

Curriculum Vitae

Thomas C. Adolphs

Assistant Professor of Graphic Design and Social Media Design Management
School of Art and Design
Northern Michigan University

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Education

Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Technical Communication, May 2018

Michigan Technological University

Dissertation Title: *Digitization of the Life-World*

Advisor: Dr. Michael Bowler; Committee Members: Dr. Stefka Hristova, Dr. Robert Johnson, and Charles Wallace

M.A. in Rhetoric and Technical Communication, December 2011

Michigan Technological University

Thesis Title: *The Work of Photography: Exploring the Ability of Photography to Disclose "The World"*

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Summa Cum Laude, December 2009

Northern Michigan University

Academic Appointments and Teaching Experience

Northern Michigan University (August 20, 2023 - Present)

Assistant Professor of Graphic Design and Social Media Design Management, School of Art and Design

Selected courses taught: AD 118 / ARTD 218 Graphic Design Foundations; AD 218 / AD 318A Typography and Layout; AD 418A / AD 418 Interactive Design and User Experience; AD 418B / AD 488 Branding and Social Media; AD 492 Internship in Art and Design; AD 108 Artificial Intelligence and Visual Art (in development for Fall 2026)

Michigan Technological University (2022 - 2023)

Assistant Teaching Professor of Graphic Design and Digital Media

Michigan Technological University (2021 - 2022)

Visiting Assistant Professor of Graphic Design

Finlandia University (2016 - 2021)

Assistant Professor of Graphic Design

Michigan Technological University (2020)

Photography Adjunct

Michigan Technological University (2016 - 2017)

Graphic Design Adjunct

Finlandia University (2015 - 2016)

Communications Adjunct and Adviser

Michigan Technological University (2010 - 2015)

Graduate Teaching Instructor in Humanities

Selected courses taught: Digital Imaging (HU 2633); Digital Media (HU 2642);
Graphic Design (HU 2645); Digital Photography (HU 2632); Composition (UN 2001);
Revisions (UN 2001)

Michigan Technological University (2010 - 2012)

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Popular Culture (HU 3860)

Curriculum and Program Development

- * Collaborated with Professor Keith Ellis to revise the Graphic Design curriculum, finalize key program decisions in Winter 2025, and implement the revised curriculum in Fall 2025.
- * Led course redesign and transition work connected to the move from AD 118 to ARTD 218, AD 218 to AD 318A, AD 418A to AD 418, and AD 418B to AD 488; AD 492 was retired as part of the broader curriculum overhaul.
- * Oversaw Social Media Design Management and worked with the Business School on Social Media Design Management program review and revision.
- * Developed AD 108 *Artificial Intelligence and Visual Art*, planned for Fall 2026 as an AI-focused lecture course at Northern Michigan University.

Advising, Mentoring, and Recruitment

- * Faculty mentor for AD 303 Individual Art Review and AD 499 students, 2024 - Present.
- * Conducted campus visit tours and participated in Wildcat Weekend recruitment events, 2023 - 2025.
- * Participated in Major for a Day, 2025.
- * Produced individualized tutorial videos and one-on-one advising support related to internships, employment, and design projects for students.
- * Collaborated with Senior Creative Services Director Mike Forester on photo and video materials used in regional television marketing, 2024.

Administration, Service, and Leadership

- * Co-Lead, Faculty Learning Committee, Teaching and Learning Center, Northern Michigan University, 2025 - Present.

- * At-Large Member, Executive Committee, School of Art and Design, Northern Michigan University, 2025.
- * Faculty Advisor, AIGA Club / CMD+C, Northern Michigan University, 2024 - Present.
- * Member, Educational Technology Resources and Policy Committee (ETRPC), Northern Michigan University, 2023 - 2024.
- * Member, Northern Michigan AI Literacy Initiative, Northern Michigan University, Winter 2025.
- * Member, IT Specialist Staff Search Committee, Northern Michigan University, 2025.
- * Collaboration with Gender and Sexuality Studies, Diversity Common Reader Program, Northern Michigan University, 2024.
- * Workshop Leader, Art Scramble, Northern Michigan University, 2023 - 2025.
- * Participant, Foundations Common Theme Project, Northern Michigan University, 2023 - 2025.
- * Organizer, Hamilton Type Museum professional development trip with AIGA / CMD+C, 2025.
- * Chair, Humanities Media Student Showcase, Michigan Technological University, Spring 2023.
- * Independent Design Consultant, Michigan Technological University, 2021 - Present.
- * Member, Media Committee, Michigan Technological University, 2021 - Present.
- * Chair and Mac Lab Coordinator, Finlandia University, 2016 - 2020.
- * Member, Career and Technical Education Center, Finlandia University and Copper Country ISD, 2018 - 2020.
- * Member, Curriculum Committee, Finlandia University, 2020.
- * Member, Assessment Committee, Finlandia University, 2016 - 2019.
- * Chair, Advising Committee, Finlandia University, 2016 - 2019.
- * Member, Faculty Council Committee, Finlandia University, 2016 - 2019.
- * Member, Learning Management System Ad Hoc Committee, Finlandia University, 2015.
- * Designer and Co-Coordinator, Biannual International Meeting of the North American Society for Exile Studies, Michigan Technological University, 2015.
- * Coordinator, Establishing Digital Humanities Conference, Michigan Technological University, 2015.
- * Director, Humanities Graduate Student Colloquium, Michigan Technological University, 2013.
- * Humanities Graduate Coordinator, Michigan Technological University, 2011 - 2012.

