

Interior Design

College of Health and Human Services

Opportunities for Employment and Graduate Study

Interior designers identify, research, and creatively solve problems relating to the function and aesthetic quality of the interior environment. Interior designers (some people use the term interior architects) may specialize in residential or nonresidential design. Their work might include:

- programming (i.e., data collection and analysis)
- development of the schematic design work, construction drawings, and presentation boards
- specification of furnishings and finishes
- supervision of construction, installation, and move-in
- post-occupancy evaluation

Some interior designers operate their own design firms, either as a sole proprietor or with support staff. Others work for interior design firms, for corporations or institutions with design departments, or for architectural or engineering firms. Designers often focus their work in a particular area of specialization such as kitchen and bath design, historic restoration or preservation, or open office planning. Some designers choose to pursue a career in a related area as a facility manager, a manufacturer's representative, or a store planner.

EMU graduates could choose to be involved in the design of:

- entertainment centers (e.g., civic centers, orchestra halls, casinos, theaters)
- government facilities (e.g., post offices, schools, colleges, courthouses)
- health-care facilities (e.g., doctors' offices, clinics, nursing homes, hospitals)
- houses, apartments, or dormitories
- institutional settings (e.g., transportation terminals, libraries, museums)
- offices and other work settings (e.g., banks, pharmacies, car dealerships)
- places of worship
- restaurants, hotels, or resorts
- retail stores, displays, or exhibits
- yacht, automobile, recreational vehicle, train, or airline interiors.

The interior design program at EMU is accredited by the Foundation for Interior Design Research (FIDER). Fewer than 100 of the more than 650 programs in the United States are FIDER-accredited first professional degree programs; therefore, graduates of the EMU program are in high demand.

After graduation from a four-year design program, designers typically work in the field for two years before achieving full status in the profession. The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) administers a qualifying examination that is required for full membership in most professional design organizations. Successful completion of the examination is required to obtain certification in those states that require interior designers to be licensed and for registration in Michigan. EMU graduates are very successful in passing the NCIDQ examination, are licensed in several states, and are active in the professional design organizations.

Requirements for Admission

Admission to the entry level of the program is open to any student admitted to the University. Students who want to transfer interior design courses from another institution must meet with the program director for a portfolio review. Continuation in the program is contingent upon successful completion of a second year review process, and internships are required for graduation.

EMU offers a two-year graduate program for those who have a bachelor's degree in interior design or architecture, or a four-year program for those with a bachelor's degree in another discipline. One of the largest post-professional interior design programs in the United States, it encourages students to focus their studies on a topic of special interest (e.g., universal design, lighting design, facility management, historic preservation, green design, design education).

Points of Interest

The program facilities include two design studios with drafting tables and adjacent seminar and work spaces, a materials resource room, photography and blue print areas, an extensive in-house design library, and access to computers for computer-aided design.

The EMU Student Design Group sponsors an annual juried interior design show to showcase student work. Students may also choose to join any of four professional organizations for designers: American Society for Interior Design (ASID), International Interior Design Association (IIDA), Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), or the Coalition for Interior Design Registration (CIDR). The organizations support the design program through their liaisons and through programs such as a Career Day for students to help prepare them for transition into the profession. IES donated a lighting library to the EMU program to support students' work in lighting design. EMU students often attend the monthly meetings and annual conferences of these professional design organizations.

Extracurricular activities for students include:

- participation in seminars for the design community
- Habitat for Humanity construction projects
- state, regional, and national design competitions

- visits to the Design Center in Troy and NeoCon at the Merchandise Mart in Chicago
- trips to office furniture manufacturers in Grand Rapids (e.g., Steelcase, Herman Miller, Haworth)

The interior design program prepares students to work on advanced projects that not only enhance their learning experience, but also contribute to the community. Students completed a children's nursery in the ASID/American Lung Association Showhouse to focus attention on Green Design. Others, working with students from another FIDER-accredited program, designed and installed the interior of an urban townhouse for the ASID/Detroit Opera Society Showhouse to focus attention on community revitalization. Yet another group worked on a project with the Downtown Development Authority to renovate the Masonic building in Ypsilanti for adaptive reuse as the Riverside Arts Center. Recently, students renovated and decorated a stairway and maids' room in the ASID/Detroit Historical Society Showcase.

