

2017 Product Design Portfolio Review

What is portfolio review?

Portfolio review is a way to evaluate your design ability and knowledge of design concepts based on work from the foundation level courses. Portfolio review assures that students have acquired a basic understanding of essential design knowledge and are prepared to move on to more advanced coursework. Students must pass portfolio review in order to continue on with their coursework and complete the degree.

Why do students have to go through portfolio review?

Design is a competitive and demanding professional discipline. Future professionals need to gain experience in presenting their work to others and in having their work reviewed. In order to maintain appropriate class sizes in upper division studios, it may be necessary to limit enrollment in the full major through the portfolio review selection process.

When is portfolio review?

Portfolio review occurs mid-semester every Spring shortly after Spring break. Students will receive notification via email of exact timeline if they are registered as pre-product design.

What are the Pre-requisites for participation?

To participate in portfolio review, a student must be a Pre-Product Design major in the College of Design with a minimum grade of C- in required courses and a suggested overall GPA of at least 2.50. A minimum of 17 credits must be completed or in progress prior to admission to the major. The following courses must be completed or in progress to participate in the review:

- PDes 2701: Creative Design Methods (Completed)
- PDes 2702: Concept Sketching (Completed)
- Phys 1101W or Phys 1301W: Physics I (Completed or In Progress)
- Math 1271 or Math 1371: Calculus I (Completed or In Progress)
- PDes 2703: Concept Visualization and Presentation (Completed or In Progress)

How do I apply for portfolio review?

Application information is sent via email prior to portfolio review to all pre-product design students. You will be given a link to submit your application online. When you submit the application form, you will be assigned a presentation time for the day of the review.

What is the format for the review?

The student will be expected to present their work using slides on a screen or monitor. The student is also expected to bring in one physical prototype (discussed below). To expedite the process and reduce the risk of presentation software errors, the slides are to be submitted online approximately one week in advance as PDF format. The exact deadlines will be shared with all the applicants. We will load the PDF onto a computer for presentation. During the review, the student will click through their PDF pages on the provided computer while presenting their work. The total number of PDF pages is flexible, but there are specific items we will be expecting as discussed below. To minimize confusion, the words “slide” and “page” are synonymous as each page of your PDF portfolio is another slide.

Students will have 5 minutes to present their work and 5 minutes for questions/discussion. The student should be able to explain their design process and design decisions. The presentation and discussion may occur at the same time over a total of 10 minutes. It is likely that the reviewers will ask 2-3 questions. Other students are not allowed in the room during your presentation.

What should I prepare for portfolio review?

In general, you will be presenting work from your classes as well as the results of a specific design challenge. In all cases, you should design your slides and consider layout, legibility, image quality, and your own personal expression. The pages should feel like they are all part of the same portfolio. Your display of work should be unified and demonstrate your understanding of foundational concepts and shows your strengths as a potential designer.

We are interested in seeing process and so for each component, you should present your conceptual planning, research, early sketches *etc.* in addition to your final images. All pages should have titles/labels and your name. Students must also include a cover page that includes the student’s name.

There are four items required to be in the portfolio. Students may also present up to an additional three slides of other relevant work. The total number of pages will be 7-14 including the cover. These four items are required:

1) PDES 2701 Creative Design Methods

We expect to see highlights of your design process in developing the specific product concept you pitched at the finale of this class. This should include your ethnographic and market research, idea generation, and final concept representation. In this portion, we are specifically looking at your creativity and your understanding of process. This section should be 1-2 pages.

2) PDES 2702 Concept Sketching

We expect to see drawings from your final assignment as well as drawings and/or renderings from one other assignment. In this portion, we are specifically looking at your visual communication skills including a strong understanding of basic 2-point perspective, line quality, and the ability to make realistic looking representations of objects. This section should be 1-2 pages.

3) PDES 2703 Concept Visualization and Presentation

As most students will have only completed a portion of this class prior to portfolio review, we are expecting students to present work from the first few assignments. These items should be more thoughtful and advanced than work in PDES 2702. We will be looking for evolution of ideas from early sketches and thumbnails to more final concept drawings as well as digital rendering ability. This section should be 2-3 pages.

4) Design Challenge

Each year, students going up for review will be given a different design challenge at least two weeks prior to the review. This challenge will require students to apply their skills toward developing a new product concept (*e.g.* develop a new bicycle accessory, redesign the portable space heater, rethink the experience of making tea). Students will be expected to present research, rough conceptual sketches, refined sketches, images of a physical prototype, and the physical prototype itself (which can be a rough sketch model). We will be looking for your ability to apply all of the skills taught in these classes in a short amount of time. This section should be 2-3 pages.

How is this evaluated?

Students will be evaluated on the quality of their work, their presentation skills, their design process, and their creativity. The student will be expected to answer questions and engage in a discussion with the faculty about their work and their interest in the field of product design. The goal is for faculty to determine if the student has a grasp of the fundamental skills and the ability to convey conceptual design ideas.

Who is on the review panel?

The review panel is made up of instructors, both full and part-time, and industry representatives. There will be between three and eight people on the panel.

When will I find out the results?

Within two weeks of the final session of portfolio review, you will be notified by email of the review decision. There are two possible outcomes: 1. Pass; 2. Fail. If you fail the review, you are invited to revise work and prepare for one subsequent review session. It is possible to fail the initial portfolio review, revised work, and pass the review the second time. If you fail the review because of a drawing related concern, you will be required to register for a 1 credit directed study to participate in PDes 2703 again to improve upon your drawing skills. Students who do not pass the second review will not be eligible for portfolio review again and will be required to change majors.

What happens once I have passed portfolio review?

After passing portfolio review you will be considered a Product Design major, and you will be eligible for those classes that require passing portfolio review as a prerequisite.

What if I have other questions?

If you need more information, please make an appointment to see your adviser or attend the portfolio review information session held each semester.