ART STUDIO – M.F.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
Revised: Fall 2009; December 2010
Graduate Council Approval: June 3, 2011

MASTER of FINE ARTS (MFA) PROGRAM

1) Admissions Requirements

Admission to the M.F.A. program in Art Studio requires:

- An undergraduate degree in any field or discipline.
- Demonstrated skill in the field of studio arts: a comprehensive body of individual and self-directed, ambitious, thoughtful, creative artwork that exhibits the promise of development and growth.
- A minimum GPA of 3.0.

Application Requirements

- A completed application
- Transcripts for all previously attended universities
- A statement of purpose
- A statement of personal history
- Three letters of recommendation.
- A portfolio of 20 images or video segments not to exceed four minutes, uploaded at the time of application

Deadline for application is January 15.

a) Prerequisites: NOT APPLICABLE
b) Deficiencies: NOT APPLICABLE

2) Master’s Plan I. This plan requires 72 units of graduate and upper division courses, of which at least 18 units must be graduate courses in the major field. Not more than 9 units of research (299 or equivalent) may be used to satisfy the 18-unit requirement. A thesis entailing a student project in Art Studio is required of each candidate.

3) Course Requirements - Core and Electives (72 units required)

a) Core Courses (64 units total):
   - ART 290 Seminar (20 units total - 4 units each for 5 quarters)
   - ART 299 Individual Study (30 units total)
   - ART 299D Comprehensive Project (12 units total)
   - ART 291 Seminar - Critical Evaluation (1 unit)
   - ART 292 Seminar - Comprehensive Qualifying (1 unit)

b) Elective Courses (8 units total): Two Upper Division or Graduate Classes (4 units) in any subject on campus with a total of 8 units.
c) **Summary:** A minimum course load is 12 units each academic quarter. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses (200) or more than 16 units of combined undergraduate and graduate level (100, 200, 300) courses per quarter. Foreign language and art history courses are not required.

64 units core courses  
8 units electives  
72 UNITS TOTAL

**Example:**  
Art 290 is a graduate seminar.  
Art 299 is individual work under a specified faculty member.  
Art 291/292, critical evaluations, must be passed to continue to the thesis project.  
Art 229D is the comprehensive project: the thesis work.

4) **Special requirements:** An oral presentation is required at the final project show. See below #8.

5) **Committees**

a) **Admission Committee**

Once the completed application, all supporting material, and the application fee have been received, the applications are submitted to the Admissions Committee, consisting of the Art Studio faculty as a whole. Based on a review of the entire application, that focuses initially on the portfolio submitted, a recommendation is made to accept or decline an applicant's request for admission. That recommendation is forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval of admission. Notification of admissions decisions will be sent by Graduate Studies. Applications are accepted through January 15 of the same year for the next fall entering class.

b) **Block Grant, Fellowship and Funding Committee**

This committee is made up of the Department Chair, the Graduate Advisor, and another faculty member appointed by the chair. This committee distributes funding to support incoming students.

c) **Final Project Review Committee**

The Final Project Review Committee is composed of three faculty from the program who are nominated by the student and the adviser, and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. After the final show review, all Art Studio faculty provide their recommendation on whether the student has presented an acceptable thesis to the Final Project Review Committee for their consideration. After considering the recommendations from the entire Art Studio faculty, the Final Project Review Committee makes the final determination as to whether the student has presented an acceptable thesis, and submits the MFA Report Form for Plan I to the Office of Graduate Studies. The Final Project Committee has the responsibility to accept or not accept the final project.

6) **Advising Structure and Mentoring**

The **Graduate Advisor**, appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures. Upon arrival on campus, each MFA candidate is assigned a faculty mentor, who familiarizes the student as to expectations of the studio environment.

The **Mentoring Guidelines** can be found in the graduate student **MFA Handbook: Art Studio**  
7) Advancement to Candidacy

M.F.A. students must complete the Advancement to Candidacy application after completing half the required coursework and prior to the quarter in which they will present their thesis project for review, normally in the fourth quarter. Typically, the form is sent to Office of Graduate Studies at the end of January in the student’s second year of study. All MFA students must pass ART 291 and ART 292 in order to be advanced to candidacy.

8) Final Project


1) Art 291 Review

During the second quarter, the student presents a body of work done at UC Davis for faculty review (Art 291). The review consists of an oral presentation by the candidate followed by a question-and-answer session conducted by the Art Studio faculty as a whole. Passing the Art 291 review indicates the student is ready to undertake Art 292. If Art 291 is not passed, a second review is scheduled approximately 7 weeks later. In the second review (re-review), further completed or new work is presented. If a student fails the re-review, the faculty will vote on whether to schedule another, third review, or make a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies for disqualification. A student must receive a passing grade for the 291 prior to enrolling in the 292.

