Interior Architecture

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Florida International University’s Department of Interior Architecture is situated within two very compelling conditions: the diverse international community within South Florida and the rich interdisciplinary environment in the College of Architecture and The Arts. This unique context inspires our interpretation of the interior design profession as an occupation that exercises many types of knowledge and operates within complex social, cultural, technological, and artistic settings.

FIU’s Department of Interior Architecture provides students with a value added education that consists of small student-to-faculty ratios, studio facilities where students have their own workspace, study abroad options, and computer and fabrication labs offering advanced technology. The Department of Interior Architecture is an ideal setting where students are actively involved in learning and exploring the current and future roles of the interior design profession within a global society. More particularly, this context challenges our students to critically investigate the diverse roles of interior design and interior architecture, and inspires us to explore new avenues of thought and attitudes toward why and how we make human environments.

We focus on preparing well-rounded design professionals. Our interdisciplinary foundation coursework and our unique three years of professional graduate curriculum prepare our students to meet the profession head-on. Our graduates work in many different settings in the design of residential, commercial, and institutional projects. This exciting program has a strong emphasis on interior architecture and incorporates the recommendations and standards of national and local professional societies into the development of its curriculum.

The Master of Interior Architecture provides professional degree tracks that are intended for individuals with bachelor degrees from a variety of fields. This course of study has three tracks: a five-year track for students who begin as undergraduates, a two-year track for students with bachelor degrees in architecture or landscape architecture, and a three-year track for students with bachelor degrees in other disciplines.

The Accelerated Master of Interior Architecture (MIA) program provides a seamless course of study leading from undergraduate freshman year to the conferral of the Professional Master of Interior Architecture degree. The Accelerated MIA is comprised of 160 credit hours of integrated pre-graduate and graduate coursework. The degree consists of 73 credit hours of pre-graduate coursework taken over two years followed by 87 credits hours of graduate coursework. At the conclusion of 73 credit hours of pre-graduate study, students move directly to graduate study. A transition from undergraduate to graduate standing occurs during the fourth year after completion of 120 credits. Students must be in good standing with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. A Bachelor degree is not awarded at any point in the program.

The department maintains close ties with interior design professionals. Our professional advisory board periodically reviews the curriculum to maintain program relevance.

Students applying to the department should plan for the financial aspects of a design education. This includes the costs of computers, software, travel and field trips, tools and equipment, and modeling supplies. All students must have continuing access to a laptop computer through purchase, lease or other arrangements.

Ownership of Student Work

Student work, submitted to the department in satisfaction of course or degree requirements, becomes the physical property of the department. However, students retain all rights to the intellectual property of such work. This work may include papers, drawings, models, and other materials. The department assumes no responsibility for safeguarding such materials. At its discretion, the department may retain, return, or discard such materials. The department will not normally discard the materials of currently enrolled students without giving the student an opportunity to reclaim them.

Admissions Requirements for all Graduate Degrees in the Department of Interior Architecture

All applicants must meet University graduate admissions requirements. Applicants to the Department of Interior Architecture degree programs must also submit a portfolio of creative work for department review. The portfolio review examines evidence of creative ability, academic success, and professional achievement. It is an important component of the admissions process. Please contact the Department of Interior Architecture for specific portfolio requirements. The deadline for portfolio submission is February 1st of each year. Portfolios submitted after this date will be considered if studio space is available.

Students who have successfully completed the portfolio review process must also meet the minimum requirements of an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university with undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or hold a graduate degree from an accredited institution to be fully admitted in the graduate program. When the academic record is less than 3.0 GPA, the applicant must submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.

Thesis Requirement

Graduate students in all master degree programs are required to undertake a master’s project or a master’s thesis as part of their course of study at the Department of Interior Architecture.

Master of Interior Architecture

Professional Degree Tracks

The Graduate Program in Interior Architecture prepares expert interior designers with strong professional and content background, capable of engaging in evidence-based design and able to conduct and apply research. The program is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary degree program designed to engage students in advanced study regarding public interiors. The unique curriculum provides students with firsthand experience of a wide range of
interior design issues in specialized areas of study such as hospitality design, healthcare facility design, and workplace design.

