



# Master of Fine Arts

INDEPENDENT FILM AND DIGITAL IMAGING

## Student Handbook

**Governors State University**

College of Arts and Sciences

Division of Arts & Letters

Independent Film & Digital Imaging

*The intent of the Student Handbook is to compile policies and procedures that apply to the graduate majors in the Independent Film and Digital Imaging Program. Occasionally, procedures of particular importance to you as a student will be presented in the Handbook even if they are not unique to this major. For general university policies and procedures, as well as course description and registration information, please consult the University Catalog and the University Student Handbook.*

## **INDEPENDENT FILM AND DIGITAL IMAGING: MASTER OF FINE ARTS**

The Independent Film and Digital Imaging (IFDI) faculty offer this handbook to prospective students and to our current students. It is hoped that the contents will aid you in understanding the program and its purpose is to provide guidelines in order to maximize your experience in our program. Students in our program will find this handbook useful at each stage of the process toward graduation. While every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive handbook, the following are only guidelines. A student needs to work closely, especially early in their program, with their advisor. Completion of all graduation requirements is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

In addition, it should be noted that the IFDI program is moving forward with accreditation processes recommended by NASAD – the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. The program will receive periodic review, permitting addition of new coursework, elimination of obsolete coursework, and/or change in program policy when appropriate. Any curriculum changes or policy changes required by reviews will be based on due notice and consultation with the academic and professional community.

The MFA-IFDI survey course, IFDI 8100, requires you to meet with your advisor in the early going in order to ensure that you understand the requirements as well as the flexibility of the degree path. Your degree audit, accessible online to you and to your advisor, is the contract between you and the program regarding the requirements for graduation.

Those exploring the possibility of entering our program and those seeking entrance should go to [www.govst.edu/mfa](http://www.govst.edu/mfa) and read admission material and download applications forms.

### **Independent Film and Digital Imaging**

The interdisciplinary Master of Fine Arts in Independent Film and Digital Imaging is a terminal degree in the applied arts of digital media production and imaging. Additional selective opportunities are available in Computer Science (see the IFDI curriculum) and a limited number of electives may be pursued at the graduate level in other disciplines.

Coursework for the Master of Fine Arts in Independent Film and Digital Imaging leads to specialized knowledge, creative development, and advanced technological skills in the applied digital arts of image making and media production. Beyond taking the required courses, students plan their specific programs in consultation with their advisors, adapting the degree path's selective sequences to their individual needs and interests. Graduates of the program will work in career areas such as higher education, filmmaking, graphic design, photography, 2D and 3D animation, motion graphics, web design, consulting, producing, media writing, TV production/direction, and training.

## **About GovState**

Governors State University and the Independent Film and Digital Imaging Program are dedicated to serving a diverse student population. Founded in 1969, GSU is located in University Park, Illinois, about 30 miles south of Chicago's Loop. It is convenient to major cities south of Chicago, including Joliet, Kankakee, and Orland Park. The university is part of a diverse, urban area and is dedicated to serving the needs of a wide-ranging population. Governors State University has a diverse student body, which will allow students to experience an education that is in touch with the larger, diverse society they will work in upon graduation.

Governors State University's student body demographics for fall 2023 (the most recently published figures) show a diverse population with 35.4% identifying as Black or African American, 28.9% as White, and 15.0% as Hispanic or Latino, according to Data USA. The university also has a smaller percentage of students identifying as Two or More Races (2.8%), Asian (2.48%), and Native American or Alaska Native (0.136%). The total student enrollment was 4,337 in 2023, with 61.4% enrolled full-time.

The university's student population is predominantly female, with 61.8% identifying as female and 38.2% as male U.S. News & World Report.

The average age of students is 32.4 years old.

The MFA-IFDI program is part of the Division of Arts & Letters, and in 2007 became the first terminal degree of the College of Arts and Sciences.

## **About The IFDI Program**

Technical materials, equipment, and various computer programs may be required as part of the overall graduate program in addition to the books and materials required by individual courses. All graduate students are expected to be computer/internet capable, including submitting papers electronically, receiving emails, and participating in online course discussions.

