Department of Art

The Master of Fine Arts degree programs (Graphic Design, Studio Art) provide students with a comprehensive experience leading to the terminal MFA degree. The degree programs exhibit the professional intensity and high standards expected of all terminal degree programs. Recognizing the close scholarly and functional relationship between Art and Design, the MFA is cross-disciplinary and combines technical skills, creative work, inquiry, and investigation in ways that focus on the advanced preparation of artists and designers in their areas of specialization.

The MFA programs enable degree holders to become: professional practitioners in art and design, educators, leaders in critical thinking, and significant contributors in the contemporary dialog of their discipline through research and scholarship.

Art Degrees


ART 7151 Design Activism
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Students work together as one unit to investigate current social issues and how to bring about social change through art.

ART 7152 Design & Semiotics
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Theoretical and Philosophical principles of signs, signifiers and what is represented is applied to the study of how meaning is created in graphic design. Investigated through studio projects, students will create work that anchors or relays meaning in visual communication.

ART 7153 Design Explorations
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Theoretical and practical application of design problems.

ART 7154 Design for the User
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Focus is placed on the relationship between the user and the principles of tangible design. Coursework includes research of existing problems in design, what are the needs of the user, and how design can be restructured to fill those needs to improve user experience.

ART 7190 Graduate Studio Practice
3-6 Credit Hours. 0 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.
Intensive studio practice provides the structure for candidates to pursue creative research in order to expand the depth and complexity of their studio based line-of-inquiry, as well as their ability to critically evaluate, understand, and develop their work in the context of contemporary art issues and interdisciplinary practices. Course may be repeated for credit.

ART 7251 Design Communication
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
This course explores the problem-solving methods when fusing verbal and visual language into one cohesive body of work. Coursework will emphasize critical readings and analysis of design theories.

ART 7252 Design Systems
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Advanced explorations in branding and brand elements. Students will research critical issues in branding while developing a pliable brand that spans into a variety of collateral.

ART 7253 Design Forms
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Advanced experimentation of visual forms and aesthetics in design and how it impacts user interpretation and meaning.

ART 7254 Design of Information
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Advanced exploration into the theory and practice of information design. Students will research types of information, different information structures and how information can impact meaning and effectiveness.

ART 7351 Design Methods
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Advanced exploration of a variety of methods used to solve visual problems. This can include, but are not limited to, metaphor, rhetoric, deconstructive theory, and narrative.

ART 7352 Design and Typographic Form
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
This course will integrate typographic theory in graphic design practice. Using typographic skills students will effectively apply type within various contexts, such as print, web, informational, poetic. This course will emphasize the importance of content, audience and purpose.

ART 7353 Design Ethics
3 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
This course explores critical issues within the design profession, and their impact on design and society. Students will become more aware of their priorities and goals as working designers, and develop broader awareness of their place as designers; and design's place in the culture. Issues reviewed in coursework will further graduate students' positions as responsible leaders within the professional community.

ART 7377 Graphic Design Art History
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.
This course is a survey of the history of graphic communications from prehistory to the present, and will evaluate the impact of culture and technology on the development of graphic design in different historical contexts. Content includes the relation of art and graphic design, techniques of graphic representation, current trends, and the importance of graphic communication in contemporary society.

ART 7890 Professional Practices in Art
1-9 Credit Hours. 1-9 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.
Strategies emerging artists need to know for career success including studio practices, finances, writing and securing grants, pursuing exhibitions and venues to sell artworks, copyright and legal issues for the artist, commission projects, marketing strategies, portfolio design collateral and web presence.

Cross Listing(s): ART 7890S.

ART 7890S Professional Practices in Art
1-9 Credit Hours. 1-9 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.
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Cross Listing(s): ART 7890.

ART 7899 Art History Travel Research
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.
A study of important art works on location at museums, galleries and other sites. Specific topics and locations to be announced.
ART 8030  Selected Topics in Art
3 Credit Hours.  3 Lecture Hours.  0 Lab Hours.
Specific themes in the visual arts. Topics vary.
Cross Listing(s): ART 8030S.

ART 8030S  Selected Topics in Art
3 Credit Hours.  3 Lecture Hours.  0 Lab Hours.
Specific themes in the visual arts. Topics vary.
Cross Listing(s): ART 8030.

ART 8830  Readings and Research in Art
3 Credit Hours.  3 Lecture Hours.  0 Lab Hours.
Classic and contemporary readings in the field and practice in research
and writing standards for theses support paper.

ART 8999  Master of Fine Arts Thesis
1-6 Credit Hours.  0 Lecture Hours.  0 Lab Hours.
Provides the Master of Fine Arts degree candidate the opportunity of
presenting a visual thesis. The candidate will present an exhibition which
will be supported by a written defense. A major professor will supervise the
creation of the thesis work and the written documentation.