Book Arts, MFA

The MFA degree focuses on book arts as a hands-on practice, as a creative medium, and as a historical and cultural phenomenon. Its principal objectives are to provide aesthetic and scholarly contexts for the making of creative work and for the study of book history, arts, and technologies. It also offers a structured program in book-related disciplines for graduate students interested in studio arts, in librarianship, and in literary and cultural history.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn:

- breadth of hands-on and contextual (studio, art historical, cultural) experience with art, craft, and design disciplines within the book arts;
- depth of study within one or more craft disciplines within the book arts;
- sustained, project-based problem solving accomplished through art-making;
- proficiency in hand skills (scale: competence, proficiency, excellence/mastery);
- interdisciplinary synthesis of studio art, scholarly practice, and material analysis;
- critical thinking within and across these book-based disciplines; and
- professional development and exposure to career tracks.

Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts program in book arts requires a minimum of 60 s.h. of graduate credit, including a thesis. Students complete core courses and work with a faculty advisor to design an individualized curriculum spanning several studio practice disciplines: artist book work, bookbinding, lettering arts, digital book work, papermaking, or letterpress printing. The degree culminates with the successful completion of a thesis.

The MFA requires the following coursework.

Studio Requirements

Courses from the areas below should be selected in consultation with an advisor.

Required Core Electives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three of these (9 s.h.):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4205/BKAT:4205</td>
<td>Bookbinding I: Materials and Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4300/ARTS:4300</td>
<td>Letterpress I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4400/ARTS:4400</td>
<td>History of Western Letterforms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4415/ARTS:4415</td>
<td>Introduction to Classical Calligraphy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:5110/BKAT:5110</td>
<td>Papermaking I: East Asia, Nepal, and Contemporary Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:5130/BKAT:5120</td>
<td>Papermaking I: Central Asia, Europe, and Contemporary Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
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Graduate Book Arts Workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UICB:6520</td>
<td>Graduate Book Arts Workshop (must be taken three times for a total of 9 s.h.)</td>
<td>9</td>
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Book Art Seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UICB:6510</td>
<td>Book Art Seminar: History, Practice, and Critique</td>
<td>3</td>
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Studio Practice Electives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio practice courses</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scholarly Inquiry and Material Analysis Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two of the following, or students may request to use related courses approved by the head of the scholarly inquiry or material analysis area (6 s.h.):</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UICB:3140/ENGL:3140</td>
<td>Literature and the Book</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>UICB:3142/ENGL:3142</td>
<td>Topics in Book History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:3980/ARTH:3980</td>
<td>American Print Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4150/ENGL:4150/SLIS:4150</td>
<td>Introduction to Book Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4910/HIST:4422/SLIS:4910</td>
<td>The Book in the Middle Ages</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4920/HIST:4429/SLIS:4920</td>
<td>The Book in Early Modern Europe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:4930/HIST:4430</td>
<td>Topics in Material Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:5600/SLIS:5600</td>
<td>Reading Culture: History and Research in Print and Digital Media</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:6100</td>
<td>Book Studies Proseminar</td>
<td>3</td>
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Additional Electives

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective courses (may include 0–6 s.h. of thesis credit; see below)</td>
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</table>

Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can be taken for a maximum of 6 s.h.:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UICB:6540</td>
<td>MFA Thesis Hours</td>
<td>arr.</td>
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Combined Programs

MFA/MA in Library and Information Science

The Center for the Book and the School of Library and Information Science offer a combined Master of Fine Arts in book arts/Master of Arts in library and information science. The combined degree program allows students with strong interests in the book arts, book history, and material book studies to also gain expertise in library and information science. The degrees provide book artists and librarians with credentials reflecting a depth of skills and knowledge that have been used to secure positions in special collections libraries and archives. Students in the combined program earn both degrees by completing fewer semester hours than if each degree was completed separately.

Separate application to each degree program is required. Applicants must be admitted to both programs before they may be admitted to the combined degree program. For more information, see the MA in library and information science in the catalog.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website. Visit Admissions on the Center for the Book website for more information.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Course Title Hours

First Year

Any Semester

Required Core Elective
3

Required Core Elective
3

Required Core Elective
3

Studio Practice Elective
3

Studio Practice Elective
3

Studio Practice Elective
3

Scholarly Inquiry or Material Analysis Course
3

Total Hours
21

Second Year

Any Semester

Studio Practice Elective
3

Studio Practice Elective
3

Studio Practice Elective (if needed)
3

Scholarly Inquiry or Material Analysis Course
3

Hours
12

Third Year

Any Semester

Additional Elective
3

Additional Elective
3

Additional Elective
3

Additional Elective (if needed)
3

Additional Elective (if needed)
3

Hours
15

Fall

UICB:6520 Graduate Book Arts Workshop
3

Exam: Final Exam-Thesis
0 - 6

Total Hours
60 - 66

Notes:

a Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.
b Choose three courses for a total of 9 s.h. from UICB:4205, UICB:4300, UICB:4400, UICB:4415, UICB:5110, UICB:5130.
c Complete a total of 15 s.h. of studio practice elective courses. Work with academic advisor to determine appropriate graduate coursework and sequence.
e Must be taken three times for a total of 9 s.h.
f Complete a total of 15 s.h. of additional elective courses. Work with academic advisor to determine appropriate graduate coursework and sequence; see department website for specifics.
g Hours may be required for this additional elective if fewer than 6 s.h. of thesis credits are completed.
h Maximum of 6 s.h. of thesis credit allowed.