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school of art

# Master of Fine Arts Student Handbook

2015-2016

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## **PREFACE**

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The Division of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Cincinnati exists to serve the needs of faculty and graduate students, and to enhance these efforts through academic leadership, administrative service, and financial support. It is headed by the University Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, who serves as coordinator to all graduate programs throughout the University. It is the function of the Graduate School to afford its members, students, and faculty, opportunities for advanced work in their chosen fields. The All-University Graduate Faculty has the responsibility for determining educational policies and regulating requirements for the admission of students, their candidacy, and the awarding to them of degrees. The Graduate Faculty formulates common rules of instruction throughout the various departments of study, precise manners of instruction, and individual methods for evaluating the results of examinations.

Students should also be in compliance with the Rules and Policies of the University of Cincinnati Graduate School which is located at [http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate\\_studenthandbook.html](http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate_studenthandbook.html).

## **THE FINE ARTS PROGRAM**

The Fine Arts Program at the University of Cincinnati offers work leading to the Master of Fine Arts degree with studio practices in 2D Studio (Drawing, Painting, Printmaking), 3D Studio (Ceramic, Sculpture, Installation), and Media Arts (Electronic Media and Photography). The Fine Arts Program, along with the Visual Arts Education Program and the Art History Program comprise the School of Art, which is located in the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning.

## **RESOURCES**

The University of Cincinnati is a comprehensive, urban university and a member of the State system. Located on five campuses, the University has seventeen component colleges and divisions that provide a wide range of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. About 44,000 students are enrolled at the University. The main campus is located in the hilltop section called Clifton, readily accessible to a variety of housing, a few blocks from three interstate highways, yet only minutes away from the downtown center and other cultural resources. Two hundred acres and an adjoining park give the University one of the more spacious of urban campuses. A municipal university until 1974, the University of Cincinnati and its programs continue to enjoy close relations with the city's agencies, institutions, and businesses; many of which provide resources for the Fine Arts Program and the School of Art.

The City of Cincinnati is an attractive city on the picturesque Ohio River. The three-state metropolitan area has a population of 1.5 million people. Cincinnati boasts an accessible and pleasant downtown area, a fine resident symphony orchestra and ballet company, accomplished amateur and professional theater groups, and a summer opera series. An outstanding system of city and county parks makes outdoor recreation both inexpensive and convenient. The Art Museum is one of the earliest collections in the United States and is still considered one of the finest. The NEW (2003) Contemporary Arts Center brings a contemporary and experimental dimension to the art life of the city, while the famous Taft Museum is among the best private collections open to the public. Numerous private and commercial galleries hold continuous exhibitions that offer the graduate student additional opportunities for viewing contemporary art.

The College maintains The Philip M. Meyers, Jr. Memorial Gallery in the Steger Student Life Center on the Clifton Campus, and the Reed Gallery in the DAAP building which hold a broad range of exhibitions of the work of students, faculty, and invited artists.

The University Library System has a collection of over 1.7 million bound volumes and includes (but is not limited to) the Langsam (Central) Library with its general research collection emphasizing the humanities and social

sciences, the DAAP Library with its strong collection of Art and Art History related volumes, the CCM library which houses materials on the performing arts, and the Classics Library, with its excellent collection of books on ancient Greek and Roman art and ancient and medieval art and architecture. The University's holdings are complemented by the fine Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and by the Library of the Cincinnati Art Museum, as well as the Lloyd library, and the Taft Museum library. Our graduate program is the Fine Arts Chapter of the Graduate Student Governance Association, and information about the role of this organization can be found at: <http://www.uc.edu/gsga/>.

The Fine Arts Program is housed in the Aronoff Center for Design and Art. The Fine Arts Program Office is located here as are studios for ceramics, electronic arts, photography, printmaking, and sculpture. Additional studios are housed at the Victory Parkway campus. The graduate studio facilities are very workable and facilitate most adequately the needs of graduate student research.

## **APPLICATION AND ADMISSION**

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### **APPLICATION**

The completed application should be received by January 15 for the following fall. GRE or GMAT tests are not required.