## **Program Mission, Goal, And Objectives**

### **Mission**

The mission of the MFA program in Independent Film & Digital Imaging is to

provide its students with the opportunity to pursue their creative and professional development as artists within a curriculum that is focused on the digital arts, yet diverse enough in its offerings to facilitate flexibility and individualized paths.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The following are the primary student learning objectives for the M.F.A. in Independent Film and Digital Imaging:

1. Students will undertake productions in the discipline of independent film and digital imaging in laboratory, studio, and remote production. Undertakings include the making of gallery works and films - shorts, features, episodic series, web content - suitable for film festivals or digital distribution. Students will engage in exercises related to conception, development, composition, producing, photography, cinematography, directing, lighting, sound recording, sound mixing, still graphic design, motion graphic design, video editing, marketing and publicity.
2. Students will develop professional skills that enable them to be considered candidates as faculty in the applied multimedia disciplines of post-secondary education, and as independent digital filmmakers and artists.
3. Students will master discipline-related theory and aesthetics and demonstrate this mastery through effective written and oral presentations.
4. Students will demonstrate critical thinking and evaluative abilities as they relate to interpretations of digital photographic arts and the cinema.

## **Career Information**

The program's intention is to graduate successful educators, filmmakers, and digital artists – an aim which is substantiated by a range of employment projections from the Occupational Outlook Handbook. The Handbook indicates that "Overall employment of postsecondary teachers is projected to grow 8 percent from 2023 to 2033, faster than the average for all occupations. Growth is expected as enrollments at postsecondary institutions at all levels continue to rise, although at slower rates than they have in the past. Many jobs are expected to be for part-time or adjunct faculty." Individuals holding terminal degrees will hold a formidable advantage over others holding intermediary degrees (i.e., the MA), as candidates lacking the terminal degree are often excluded in the preliminary phases of job searches in higher education. While the Handbook does not provide further data broken down by discipline, it separately projects that there will be major growth in the film and television production industries,

which suggests that employment in higher education in our discipline will be higher than disciplines in which professional prospects are stable or on the decline.

The following information provides the broader context: “Employment of producers and directors is projected to grow 8 percent from 2023 to 2033, faster than the average for all occupations. Some job growth in the motion picture and video industry is expected to stem from strong demand from the public for more movies and television shows, as well as an increased demand from foreign audiences for U.S.-produced films.”

“Overall employment of film and video editors and camera operators is projected to grow 3 percent from 2023 to 2033, about as fast as the average for all occupations.”

The Illinois legislature has supported the indigenous film industry through a system of tax incentives. Illinois needs to generate its own filmmakers, not import them. It needs to develop its own solid production infrastructure, not export its most capable talent to other US and foreign markets.

## **Admission**

### Admission Criteria

Applications for admission are facilitated on a rolling basis. Applications for admission are available at: <https://apply.govst.edu/apply>. Due to limited space availability, this program will maintain approximately fifteen students in either track (independent film / digital imaging) at any given time. Applicants are considered for admission on the basis of their academic potential and admission criteria.

In addition to meeting university admission criteria, applicants must:

1. provide evidence of an undergraduate degree, preferably in a related field (media, multimedia, communications, English, or the liberal arts)
2. have a minimum cumulative undergraduate G.P.A. of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
3. Submit (to Slate) the following materials:
4. a portfolio: for students in digital imaging, this link to a series of stills on a website or other platform such as dropbox; for students in digital filmmaking, this entails a sample of a prior production as a URL or URLs for streaming video on platforms such as vimeo or youtube.
5. a current resume,
6. three letters of recommendation, and
7. a personal essay or statement of intent with respect to goals for the degree, and artistic philosophy

8. provide official TOEFL scores (if applicable);
9. submit the payment of the \$50 application fee; and
10. participate in personal interviews, if requested, to be conducted by the M.F.A. admissions committee.

### **Recommended Preparation**

Admission to the program is maintained at an approximate maximum of 15 students in either track at any given time on a “rolling” basis. All students must submit a portfolio demonstrating advanced proficiency and creative promise.

