

# **Student Guide To The Art Department Master of Fine Arts Program**

## ADMISSION

The web site for graduate school information is [www.uaf.edu/gradsch/](http://www.uaf.edu/gradsch/). Students wishing to enroll must submit a graduate application for admissions online: <http://www.uaf.edu/admissions/apply/index.html>, submit official college transcripts, a letter of intent and three letters of recommendations to the UAF Office of Admissions. A separate portfolio of work; including 20 images of work or the appropriate equivalent depending on the field of study, must be sent to the Art Department. (See below for image format requirements). The prerequisite for acceptance into our M.F.A. program is a B.F.A. or B.A. in Art. The application and all supporting materials for entrance into the Master of Fine Arts program are due March 1st for the following fall semester and October 1st for the spring semester.

Students who submit an exceptional portfolio with an undergraduate degree in another field will be accepted with the condition that they make up any deficiencies as determined by their graduate committee. The same requirements are observed with the determination of previous schooling from a University other than UAF. Students with a degree from UAF will be considered if they have attended full time, one year, at an MFA program at another institution.

## PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE MFA PROGRAM

Upon being admitted to the program the student is assigned a graduate committee chair (who will be the student's major advisor). It is the student's responsibility to contact the Art Department Graduate Coordinator or their graduate committee chair no later than May 1st to commit to the program.

## GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The Graduate Committee shall consist of three Art Department full time faculty who teach graduate courses. Additional members may be added with the consent of the committee.

## 15 HOUR REVIEW

All students are admitted with a provisional status and must complete fifteen credit hours of coursework, with a grade of "B" or better in each course. Deficiency requirements must be completed by the end of the first year. Any dead line extension beyond one year must have the approval of the MFA Committee Chair and the Graduate Coordinator. The student must undergo a 15-hour review. The student must undergo the 15-hour review at the end of the semester during which the 15 credit hours were completed. Normally this will be the second semester in the program. The review will be conducted by the entire Art Department faculty involved in teaching graduate courses. If the 15-hour review is not passed a second 15-hour review may be offered but must be conducted the following semester. If failed a second time, the student will be terminated from the MFA program.

## GRADUATE ANNUAL REVIEWS

An annual review of student progress is required. This summary review is in addition to the progress monitored by the individual's committee that meets on a regular basis during the semester. At this time an annual report form of the Graduate Advisory Committee will be completed and is due to the Graduate School by May 15th. Progress will be noted of successes and deficiencies towards the thesis or project.

## COURSE LOAD AND TRANSFER CREDITS

Credits taken prior to admission and during the MFA program may be counted as part of the student's program of study with approval of the student's graduate committee and full faculty. This recommendation may be accepted as bypassing the 15-hour review process into full and regular status. The student is then required to undergo the regular annual reviews. The course load is determined in consultation with the student's committee chair. Maximum course load for 20 hour a week assistantships is 10 credit hours per semester. The tuition award covers up to 10 credits. Any additional credits are to be paid by the student with a maximum of 14 credits allowed with the assistantships.

## GRADES AND GRADE POINT AVERAGES

A student must achieve a grade point average of "B" (3.0) or better in all courses to remain in good standing. Grades below "C" cannot be used to meet the requirements of a graduate degree. A student receiving one "C" grade is placed on academic probation; two "C" grades are grounds for termination from the program. Transfer grades will be included in computing grade point averages. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be subject to an immediate status review by the Graduate Review Committee.

## MAXIMUM TIME LIMIT

Three years is the usual time spent earning an art MFA degree at UAF. Two years is the minimum, excluding transfer credits. All of the work towards a Master of Fine Arts degree must be completed within seven consecutive years.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MFA DEGREE

The program requires a minimum of 60 credits.  
43 credits studio areas all at the 600 level or above.  
5 credits Thesis or Project and Exhibit (taken the semester of graduation), Art 699 or Art 698.  
3 credits Current Problems, Art 690.  
3 credits Seminar in Art History, Art 663.  
6 credits art history/ humanities / philosophy elective.  
The 400 level classes in these areas can be taken with additional course requirements. 400-level courses must be letter-graded. Pass/Fail courses at the 400-level cannot count toward a graduate degree.

Students must take studio work in at least 2 studio areas. 20 credits are to be in the major area of study with 10 credits in a secondary area. The remaining 13 credits are comprised of Mentored Teaching in Art and studio credits.

