

Art, MFA

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking and conceptual problem solving within the particular focus and practice of their field;
- demonstrate a personal vocabulary, approach, and vision in creative work;
- demonstrate knowledge of historical, social, and cultural perspectives in relation to visual art and design;
- demonstrate technical proficiency in relation to the tools, techniques, and materials used in their field; and
- develop a professional package that includes a curriculum vitae/résumé, statement about their work, images of their work, and prepare materials (i.e., teaching and research statement, online portfolio, etc.) for specific careers as a professional emerging artist/designer or in teaching, art, or design-related positions.

Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts program in art requires a minimum of 60 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00. The degree is offered with thesis and with emphases in the following studio art disciplines: ceramics, graphic design, three-dimensional (3D) design, drawing, intermedia and video art, jewelry and metal arts, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture. Students must earn at least 24 s.h. of credit for the degree at the University of Iowa, including approved credit earned for the MA in art.

MFA students must hold an MA in art equivalent to that offered by the University of Iowa. Transfer credit is decided by faculty review. Following completion of the MA, students may be invited into the MFA program.

Required Courses

The 60 s.h. of credit required for the MFA includes at least 24 s.h. in a primary studio art emphasis, at least 12 s.h. in a secondary studio art emphasis, and 6 s.h. in art history and theory of art (if not already taken). Students must earn 8 s.h. in their primary studio art emphasis and 4 s.h. in their secondary studio art emphasis after being granted an MA in art. Students provide five images of their MFA work for the Graduate Archive.

Committee Review

Students must undergo an MFA committee review. They also must complete a written thesis and possibly a studio thesis. Students are reviewed by their committees at the end of the semester prior to the semester they intend to graduate.

Students are responsible for identifying a degree chair by the semester prior to the semester they intend to graduate. Committee members are selected in consultation with the degree chair by Sept. 15 for spring or summer graduation and Feb. 15 for fall graduation. The committee is comprised of the degree committee chair and three members of the graduate faculty at the assistant professor rank or above (two graduate faculty members from a student's primary studio discipline, one graduate faculty member from a student's secondary studio discipline, and an additional member).

Adjunct faculty, lecturers, and visiting professors may serve on degree committees with approval of the degree committee chair and a Graduate College petition request (renewable every three years).

MFA students sign up for review through the graduate program coordinator. They obtain a form to be signed by both the degree committee members and a faculty member in the second emphasis studio discipline. These forms must be returned to the office no later than the university's official midterm day by 4:30 p.m.

Thesis

A thesis abstract is given to all degree committee members and is due by Sept. 15 for spring or summer graduation and by Feb. 15 for fall graduation. The thesis chair is responsible for meeting with the student immediately thereafter to direct thesis content and to coordinate meeting with the full committee.

The complete thesis in final form must be given to all committee members at least four weeks prior to the MFA exhibition week. Graduate College regulations covering the specific requirements of the written thesis are found on the Graduate College Thesis and Dissertation website. The thesis must be as complete as possible, including images (may be black and white or color photocopies) of approved figures that are part of the final thesis. The graduate program coordinator provides a student with complete thesis/artist statement procedures, including the Graduate College calendar.

A thesis defense of the MFA work must be scheduled with the candidate's committee during the final semester in residence. The MFA exhibition is considered the final examination and is where the degree committee reviews the thesis and artwork.

The thesis must be submitted by the Graduate College deadline. Committee members receive an email that provides a link to the finalized (post-format review) thesis and prompts them to verify the manuscript electronically; committee verification happens after the Graduate College format review. Any corrections to the thesis required by the graduate examiner or the degree committee should be completed immediately.

Students may earn 1 s.h. for writing a technical or substantial thesis by registering for ARTS:7000 MFA Written Thesis, with approval of the thesis supervisor. Thesis credit earned in an MA program is not applicable to MFA requirements.

Admission

Application materials should be uploaded onto a student's admissions profile (see instructions below under "Application Procedures"). All applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College and the School of Art, Art History, and Design requirements.

The deadline to submit materials to the Office of Graduate Admissions is Feb. 1 for studio art programs; admission is for the following fall.

School of Art, Art History, and Design Requirements

Prospective graduate students must meet the School of Art, Art History, and Design's admission requirements for the specific degree program they plan to enter. They must submit application materials to the university's Office of Graduate Admissions and to the specific program they wish to enter.

Program-specific application requirements and deadline dates are listed below.

All applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Application Procedures

Prospective students may apply online through the Office of Admissions website. After submitting an application, applicants will receive email instructions on how to access their admissions profile on MyUI. Applicants then upload the required supplemental documents through a secure portal.

Required documents include transcripts from all colleges and universities an applicant has attended, contact information for three individuals (able to assess applicants' potential for graduate study) designated to provide letters of recommendation, and a statement of purpose.

Applicants should consult the Studio Art Graduate Bulletin on the School of Art, Art History, and Design website. No separate application is necessary for scholarships or teaching/research assistantships for studio art applicants.