Application materials submitted online at UC's Graduate School website: <http://grad.uc.edu/admissions.html>

- University Graduate Application
- Application Fee \$65
- Unofficial Transcripts (Official transcript will be requested if you are accepted)
  - Submit all transcripts from previous colleges and/or art schools
- 3 letters of recommendation
  - Recommenders should be people familiar with your academic and professional abilities. Ask them to provide the following information:
    - Who they are
    - Their relationship to you
    - Why they think you will succeed in the Graduate Fine Arts Program at the University of Cincinnati
  - The recommenders you list in your online application will receive information via email about submitting their recommendation letter online.*
- Artist's Statement
  - Include a statement (up to 500 words) describing the long-term goal to be met by graduate study. Include the following:
    - a general introduction to the work in the portfolio
    - how you would like to creatively develop in graduate school
    - any professional interests (teaching? galleries?)
    - whether you are interested in teaching while in graduate school
- Resume
- Proof of English Proficiency (International Students only-submitted directly to UC from the testing agency- *university code of 1833*)

### **We are no longer accepting links to websites or hard copies of portfolios.**

Application materials submitted online at Acceptd's website: <https://app.getacceptd.com/daap>

- Application fee \$30
- Portfolio Image List/descriptions in separate file which includes:
  - title of work, date of work, dimensions, if applicable, materials
- Portfolio

- For 2D Studio, 3D studio and Photography:  
Twenty (20) images. Images should be no more than 1 MB each, at 72 dpi.
- For Electronic Art:  
Between two and six works in digital imaging, net.art, animation, sound, video, interactive, game design, coding or other new media artforms. Time-based work should be limited to a total of ten minutes or less. Samples may be submitted via disc or URL (preferred). Only work in which the applicant has played a major role in the project should be submitted. Please attach a brief statement about each work, including an explanation of your role in making the piece.

## **ADMISSION**

The Fine Arts Graduate Program normally accepts twenty students per year. The Fine Arts Program does not make decisions on the basis of race, age, sex, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or handicap.

There are three types of admission/standings in the graduate program. They are (1) Full Graduate Standing, (2) Provisional Admission, (3) Unclassified Graduate Student. Please read the University of Cincinnati Graduate Handbook for a full description of these. It is located at [http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate\\_studenthandbook.html](http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate_studenthandbook.html).

No student may register for any graduate level course in Fine Arts that is applicable to a degree in Fine Arts without having been formally admitted to the graduate program.

Students who hold a baccalaureate degree and who have substantial experience in making art are eligible for admission into a series of post-baccalaureate courses in Fine Arts when available. Admission is with instructor permission only. These courses are designed for students who are not enrolled in the degree program but wish to advance their skills and knowledge of art. Students obtain graduate level credit for this work; however, this credit is not applicable towards the master's degree in Fine Arts at the University of Cincinnati.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Foreign students can only be admitted with full graduate standing. If you are a foreign student you must fulfill U.S. Immigration Service requirements and must register with the International Services and Foreign Student Counseling Office. A minimum TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language) score of 68 is required. The test should be administered in the country of residence prior to the time of application. The requirements may be temporarily waived for you if you have completed an academic program of two years or more in an accredited American college or university. You are also required to carry the specified health and accident insurance.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Many first and second year graduate students are awarded a University Graduate Scholarship and/or a Graduate Assistantship. These are allocated by the College of DAAP Dean to the Fine Arts Program which administers the awards.

### **University Graduate Scholarship**

These are awarded to applicants on the basis of competitive excellence. This scholarship pays for full or partial tuition.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

A program of Graduate Assistantships has been instituted to provide qualified graduate students with an intensive in service training in college teaching or other professional experience. For Graduate

Assistants who teach, this program combines regular classroom teaching experience with faculty supervision and counseling. Recipients of Graduate Assistantships who are assigned teaching duties hold regular appointments in the undergraduate program of Fine Arts within the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning. All recipients of full Graduate Assistantships are required to devote up to 20 hours per week in their assigned duties. The teaching assignment normally consists of instruction of one studio course or duties such as leading freshman level discussion sessions, shop monitoring, instructional support for faculty, and/or shop maintenance.

Students receiving Graduate Assistantships or University Graduate Scholarships must carry a full-time course load (12 graduate credits or more) each semester exclusive of audit credits. Under ordinary circumstances, assistantships and tuition scholarships will not be awarded to students who have accumulated 260 or more graduate credit hours. The number of years of eligibility for a graduate assistantship and a tuition scholarship is two years.

