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Degree Requirements

- Successful completion of 60 credits, including all required courses and the thesis project. Documentation of all thesis projects must be on file in the Visual Narrative Department to be eligible for degree conferral.
- A matriculation of three summers on-site and four semesters (fall and spring) of low residency. Students must complete their degree within six years, unless given an official extension by the provost.
- Visual Narrative grades on a pass/fail system. A Pass (P) or High Pass (HP) will be awarded for the successful completion of a course. Students are required to remain in good academic standing.

Departmental requirements are subject to change by the department chair if the chair deems that such change is warranted.

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First-Year Course Requirements

Summer Semester

Course #	Title
VNG-5040	Framing the Story
VNG-5080	Analog to Digital: Risograph Production and Process
VNG-5085	Analog to Digital: Lens-Based Storytelling
VNG-5130	Writing Studio: Narrative Structure and Development
VNG-5230	Visual Narrative: Graphic Media
VNG-5234	Visual Narrative: Photography

Fall Semester (online)

Course #	Title
VNG-5540	Story Visualized: A Text and Image Lab
VNG-5580	Writing Studio: Creative Script
VNG-5583	Visual Narrative: Film and the Moving Image



Spring Semester (online)

Course #	Title
VNG-5640	Narrative Color
VNG-5652	Visual Narrative: Crafting Worlds and Immersive Stories
VNG-5657	Writing Studio: Mythology and Folklore

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Second-Year Course Requirements

Summer Semester

Course #	Title
VNG-6150	Thesis Prep: Shaping Your Story
VNG-6210	Visual Research
VNG-6240	Form, Empathy, and Character Play
VNG-6250	Thesis Prep: Picturing Your Story

Fall Semester (online)

Course #	Title
VNG-6320	Identity in a Digital World
VNG-6520	Thesis I
VNG-6532	Seminar I

Spring Semester (online)

Course #	Title
VNG-6510	Storyteller as Community
VNG-6525	Thesis II
VNG-6533	Seminar

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Third-Year Course Requirements

Summer Semester

Course #	Title
VNG-6820	Storyteller as Brand
VNG-6852	Thesis Exhibition
VNG-6860	Professional Practices
VNG-6900	Portfolio and Presentation



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General Course Listing

Several elective courses offered through other graduate departments may be taken with the proper prerequisites and permission from both department chairs, space permitting. Please refer to each department's General Course Listing descriptions and information.

First Year

VNG-5040-A

Framing the Story

Wednesday, Friday; June 4 – July 25 (no class July 2)

Hours: Wednesday 6:00-8:50, Friday 9:00-11:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [N. Fox](#)

This course focuses on the fundamental principles and visual language of compositional design and how the framing of a story's imagery can influence or alter its communication and how it is perceived by an audience. Through collaborative projects and rapid prototyping challenges, students will be asked to break out of their comfort zones, apply their discoveries, and dig deep to develop their own visual language and unique approach to narrative image-making.

VNG-5080

Analog to Digital: Risograph Production and Process

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 1 credit

Instructor: [A. Chung](#)

Utilizing Risograph duplicator technology in this project-based workshop, students will learn to harness the power of print through the print reproduction process, developing a personal workflow that can be applied to any professional analog or digital medium. We will cover a variety of color separation methods, such as spot color, duo tone, and faux CMYK. Students will gain familiarity with preparing files for print with their desired analog/digital medium, including analog/digital illustrations, photography, and text, and learn how to translate these digital files into Risograph prints and zines. We will also examine the ever-growing independent publishing community and the integral role that the Risograph plays in personal storytelling and sharing your work with a wider audience.

Course #	Day	Dates
VNG-5080-A	M	June 2 – July 21 (no class June 30)
VNG-5080-B	W	June 4 – July 23 (no class July 2)



VNG-5085

Analog to Digital: Lens-Based Storytelling

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 1 credit

Instructor: [A. Eveslage](#)

Through technology and project-based workshops, this course will examine best practices for telling a story through video. Traditional media and analog processes will be transformed by time, sound, and photography. Video and sound capture techniques, as well as production design and lighting, will be addressed. Using Adobe Premiere Pro, students will explore a variety of methods for producing digital images, and how to translate a stationary vision into the dynamic world of motion. The evolution of storytelling from analog to digitized media will be discussed.