2) Art 292 Review

In the fourth quarter, the graduate student presents a new body of work for Art Studio faculty criticism and review (Art 292). Passing Art 292 indicates the student is ready to undertake the production of a comprehensive body of work that will constitute the MFA Thesis Exhibition.

If the student fails at the first attempt at the Art 292 review, then a second review is scheduled and the student has the opportunity to complete the work from the previous review to the faculty’s satisfaction, or to present a new body of work or work in-process. If the second review (re-review) is not passed, the faculty will vote on whether to schedule a third review, or the student will be recommended for disqualification from the program to the Dean of Graduate Studies. A student must receive a passing grade for the 292 prior to enrolling in the 299D.

3) Final Project and Exhibition

During quarters five and six, the MFA candidate completes a body of independent artwork known as the final project. It is presented in the annual UC Davis MFA Thesis Exhibition. Work from previous quarters is not generally accepted; a new body of work and significant development is expected to be presented at the MFA Exhibition.

The final exhibition / project (Art 299D) is a body of original work. The work is required to show involvement and commitment of the highest quality. It should be of the depth and quality of a solo exhibition in a reputable commercial or public gallery or, in the case of site-specific works, of a similar professional quality in consideration of setting, process, and fabrication. The student will place this artwork in one of the galleries either on campus or in the City of Davis. This annual UC Davis MFA Exhibition usually takes place in the month of June. To accompany the artwork, the student is required to submit a professional dossier containing a résumé, an artist's statement, 20 images of work or video on a CD or DVD with accompanying image index and a detailed work description. This dossier becomes part of the Nelson Gallery Archive.
The Final Project Committee, along with the entire Art Studio faculty, meets with the MFA candidate in the gallery for the MFA Final Project/Thesis Review. The review consists of an oral presentation by the candidate followed by a question-and-answer session. After this review period, the entire Art Studio faculty meets to discuss the work; the entire faculty comments on the project are submitted to the Final Project Committee for their consideration.

If the Final Project Committee accepts the work by majority vote, the final project is considered as passed and the student is recommended to receive the Master of Fine Arts degree. The Final Project Committee has the responsibility to accept or not accept the final project.

A candidate who receives a majority of “not pass” votes from the Final Project Committee will be provided with a written evaluation from the Committee with clear instructions on what is expected in preparation for a second exhibit. The second exhibit will be reviewed in the same manner as the first exhibit (by both the entire Art Studio faculty and the Final Project Committee). The second final project review for the MFA Final Project/Thesis Exhibition is most commonly scheduled for the following fall. The work must be presented on campus or within the city of Davis. The program typically allows for a two-year window for the remounting of the thesis show and the second thesis review. Should a student’s work not be accepted at the second review by the Final Project Committee, a recommendation for disqualification from the program will be made to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

9) Normative Time to Degree

The normative time to degree for the M.F.A. program in Studio Art is six quarters (two years).

10) Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events

**FIRST YEAR**

Fall
Art 299 Individual Study (4 units)
Art 290 Graduate Seminar (4 units)
Art 299 Individual Study (4 units)

Winter
Upper Division or Graduate Class (4 units) in any subject on campus
Art 290 Graduate Seminar (4 units)
Art 291 Critical Evaluation (1 unit)
Art 299 Individual Study (3 units)

Spring
Upper Division or Graduate Class (4 units) in any subject on campus
Art 290 Graduate Seminar (4 units)
Art 299 Individual Study (2 units)
Art 299 Individual Study (2 units)

**SECOND YEAR**

Fall
Art 290 Graduate Seminar (4 units)
Art 292 Comprehensive Qualifying (1 unit)
Art 299 Individual Study (7 units)

Winter
Art 290 Graduate Seminar (4 units)
Art 299 Individual Study (4 units)
Art 299D Comprehensive Project (4 units)
Spring

Art 299 Individual Study (4 units)
Art 299D Comprehensive Project (8 units)

Unit total 72

11) **Sources of funding.** Students are funded with Teaching Assistantship and Associate In
appointments as well as block grant funding through the Office of Graduate Studies. Substantial
additional funding at the department level, awarded by vote of the faculty, comes from
endowments honoring the memory of Robert Arneson, Freemond E. "Pete" Gadberry, Faye
Nelson, and Mary Lou Osborne. The Nelson Gallery offers a materials stipend by competitive
application. Graduate students regularly apply for university travel grants, fellowships, and
residency awards.

12) **PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee status.** Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave),
In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found in the