The Graduate Assistantships provide a cash stipend. Please note that the Internal Revenue Code considers this stipend as taxable income. Amounts received that represent payment for teaching, research or other services required as a condition for receiving the scholarship or fellowship are also considered taxable income. Only the portion of your scholarship or fellowship used to pay eligible educational expenses, such as tuition and fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for courses of instruction, are EXCLUDABLE from your gross/taxable income. Room, board and other living expenses do not qualify, therefore, scholarships or fellowships paid specifically to cover these costs are also taxable income. These other conditions apply for state and city taxes. You should maintain careful records of your legitimate educational expenses in order to document any deductions that you may be eligible to claim when you file your taxes. If you have questions about a potential tax liability, you should consult a personal tax specialist or accountant.

When students are employed over and above their assistantships, a number of legitimate academic concerns can be raised (including length of time to earn their degrees). The following policy recommendations are to be followed:

- a. The program will closely monitor the academic progress of students holding more than one University appointment/employment. This may include grade reports and a progress report for each student's file.
- b. Continued academic progress is expected; should progress slow, the additional appointment will be terminated.

### **Other Awards**

The Financial Aid Office at the University administers a variety of state and federal grants and loans, based on each student's demonstrated financial need. For further information contact the Financial Aid Office at <http://financialaid.uc.edu/>.

Graduate minority scholarship and fellowship information is available through the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at <http://grad.uc.edu/research.html>.

Scholarships are available to all students at school, college and university levels.

## REGISTRATION

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### PREREGISTRATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

As soon as you accept an offer of admission you will be sent a supplementary information form which must be filled out and returned to the School of Art Office. You will also be sent a health form which must be completed and returned to Student Health Services within three months of registration. This should be filled out to reflect your immunization record.

Supplementary Information Forms must be completed **prior to registration** by the following individuals:

- a. new students entering the University
- b. students not enrolled in the previous academic year
- c. students who transfer to another college/department

### ADVANCED STANDING

Relevant graduate level courses completed at the University of Cincinnati or another accredited college or university may be applied toward a degree in Fine Arts. These are normally applied to the elective portion of the curriculum. In no case may the number of advanced standing hours be more than one-half of the total number of credits required for the degree. The determination of advanced standing will be made by the director of Graduate Studies who will then petition the graduate dean for advanced standing credits for the student involved.

### REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

You should meet with the director of Graduate Studies before registering in order to discuss your program of study. Registration is conducted online through the Office of the Registrar: <http://www.uc.edu/registrar/>. Be sure and register as early as possible each semester to ensure that you get maximum choice of course offerings.

### REGISTRATION CHANGE

If you need to change your schedule after registration, you can do so online. Some changes will require a paper registration change form, which can be obtained in the School of Art office. The appropriate information must be completed on the form, signatures acquired if necessary, and then you must take the form in person to the Registration Office. With a registration change form, courses can be added, dropped, changed from credit to audit or vice versa; and sections and credit changed.

### AUDIT

You may use the audit option for cases in which course work is desired or needed to satisfy remedial/deficiency instruction in major elective areas of study. You should discuss the audit option with the director of Graduate Studies, and then see the instructor for his/her permission to audit the course. Audited courses do not count towards satisfaction of degree requirements, but you are free to request to audit any course.

## **PASS/FAIL**

With the approval of the graduate advisor and instructor, you may take a class for pass/fail, but with the exception of ongoing seminars and thesis the class cannot be used to fulfill specific degree requirements.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

Check with the registrar's website for updated deadlines for adding and dropping classes, refunds for classes dropped, etc: [http://www.uc.edu/registrar/policies\\_and\\_procedures/add\\_drop\\_withdrawal.html](http://www.uc.edu/registrar/policies_and_procedures/add_drop_withdrawal.html). Students may withdraw from classes through web registration if the instructor permits web withdrawals (refer to the instructor's class syllabus). Students and instructors both will receive e-mail notification of the withdrawal. Students are assigned a "W" grade at the time of the withdrawal, but instructors reserve the right to change the "W" to an "F" through the final grading process. No drops are granted after the 58th calendar day of classes.