While admission to the program does not require an undergraduate major in Film, Video, or Photography, an undergraduate major in these or in one of the following fields is recommended but not required: media, multimedia, communications, English, speech, or liberal arts. In addition, students are expected to have demonstrable competence in digital technology and in oral and written communication.

Information related to the program and special application materials for the Master of Fine Arts in Independent Film and Digital Imaging program are available from the GSU Office of Admission and Student Recruitment and on the university website at [www.govst.edu/mfa](http://www.govst.edu/mfa).

Office of Admission and Student Recruitment  
Governors State University  
1 University Parkway  
University Park, Illinois 60466  
708.534.4490

### **Graduate Student Status**

Those interested in admission to the MFA in IFDI should apply as degree-seeking students. Graduate degree-seeking students are those who meet the established admission requirements of the University, college, and specific program for which the Master's Degree is sought. Admission to a graduate major does not carry with it, nor guarantee, admission to degree candidacy in the major.

Those who are not ready to apply for full admission to the MFA-IFDI may apply to GSU as a Graduate Non-degree seeking student, and can take the prerequisite courses, IFDI 6702, IFDI 6444, or courses in the selective areas before admission to the program. Graduate Non-degree seeking students are defined as those who hold a bachelor's or higher degree and have not declared a major at the time of admission. No more than six (6) credit hours earned as a graduate Non-degree seeking student shall be transferable toward the requirements of any graduate degree program, and such transfer will be subject to the degree

requirements in effect at the time of admission to the specific major. Graduate non-degree seeking students may not take graduate level courses designated by division faculty as reserved for Master's degree candidates only.

Some students may be added to a wait list prior to admission, or may be asked to complete a specified number of courses prior to admission. In such cases, students will be informed of the admission procedure by letter from the program coordinator.

### **Introduction to Graduate Studies at GovState**

Although guidance is available and students are encouraged to seek help, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to know the policies, procedures, and requirements related to completion of the masters degree.

The GSU Graduate Studies Policy describes Graduate education as the pursuit of knowledge and the means to knowledge at an advanced level. Graduate education is distinct and different from basic levels of education both in kind and in degree. It demands of students engaged in it greater intellectual maturity and autonomy, a deeper responsibility for their own learning, more intense study, and the mastery of different and more complex skills. Concomitantly, graduate education demands of faculty engaged in it a deeper knowledge and greater skill within a given discipline, a greater commitment to the development of students' intellectual autonomy, and a more rigorous effort to imbue students with the values and standards of the discipline or profession.

A graduate degree is a distinction to be earned. Award of the degree symbolizes both the student's accomplishment and the University's endorsement. A student receiving a Master's Degree must have demonstrated:

1. an in-depth knowledge of significant theories, issues and findings, and mastery of appropriate skills, within his/her discipline;
2. the ability to apply such knowledge and skills;
3. the ability to read, interpret and evaluate research literature and to relate results to selected areas of interest;
4. the ability to analyze problems and to critique attempted solutions, especially within his/her own discipline;
5. the ability to integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines;
6. the ability to design and implement a research, scholarly, or creative project; and
7. the ability to communicate scholarly thought to professional colleagues



through writing and discussion.

### University Links

University Catalog: <http://www.govst.edu/catalog/>

College of Arts and Sciences: <http://www.govst.edu/cas>

MFA - IFDI Web Page: <http://www.govst.edu/mfa>

University Student Handbook: <http://www.govst.edu/studenthandbook/>

### Degree Requirements



STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT ID: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Minimum Degree Requirements

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher to complete requirements for the MFA. A grade lower than “B” taken in any course will not be counted toward graduation.