Course #	Day	Dates
VNG-5085-A	M	June 2 – July 21 (no class June 30)
VNG-5085-B	W	June 4 – July 23 (no class July 2)

VNG-5130-A

Writing Studio: Narrative Structure and Development

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (no class July 3)

Hours: 6:00-8:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [A. Eveslage](#)

Stories are powerful. Through lenses of narrative craft, this course will explore the structures behind this power and how they can be wielded to create effective narratives without the use of images. We'll look at the function storytelling serves in our lives—from our basic psychology to how we use story to understand ourselves and the world around us. Breaking down the essential components of story mechanics, students will discover how story transcends medium using the same core elements. In addition to reading theoretical and narrative works, we will develop one common narrative as a class. Along the way, we will examine how these basic elements present themselves in both traditional written prose and audio podcasts, giving students the opportunity to write for both mediums. With a focus on how language alone can be used as imagery to achieve these narrative goals, students will learn how to make editorial decisions designed to fit the evolving needs of a story.



VNG-5230-A

Visual Narrative: Graphic Media

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (no class July 3)

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 2 credits

Instructors: [B. Kartalopoulos](#), [L. Marcus](#)

The Visual Narrative series offers an overview of various creative fields. This course will examine the evolution of picture books, comics, artists' books, and graphic novels as the departure point for different approaches to telling a story with words and pictures. A history of these art forms and their various points of intersection will be given, from children's adventure books to comic strips, web comics, and experimental graphic picture books to contemporary independent, direct, and book publishing markets. Guest artists and lecturers will address the class and field trips will be included.

VNG-5234-A

Visual Narrative: Photography

Monday, Friday; June 2 – July 25

Hours: Monday 6:00-8:50; Friday 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [S. Morrison](#)

The Visual Narrative series offers an overview of various creative fields. This course is a survey of the history of photography with special emphasis placed on how narrative is communicated through the medium. Photographs often suggest open-ended, non-linear narratives, and we will examine these ideas by looking at both the individual image and serial work. Studying photographs from the 19th century to contemporary practices, we will embark upon a careful analysis of the bond between photography and narrative will be defined and disassembled. The notion of photographers' intentions versus viewers' perceptions will also be explored. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of how the practitioners of this medium create stories.

VNG-5540-A

Story Visualized: A Text and Image Lab

Fall semester: 2 credits

Instructor: TBA

In this course students will create fully formed visual narratives, such as creating a visual documentary story incorporating collaged elements or creating a visual story entirely out of letterforms and words. The relationship of text and image in visual storytelling will be explored by experimenting with text as image and image as text and using them together to tell stories in different formats, media, and materials. Throughout the semester students will create a series of short projects that lead up to a longer adaptation of an existing story.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*



VNG-5580-A

Writing Studio: Creative Script

Fall semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [M. Sable](#)

Concept, character, structure, and craft—the fundamentals of creative storytelling and the architecture of a well-defined outline—will be explored in this course. Through a series of exercises, students will develop writing skills in the core components of storytelling, such as an active but flawed protagonist with a concrete goal, a story with a solid structure based on a character arc, and a concept with a specified target audience. The similarities and differences among theater, film, television, comics, games, and other visual media will be explored through lectures, and primarily through writing itself.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

VNG-5583-A

Visual Narrative: Film and the Moving Image

Fall semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [L. Rosen](#)

The Visual Narrative series offers an overview of various creative fields. In this survey of the moving image we will screen a classic film every week—each from a different genre and era—and explore the concepts and visual narrative structures it illustrates. Clips from other influential films that inspired (or were inspired by) our core films will be incorporated, to gain a deeper understanding of the continuum of film history. The course will also examine how film theory, specifically the interplay between montage and mise-en-scène, is put into practical use. How the visual vocabulary of film developed along with new innovations (and innovators) will be addressed as we examine how filmic vocabulary informs and borrows from other visual media.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

VNG-5640-A

Narrative Color

Spring semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [J. Rosen](#)

From fundamental principles of color theory to the invention of the printing press, color film and the digital exploitation in today's mobile media and entertainment, this studio course will explore the emotive, psychological and symbolic properties of color and the narrative role color plays in visual communication, culture, politics and storytelling across media. Students will create a series of works that convey atmosphere and mood through narrative color.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*



VNG-5652-A

Visual Narrative: Crafting Worlds and Immersive Stories

Spring semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [S. Simpson](#)