## **GRADUATE CREDITS AND GRADING PRACTICES**

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As a full-time graduate student in the MFA program you must register for at least 12 graduate credits each semester. If you are receiving a UGS award you must be a full-time student (12 graduate credit hours, exclusive of audit credits). To receive a GA award you must be registered for 12 credits during the semester in which you receive the award.

If you are enrolled in a 6000, or 7000 level course carrying both undergraduate and graduate credit, you may be asked to complete an additional amount of work at the discretion of the instructor.

If you are an international student, under the terms of your visa, you must enroll as a full-time student.

Please read the *Grading* section of the [University of Cincinnati Graduate Handbook](#) carefully for a full description of grading practices.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MFA DEGREE**

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### Credit Requirements

- 33 semester hours credit in studio coursework
- 9 semester hours credit in Graduate Critique Seminar
- 3 semester hours credit in Graduate Theory Seminar
- 6 semester hours credit in Graduate Fine Art Seminars
- 9 semester hours credit in academic courses (any graduate-level course outside of Fine Art)

Total of 60 semester hour credits. The program is normally completed in two academic years or four semesters.

## **PROGRAM OF STUDY**

The full-time student upon admission will register for an average of 15-16 credits per semester. The entire MFA program would be normally completed in two years. Reduction of credit registration per semester is possible with attendance during summer semester.



## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- a) Admission to Candidacy/Passing First-Year Review
- b) Completion of Thesis project and paper

## **ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND POLICIES**

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### **MINIMUM STANDARDS**

The policy on minimum standards requires that a graduate student maintain a 3.00 or 'B' average cumulatively in all course work. Should the cumulative average drop below 3.00, the student is considered on probation.

### **EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

An annual review or some other form of formal evaluation of progress is required throughout a student's program. At least once each academic year, the graduate program director or the graduate student's advisor shall inform the student in writing of his or her status in the master's degree program. (This is normally completed in the First Year Review and Thesis processes.) Students should meet with the director of Graduate Studies each term to review their progress.

### **PROBATION/DISMISSAL**

Dismissal will occur if the student fails to maintain a 3.00 average for two successive semesters. After the first semester in which the cumulative average falls below an average of 3.00, the director of Graduate Studies will issue a letter of probation, warning the student of his/her status and, if continued for another semester, will result in dismissal. Special situations are subject to petition to the director of Graduate Studies.

## **SPECIAL RULES AND PROVISIONS**

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### **USE OF STUDIOS**

Full-time graduate students are required to work in studios provided unless petition is made to and found acceptable by the director of Graduate Studies and the Fine Arts Graduate Committee. Unless otherwise instructed, graduating students must move out of their studios no later than three weeks prior to the start of the fall semester (or of the following semester if graduating during the academic year).

### **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Faculty-directed independent study is approved in special cases when normal course offerings do not fit a student's schedule, or when a student's program of study necessitates it. On the whole, we feel that students benefit from the studio experience and we encourage them to take our regularly scheduled courses. To do an independent study a student and the faculty member directing the project complete a contract, which must then be approved by the director of Graduate Studies.

## **CANDIDACY, TIME LIMITATIONS**

You do not have to submit formal application for master's candidacy, but to remain in the program you must register for one graduate credit in Fine Arts each academic year. Foreign students must sign up for one graduate credit each semester (except summer semester).

A master's student must complete all requirements in his or her master's program no later than five years from the date of matriculation into the degree program for students beginning their program Autumn 2007 or thereafter. Under extenuating circumstances you may petition the University dean, through the school and college, for extension of this time limit. See the director of Graduate Studies for the proper form needed for an extension.