Prerequisite courses:

Note: Courses taken below the 5000-level are not counted toward the total number of required Graduate credits. *The column after the course title identifies the trimester in which the course was most recently offered, and is meant to be a rough guideline for projecting your degree, not a fixed resource. Please consult the on-lines schedule in the weeks prior to the new trimester for the most up-to-date list. F = Fall, SP = Spring, SU = Summer, CS = Consult Schedule*

Common Core - Required Courses: (21 minimum hours)

IFDI 8100 – Survey of the MFA in Independent Film and Digital Imaging (3)	FA		
IFDI 6702 – Digital Film Production (3)	FA SP		

IFDI 6744 - DigitalPhotographic Imaging (3)	FA SP		
IFDI 8800 – Internship (6-9)	FA SP SU		
IFDI 8990 – Applied Masters Thesis Project (6-9)	FA SP SU		
Subtotal:			

*Note: not all courses are offered in all years or all semesters. Many courses are offered just once per calendar year. Students are strongly advised to arrange appointments to consult with their advisors prior to beginning the program.*

Ethics, Theory and Aesthetics -

Select three or more of the following: (9 minimum hours)

IFDI 5410 – History of Photography (3)	SP		
IFDI 8400 – Film Seminar* (3) <b>may be taken 3 times for credit</b>	FA SP SU		
IFDI 8420 – Critical Practices in Contemporary Photography (3)	SP		
IFDI 8701 – Independent Study (1-4) (6 total in MFA)	F SP SU		
IFDI 8850– Digital Imaging Thesis Development Seminar (3) **	SP		
Subtotal:			

Applied Courses - Select five or more of the following: (15 minimum hours)

IFDI 5490 - Photography: Combined Color Process (3)	SP		
IFDI 5540 – Documentary Photography (3)	F		
IFDI 5460 – Advanced Video Editing (3)	CS		
IFDI 5769 - Acting for Independent Film (3)	F		
ART 6528 - Digital Motion Graphics (3)	SP		
IFDI 6000 - Media Workshop - Topics in IFDI (3)	SP SU FA		
IFDI 6734 – Video Production Editing (3)	SP		
IFDI 6735 – Documentary Filmmaking (3)	W		
CPSC 6569 - Intro to 3D Visual Effects (3)	CS		
ART 6605 - Digital Mixed Media Technique (3)	CS		
IFDI 6609 – Advanced Electronic Drawing /Design (3)	CS		
CPSC 6630 – Game Modeling and Animation (3)	CS		
CPSC 6631 – Game Design (3)	CS		
CPSC 6632 – Digital Sculpting (3)	CS		
CPSC 6653 - Intro to Virtual Reality (3)	CS		
IFDI 6730 – Directing Drama for Film / TV (3)	SP		

IFDI 6644 - Advanced Digital Photographic Imaging (3)	SP		
IFDI 6700 – Graduate Media Workshop (3) <i>may be taken 3 times for credit</i>	SP		
IFDI 6731– Screenwriting (3) <i>may be taken 3 times for credit</i>	SP		
IFDI 6777 – Advanced Cinematography (3)	CS		
IFDI 7725 – Advanced Producing for Film / TV (3)	CS		
ART 8830 – Graduate Photography and Digital Imaging (3)	SP		
Subtotal:			

Electives: Up to 9 (nine) credit hours taken at Governors State at the 5000 level and higher may be counted toward total credit hours allowable for graduation.

	CS		
	CS		
	CS		
Subtotal:			

Total: 60 credit hours	
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### Statement of Expectations

A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to function well within the program. Students must demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, and accept personal responsibility.

### Graduation Requirements

To graduate with an MFA degree, a student must meet the following minimum university degree requirements:

1. Complete the number of credit-hours specified by program requirements (minimum 60) by taking graduate-level courses of which at least six credit hours are designated as a master's final project.

2. Complete a minimum of 12 graded credit-hour graduate-only courses (numbered 8000-9999).
3. Complete all course work for the degree requirements with a grade of "B" or better.
4. Be in academic good standing with a minimum 3.0 cumulative G.P.A.
5. Be admitted to master's degree candidacy at least one semester before the semester in which the degree is to be awarded.
6. Complete a master's final project and internship
7. Complete all course work for the degree, except the final project, within four years of admission to candidacy. The final project must be completed within five years of admission to candidacy.
8. Complete no more than 50 percent of the credit hours counted toward degree requirements from the same faculty member, including credit-hours related to the master's final project.
9. Apply to degree requirements no more than eight graduate credit hours awarded for experiential learning through the established procedures.
10. Apply to degree requirements no more than six graduate credit hours earned as an undeclared student.
11. No more than six credit hours may be undertaken in registered independent studies (IFDI 8701)
12. Satisfy the residency requirement.
13. Remove all grades of incomplete (I or E) by the graduation processing date.
14. Complete the collegial and university procedures that cover implementation of the above requirements.

