

Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art

Masters of Fine Arts Graduate Program

The Department of Visual Art offers a single Masters of Fine Arts degree in Visual Art. Studio practice areas include: ceramics, expanded media, metalsmithing and jewelry, painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture, & textiles and fibers.

The MFA program is designed to take three years. Graduate Students spend their first two years taking an interdisciplinary graduate seminar comprised of first and second year grad students, and take electives in the Department of Visual Art and University. They also work independently with faculty in their chosen discipline and within the Department of Visual Art, Spencer Museum of Art, and Affiliated Faculty. After the successful completion of two reviews (first and second year), third year students spend their entire third year on their thesis work.

Students in the MFA program receive generous private/semi-private studios appropriate to their work for the entire duration of the program. In addition to their individual studios, Graduate Students have access to the entire Department of Visual Art facility including equipment, tools, staff resources, workspaces, computer production labs, and shops. Graduate Students also have access to the resources of a major research university including libraries, the Spencer Museum of Art, the Biodiversity Institute, and various research labs.

The MFA degree in the Department of Visual Art is a terminal professional studio degree. The program's goals are to develop each student's critical thinking and studio skills so that they have the necessary tools and experience to pursue a career as a studio artist and to otherwise participate in the creative community both on a regional and national level.

The University of Kansas is a member of the **National Association of Schools of Art and Design** (<http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/>). The entrance and graduation requirements in this catalog conform to the published guidelines of those organizations.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Graduate Admission - M.F.A.

To be considered for admission, students must have undergraduate backgrounds judged by the graduate faculty to be appropriate preparation

for the specific specialization selected for graduate study. A strong preference exists for applicants whose undergraduate backgrounds are in visual art.

Departmental faculty selection and review committees evaluate each applicant's transcripts, portfolios, and letters of recommendation to determine their qualifications for admission. Applicants are required to hold a bachelor's degree, a bachelor's of fine art (B.F.A) is preferred or equivalent experience. Admitted students are expected to be on-site throughout the duration of their degree.

Application to the program is competitive, by permission of the Kansas Board of Regents application for admission to graduate programs in Visual Art may be refused if available instructional space does not allow for addition of more students. More information about materials and deadlines is available on the Department of Visual Art **admissions page**.

Submit your application and fee **online**.

Required Materials:

- Application for Graduate Study
- Official transcript of all college and university coursework
- Statement of purpose
- 3 letters of recommendation
- Digital portfolio or 15-20 images and descriptions
- International Students: Please refer to the international admissions requirements (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/International-requirements/>)

Master's of Fine Arts in Visual Art Degree Requirements

Areas of Studio Practice: Ceramics, Expanded Media, Metalsmithing and Jewelry, Painting and Drawing, Printmaking, Sculpture and Textiles & Fibers

The graduate program consists of 60 semester hours of graduate credit, including thesis exhibition, in courses approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the graduate students thesis committee. At least 50% of the coursework must be taken at the 700 level or above. Within the program, students can focus their practice in one of our seven areas of studio practice, and are encouraged to take an interdisciplinary approach to their practice through experiences in areas outside of their primary medium.

Code	Title	Hours
Course Requirements		
Graduate Seminar		
Repeated each Fall and Spring for the first 2 years of the program:		12
ART 877	Graduate Seminar	
Studio Practice		
Select any combination of the following courses:		23
ART 801	Directed Study III	
ART 802	Directed Study IV	
ART 803	Directed Study V	
ART 805	Graduate Studio	

Must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. May be repeated.

ART 500	Advanced Special Topics in Visual Art: _____	
Academic Electives		9
Students develop unique plans of study in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. Courses will be identified that align with the students unique interests.		
General Electives		6
Students develop unique plans of study in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. Courses will be identified that align with the students unique interests.		
Thesis		10
ART 950	Thesis in Visual Art	
Total Hours		60

First and Second Year Reviews

In the Spring of the students first year and the Fall of the students second year, the faculty selection and review committee reviews the student's work. At the reviews, students are expected to present their creative work and be prepared to introduce and discuss their research, concerns, intent, and progress. The review committee will determine if the student is making satisfactory progress in the program. After all reviews have concluded, the committee will make determinations as to status (Pass, Fail or Re-Review) and will inform all candidates of their status later that day. After the completion of each review, MFA candidates will be provided with a written overview consisting of comments and recommendations made by the committee.

Re-review implies that the work is unsatisfactory to pass the review and the student will be given time to make improvements, a first-year re-review will be scheduled at the beginning of the following semester, a second-year review will be scheduled at the end of the following semester. The student will be advised to consider the Review Committee's recommendations outlined in the written overview as a guide for developing work to be presented at the re-review. If a student fails the re-review, the department can recommend that the student take additional course work or is to be dismissed from the program.

The M.F.A. Thesis

Upon approval of the second year review by the review committee, the candidate may begin work toward the thesis. Students not receiving approval may continue to work toward the next review unless denied by the committee. The thesis consists of a professional-level thesis exhibition (or equivalent dissemination strategy), an oral defense of the thesis work, and is accompanied by a written thesis statement that includes documentation of the thesis exhibition. The entire thesis is produced and developed under the supervision of a Thesis Committee. Graduate students begin their formal thesis coursework in the last two semesters of their expected residency in the program.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- develop an independent voice for inquiry and innovation in the arts through a rigorous creative practice.
- professionally produce an exhibition and other forms of public presentation of creative work (i.e., publications, artist lectures, performances, screenings, etc.)
- effectively articulate the process, materials, concepts, media, methods, or techniques that the student employs to communicate their creative vision through content and form.
- demonstrate a critical understanding and knowledge of historical precedents and contemporary contexts across a wide range

of interdisciplinary fields that inform and connect their creative research and practice to a broader discourse.

- demonstrate the ability to evaluate and be critically engaged with the artwork and creative research of contemporaries, peers, and students.
- apply technical, conceptual, and creative skills and knowledge to teach students at the collegiate level or other arts education contexts such as community centers, public workshops, arts focused programs, and/or private institutions.