EMU brings renowned designers and internationally recognized experts in the design field to the campus in order to enrich students' academic experiences and provide lifelong learning opportunities for practitioners. Recent seminars featured:

- Cindy Leibrock, of Colorado, who spoke on barrier-free design
- Bruce Pao, California architect, who spoke about Feng Shui, the Chinese art of placement.
- Dorothy Fowles, of Iowa, who talked about incorporation of universal design concepts
- Dr. Denise Guerin, of Minnesota, who spoke about environmentally conscious interior design
- Patricia Moore, of Arizona, who discussed universal design as a premise for addressing the needs of elderly or disabled people

EMU sponsored the All Michigan Design Charette: Universal Design — Beyond ADA and Barrier-Free Codes. Students in architecture, graphic design, product design, and interior design from 11 schools spent the day working in multidisciplinary teams to design a welcome center for Ann Arbor that would accommodate the diversity of ages and abilities of the potential visitors.

For the past several years, EMU design students have been among the winners in the major student design contests in the state, including both ASID design and portfolio competitions, as well as IIDA's portfolio competition, the Giordes Knot competition, and Trends in Design Scholarship.

Upper-level studio classes work directly with clients in the local community. Past projects include:

- design of new homes and additions or alterations to homes
- redesign of a historic car dealership as an incubator for new business in Detroit's renaissance zone
- adaptive reuse of an historic bank building in downtown Detroit to house both law offices on upper floors and a nightclub at street level
- redesign of a vacant building in Ypsilanti to house City Hall
- renovation plans for conversion of four townhouses into a community center in Ypsilanti
- conceptual design for renovation of a six story building in Monroe, Michigan that was constructed in the 1930's, in the art deco style; intent was to create an EcoVillage for sustainable design.

Scholarships

The Virginia Seaver Scholarship is awarded annually, following the second-year review process, to the student with the best portfolio of design work. Students are also eligible to apply for other department, college, and University competitive scholarships. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid, 734.487.0455.

Faculty

All full time faculty hold doctorates and enrich their teaching through involvement in scholarship. Recent design research includes:

- **Dr. Keith Fineberg:** green design, lighting design and universal design work applied in educational settings
- **Dr. Louise Jones:** design for aging, universal design, sustainable design, and design education
- **Dr. Abraham Kadushin:** investigation of community revitalization

Both graduate and undergraduate students have opportunities to work with faculty on their research projects. Faculty research expertise includes design education, lighting design, universal design, design for aging, community design, and barrier-free design. Their scholarship is disseminated through numerous papers and book chapters as well as presentations at regional, national, and international conferences. Faculty scholarship also provides support for instruction:

- **Dr. Jones** received funding through two grants to support incorporation of universal design into design education.
- **Dr. Kadushin** received support for his students' participation in an AIA design-for -aging project.

Studio critics and adjunct faculty are active practitioners in the design community. Areas of faculty specialization include lighting design and the design of health care facilities, residences, retail shops, showrooms, restaurants, hotels and motels, kitchens and baths, and corporate offices. Faculty have received recognition for excellence in both design practice and research:

- **Dr. Fineberg** received the IDEC juried design award for his lighting design at the Roberts Building, a renovated office building in Southwest Detroit.
- **Dr. Jones** was recognized by IIDA for Excellence in Scholarship for research regarding the design of facilities for people with Alzheimer's disease.
- **Dr. Kadushin's** project, the Islandview Village/Field Street Infill Housing Project was selected as a case study in the publication, *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing* produced by the American Institute of Architects and the National Endowment of the Arts.

In addition, the design faculty are active in and provide leadership for the professional organizations they belong to, frequently holding elected office and chairing national and international committees. These include the AIA, ASID, IIDA, and IDEC.

Want to Learn More?

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