2018 Product Design Portfolio Review

What is portfolio review?

Portfolio review is a way to evaluate your product 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 be accepted to the major, continue on with their coursework, and complete the degree.

Why do students have to go through portfolio review?

Product/industrial design is a highly 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 will occur at the end of the spring semester during finals week in Rapson Hall. Every student participating in the review will be assigned a 15-minute timeslot on a specific day. All pre-product design students will receive notification via email of an exact timeline.

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 19 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
- PDes 2702: Concept Sketching
- PDes 2703: Concept Visualization and Presentation
- PDes 2777: Product Form and Model Making
- Phys 1101W or Phys 1301W: Physics 1
- Math 1271 or Math 1371: Calculus 1

How do I apply for portfolio review?

Application information will be sent via email 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 one of the days of the review. This application form is not the same as your portfolio submission. You will submit your portfolio at a later date.
What is the format for the review?

Students will be expected to present their work using slides on a screen. 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 several days in advance as a PDF. The exact deadlines will be shared with all the applicants. We will load the PDF onto our computer for presentation. During the review, the student will click through their PDF pages on the provided computer with a provided slide changer while presenting their work. Students do not need to bring their own laptop.

The total number of PDF pages is discussed below and there are specific items we will be expecting to be included. To minimize confusion, the words “slide” and “page” are synonymous as each page of your PDF portfolio is another slide. Students will only have 5 minutes total to introduce themselves and walk through all of their slides. The student should be able to explain their design process and design decisions, however, there is not much time to go into detail for all projects. There will be 5 minutes for questions/discussion. 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. The expected attire is smart casual or business casual.

What should I prepare for portfolio review?

In general, you will be presenting some work from your classes as well as the results of a specific design challenge assigned approximately 2 weeks prior to the portfolio submission date. 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 show your strengths as a designer. Any physical models should be well photographed. You should begin preparing your portfolio prior to the design challenge assignment.

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. You will be presenting the work on a screen in standard 4:3 aspect ratio, we will also be printing your portfolio out in landscape orientation on 11”x8.5” paper. Please use the 4:3 aspect ratio and landscape orientation for all your slides.

The first four items below are required to be in the portfolio. Students may also present one additional slide of other work. The total number of pages will be 5 or 6 including the cover page.

1) **Cover (1 page)**

2) **PDES 2703 Concept Visualization and Presentation 1 (1 page)**
   You should select your best work from PDES 2703 and use this page as an opportunity to showcase your sketching and digital rendering ability. We will also be looking for evidence of evolution of ideas from early sketches and thumbnails to more final concept drawings.

3) **PDES 2777 Product Form and Model Making (1 page)**
   You should select your best work from PDES 2777 and use this page as an opportunity to showcase your physical prototyping ability. We will be looking for evidence of evolution of ideas from initial sketches as well as your ability to photograph your work.

4) **Design Challenge (2 pages)**
   Each year, students going up for review will be given a different design challenge approximately 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, digital renderings, images of a physical prototype, and the physical prototype itself. As you only have two weeks, the prototype should be a low-fidelity appearance model (foam/foam board is acceptable). We will be looking for your ability to apply skills taught in the introductory classes (2701, 2702, 2703, 2777) in a short amount of time. We will also be looking for creativity and an understanding of design process.

5) **Optional Additional Work (1 page)**
   This page can include content from other PDES classes, work from internships, or other non-academic design or artwork.
How is this evaluated?

Students will be evaluated on the quality of their work (perspective drawing, 2D rendering, physical modeling), their presentation skills (verbal and visual), their design process, and their creativity. GPA in program classes will also factor into the evaluation. 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 4-8 instructors and industry representatives.

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 the review the following Spring. Portfolio reviews are only in spring semesters. It is possible to fail the initial portfolio review, revise work, and pass the review the second time. If you fail the review because of drawing ability, you may register for a 1 credit directed study to participate in PDes 2702 again to practice the fundamental 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.

As portfolio review occurs after registration opens, what should I be registering for?

We will be reserving enough seats in the core Fall PDes classes for all students who get admitted into the program. These classes are PDES 2771 Product Design Studio 1, PDES 2704 Concept Visualization and Presentation 2, and PDES 3704 Computer Aided Design Methods. All students entering the major take these three classes together. You should register for your computer programming class if you haven’t taken one already. If you have already taken computer programming and Physics 2, you could register for ME 2011. You may want to register for placeholder classes in the case that you do not pass portfolio review. It is always helpful to meet with your advisor if you are unsure about registration.

What if I have other questions?

If you have questions related to your eligibility and class registration, please make an appointment to see your adviser. If you have general questions about the review itself, please contact the program director and attend the portfolio review information sessions (see dates below). The student group PDMN will also be holding sessions for practice and feedback. Look for emails related to that.

What are all the important dates?

Portfolio Review Information Session – Wednesday Feb 21 10:30-11 OR Feb 21 11:15-11:45, Rapson Hall Room 11
Applications Due Online - March 21st at 4pm.
Design Challenge Emailed to Applicants – April 23rd
Final Portfolios (PDFs) Due Online – May 8th at 4pm.
Portfolio Review - between 8am and 6pm on Thursday May 10 and Friday May 11, Rapson Hall Room 145T

*Note for students who entered the program in Fall 2016 or Spring 2017

Students who entered Pre-Product Design status in Fall 2016 or Spring 2017 are grandfathered into the “old” program, which did not include the studio sequence (PDes 2771, PDes 2772, PDes 3771) or Concept Presentation and Visualization 2 (PDes 2704). If you are one of these students grandfathered into the old plan and do not intend to enroll in these additional core courses, you will be held to a higher standard as you are indicating you are ready to be admitted into the senior capstone. These individuals will be reviewed in a separate group at a higher standard. If you are one of these students and are uncertain about completing the studio sequence prior to capstone, please make an appointment to meet with the program director prior to applying for portfolio review.