In addition to the requirements stated above, an MFA degree student must:

1. Demonstrate that all degree requirements have been met as stipulated in the approved study plan.
2. Meet all financial obligations to the university.

### **Academic Honesty**

The following statements are taken directly from the online version of the University Catalog (<http://www.govst.edu/catalog/appendix.htm>).

The following procedures are appropriate ways to use the ideas and work of others when fulfilling academic requirements:

- a. When someone else's work or scholarship is used to fulfill academic requirements, the source should be given credit. It should not be stated or implied that this work is a person's own work.
- b. When using material from a publication (e.g., book, journal, article, film, etc.) that material should be enclosed in quotation marks, or otherwise

- set off, and the source of the material acknowledged.
- c. When paraphrasing published material (e.g., using it almost word-for-word) the source should also be acknowledged unless the information is common knowledge in the field.
- d. Unpublished data or ideas of another person should be utilized only with the consent of that person.
- e. Material should be prepared jointly with one or more other individuals only with the permission of the instructor. The contributions of all individuals to this material should be clearly acknowledged when it is submitted.
- f. Having someone else prepare material that is to be submitted should only be done with the instructor's permission to do so.
- g. The same piece of work should not be submitted for credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors involved.
- h. Hypothetical data should be submitted only with the permission of the instructor to do so and should be clearly labeled as such.
- i. One should refuse to make work available to another person who intends to submit part or all of that work as if he/she had written it.
- j. Students may neither give, request, nor utilize assistance during an examination without the instructor's permission.

These ethical guidelines are in no way intended to discourage people from studying together or from engaging in group projects.

### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

At Governors State University, we acknowledge the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on education and strive to create a learning environment that promotes innovation, academic integrity, and responsible use of technology. All students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines regarding the use of AI in the classroom:

1. Responsible AI use: While AI can be a valuable tool for learning, it is essential to use it responsibly and ethically. AI might be used to expand your understanding of course content, not as a substitute for your own work. All work submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the university's academic regulations.
2. Academic Integrity: Using AI-generated content as your own work, including but not limited to essays, assignments, and exams, constitutes academic dishonesty. If you would like to use AI, please obtain prior permission from your instructor before using AI to complete an assignment.

Any instances of academic dishonesty may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Technology**

All students must demonstrate technical competence with the tools of film and photography, including work within the Adobe Creative Cloud and electronic submissions via Blackboard, YouTube, Vimeo, and other platforms. Students have free but limited access to professional film/ photo equipment from the program's media lab. All students are encouraged to check their University assigned email account frequently for messages from the University and from the MFA-IFDI. The University sees the student's govst.edu account as the required platform for internal communications. If a student wishes, these student accounts can be forwarded to other electronic mail accounts.

## **Advising and Regulations**

Our program's advisor is Ms. Stefany Sigler. The advisor's functions include:

1. Student study plan consultation. The study plan is a guide that must be followed for the degree and/or certification program.
2. Initial review and recommendation of transfer credit or the waiving of requirements based upon prior graduate study. Transfer credit is applied at the time a graduation application is submitted.
3. Pre-registration advisement.
4. Review of student program toward degree completion. If it becomes apparent that another course or elective is needed, the advisor will meet with the student in order to modify the study plan. Depending upon the circumstances either the advisor or the student may initiate the request for revision.
5. Alternative career plan advisement.