## **FINAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

1. Graduation requirements for Masters students can be found on the Grad School website [http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate\\_studenthandbook/policy\\_masters/graduation\\_requirements.html](http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate_studenthandbook/policy_masters/graduation_requirements.html).
2. See the Graduate Website for information on deadlines for grade changes and applications: <http://www.grad.uc.edu/graduation-deadlines.aspx>. All changes of grade must be completed by the deadline specified for that year. If not, the student will not be certified for graduation.
3. The University requires that all fines (library, parking fines, etc.) be paid before the student can receive their diploma.
4. MFA Students are considered non-thesis students; however, you must turn in your thesis paper and project on cd/dvd/USB drive to the SOA office.
5. Information concerning graduation fees will be sent to each student by the Registrar's Office.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Fine Arts Program of the University of Cincinnati reaffirms its policy that discrimination on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, handicap or age will not be practiced in any of its activities. The full policy can be read here: [Notice of Non-Discrimination \(http://www.uc.edu/about/policies/non-discrimination.html\)](http://www.uc.edu/about/policies/non-discrimination.html).

## **RIGHT TO REVIEW RECORDS**

Once you have been enrolled, you have the right to review your educational records, except for those excluded by law (physician, psychiatrist, or parent's financial statement). If you need to review such records, you should prepare an appropriate explanation or interpretation, and see the director of Graduate Studies.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Grievance procedures have been established to provide graduate students with a formal opportunity to address grievances arising out of their academic relationships with their department, college and University of Cincinnati. See the University Graduate handbook for updated policies on Grievance procedures.

## **CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY/INTEGRITY**

It is expected that students will conduct their relationships with faculty and others in a professional manner. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) in the University Graduate Handbook defines the behavior expected of all University of Cincinnati students. In this document, behavior considered misconduct is defined, and the possible sanctions or penalties are outlined to which the students are subject to as the consequences of misconduct.

Students have the responsibility for being honest in carrying out any written, oral, or studio assignment. A student who has been dishonest in coursework will receive a grade of "F" for that course. Typical actions which are considered dishonest include: plagiarism - defined herein as using the conceptual framework and/or words of others without proper referencing; deception of effort; unauthorized assistance; and cheating on exams - defined as both "copying" and "using unauthorized notes". In such cases, the director of Graduate Studies will issue a letter of warning to the student with a copy placed in the student's departmental record. A second infraction will result in immediate dismissal. Any student who willingly aids another in academic dishonesty will receive the identical penalty.

## **FIRST-YEAR CANDIDACY REVIEW**

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All full-time first-year graduate students must successfully pass a faculty committee review before advancement to degree candidacy. This review is normally scheduled in April of the spring semester, and is an evaluation of visual work and general progress. The student has three opportunities to successfully pass the candidacy review. Failure to pass the third review will result in termination of the student's program. Timing of reviews for students going part-time will be set by the Director, in consultation with the student.

At this review, all first-year graduate students present their work to the faculty in the program. The purpose of the review is to evaluate progress. The faculty committee looks for the student to have tried new approaches in their work, experimenting at a broad level (and also creating some finished work), and then to have arrived at a new level of focus by the time of the review.

## **OVERVIEW**

The full faculty of the fine art department reviews every MFA candidate once each year (Spring Semester) to determine the rate of progress. The faculty will comment on the student's progress and recommend strategies for the student to successfully continue in the program. A group of at least eight (8) full time faculty will be announced prior to the Spring review to vote on the students successful progression in the program. Remaining full-time faculty may also vote if they are in attendance at the Spring Review. The Director of Graduate Studies will inform students who are progressing successfully in writing. The student will choose a Thesis committee after the review in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in Fine Arts. The Director of Graduate Studies will inform students who are not progressing at a satisfactory rate in writing. The student must form a Thesis Committee in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in Fine Arts and be required to re-review with their chosen Thesis Committee no sooner than the next semester of study. The Thesis Committee composition requirements are listed below. If three consecutive unsatisfactory reviews occur (one by the full faculty and two by the student's chosen Thesis Committee) the student is dismissed from the MFA program. All

full-time graduate students must successfully pass a review before advancement to degree candidacy. The first review is normally scheduled in March/April of the spring semester, and is an evaluation of visual work and general progress. If the student is not satisfactorily progressing at this review based on voting faculty recommendation the student will be placed on probation and required to re-review the following semester with the student's chosen Thesis Committee. Timing of reviews for students attending with part-time status will be set by the Director, in consultation with the student.

At the Spring semester review, all first-year graduate students present their work to the Fine Arts faculty. The purpose of the review is to evaluate progress. The faculty looks for the student to have tried new approaches in their work, experimenting at a broad level (and also creating some finished work), and then to have arrived at a new level of focus by the time of the review.