Combining the theory and practice of immersive storytelling with the art and craft of world-building is the focus of this course. From folktales to franchises, we will explore transportive worlds and the methods used to create them. Students will delve into the psychology, theory, history, and creation of stories that emerge from the dynamics of interaction, exploration, and choice. We will examine the history of our most pervasive forms of media and platforms to gain an understanding of how to tell stories that move the audience from viewers to architects of their own experience. Collectively, we will deconstruct the idea that world-building is a private practice and, instead, uplift the notion that it is a creative tool to strengthen stories and expand ideas.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

VNG-5657-A

Writing Studio: Mythology and Folklore

Spring semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [C. Roussos](#)

This survey course will explore the history, universality, and use of mythology and folklore across literature, the arts, entertainment, and popular media. We will review a diverse list of stories from around the world, studying the symbolism, archetype, structure, and intent, and what these stories reveal about our shared humanity. How these stories influence contemporary storytelling across media will be discussed. In addition to analysis, the course will focus on the application of the structures and characters found in mythology and folklore through creative writing and peer response. Students will concept and create new forms and works of myth and fiction.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

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Second Year

VNG-6150-A

Thesis Prep: Shaping Your Story

Monday, Wednesday; June 2 – July 23 (no class July 2)

Hours: 6:00-8:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [A. Eveslage](#)

What is the best way to research, develop, and produce a particular story? How do you get to the root of what that story is about? How do you leverage your chosen medium to deliver that story? These are the core creative and professional questions this course will ask of each student and their thesis. Students will be asked to dig deep and make story choices that put the why of their story first, ahead of the visual or scripted end product. In addition to one-on-one meetings, in-class critiques, and discussions, students will conduct in-depth research into their story. As they start tackling preproduction tasks (asking “why” and “how”), students will analyze their medium’s strengths and weaknesses in the service of their story. Alongside story development, students will be asked to answer questions of scope, budget, and other preproduction criteria in pursuit of an ambitious but feasible outcome. The ultimate goal is to present a professional thesis video pitch at the end of the semester wherein students demonstrate a clear, focused understanding of their story.

VNG-6210-A

Visual Research

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (no class July 3)

Hours: 6:00-8:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructors: [J Goldstick](#), [T. Szetela](#), [A. Soetarman](#)

This course focuses on the application of mapping and data visualization techniques for use in concept development and world-building. Students will identify locations connected to their existing story ideas and will investigate these locations using documentary media, data collection, and other methods of site-specific research. The materials they gather will be compiled into visual archives and students will create analog and digital maps that describe their content. The work produced in the course will function as a reference for the development of thesis projects and as a means of communicating the spaces that these stories will inhabit.



VNG-6240-A

Form, Empathy, and Character Play

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (no class July 3)

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [C. Stephens](#)

Sometimes the best way to find a character's voice is to become the character. This course is designed to further develop skills in character creation through examining what makes characters behave in the ways they do. With lectures on archetypes, defining moments, unconscious desire, and design, students will examine the elements necessary for creating their own characters. Through improvised time-based exercises, in-class writing prompts and role-playing techniques, students will understand how their characters will behave in fictional settings, better enabling them to write and visualize their creations.

VNG-6250-A

Thesis Prep: Picturing Your Story

Monday, Friday; June 2 – July 25

Hours: Monday 1:00-3:50, Friday 9:00-11:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [S. Morrison](#)

Through research, critical discourse, and presentations, students in this seminar will formulate and articulate the conceptual positions of their portfolio and visual thesis development. The goal of this seminar is to identify, analyze, and interpret each student's creative interests, creative values, intent, influences, philosophical viewpoint, and historical lineage as it relates to the work they are pursuing. This course is structured around extensive group critiques, presentations, and research. Along with the story development produced in *Shaping Your Story*, this seminar course will culminate in a fully realized pitch video at the end of the semester.

VNG-6320-A

Identity in a Digital World

Fall semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [M. Rota](#)

Aspiring artists and storytellers will advance the development of their online toolset and studio practice skills to take agency of their personal identity and communications across platforms and marketplaces. A variety of web hosting, social media, blog and portfolio/skill-sharing platforms will be discussed, along with marketing and data collection to effectively share and represent students' digital identity and content. The pros and cons of each tool will be addressed, and specific strategies for finding clients and generating traffic and interest will be discussed.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*




VNG-6510-A

Storyteller as Community

Spring semester: 2 credits

Instructor: [T. Sokolowski](#)

As an artist, your “brand” is defined by how others perceive you and your work. In this course, students will lay the foundation for developing a personal brand by understanding and engaging with their creative community. Students will conduct research and build connections with potential audiences, supporters, collaborators, clients, and customers. Through this process, students will identify their professional goals and the impact they want to have on their community. There will be individual and group feedback sessions where students will review their findings and prepare for developing their personal brands.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

