The Visual Communication Design program educates and trains designers for the communication needs of industry and society. Emphasis is placed on the conception, creation, planning and realization of visual solutions to complex problems in contemporary culture. Students integrate methodology, prototyping, aesthetics, human factors, technology, materials, context and audience to develop strategies and solutions that give form to print, screen and the built environment. Faculty emphasize the objectives of design rather than the process of production, and encourage innovative visual ideas that inform, interpret, instruct or persuade the intended user across the spectrum of application.

The success of the program is evidenced by the receipt of numerous national and international student design awards/scholarships as well as significant publications. Three international design journals, Novum (Germany), IDEA (Japan), and Art and Design (China) have produced major articles on design education featuring the University of Washington program of Visual Communication Design.

Visual Communication Design is one of the largest undergraduate programs in the School. It has evolved over the past 20 years into a professional program primarily aimed at visual communication in the corporate, institutional and municipal sectors. It is an intensive program emphasizing visual problem solving, organizational skills, and information theory. The curriculum includes all phases of typography, information design, design systems, exhibition design, publication design, new media, and visual methods/processes.