## **COMPOSITION OF FACULTY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Candidacy committee is comprised of at least eight (8) full-time faculty members in Fine Arts in the School of Art. Faculty from other disciplines in the School of Art and University community are welcome to attend the review and students should encourage faculty they have worked with to offer input for their review. The faculty will vote during a post review meeting to rate a student's progression in the program. The student will be informed in writing of their progress as soon as the post-review meeting is concluded.

The Review decision will be delivered in two ways:

1. Pass-Satisfactory progress
2. Probation- Satisfactory progress with re-review scheduled for following semester.

## **CRITERIA**

At the admission to Candidacy Review students are assessed on:

1. Productivity and Progress  
Is there evidence that the artist thoroughly questioned and advanced his/her work and its related ideas? Has the artist experimented with new approaches in his/her work? Does the artist indicate a sense of direction?
2. Sophistication/Quality of work  
Does the artist demonstrate a substantial conceptual approach and indicate influences both older and newer? Does the work engage ideas that have depth and complexity? Is it sufficiently accomplished technically?
3. Clarity of verbal presentation  
Was the artist able to clearly communicate his/her ideas?

Students may be asked to re-review if the work/process does not satisfy the above criteria sufficiently. We provide multiple opportunities to review, to allow for normal variations in the progression of the creative process. A decision to require a re-review may mean that the student IS working hard enough, and is experimenting widely, but they haven't yet found that new level of focus. However, sometimes, students are not seen to be working hard enough, or there may be other problems to address. Written evaluations will make clear the reasons for re-review, if one is required.

## PROCESS

The review will last for 35 minutes. You must have your review space set up and ready by the time the review is set to begin. If you have time-based media that we should see prior to the review, please deliver the media to all committee members one week before the review (put in our mailboxes). Plan to spend the first 20-25 minutes giving an oral and visual narrative of your progress. You should follow the outline below in your presentation:

1. Demonstration of Productivity and Progress

Describe:

- your work at the beginning of the year
- questions that you asked of the work/process
- experiments and research that you conducted
- how the newest work shows a progression or breakthrough

2. Demonstration of Sophistication/Quality of work

Describe:

- the primary ideas, concepts, or concerns driving the work
- influences, in relation to art history and contemporary art
- how your choices of media and approaches to craft and technique contribute to the exploration /expression of your ideas.

The remainder of the review time will be used for questions from the faculty. The review will be conducted as a series of questions directed to the student, not a critique. Be prepared to answer questions about your work and creative process.

Following the review, the Director of Graduate Studies will notify the student in writing regarding the faculty's decision concerning successful progression in the program. This will be followed by a detailed written evaluation and/or videotaped recording of the review comprising of comments from the faculty. At the successful completion of the review the student will designate an official major advisor to chair his/her Thesis Committee. Should this choice be acceptable to the designee and the Graduate Director this faculty member will take on the role of major advisor and guide the student through the completion of the thesis paper, and final MFA exhibition. The major advisor may be chosen from any of the eligible graduate faculty. If a major advisor is chosen from outside the disciplinary focus of the student a justification must be submitted to the graduate coordinator by the student.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PREPARATION**

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Guidelines and schedule for thesis preparation are listed below. Failure to comply with these guidelines and schedule may result in a postponement of the student's thesis project and subsequent graduation.

Fall semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year - The Graduate Program Director meets with students to explain the thesis process and schedule the thesis shows. Students then set about choosing their committee (with the guidance of the Graduate Program Director).

Committee makeup: The thesis committee must be comprised of at least three **full-time** faculty members:

1. Fine Art faculty from studio area most related to student's thesis
2. Fine Art faculty from any studio area
3. Faculty from outside Fine Art (e.g. Art History, English, Philosophy, etc—can also be from larger community if approved by the Graduate Director—if so, cannot have an MFA but must have a Master's degree in something).