The Master of Interior Architecture provides professional degree tracks that are intended for individuals with bachelor degrees from other fields. This course of study has two tracks: a two-year track for students with bachelor degrees in architecture or landscape architecture, and a three-year track for students with bachelor degrees in other disciplines. Both of these tracks begin Summer Semester.

THREE YEAR TRACK – 90 Credits

A professional degree for students with a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science, or equivalent, from an accredited institution. Leveling courses may be required for students without a design background. These are in addition to degree requirements.

Summer Leveling
MAC 2147 Pre-Calculus Math 4
IND 5319 Visual Notation for Interior Design 3
IND 5475 Computer Applications in Design 3
IND 5285 Design Foundations 3

Summer Semester
IND 5325 Color Theory and Application for the Built Environment 3

Fall Semester
IND 6255 Graduate Design 1 6
IND 5477 Computer Applications in Design II 3
IND 5486 Materials for Interior Design 3
IND 5427 Construction Documents in Interior Architecture 3

Spring Semester
IND 6256 Graduate Design 2 6
IND 5438 Lighting Design 3
IND 5645 Structures and Systems I 3

Summer Semester
IND 5629 Computer Applications in Design III 3
IND 6616C Interior Architecture Theory I (or approved 3 credit alternate) 3

Fall Semester
IND 6257C Graduate Design 3 6
IND 5485 Advanced Construction Documents in Interior Architecture 3
IND 5615 Building Systems for Interior Designers 3

Spring Semester
IND 6258C Graduate Design 4 6
IND 5625 Interior Architecture Theory II (online) 3
IND 5138 History of Modern Interiors (online) 3

Summer Semester
IND 5937 Special Topics 3
IND 6639 Research Methods 3
Directed Elective 3

Fall Semester
IND 6259C Graduate Design 5 6
IND 5626 Project Programming 3
Directed Elective (graduate seminar) 3

Spring Semester
IND 6970 Master’s Project 6
Directed Elective (Internship) 3

IND 5508 Professional Office Practice 3

TWO YEAR TRACK – 63 Credits

A professional degree for students with a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science, or equivalent, in Architecture or Landscape Architecture from an accredited institution.

Summer Semester
IND 5325 Color Theory and Application for the Built Environment 3
IND 5629 Computer Applications in Design III 3
IND 6616C Interior Architecture Theory I (or approved 3 credit alternate) 3

Fall Semester
IND 6257C Graduate Design 3 6
IND 5485 Advanced Construction Documents in Interior Architecture 3
IND 5615 Building Systems for Interiors 3

Spring Semester
IND 6258C Graduate Design 4 6
IND 5625 Interior Architecture Theory II (online) 3
IND 5138 History of Modern Interiors (online) 3

Summer Semester
IND 5937 Special Topics 3
IND 6639 Research Methods 3
Directed Elective 3

Fall Semester
IND 6259C Graduate Design 5 6
IND 5626 Project Programming 3

Spring Semester
IND 6970 Master’s Project 6
IND 5438 Lighting Design 3
IND 5508 Professional Office Practice 3

Master of Arts in Interior Architecture

Post-Professional Degree

Individuals with an undergraduate degree in Interior Design or Interior Architecture from an accredited professional program are eligible for admission to the program provided University requirements are met. This 36 credit hour degree prepares students who wish to conduct research, teach and undertake advanced studies in Interior Design. One year of full-time study in residency is normally required. However, a part-time study option is available subject to the review and approval of the Program. Satisfactory completion of 36 credits in the following course of study is required.

First Year (Summer Semester)
IND 5937 Special Topics 3
IND 6639 Research Methods 3
Directed Elective 3

First Year (Fall Semester)
STA 6166 Statistical Methods in Research 1 3
IND 6979 Thesis Research 3
IND 6910 Graduate Seminar 3

First Year (Spring Semester)
IND 6906 Independent Study 1-3
Directed Elective 3
IND 6973 Thesis Seminar 3
Certificate in Cruise Ship and Super Yacht Design

The Interior Architecture Department has assembled a team of professionals and educators to offer a unique curriculum that will prepare designers for the specific issues associated with designing cruise ship and yacht interiors. The certificate program is offered to students who are enrolled in the FIU’s Master of Interior Architecture program and involves international workshops with designers from overseas venues. Enrollment in the certificate program offers FIU students the opportunity to form specialized knowledge in this area of design prior to graduation with their Master of Interior Architecture degree.