Studio art applicants' portfolio requirements are listed below. Images in the portfolio should be uploaded as PDF files no larger than 72 dpi and 1240 by 1240 pixels. File size must not exceed 18 MB. Images must be numbered according to the order they are to be presented to the admissions committee, beginning with 01. Applicants must include an inventory list that includes each image's name, title, medium, size, and approximate date of work, as well as their name and emphasis. They may supply a link to their personal website.

Portfolio contents and submission requirements for each program are as follows.

- Ceramics: 10 to 20 images.
- Three-dimensional (3D) design, and jewelry and metal arts: eight images in the primary studio art discipline and two in a second discipline.
- Graphic design: documentation of 15 to 20 projects. Applicant should include a brief description of each work, illustrated with embedded still images and supplemented by links to online media. The precise number of images varies according to the nature of the work. Contact the School of Art, Art History, and Design with questions.
- Painting and drawing: eight images in the primary studio art medium (either painting or drawing) and two in a second medium.
- Photography: 15 to 20 images.
- Printmaking: 10 to 20 images.
- Sculpture and intermedia: applicants submit the following depending on their preferred area of emphasis.
- Sculpture: 20 images in sculpture, including details, and two or three images in a second medium. Video links may be included.
- Intermedia: documentation of 5 to 10 projects, including a brief description of each work illustrated with embedded still images and supplemented by links to online media. The precise number of images varies according to the nature of the work; contact the School of Art, Art History, and Design with questions.

The Office of Graduate Admissions notifies all applicants by mail of admission decisions.

Financial Support

Fellowships, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, and tuition scholarships are awarded to graduate students on the basis of artistic and/or scholarly record.

Iowa Arts Fellowships

The Graduate College awards Iowa Arts Fellowships to two incoming or first-year studio art graduate students each year. For more information, see Iowa Arts Fellowship on the Graduate College website.

Teaching and Research Assistantships

Assistantships are awarded to graduate students on the basis of academic record, promise as scholars or artists, and demonstrated ability to do the job. Quality of performance in one's graduate program at Iowa is generally the major criterion for awarding teaching assistantships. The number of hours of work required depends on the amount of the award.

Scholarships and Fellowships

The School of Art, Art History, and Design offers a variety of scholarships and fellowships made possible by contributions from alumni who wish to support promising artists and scholars. These awards are made on the same basis as teaching and research assistantships.

Information for graduate scholarships and fellowships is included in the admissions package and is available from the School of Art, Art History, and Design main office.

Renewal or reappointment for fellowships and assistantships depends on adequate progress toward the degree (students must accumulate at least 18 s.h. of graduate credit each calendar year and maintain a grade-point average above the required minimum) and satisfactory performance of assistantship duties.

Decisions on assistantships and financial aid generally are made during the latter part of the spring semester for the following academic year.

Career Advancement

Many graduates pursue careers that match their degree specializations, for example, commercial or graphic designer, conservation or museum curator or administrator, art educator, public artist, or community art center coordinator or instructor.

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.

Art, MFA

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
60 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; graduate transfer credits allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^{a, b, c}		
Students must hold an MA in art equivalent to that offered by the University of Iowa; following completion of the MA, students may be invited into the MFA program.		
Students may pursue certificates (including the book studies/book arts and technologies certificate) in conjunction with completing the degree requirements for the MFA; for more information check with the Graduate Program Coordinator.		
Hours		0
First Year		
Fall		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Elective ^e		3
History and Theory of Art course ^f		3
Hours		10
Spring		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Secondary emphasis course ^g		4
Elective ^e		2
Hours		10
Second Year		
Fall		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Secondary emphasis course ^g		4
History and Theory of Art course ^f		3
Hours		11
Spring		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Elective ^e		3
Elective ^e		2
Hours		9
Third Year		
Fall		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Secondary emphasis course ^g		4
Elective ^e		3
MFA Committee Review ^h		
Hours		11
Spring		
Primary emphasis course ^d		4
Elective ^e		4
ARTS:7000	MFA Written Thesis ⁱ	1
Final Exam ^j		
Hours		9
Total Hours		60

b The degree is offered with thesis and with emphases in the following studio art disciplines: ceramics, graphic design, three-dimensional (3D) design, drawing, intermedia and video art, jewelry and metal arts, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture.

c 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.

d Need only additional 8 s.h. after completion of MA.

e Work with faculty advisor to determine appropriate coursework and sequence; see General Catalog and department website for specifics.

f If completed for MA, may choose an elective course, excluding readings and directed studies.

g Need only additional 4 s.h. after completion of MA.

h Provide abstract of thesis; typically occurs at the end of the semester prior to degree completion.

i Students may earn 1 s.h. for writing a technical or substantial thesis; counts as elective credit.

j Written thesis.

a Students provide five images of their MFA work for the Graduate Archive.