Any changes to the makeup of the committee must be reported to the Graduate Director. Only with permission of the Graduate Director can an adjunct serve on the thesis committee in the second or third positions (they must have a Master's degree to serve). Students can also have additional faculty on the committee from any department (but students should consider the difficulty of getting three faculty together at any given time!). One of the two Fine Arts faculty members must be identified as the chair of the thesis committee. Students must meet with their chairs this term for their advice and expectations regarding the thesis paper and the thesis project and exhibition. Unless the committee wishes to do otherwise, students need only work with their chair in developing their paper. Students must turn their *MFA Thesis Committee Agreement* form to the SOA office by a specific date to be announced

Students must set up and hold their first meeting with their thesis committees, in their studios or someplace suitable for a conference, near the end of the fall semester. The chair presides at this meeting. A few days prior to this meeting, a working draft of the thesis paper must be delivered to the committee members (via email or hard copy). The purpose of the meeting is to provide support and guidance to the student in developing their thesis project and paper.

**FOR STUDENTS WHO MUST RE-REVIEW-** Students who did not demonstrate successful progression in the program at the time of the Spring Candidacy Review, must successfully pass a review during the with their chosen Thesis Committee. A successful passing of this review must be delivered in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies in Fine arts prior to the end of the semester of review.

Spring semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year - The committee may schedule additional meetings with the student this semester. Two weeks prior to the thesis exhibition, students deliver a final draft of their thesis paper (via email or hard copy) to their thesis committee.

The week of the thesis exhibition - The students schedule and confirm a time (preferably at the beginning of the week) for an oral examination with their committee at the site of the thesis exhibition. Each student is responsible for bringing a copy of the Thesis Committee Signature Form to this final meeting, with the thesis information having been typed in prior to the meeting. The thesis committee chair presides over the oral defense. After all questions are raised and answered, the chair asks the student to leave the room so that the committee can discuss the outcome of the examination. The student is then informed about the outcome. The forms are signed and returned by the student to the School of Art office. The student can pass provisionally: the committee can ask that the thesis paper be changed, the exhibition changed, or make other requests. If the student does not pass their thesis, the exhibition will stand, but they are required to mount another exhibition the following year during the thesis "season"(spring semester). In this case, the chair will record the position of the committee in lieu of signing the thesis forms. Students will retain their committee until their thesis is passed;

if a faculty member is unable to continue on the committee, students must replace that member by the following fall semester and inform the director of Graduate Studies of the change.

At the end of the academic year - Students will submit a cd/dvd/flash drive to the director of Graduate studies in Fine Arts, containing the following:

- thesis paper, in .pdf form
- at least 10 jpeg images of their work, each no more than 5 mb in size (work can include installation shots)
- videos from exhibition (if video is included in exhibition)

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR THESIS PAPER**

While the thesis exhibition is the main embodiment of the thesis project, the thesis paper is considered to be a very important component. It serves the process initially by helping the graduate student gel their thoughts as their thesis project develops. As the writing proceeds, it becomes a venue for contemplation and reflection on their visual work. Also, the thesis paper provides faculty and viewers with insights and clues for understanding the visual work. The content of the paper should be discussed with the chair of the thesis committee throughout the writing process.

The main body of the thesis paper must be at least (not including title page) 2,000 words in length. Normally, students will address the following points as they pertain to their work:

1. A description of the process by which the thesis project was realized. (This can include a description of the groundwork for their investigations.)
2. A statement of the artist's intent...What has inspired you to choose to do the project? What is its purpose? Why did you choose to employ various aspects of the project (forms, medium, scale, color, space, lighting, speed, etc.)? What do you mean to convey with these aspects?
3. An analysis of how and why the work is significant in relation to art history and contemporary art. (Context for the work.)
4. Reflection on the outcome of the project. Also, what are the new and as yet unanswered questions raised in the process?

(TITLE PAGE FOR MASTER THESIS)

DANCING IN THE DARK (CAPS)

(Thesis paper must have title)

A thesis submitted to the  
Division of Graduate Studies and Research  
of the University of Cincinnati  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS (CAPS)

in the School of Art  
of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning

2003

by

Art Field

BFA, Mills College, 1985



1 1/2 inch margin on top

## Preparation of Written Thesis Paper

10 point Times font, double spaced.

Submit in .doc form or hard copy to thesis committee for editing purposes,  
and submit final version in .pdf form to graduate director on cd.

1 1/2 inch margin  
on left side

1 inch margin  
on right side

1 inch margin on bottom

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Subject to Change

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