Entrance into the program is limited to students entering their fourth year of the MIA curriculum who have earned a 3.0 or better grade point average in the graduate program. All applicants should access the appropriate application through the University Graduate School website, at: http://gradschool.fiu.edu/admissions.html. The application is in paper form and must be completed by the student to Graduate Admissions in PC 230. At the conclusion of the certificate program, students will be issued a Certificate of Cruise Ship and Super Yacht Design from Florida International University.

Program Requirements

The certificate program consists of 15 credit hours of courses currently embedded within the existing Master of Interior Design curriculum: two specialized sixteen-week studio courses; plus an industry specific internship course coordinated through FIU’s interior design program.

IND 6257C Graduate Design 3 6
IND 6258C Graduate Design 4 6
IND 5948 Interior Architecture Graduate Internship (Industry specific) 3

Certificate in Furniture Design

The Certificate in Furniture Design offers students the ability to explore furniture design and the creation of new pieces of furniture for commercial and residential purposes. This program is developed to serve people who wish to extend their design education into this area of specialized study. Focused on creative design process and on bringing products to market, the four courses in this certificate develop students’ skills, knowledge, and critical thinking about the design, making, and marketing of furniture products for industry, retail, and gallery markets.

The Furniture Design Certificate awards graduate credit and is available to students who possess a minimum of an Associate of Arts degree in a design related field. Students who wish to enroll in furniture certificate should contact the School of Architecture graduate advisors in advance of pursuing this course of study.

Program Requirements

Studio Courses
IND 5445C Introduction to Furniture Design 3
IND 5447C Advanced Furniture Design 6

Subject Area Courses
IND 5164 History of 21st Century Furniture Design 3
IND 5446 Professional Practice and Entrepreneurship in Furniture Design 3

Course Descriptions

Definition of Prefixes
IND-Interior Design
F-Fall semester offering; S-Spring semester offering; SS-Summer semester offering.

IND 5137 History of Design from the Renaissance to XIX Century (3). Survey of the architectural, interior and landscape design from the Renaissance to the XIX century, including western and non-western traditions.

IND 5138 History of Modern Interiors (3). An analysis of the history of architectural interiors, furniture and decorative arts from the Neo-Classical period to the present time.

IND 5164 History of 21st Century Furniture Design (3). Students will research and analyze the social, political, technical economic and theoretical forces that contribute to new movements in late 20th century and early 21st century furniture design.

IND 5235 Formative Studio 1 (6). Introduction to concept development, spatial expression, and representational techniques in architecture.

IND 5285 Design Foundations (3). The course is a rigorous introduction to design fundamentals. It builds a design language through lectures, practical exercises, exploring techniques, materials, skills, making and critical thinking. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 5319 Visual Notation for Interior Design (3). Course will develop drawing skills in multiple media, actively engaging in projects of drawing as a medium of investigation, documentation, memory, observation and presentation for interior design. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 5325 Color Theory and Application for the Built Environment (3). Use of color in the built environment including principal color systems, methods of color harmony, effects of visual phenomena, and various psychological, cultural and historical implications.

IND 5427 Construction Documents in Interior Architecture (3). Conceptual framework for design of building assemblies, understanding of construction technologies and properties of interior building materials. Construction drawings and specifications are produced. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

IND 5428 Materials and Methods (3). Research and analysis of building materials and methods. Properties of materials and performance in a variety of light building, interior and environmental assemblies are investigated.

IND 5438 Lighting Design (3). Exploration of theories and applications of lighting design. Emphasis on studying
research about interactions between light, people and articulation of interior space.

IND 5445C Furniture Design (3). Providing a general overview of furniture design process, this design/build studio course teaches students about ergonomics, scale, space, structure and materiality related to furniture design.

IND 5446 Professional Practice and Entrepreneurship in Furniture Design (3). Learn about industry standards and entrepreneurial strategies that successful designers and furniture companies use when bringing new designs to different markets.

IND 5447C Advanced Furniture Design (6). Research, analyze and design furniture using wood, metals and plastics. Instruction will include advanced technical skills and emphasis on qualitative and conceptual aspects of design.

