

Guidelines for Graduate Program Assessment

The Department of Art offers a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) the terminal professional degree in Art. The three-year interdisciplinary graduate program encourages students to work across disciplines with comprehensive resources offered in areas of photography, painting, drawing, printmaking, art and technology, ceramics, fibers, jewelry and metalsmithing and sculpture. The program incorporates rigorous studio investigation, critical discourse, and conceptual development to prepare students for a professional and engaged art practice. Developing fluency in critical discourse, analysis, and writing are important parts of the MFA program, which culminates in a yearlong terminal project and group thesis exhibition at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland, Oregon.

Disciplinary Accreditation:

The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) provides external review and assessment of our discipline. NASAD is the recognized accrediting agency covering the field of art and design. Reaccreditation occurs initially every five years and then every ten years. Our next review and site visit will be in Spring 2020.

The accreditation process includes an extensive Self-Study report by the department, followed by a site visit by three external reviewers appointed by NASAD. A significant component of the site visit is a review of student work in all media areas and at all levels.

Learning Goals and Objectives

1. Development of an accomplished, independent, professional level body of work.
2. Conduct independent research and analysis in the discipline
3. Demonstrate critical thinking and articulation of their creative work, including effective oral and written communication skills.
4. Demonstrate competencies and strategies for experimentation, materially and conceptually, which will sustain the work beyond graduation.
5. Understand historical and contemporary contexts, and professional discourse in the discipline.
6. Demonstrate understanding of professional practices

Assessment Methods

Graduate Studio

- Mentors individually meet with student twice per term for in-depth conversations surrounding the direction and progress of work. The third meeting of the term is a group meeting with both mentors and the student.

Critique Colloquium

- Critical dialogue across three years of study. Led by a faculty member, each student presents in-progress and finished work for discussion with their peer group. Colloquium faculty is rotated frequently to give students a diverse approach towards criticism and analysis.

Public exhibitions

- Students can present work in public exhibition opportunities available in the student gallery, project space and in off-campus venues.

First Year reclassification review

- Finished work, work in progress, and a 1-page artist statement are presented to faculty committee for review.

Terminal project proposal – end of Year Two

- Student present proposal to thesis committee for feedback

Terminal project report and exhibition – end of Year Three

- Public exhibition of creative project opens in May at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland, Oregon with a public reception, artist talks, and final review of project with the thesis committee.

Assessment Processes

ANNUALLY

Graduate Reviews held in November/ February

Held bi-annually, graduate reviews are open studios and discussion of work through small group meetings with the art faculty, invited guests from College of Design and the regional art community. Students are required to participate in one review each year.

Public exhibitions

Students present a first year and second year group exhibition. Students are encouraged to engage additional public exhibition opportunities available in the student gallery, project space and in off-campus venues. Students gain experience in professional practices associated with exhibitions.

FIRST YEAR

First Year MFA Reclassification Review in May

All reclassification candidates (first year MFAs) set up finished work in their studios or other appropriate locations on the designated date and present the work to faculty. Work in progress may be considered in addition to finished pieces. Students write a 1-page artist statement, which traces the evolution and progression of their work since beginning the program and outlines current and future directions. If students do not pass reclassification, they may have a second reclassification opportunity the week previous to the beginning of fall term.

SECOND YEAR

Terminal Creative Project (Thesis) Progress Requirements:

Students establish a thesis committee (advisor as chair, 2 other departmental faculty). Student meets with the committee end of Spring Term to present their thesis proposal and studio work. Evaluation is based on evidence of continued independent studio commitment and research.

*If proposal is not passed at the initial proposal meeting, it must be passed by the third week of fall term.

THIRD YEAR

Terminal Creative Project Progress Requirements:

Students hold a minimum of one progress meeting each term with the committee, in addition to meeting regularly with individual committee members throughout the year. Written outline and abstract of terminal project report due to committee in January. Final draft of terminal project report due to committee in April. Public exhibition of creative project opens in May at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland, Oregon with a public reception, artist talks, and final review of project with the thesis committee. Final terminal project report is approved in June.

Status, Outcomes and Results

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee members are appointed by the Head of the Department of Art. The graduate committee works with the graduate director on issues related to the MFA program, including curriculum and processes. They serve as the review committee for GTF assignments and for the Singer Fellowship. The committee meets regularly during the academic year to plan graduate programming, evaluate program criteria and outcomes, and provide timely reports to the Head and faculty.

The Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Committee will be responsible for analyzing the data, drafting the report, and when applicable preparing recommendations for changes to be proposed to the department. The report and recommendation will be submitted to the Head of the Department sometime before the annual fall retreat prior to the beginning of the new academic year. The findings will be discussed during the fall retreat.

Decisions, Plans and Recommendations

Each year, the assessment report from the previous academic year and recommended changes proposed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee will be discussed during the annual fall retreat, and the new goals for the upcoming academic year will be determined.