Courses may be chosen from the following:

Art 601, Graduate Ceramics  
Art 603, Graduate Photography  
Art 605, Graduate Drawing  
Art 619, Graduate Life Drawing  
Art 607, Graduate Printmaking  
Art 609, Graduate Metalsmithing (not offered at this time)  
Art 611, Graduate Sculpture  
Art 613, Graduate Painting  
Art 648, Graduate Native Arts  
Art 671 Two- and Three-Dimensional Computer Design  
Art 672, Advanced Computer Visualization in Art  
Art 684, Multi Media Theory and Practice (computer based)  
Art 624, Field Artists of the North  
Art 625, Visual Images of the North  
\*Art 690, Current Problems  
\*Art 663, Seminar in Art History  
Art 673, History of the Role of the Artist  
\*Art 698, MFA Project or Art 699 Thesis  
\*\*Art 661, Mentored Teaching in Art  
\*Required courses for the MFA.  
\*\*Graduate students are required to be enrolled every semester.  
Art 695, 697 and 693 (independent study and special topics courses) can only be taken up to a combined total of 12 credits.  
Art 663 can be repeated up to a total of 12 credits.

## MFA PROJECT OR THESIS

A public exhibition displayed in a professional manner is produced as a culmination of the MFA experience and is a requirement for the granting of the MFA degree in Art. At the completion of this degree, the student gives a public lecture and defense of their project or thesis work followed by an oral defense examination session by the full Art Department faculty. A preliminary run through of the public presentation with the graduate student committee is recommended.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the graduate student to follow all procedures and requirements of the Graduate Program. The student will consult with his/her graduate committee to produce a MFA Project or Thesis Proposal. Normally studio art majors do the MFA Project rather than a Thesis which is an exclusively written document. The MFA Project Proposal must include a statement of purpose that describes the theme of the exhibition, the concepts involved with the work, the technical expertise that goes into the production of the art, and the tentative gallery dates. The proposal will be submitted one semester prior to the MFA Show.

After installation of the show a written summary paper, with slides and digital archive or appropriate media documentation will be submitted for committee evaluation.

### MFA IMAGE REQUIREMENTS

These formatting requirements are for applicants to the program and for final exhibition documentation. Visual documentation is a critical component of your application and documentation and will be considered carefully during the review process. Images must reflect the actual work accurately. Documentation of the final exhibition is a requirement for graduation. If collaborative work, detail your contribution.

Applicants must submit a minimum of 20 images on a CD or 20 slides.

Graduates must submit as well, a minimum of 20 images on a CD and 20 slides of the final thesis exhibition. The final documentation CD must be a gold CD for archival longevity.

Digital images on the CD must be in JPEG format in RGB mode, no Word or Access files.

Recommended format for image size is approximately 1200X900 pixels or 4X3" with 300 dpi. CD must be in MS Windows readable format.

For video files, submit a maximum of one video file no longer than five minutes. Submit files that can be accessed with one of the following movie players: Quicktime or Windows Media Player. Files should use standard codecs/compression for the movie players. Alternatively submit a DVD playable with standard US DVD players (regional code free or code 0).

An information sheet must be included with image submissions. For CDs and DVDs this should be a color contact sheet of thumbnails of the images with no more than 20 images per sheet. Include the following information on the contact sheet: name, title of piece, size (height X width X depth"), medium and date created. Slide information sheets should contain the same information but need not include thumbnail images.

Test your digital documentation before submission to ensure that it is formatted correctly for both PCs and Macs

### ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION:

The Comprehensive Examination is an oral exam based on the student's education and artistic development during the student's time in the program. The examination will take place prior to the Project Show, and will be conducted by the entire art faculty at must include at least one examiner from outside the Art Department who is approved by the other members of the committee.

Outline of Examination Content:

- A. Questions about the student's work in terms of concepts, technical accomplishment, development of a personal style, and possible future directions.
- B. Technical and aesthetic questions related to the area(s) of concentration.
- C. Questions concerning significance of the project for the discipline, field of expertise and how the thesis exhibition in particular focuses these concerns.
- D. The student should demonstrate a developed knowledge of contemporary art and art history related to their work including precedents and scholarly writing.

### GRADUATE PROJECT PROPOSAL

The project proposal is a comprehensive document that helps focus and clarify the intentions of graduate students beginning to consider the MFA project exhibition. The process of creating the thesis exhibition often evolves in ways that cannot be anticipated in a proposal so later modification of the plan is normal. However, by submitting a proposal for a set of intentions, working methods, and overall aesthetic attitudes to paper, the on-going dialog between the student and his/her committee will be enriched and the final exhibition will be correspondingly stronger. The student's committee must approve this written proposal

before the student can enroll for the project course work. There will as well be a meeting of the student's committee to approve the show dates.

