

What can I do with a degree in... **INTERIOR DESIGN?**

Why study **INTERIOR DESIGN?**

The mission of the Interior Design Program at WCU is to strengthen and broaden the intellectual and cultural horizons of our students by providing a supportive learning environment and encouraging a socially responsive approach to design.

The Interior Design Program at WCU provides students with broad exposure to all aspects of the practice of interior design. The program is grounded in research-based problem-solving in addition to a variety of cultural, environmental, and historical perspectives. The Interior Design program is accredited through the National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD) and the Council of Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA), recognizing the highest academic standards established by the profession.

We prepare students for career opportunities in a field that combines creativity, technology and business in a profession that relies on people skills, problem-solving capabilities, and financial awareness. The B.S. degree in interior design includes specialty courses in residential design, commercial design, and kitchen and bath design. It includes a senior capstone project and an internship experience during the summer between junior and senior year. Additionally, we offer students the exciting opportunity to travel for first-hand exposure to the art and architecture found abroad.

What are the **DEGREE OPTIONS?**

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Interior Design



What is the **ADMISSION PROCESS?**

Any student currently enrolled at Western Carolina University may declare this major. Students interested in the Interior Design major should visit the Advising Center, located in Killian Annex. Please make an appointment with your advisor via your MyWCU student portal.

What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Depending on experience and qualifications, our graduates are prepared to become a variety of professionals including interior and commercial designers; set designers; urban or regional planners; exhibit designers;

space planners; purchasing agents; home, bath, and kitchen designers; hotel furnishing specialists; CADD technicians, and more. **NOTE:** Advanced degrees may be required for some of the listed professions. Please see a career counselor or an Interior Design advisor for more information.

Who employs **INTERIOR DESIGN** graduates?

Our graduates gain employment with a variety of employers including interior design firms, office and branded environments, healthcare and medical centers, hospitality firms including hotels and restaurants; government agencies; higher education institutions; and commercial and residential construction management firms.

MAJOR MAP

How to use this map: Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

1st YEAR

2nd YEAR

EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

Many first-year students will focus on the liberal studies requirements as well as introductory art courses. [Check out the Interior Design degree checklist](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Students in their second year will likely continue with liberal studies electives, intermediate Interior Design courses topics, as well as introductory courses with their minor. [Check out the Interior Design degree checklist](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness.

See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU.

Get involved with the Interior Design Club

If you are thinking about attending a graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions.

Engage deeper with [DegreePlus](#); choose an additional competency to complete

BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Lily Award](#), a program aimed to encourage students to be connected with their community.

Job shadow with professionals in the career area you wish to pursue.

Volunteer with area non-profits or organizations which interest you.

Consider the [study abroad programs related to Interior Design](#). Talk with a study abroad advisor about targeted experience for your areas of interest.

PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [Onet Online](#).

Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus.

Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools, if applicable, you wish to apply to in a few years with their admission requirements so that you are aware of the expectations.

Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Business Administration & Law
Communication
Construction Management

English
Entrepreneurship
Studio Art

3rd YEAR

Third level courses focus on upper-level Interior Design courses, special topics relating to your career path, or your chosen minor. [Check out the Interior Design degree checklist](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Apply for internship experiences that will give you practical and hands-on experience to put on a resume.

Start building your online portfolio to showcase the works of art you have created.

Consider networking with professionals in your field at national or regional professional conferences such as the [American Society of Interior Designers' annual conference and events](#), or the [Society of Interior Designers annual conference](#).

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

Connect with alumni in your field through [LinkedIn](#)

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Apply for internships. Utilize the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) for MCAT, GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Use [Big Interview](#) to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour graduate schools of your choice, if applicable.

4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will complete the major coursework requirement, concentration courses, as well as your chosen minor electives. Be sure to [check out the Interior Design degree checklist](#), make an appointment with your advisor, complete your degree audit, and [apply for graduation!](#)

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Join professional organizations such as the [American Society of Interior Designers](#), [Society of Interior Designers](#), [International Interior Design Association](#), or the [Carolinas Chapter of American Society of Interior Designers](#).

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual Career Fair Plus event, held each October and February.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by using the [CCPD](#).

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

DID YOU KNOW?

MORE INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP Information

At Western Carolina University there are numerous internship opportunities for students. In some cases internships are established through a faculty member in the student's major. Oftentimes students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic advisor the possibility of receiving college credit. The interior design internship requirement strengthens the ability of graduates to excel in competitive professional opportunities. Generally, three hours of general elective credit can be earned for a minimum of 200 hours of experience.

SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- Artistic ability
- Creativity
- Interpersonal skills
- Problem solving skills
- Organization
- Teamwork
- Visualization

KNOWLEDGE Base

This program will prepare students to:

- Apply the laws, codes, regulations, standards and practices that protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.
- Demonstrate the ability to analytically, critically and logically think about and generate spatial design.
- Understand and apply the knowledge, skills, processes and theories of interior design.
- Demonstrate and understand the ability to communicate about the discipline

Professional **RESOURCES**

- American Society for Interior Designers: www.asid.org
- International Interior Design Association: www/iida.org
- Interior Design Society: www.interiordesignsociety.org
- National Kitchen and Bath Association: www.nkba.org

QUESTIONS?

For questions, please call the Interior Design program at 828-227-2487 or visit <https://www.wcu.edu/learn/departments-schools-colleges/fpa/artdesign/undergraduate-programs/ides.aspx>

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or careerservices@wcu.edu.