the research area they are studying. A critique and discussion of their project work. 	 The Q.E. must be passed by the end of the 6th semester – following the UNIST regulation. Applicants who fail the first oral exam must pass at the second attempt. An applicant who fails the oral exam for the second time must discontinue their PhD program (i.e., degree termination). Applicants will fail if the committee determines that the student has the following: Poor knowledge of the research area (as demonstrated through presentation or Q&A) or inadequate project work.

In the case of students transferring from another major, the Q.E. must be passed by the end of the third semester in the new major; following UNIST regulation.

11. Pre-defense (PhD, MS-PhD only)

For PhD, MS-PhD combined students, passing the Pre-defense is mandatory. The detailed guide for preparing for the Pre-defense is provided below.

Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
n/a	Pre-defense Qualification Requirements	 The student has completed the required graduation course credits. The student has passed the Q.E. The student's GPA is 3.0 or higher. Permission obtained from the supervising professor. Approval obtained of research proposal. 	
Week 9 of the semester	Submission of Predefense application	 Nominate 5 committees including supervising professor (chairman), and 1 external evaluator. Three or more shall be UNIST professors. 	
Week 15~16 of the semester	Examination	Conduct pre-defense with nominated committee members	The student must pass the pre-defense at least 3 months before graduation.
Week 15~16 of the semester	Evaluation		 Pass: more than 60 points Deferred: 40 to less than 60 points Fail: less than 40 points (Retake)

12. Defense

The defense is the final stage of the thesis or dissertation process that must be completed for MS, PhD, and MS-PhD programs.

Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
Week 15	Input period for nomination of thesis/dissertation examining committee	Registration for graduation: Portal → Graduation → Request for Graduation Nomination of committee: Portal → Graduation → Thesis/Dissertation Info. → Input information → Print out the form → Get an approval from committees → Submit it to staff in charge of Academic & Students Affairs in Department office. Committee setup • MS: 3 persons (Option: 1 external committee). • PhD/MS-PhD: 5 persons (Mandatory: 1 external committee member).	 Students who have not passed the foreign language test should submit the test result before nominating committees External committees should be faculty members from other dept. or external experts who have doctoral degrees in similar fields.

Week 15	Submission of required documents (Student → Academic & Students Affairs Team)	Submission: Choose ① or ② ① Prospective Graduates Nomination of Thesis/Dissertation Examining Committee, Observance of research ethics. ② Leave without degree: Request for Course Completion.	 Submitting Nomination of Thesis application and obtaining signatures from all committee members. Check the details and forms for submission and submit.
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Period/Deadline	Phase	Things to do	Remark
Week 16	Proceed and complete the defense	Successfully complete the defense and submit the following deliverables. PhD/MS-PhD Doctoral Dissertation Approval Doctoral Dissertation Evaluation Published document / Attendance of conference - At least 2 doctoral research-related papers published (or accepted) as 1st or corresponding author. Survey of new doctoral degree recipients in South Korea (국내 신규 박사학위 취득자 조사 설문) result. Turn it in result: (Additional submission: Plagiarism Judgment).	Submitting approval of thesis Get the sign from all committees Compliance in writing Year of graduation Name of Department Plagiarism Judgment Submit it if the turn it in result exceed 20%

		 Master's Dissertation Approval Master Graduate Project result Choose ① or ② ① Submission of a paper from MGP or other research to a domestic journal/international conference proceedings as the 1st author ② Submission of a design work from MGP or other research to an internationally well-known design competition or to a video showcase Turn it in result: (Additional submission: Plagiarism Judgment) 	
Week 14 ~ +3 weeks from end of semester	Exit interview	Apply through UNIST Portal	
+1 ~ +3 weeks from end of semester	Graduation administration clearance		
+1 week from end of semester	Graduation final screening	Final examination of graduation availability	Non-qualified students will be noticed individually
+4 week from end of semester	Submission of the official document of graduation (Academic & Students Affairs Team → UNIST HQ Education Affairs Team)	Submit the graduation screening result including attachments	

+5 week from end of semester	Submit final dissertation in online	Refer to the UNIST Library	Link: http://unist.dcollection.net
+5 week from end of semester	Submit final dissertation hardcover	Where to / How many: 3 for Library	

End Note

This document applies to students enrolling from the 2025 Spring semester onwards. Students who enrolled prior to the 2025 Spring semester should refer to the regulations in effect at the time of their enrollment. Alternatively, students entering before the 2025 Spring semester may choose to follow the schedule and details outlined within this document.

For clarification, please contact our Student Affairs staff: https://design.unist.ac.kr/staff/