

**University of Houston System
Degree Program Closure**

Institutions requesting to close a degree program must:

- a) develop and execute a teach-out plan;
- b) give appropriate notification to the federally recognized institutional accreditor and the program's accreditor, as applicable;
- c) cease to admit new students to the program;
- d) ensure that all courses necessary to complete the program are offered on a timely basis;
and
- e) close the program when the last student enrolled in the program has graduated or the teach-out period has lapsed.

Institution: University of Houston - Victoria

Proposed effective date of change: 1/1/2025

Degree Level: Bachelor's

Degree Designation and Title: Bachelor of Arts in Communication Design

Administrative Unit: College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Last date students were/will be admitted to the program: 1/1/2025

Degree program closure date: 5/31/2026

Summary

The University of Houston-Victoria will be closing the program BA in Communication Design. Students will no longer be admitted for this degree plan beginning on January 1, 2025.

The BA in Communication Design program focused on design principles related to book arts-typesetting, printing, binding, publishing, etc. The program is being closed because of attrition in faculty who had taught in a graduate program in publishing and the loss of two artisanal presses in recent years. The university no longer has the auxiliary support for an undergraduate program focused solely on book arts and declining enrollment in the program suggests that students are looking for a program more closely aligned with contemporary, digital design tools and skills. Consequently, the university is exploring the possibilities of offering a more traditional graphic design program, with an emphasis on computer-generated design. This new program would create opportunities for collaboration with faculty and students in UHV's BS in Digital Gaming and Simulation program, as well as students who are interested in more contemporary arts and design. We recognize that any new program, such as described here, would fall under its own substantive change process.

The decision to close the BA in Communication Design and build a BA in Graphic Design was made by the faculty in the Multidisciplinary Department with support from the Associate Dean and Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Teach Out Plan—Students

- Students who have been admitted into the program will have a pathway of classes provided by our current faculty suitable to complete all the communication design program within four years after this academic year.
- The attached teach out plan highlights several required courses (DSGN 4312, DSGN 4316, DSGN 4320) where few of the actively matriculating students have met the requirement. In these cases, the academic advisor has worked with faculty in the program to identify "standing" substitutions (DSGN 4300 For DSGN 4312; DSGN 3325 for DSGN 4316; DSGN 3332 for DSGN 4320) to enable students to meet degree requirements.
- Our graphic design minor will remain in place which can be used to supplement course offerings for students as we close out the communication design program.
- Most design classes will continue to be offered as part of a graphic design concentration in the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences program and the graphic design program that is currently being developed. We anticipate little disruption in student progress, given that most design and all art classes will still be offered.
- Due to the in-progress development of the graphic design program, we anticipate little impact on students.
- In some cases, ARTS 4302: Independent study will be utilized as a substitution. Faculty is in place to cover these offerings.

Courses will continue to be offered to students who are already in the program until the students have either graduated or failed to enroll for at least three semesters, as outlined in the policy pertaining to continuous enrollment in the Academic Catalog. Students who stop out for more than one year will be welcome to reenroll in another program (potentially the in-development graphic design program), and relevant classes from the closed BA in Communication Design program may be applied to the new program, to minimize the disruption to those students.

The teach-out will create no additional cost to students in the program. UHV will not be entering into an agreement with another institution for the teach-out of the program.

Communication plan-students: Before the close of registration for the Fall 2024 semester, academic advisors will contact the students in the program, informing them of the closure and providing a degree map/timeline for completion of degree requirements. Students who have been inactive for more than 13 months are discontinued, per UHV policy, and would need to reenroll under the current catalog at the time of reenrollment (which will not contain the BA-Communication Design); in this case, students will be directed to other, related degrees such as the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (graphic design concentration) or the in-development BA in Graphic Design.

Communication plan-faculty and staff: The Interim Provost will announce the program closure during regular meeting(s) of the Executive Committee and President's cabinet. These announcements will include the offer to meet with relevant admissions/recruiting or marketing staff members. The Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences will work with Marketing and Communications to ensure that relevant web pages and social media sites are updated appropriately.

Communication plan-community partners: This program does not maintain close ties to community partners that would be impacted by the program closure.

Redeployment of Faculty

There will be no disruption to existing faculty and staff. There are no administrative staff connected to the closing program.

A tenure track faculty member, Dr. Jia Liu, will lead the development of the emerging graphic design program as well as oversee the teach-out of the existing program. A full-time lecturer, Mr. Kevin Auer, will also continue to teach typography, book arts, and introductory design classes, as appropriate to his training and expertise; Mr. Auer also carries credentials in history and may be assigned to history classes to meet instructional needs within the institution. No reductions in faculty are anticipated. Our current faculty will be able to offer the required number of classes as we develop a graphic design program that will utilize the faculty and infrastructure we currently have dedicated to communication design, such as studio space and computer labs.

Staff, Facilities, and Infrastructure

We are planning on developing a graphic design program that will include design elements to retain some of the current courses, the studio space, and the faculty of the communication design program. The BA in Communication Design program has a few presses, typesets, and other capital assets. These materials will continue to be used for courses in historical design methods in the potential new graphic design program. No staff or administrative assistants are assigned to the program, and we anticipate no interruptions in that regard. Studios and computer labs will continue to be used for the graphic design minor as well as the new graphic design program. No anticipated budgetary impact is anticipated due to maintaining the existing minor and providing coverage for core curriculum needs.