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 an understanding of essential design knowledge and are prepared to move on to more advanced coursework.

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.

Who is eligible for portfolio review?
You must be a Pre-Graphic Design major with a minimum grade of C- in required courses and an overall GPA of at least 2.50. You must also have completed the following courses:

- DHA 1101: Introduction to Design Thinking
- DHA 1311: Foundations I: Drawing & Design in Two and Three Dimensions
- DHA 1312: Foundations II: Color Design in Two and Three Dimensions
- DHA 1315: Foundations III: The Graphic Studio

If you have one or more of these classes in process, you may NOT participate in portfolio review.

When is portfolio review?
Portfolio review takes place between weeks four and eight of each semester. Student will receive notification of the exact dates via e-mail and posted online at http://dha.cdes.umn.edu/programs/graphic/review.html. The application deadline will be the end of the second week of classes. This timing allows you to completely finish projects from the previous semester and to know that you have passed the review before registration opens for the next semester. There are several required classes you can take during the semester you go through portfolio review (DHA 2311, 2334, photography, business course) allowing you to continue making progress toward your degree. Each review session will have openings from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. so that you can plan around your class schedule.

How do I apply for portfolio review?
Application materials are sent via e-mail prior to portfolio review, and outside the Student Services Office in 12 McNeal Hall. Complete the application form and attach an unofficial transcript, downloadable via OneStop.umn.edu or available from 130 Coffey Hall. Sign up for a presentation time when you turn in the application form and transcript to the receptionist in the Student Services Office in 12 McNeal Hall.

What should I prepare for portfolio review?
You should show a minimum of 4-5 examples of your work from each of the foundation level courses. We consider a series as one piece. Work done outside of class may also be shown, but should not substitute for foundation projects. Your work should include both highly finished projects as well as some planning and concept work. You should prepare a five-minute oral presentation describing the work you are displaying. Appropriate design vocabulary should be used to describe the objectives of the projects and the design principles incorporated to achieve those objectives. Following the presentation, you will be asked 2-3 questions about your work.

What is the review panel looking for?
While we do not mandate specific projects from each of the classes, we do expect that the work shown will demonstrate your creative ability, design knowledge, and technical skill.
In your drawings we would expect to see effective line quality, evidence of observational drawing (drawing from real objects/environments, not photographs), mastery of rendering with pencil and other media, compositional skills, a sustained-effort drawing of interior space that makes use of depth perception cues, modeling of form, and the use of light and shadow to create dimension. This last requirement should be met with the McNeal Hall drawing assignment completed in DHA 1311.

Your work from color should include several color and design projects that demonstrate your ability to create successful compositions using the variables of color: hue, chroma, and value. We would like to see a larger color project that integrates several of the design strategies.

We would also expect to see a three-dimensional project from either 1311 or 1312.

From the graphic foundation course we expect to see compositions using the appropriate computer software and the integration of design concepts into your beginning graphic design work.

Your selection of pieces to include is also evaluated as evidence of your design judgment, and we assume that you are showing your best work. If a required project does not meet this standard, it should be revised or redone.

Who is on the review panel?
The review panel is made up of instructors, both full and part-time, several of whom you may have had for your foundation courses. There will be between three and eight people on the panel. Other students are not allowed in the room during your presentation.

When will I find out the results?
Within two weeks of the final session of portfolio review, you will be notified by mail of the review decision. There are two possible outcomes: 1. Pass; 2. Fail. If you fail the review, you are invited to work with one of the Graphic Design faculty to revise work and prepare for one subsequent review session. Many students who have failed the initial portfolio review and who have followed through and revised work have passed the review the second time. 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 Graphic Design major, and you will be eligible for those classes that require passing portfolio review as a prerequisite. You should plan to spend a minimum of five semesters of coursework following the successful completion of Portfolio Review. We do enforce prerequisite courses at the upper division, and you will be expected to take the required courses in sequence. After passing portfolio review, you will be assigned a faculty mentor/adviser who will assist you with special learning opportunities (study abroad, UROP, Career Readiness activities, honors), and supervise your internship.

What if I have other questions?
If you need more information, please make an appointment to see your academic adviser, Zahra Khorasani, or attend the portfolio review information session held each semester.

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