Content Outline for the Project Proposal:

- A. Proposal Abstract: one brief paragraph that outlines the scope of your thesis.
- B. Propositions, ideas, questions, and concepts to be explored.
- C. Your visual vocabulary, range of techniques and methods.
- D. A synopsis of thesis goals.
- E. Precedents including contemporary and historical artists and scholars to whom you feel a kinship.
- F. The significance of the project for your discipline and field of expertise.
- G. Criteria by which the project's success will be judged.
- H. An action plan for visual and conceptual organization of project including research necessary to complete the project as well as materials and processes needed, space requirements, and possible venues for exhibition. On campus and off campus resources necessary for your project should be detailed.
- I. Project feasibility and schedule for it's realization with alternative pathways to achieve the project goals.

## MFA GRADUATE PROJECT REPORT

The MFA Thesis Report is a comprehensive document that summarizes the MFA Project Exhibition. This report is normally an expanded and refined version of the project proposal and should include similar content specific to the final exhibition including possible future directions. Construct your analysis specifically to the works exhibited. This paper should be a substantial document of at least 2500 words. This paper should be reviewed and approved by the student's committee before final submission. Give a working draft copy to each of the full faculty and outside examiner prior to the public presentation and oral examination.

## CHECK SHEET FOR THE MFA PROCEDURES

### 1. Committee Selection

This is the student's primary faculty committee. The selection of this committee is the result of consultation between the committee chair and the student. The Committee must be selected during the first semester of enrollment in the MFA program. The committee's function is to guide and advise the student through the entire program. Changes in the make up of the committee must be formally submitted to the Graduate School. Faculty changes and sabbatical leaves will be taken into consideration when changes in committees are requested.

### 2. Graduate Study Plan

The student completes a working document of the graduate study plan subject to revision.

The form can be found on the web site at <http://www.uaf.edu/gradsch/>

This plan and completed form are required before the end of the second semester and must be approved by the student's committee chair and the Graduate Student Coordinator before submission to the Graduate School.

### 3. Work Reviews

The student must meet at least two times a semester with their committee, to discuss and review work in progress. The meetings should be spaced to accommodate new developments. Students should also meet with each full time Art Department faculty member once a semester for input from outside the regular committee. Before graduation a final committee meeting is to be held a minimum of three weeks prior to the oral examination. An Annual Report form must be submitted to the Graduate School by May 15<sup>th</sup> of every year. The student's committee chair and Graduate Coordinator are responsible for this document.

### 4. Full Faculty Review during MFA Student Shows

The student must meet with the entire faculty during the annual student MFA exhibition for comments on developments or new directions of their work.

### 5. Graduate Project Proposal

The student submits a written exhibition proposal that is approved by the Graduate Committee for inclusion in the student's permanent file. Give a copy to the Graduate Coordinator.

#### 6. Scheduling of Final Show Date

It is the student's responsibility to schedule their show for exhibition in the UAF Fine Arts Gallery or other exhibition space. To insure a space in the Fine Arts Gallery set the show date one year in advance.

#### 7. Application for Graduation

The student must apply for graduation the semester he/she decides to graduate. Apply through the UAF Registrar Office. A graduation fee is charged to the student and a credit check is requested.

#### 8. MFA Graduate Project Report

The MFA Project Report is a comprehensive document that summarizes the MFA Project Exhibition. This paper should be a substantial document of at least 2500 words. This paper should be reviewed and approved by the student's committee before final submission.

#### 9. Oral Examination

An oral examination is held in which the entire faculty and an outside examiner make an assessment of the work produced for the final exhibition. Be sure to inform all faculty of the schedule for the final oral review. If the outcome of the oral examination is negative, the student's status and requirements for the MFA will be determined at that time by the Graduate Committee.

#### 10. Image Documentation Requirements

A set of slides and digital archive fully documenting the exhibition is to be given to the Art Department Office prior to graduation. Take care to follow the approved format for these images.

### GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF REPORT ON MFA DEGREE THESIS EXHIBITION

1. Type the thesis report on good paper. It should be double space and free of errors. The Graduate School has information for proper formatting and methods.
2. Include a current resume.
3. Accompany your report with professionally photographed 35mm color slides and digital archive of all the works in the exhibition. This should be about 20 slides presented in a plastic slide sleeve and a gold CD. Indicate the top of each slide by marking top or placing a dot in lower left hand corner corresponding to the placement in a slide projector. Number and arrange slides left to right, top to bottom in a slide holder.
4. Include a typed list of your slides.
5. Include exhibition announcement and copies of any reviews.
6. The report should be presented in a three ring binder using plastic sleeves.
7. Carefully arrange all the materials in the following sequence: title page, thesis report, resume, artist's statement, list of slides, color slides and CD, announcement and reviews.
8. Prepare two copies of the thesis report. One copy must be submitted before the end of the semester and the second copy should be kept for your own records. The report must pass the Art 698 Project class.
9. If you have questions consult with the graduate committee chair (major advisor) and MFA degree committee.