VNG-6520 / VNG-6525

Thesis I and II

Fall and spring semesters: 3 credits per semester

Instructors: Faculty advisors

Focusing on thesis story development, this course will address project management, thesis production, and how to achieve audience engagement. Students will establish production schedules and deadlines with instructors and mentors, who will guide and support them through constructive critique, industry feedback, and troubleshooting. Participating in discussions and hearing from professionals in various fields, students will build a community of mutual support and accountability for the completion of each thesis, and in preparation for exhibition and public presentation.

 *This course is held online through asynchronous instruction.*

Course #	Semester
VNG-6520-A	fall
VNG-6525-A	spring




VNG-6532 / VNG-6533

Seminar I and II

Fall and spring semesters: 1 credit per semester

Instructor: [S. Morrison](#)

Through research, critical discourse, and presentations, students in this seminar will formulate and articulate the conceptual positions of their portfolio and visual thesis development. The goal is to identify, analyze, and interpret each student's creative interests, creative values, intent, influences, philosophical viewpoints, and historical lineage as they relate to the work they are pursuing. This seminar is structured around extensive group critiques, presentations, and research and will culminate in a fully realized pitch video.

 *This course is held online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous class sessions. Schedules will be available prior to the beginning of the semester.*

Course #	Semester
VNG-6532-A	fall
VNG-6533-A	spring

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Third Year

VNG-6820-A

Storyteller as Brand

Monday, Wednesday; June 2 – July 23 (no class July 2, July 7; additional class on July 11)

Hours: 6:00-8:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [T. Sokolowski](#)

In this course students will develop a personal brand that resonates with their audiences based on the research completed during the previous semester. Students will define their purpose, vision, and values as an artist and assess the unique value they bring to their audiences. This will lay the foundation for the development of an artist presentation that each student will give at the end of the semester. There will be individual and group feedback sessions to help students refine their personal narratives, and solidify their brand strategy and expression.



VNG-6852-A

Thesis Exhibition

Monday, Wednesday; June 2 – July 23 (no class July 2)

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: TBA

The challenges in realizing a professional gallery exhibition and presentation experience will be addressed in this course, as students explore spatial design, working to scale, and curating work for presentation to the general public. Working with the SVA galleries and Visible Futures Lab, various modes of fabrication will be applied, including pedestal fabrication, as well as lighting strategies and signage development for the installation of the work in both a gallery and the digital exhibition space. Time management and budgetary constraints will be considered and students will explore promotional techniques that articulate their work to target specific venues. Guest artists and gallery visits are included. The course will culminate in the thesis exhibition.

VNG-6860-A

Professional Practices

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (no class July 1, July 3)

Hours: 1:00-3:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: [G. Meola](#)

Designed as both a studio workshop and guest lecture series, this course will focus on developing professional business practices, including networking, social media skills, outreach, and financial literacy. Guest presentations will be held throughout the semester to discuss and share real-world expertise and industry best practices.

VNG-6900-A

Portfolio and Promotion

Tuesday, Thursday; June 3 – July 24 (No class July 1, July 3; additional class on July 11)

Hours: 6:00-8:50

Summer 2025 semester: 3 credits

Instructor: TBA

Developing each student's online portfolio and accompanying promotional materials and networks will be covered in this course. We will examine current trends and professional standards for each student's market and audience, which will be paramount in cultivating relationships with art directors, editors, producers, and clients. At the end of the semester, students will present their thesis and portfolio at a public exhibition. Students will exit the program with an online portfolio and website presence.




VNG-6965

Thesis Extension

One semester: 1.5 credits

This course is designed for students who have not met the unanimous approval of the Thesis Review Committee and who need an additional semester to complete their project. Students will work with a faculty advisor and have limited access to facilities.

 *Registration for Thesis Extension is contingent upon approval by the department chair. This course is held online.*

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Language Skills Course

EVG-0291


Writing Strategies

Day/time: TBA

One semester: no credit

Instructor: [N. Schiff](#)

In this course, students will explore literary structures for class assignments and story development projects while focusing on grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Students will work toward building language skills to better express their narrative vision.

 *Registration for this course is by invitation of the department. The fall and spring sections are held online.*

Course #	Semester
EVG-0291-A	fall
EVG-0291-B	spring
EVG-0291-C	Summer

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