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### Gardner-Webb Offers New Degree Programs in Graphic Design

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# Gardner-Webb Offers New Degree Programs in Graphic Design

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Office of University  
Communications

March 15, 2017

## *Associate of Arts and Bachelor of Arts Begin in Fall 2017*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University has finalized plans to offer new degree programs in the Department of Communication & New Media. Beginning in fall 2017, students can choose either an associate's degree or bachelor's degree in graphic design.

students studying in a computer lab

“Adding the associate's degree is an innovative approach,” offered Dr. Bob Carey, Chair of the Department of Communication & New Media. “We are giving students not only the necessary tools for the workplace, but also a liberal arts background emphasizing critical thinking and creativity.”

The associate's degree in graphic design will be the University's first Associate of Arts (AA) degree. The two-year program includes 66 total hours with 36 hours of general education courses. All of the AA general education requirements will fulfill those for the bachelor's degree. “The AA is intended to provide students with the technical skills needed to begin work in the field with the ability to either progress beyond the technician level—to move from being only an implementer to being a planner, decision maker and manager—or to return to GWU to complete a bachelor's degree,” explained Dr. David Yelton, GWU Associate Provost for Arts & Sciences.

Previously, graphic design was offered as a concentration within the communication studies major. The bachelor's degree expands the concentration and consists of 128 total hours with 54 in the major, which includes an internship experience plus required courses in art and marketing. “The addition of courses will give the students a broader scope of knowledge and skills, which will make them more competitive and attractive to potential employers,” observed Dr. Amanda Bridges, assistant professor of graphic design.

According to reports by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, North Carolina ranks in the higher percentile in the country for employment of graphic designers. “Graphic design is a growing industry which is becoming increasingly competitive, so the transition and addition of these degrees will prepare our students to go out and secure these highly sought after positions,” Bridges noted. “These programs are a natural fit in the Department of Communication & New Media, because graphic design is a form of visual communication relying heavily on up-to-date software and technology.”

For more information about the new programs in graphic design, contact Dr. Amanda W. Bridges, assistant professor of graphic design, 704-406-2137 or [awbridges@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:awbridges@gardner-webb.edu).

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*