Student's responsibilities include:

1. Making contact with the advisor as needed. When consulting with faculty, be cognizant that they serve ten-month contracts with the university and are generally unavailable for meetings for two months of the year and between semesters.
2. Updating all pertinent information in your student record, e.g., change of address, name, major, etc.
3. Completing your study plan before the conclusion of the first semester at GSU (preferably during IFDI 8100) and updating the study plan when changes are made.

## **Student Study Plan**

Students are required to develop a student study plan before the end of the first semester of enrollment in the college. It is the first required, graded assignment in IFDI 8100 - Survey of the MFA-IFDI. At the earliest opportunity,

make an appointment with your advisor to develop a study plan. Student study plans must be approved by the advisor. Changes in the student study plan must be approved by your advisor.

### **Transfer Credit**

The following requirements apply to courses being transferred from colleges and universities accredited by regional accrediting agencies.

**Transfer of Prior Credits.** Credit earned in courses taken before enrollment as a degree-seeking student at Governors State University or earned as an undeclared student at Governors State University will be accepted in accordance with the following rules. Transfer credits that are accepted toward degree requirements will be entered in the student study plan.

1. The number of transfer hours accepted shall not exceed 25 percent of the total hours required in the major. For this program, a maximum 15 hours may be accepted in transfer from another school.
2. Only credits earned with a grade of “B” or better or “P” (pass) will be considered for transfer credit.
3. Transfer credits earned ten or more years before the student’s admission to a degree program at Governors State University will not be accepted toward the degree requirements unless approved by the appropriate academic dean.
4. No more than six credit hours earned as a master’s level undeclared/non-degree student may be applied toward degree requirements.
5. No more than nine credit hours earned as graduate credit beyond the bachelor’s degree requirements, earned as an undergraduate degree-seeking student at Governors State University may be applied toward master’s degree requirements.
6. Transfer credits are applied toward specific degree requirements on a course-by-course basis by the academic advisor.

Transfer credit should be reviewed before admission to Governors State University to avoid duplication of course work. The review of transfer credit must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of enrollment as a degree-seeking student.

You must formally apply for transfer credit through your advisor when you develop your initial study plan. To obtain transfer credit you must produce an official transcript indicating the institution you attended, the course(s), and the grade(s) earned. The advisor and professor who usually teaches the course at

GSU must approve the request. The Dean or an appointed designee will make the ultimate decision. You will have had to earn a “B” or better for transfer credit to be awarded. The transfer credit will appear on your study plan.

You may also request a waiver of a particular requirement based upon previous graduate work. A waiver does not reduce the number of credit hours you need to obtain a degree but may allow you to substitute an elective for a required course. You must initiate the request for a waiver with your advisor. The waiver will be granted if the advisor, the faculty member who usually teaches the course and the chairperson approve the request.

**Transfer Credits Earned After Admission.** Credits earned in courses taken at another institution after admission to a degree program will only be accepted if permission to apply such credit toward degree requirements was obtained from the student’s academic advisor and the dean before taking course work at the other institution. Only courses with grades of “B” or better will be applied toward degree requirements.

### **Requirements for a Second Master’s Degree**

If you have previously earned a master’s degree at Governors State University or another institution, you may earn a second master’s degree at the university, provided that all specified requirements for both degrees are fully met. A student who wishes to earn a second master’s degree must:

1. apply and be admitted to the second master’s degree program;
2. meet university, college, and/or major degree requirements for the subsequent degree;
3. complete all requirements of the subsequent degree program as stipulated in the student study plan;
4. meet the requirements of the university’s residency policy for the subsequent degree by taking a minimum of 24 hours at Governors State University. Hours applied toward the first degree may not be included in hours required to meet residency requirements for a second degree; and
5. credits earned and applied toward any degree previously earned may not be applied toward a second or additional degree. Students pursuing two or more degrees simultaneously may not apply the same credit to more than one degree.

### **Student Course Load**

For a graduate student, 9 hours is considered full-time enrollment. 8 or less hours is considered part-time.

The maximum course load you may carry for each semester is 16 hours. Overloads will not be permitted except in unusual circumstances. An approval of the dean is needed for overloads.



## **Readmission**

If you have been readmitted to the MFA in IFDI you must complete a new student study plan and follow the catalog in effect when you return.

