**FAQS**

*What type of abilities or interests should I have in order to be successful in visual communications?*

Answer: While specific skills can be taught, it is always good for a student to possess some specific interests in order to have a better chance of succeeding. For example, being creative always helps. Being excited by visual elements in our everyday world, such as typography, color choices, overall design elements, and logos is beneficial. It doesn’t mean that you have to know how to create these elements now, it just means that those are the foundational elements that a visual communications designer uses to communicate. Also be passionate about the concentration you have chosen to study. Have a basic knowledge of the type of work you would like to do after graduation. It is extremely helpful if you have good work ethics and a conscientious approach to completing assignments on time. Devoting the time and research necessary to complete the courses successfully is always a strong attribute.

*Do I need a computer of my own with Adobe Creative Cloud software to complete the coursework?*

Answer: Nashville State provides computer labs that can be used to complete assignments and Visual Communications classrooms are equipped with state of the art iMacs with the most current Adobe Creative Cloud software installed. Some of our classes are delivered online. If you take a class remotely, it is up to the student to ensure they have access to a computer that meets the hardware and software requirements of the class as stated in the class syllabus. While owning your own computer and having the Adobe Creative Cloud software installed is not required, it is highly recommended. A student usually makes greater progress and has a better grasp of the software when he or she has 24/7 access to a computer.

*I am only familiar with PC computers. Will I have a problem completing the coursework on Macintosh computers?*

Answer: All computers do basically the same thing. If a student has strong PC computer skills, the VISCOM department offers a subscription to [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com), an online video tutorial website that will get them up to speed on the basics.

*I have some previous work experience related to the graphic design or photography industry. Can any of my work experience count towards my degree?*

Answer: If you have previous work experience that is related to the Visual Communications, then you can meet with an advisor in our department. Credit can be given for previous experience if the student can formally document, with third party agreement, that they created the work. This is done on a case-by-case basis. Up to 10 hours of advanced credit can be awarded for prior work experience.

*I can’t draw, does that matter?*

Answer: It would be extremely helpful if you had some creative ability prior to entering a career in visual communications. In graphic design, sketching ideas is important in the design process. Creating storyboards are required in the Multimedia concentration. Although some basic drawing skills could be extremely useful, it isn’t absolutely critical.

*I’m entering the photography program, what kind of camera do I need?*

Students entering the program will need to have a digital SLR camera. There are a wide variety of options out there to fit all budgets, and the answer to that question will depend on your personal and professional goals. As you progress through the program you will need a variety of other equipment including, but not limited to a film camera, detachable flash and external hard drive. It is recommended that you meet with an advisor in the Photography program if you have questions about which camera to buy. The website [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com) is a great source of camera comparisons.