IND 5475 Computer Applications in Design (3). Study of computer software packages applicable to the architecture office environment, with particular emphasis on CAD software, graphics packages and desktop publishing.

IND 5477 Computer Applications in Design II (3). Intermediate study of computer software applicable to the architecture and interior design office environment, with particular emphasis of CADD software, graphics packages and desktop publishing.

IND 5485 Advanced Construction Documents in Interior Architecture (3). Experimental approach to new materials and methods applicable to the field of construction. Field and laboratory exercises in the evaluation of technical support assemblies for buildings.


IND 5508 Professional Practice (3). Advanced study office administration, contract negotiation, fee structure, professional ethics, client and public relations. Investigations and analysis of business organizations and project management. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 5615 Building Systems for Interiors (3). Study of building environmental systems and building performance issues that impact the design of building interiors and affect the health, safety, welfare, and performance of building occupants. Prerequisite: IND 5628.

IND 5625 Interior Architecture Theory II (3). Overview of the environmental parameters, morphological concepts and ideological principles that generate form and meaning in interior design, architecture, and landscape architecture.

IND 5626 Project Programming (3). Students perform pre-design research and analysis aimed at programming the design of a specific facility. Students ultimately prepare a program of requirements for their master's project. Prerequisites: IND 5937, IND 6639. Corequisite: IND 6259C.


IND 5629 Computer Applications in Design III (3). Students learn advanced techniques in digital design through using 3 dimensional modeling and rendering software within the design process.

IND 5645 Structures and Systems 1 (3). Study of physical science for structural design problems and for ecological systems. Review, analyze, and evaluate structural systems and building environmental systems.

IND 5937 Special Topics (3). Examination of the conceptual framework supporting the theory, and research applications in specialized area of interior design. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 5938 Cejas Eminent Scholar Seminar (1-3). This is a seminar/workshop course taught by distinguished educators, scholars, and designers. Lectures, critical readings, and discussions of thematic topics make up the methodology of the course.

IND 5948 Interior Architecture Graduate Internship (3). Advanced issues in professional practice learned through work experience with design professionals.

IND 6255 Graduate Design 1 (6). Exploration of highly articulated projects utilizing innovative research methods to strengthen and clarify design concepts taken to a detailed resolution. Corequisite: IND 5427.

IND 6256 Graduate Design 2 (6). Advanced design topics explored. Focus on student specialization interest. Emphasis on integration of design process from conceptual formulation and programming to design development and reflection. Prerequisite: IND 6255.

IND 6257C Graduate Design 3 (6). Advanced content with focus on developing and applying of design criteria to create highly articulated interior environments for work, retail, and recreation. Prerequisite: IND 6256. Corequisite: IND 5485.

IND 6258C Graduate Design 4 (6). Focus on developing a global approach to designing with awareness and respect for cultural and social differences, and the implications of conducting the practice of design within a world market. Prerequisite: IND 6257C.

IND 6259C Graduate Design 5 (6). Complex issues associated with the design of institutional environments are used to explore issues of environment and behavior, universal design, plus issues of health, safety, and welfare. Prerequisite: IND 6258C. Corequisite: IND 5626.

IND 6616C Interior Architecture Theory I (3). Students analyze and explore the application of pivotal theories regarding the relationships between human behavior and the design of interior environments.

IND 6639 Research Methods (3). Methods of data acquisition, analysis, and interpretation used in interior design research. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 6906 Independent Study (1-3). Coursework on a particular aspect of Architecture under the direction of faculty in an individual study format. Prerequisite: Program approval.

IND 6910 Graduate Seminar (3). Coursework under the direction of faculty in preparation for a master's thesis or master's project in interior design. Prerequisites: IND 6906, program approval.
IND 6970 Master's Project (1-6). The curriculum was reordered and the Master's project is now the terminal studio for all students.

IND 6971 Master's Thesis (1-6). Coursework under the direction of faculty for the completion of thesis by candidate for the degree of Master of Interior Design. Prerequisites: Program approval and IND 6910.

IND 6973 Thesis Seminar (3). Students develop an independent research strategy that will enable them to address their thesis question. Prerequisite: IND 6979.

IND 6979 Thesis Research (1-3). Design, development, and execution of research project for master's thesis in interior design. Prerequisites: IND 5937, IND 6639.