## **Independent Study**

Graduate students may take a maximum of six (6) hours of Independent Study within a degree program. All Independent Study projects must be described in a written proposal prior to listing the Independent Study on an Advance Registration Form. The Independent Study proposal must be approved by the supervisor of the Independent Study project and the division chairperson prior to registration. Students without approval will not be allowed to receive credit for independent Study projects on their study plans. Independent Study may not be taken as a substitute for regularly scheduled courses and will not be used to replace courses needed for the degree except in unusual circumstances. Approval of the division chairperson is needed in these cases.

## **Internship and Thesis/Project**

As part of this degree program, students will pursue both an internship and thesis/project.

The student independently pursues a field-related internship and develops an agreement with the assistance of the internship site coordinator. Upon approval of the coordinator, the student may register for an IFDI 8800 Internship with a GSU coordinator. The GSU coordinator must be a full-time faculty in IFDI.

In the thesis/project, IFDI 8990, the student selects a committee consisting of a thesis / project advisor and two additional faculty members, and then develops a proposal acceptable to the committee. Faculty advisors and readers must be drawn from full-time faculty in IFDI, COMM, or ART. Students may register for IFDI 8990 once the committee has approved the student's proposal. The student then completes a project/production with the guidance of the thesis/project advisor. A paper must accompany all projects submitted for evaluation. Once the project is completed and approved by the committee, a grade is assigned.

## **GRADUATION**

In order to graduate students must complete coursework, project/internship, and have the recommendation of the faculty. In addition, students must complete these requirements within the specified time limit and complete an application for graduation.

### **Time Limits**

All course work for the degree, except the Master's Final Project (project/and internship), must be completed within four (4) years of a student's admission to candidacy within the IFDI program. The internship must be completed within five years of admission to candidacy.

### **Application for Graduation**

You must apply for graduation by the date listed in the Schedule of Classes of the semester in which you anticipate graduating. Student Progress Forms, which accompany the Application for Graduation, must also be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

## **ACADEMIC PROCEDURES**

### **Grievance Procedure for Student Retention**

If a student has a serious complaint about a faculty member, the student could choose to invoke either a collegial or university grievance procedure. Often such complaints result from a failure of communication on one or both sides or a simple misunderstanding. Student complaints may relate to academic or non-academic (e.g. discrimination, harassment, or other unfair treatment not

related to academic issues). We encourage you to resolve any grievances informally by talking with the faculty member in question and attempting resolution. If informal resolution proves impossible, you should follow the appropriate formal grievance procedures, as informal. These procedures can be found in GSU's Student Handbook under the section entitled, "**Student Grievance Procedures/Conduct Code**". The Handbook is online at [http://www.govst.edu/sas/t\\_hb.aspx?id=2869](http://www.govst.edu/sas/t_hb.aspx?id=2869). You can pick up a hard copy in Student Life.

## **Graduation**

Application for Graduation: Students should apply for review of their degree requirements within the first month of the last semester before graduation. (The deadline is posted in the academic calendar found at <http://www.govst.edu/academiccalendar/>). Students should complete an Application for Graduation form and a Student Progress Report form, available in the Registrar's Office (this deadline is also posted in the academic calendar, normally falls in the first week of the semester of graduation). Upon completion of these forms, students should arrange to meet with their academic advisor to review the student study plan and verify expected completion of degree requirements. Students should have no more than 16 credit hours outstanding toward degree requirements, either as incomplete work or as current enrollment at the time of application. The application is approved by the advisor, division chair, and dean and should be forwarded to the Registrar's Office two months before the end of the last semester of enrollment. Students must meet all financial obligations to the university. A fee is billed to the student, covering the cost of application processing, diploma, cap and gown, and commencement. Commencement Participation in commencement is limited to students who have been certified by the registrar as having completed all requirements for the degree.

## **Diplomas**

Diplomas are awarded upon verification of completion of all degree requirements and satisfaction of all financial obligations to the university. Diplomas are inscribed with the type of degree, the date, and the student name on record at the time the degree was conferred.