Community and Public Engagement

- * Member, Marquette Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee, July 2024 - April 2026.
- * Vice Chair, Marquette Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee, April 2025 - April 2026.
- * Chair, Annual Marquette Art Awards Committee, 2025 - 2026.
- * Judge, Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, 2024, 2025.
- * Judge, County Fair Art Awards, 2025.

Awards and Certifications

- * Finalist for the 2023 Distinguished Teaching Award, Michigan Technological University, Spring 2023.
- * Member of the Michigan Tech Academy of Teaching Excellence, Michigan Technological University, Spring 2023.
- * Top 10% Instructor Evaluations, Michigan Technological University, Fall 2021.
- * ETOM Online Teaching Certification Course, Michigan Technological University, Summer 2020.
- * CSA Outstanding Teachers, Michigan Technological University, May 2015.
- * Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award, Michigan Technological University, 2014.
- * CSA Faculty with Excellent Teaching Evaluations, Michigan Technological University, May 2014.
- * CSA Outstanding Teachers, Michigan Technological University, April 2014.
- * CSA Outstanding Teachers, Michigan Technological University, July 2013.
- * Recognition of Professional Contribution to UN 2001, Michigan Technological University, 2012.
- * Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award, Michigan Technological University, 2011.
- * Invited Presenter to 2011 Composition Orientation, Michigan Technological University, 2011.

Conference Presentations and Academic Participation

- * Accepted collaborative presentation: "Digital Communication and Creation Across Disciplines." *2026 Upper Peninsula Teaching and Learning Conference (UPTLC)*. Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. May 28 - 29, 2026.
- * "Empowering Student Learning Through Hybridization." *Upper Peninsula Teaching Learning Conference*. Individual presentation. Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. May 25, 2022.
- * "Digital Media's Significance on the Perception of LGBTQ Persons." *RTC Graduate Colloquium*. Individual presentation. Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan. October 9, 2015.
- * "Solidarity of the Life-World: Facebook and the Image that United the LGBTQ Marriage Equality Movement." *Digital Queers 2015*. Individual presentation. The New School, New York City, New York. June 25, 2015.
- * "Understanding BuzzFeed.com: Exploring the Practical and Theoretical Implications of Digital News." *Writing Across the Peninsula (WAP) Fifth Annual Conference*. Panel presentation on *Digital Landscapes and Engaging in the Hybrid Environment* with Rebecca Miner, Joel Beatty, and Elsa Roberts. Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. October 9, 2014.
- * "Brews, Bros, and Ballgames: Selling American Masculinity." *Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG)*. Panel on *Changing Views of Men and Masculinity* with M. Kathleen Rister, Johnny Jones, Gloria Pindi

Nziba, and Amanda Patrick. Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan. October 11, 2013.

Professional Memberships and Development

- * Educator Member-at-Large, AIGA / Professional Association for Design.
- * *Revolve CC Conference*, Marquette, Michigan. November 3 - 4, 2023.
- * *Revolve CC Conference*, Marquette, Michigan. November 8 - 9, 2024.
- * *Adobe MAX 2020 Creative Conference*, online. October 9, 2020.
- * *Adobe EdMax*, San Jose, California. Fall 2025.
- * *CiderCon*, product marketing and digital advertisement, Chicago, Illinois. February 2017.

Exhibitions, Creative Work, and Publications

- * *2024 Northern Michigan Bi-Annual Art Show / NMU Faculty Biennial*, Northern Michigan University. Exhibited *Little Presque Isle*, *AIGA NMU Poster*, and *Revolve CC 2024*. 2024.
- * Poster and design work for *Revolve CC Conference*. 2024.
- * *Fragmentation of Self*. Rozsa Featured Artist Series, Rozsa Gallery, Rozsa Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan Technological University. Digital photo-manipulations. Summer 2023.
- * *The Daily Motions of Quarantine*. Finlandia University International School of Art and Design, 2021 Faculty Show. Digital vectors and After Effects. 2021.
- * *In-Between*. Finlandia University International School of Art and Design, 2019 Faculty Show. Digital painting. 2019.
- * *Evolution of Gitche Gumee Ciderworks Brand and Style Guide*. Finlandia University International School of Art and Design, 2017 Faculty Show. Digital. 2017.
- * "The next statement is true. The previous statement is false." *Flaunt Magazine, The Selfie Edition*, July 2014, p. 107.
- * *Upper Michigan Landscapes*. Finlandia University, Hancock, Michigan. 2011.
- * "Minefield." Photographer in *Earth Island Journal*, Summer 2010, p. 40.
- * *Stanley Cup in U.P.* Ambassador, Houghton, Michigan. 2010 - Present.
- * *The God of Consumption*. *Luminance Art Exhibition*, Devos Art Museum, Marquette, Michigan. 2008.
- * *President's House Art Exhibit*. Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. 2007.

Related Professional Experience

- * Design Consultant, Monte Consulting, Upper Midwest. 2023 - Present.
- * Production and Graphics, Gitche Gumee Cider Works, Upper Michigan. 2015 - Present.

- * Freelance Graphic Designer and Wedding Photographer, Upper Michigan and surrounding areas. 2006 - Present.
- * Michigan Tech Photographer, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan. 2005 - 2006.