

Master of Fine Arts, Fine Arts Degree

MFA GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

University of New Orleans

Department of Fine Arts

FALL 2021

These guidelines are meant to assist you as a new member of the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program in Fine Arts. Many of the topics outlined below are discussed during the first orientation meeting at the beginning of the academic year. More information can be found on UNO's graduate school [website](#) as well as the MFA Moodle Shell. You will need to familiarize yourself with the guidelines described in this handbook as well as the policies and deadlines with the graduate school.

Please reference these guidelines throughout your time in the MFA program and contact your advising professor and/or the Graduate Coordinator if you have any questions. Ariya Martin is the current faculty member serving as Graduate Coordinator, Please contact her regarding general MFA questions or concerns (email: jrineha1@uno.edu). You will be working with professor(s) in your area for your Graduate Assistantships, thesis development, and all area specific issues.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Fine Arts offers a full time, three-year Master of Fine Arts degree in Fine Arts. The degree requires 60 total credits distributed as follows: 6 credits in art history; 12 credits in studio (primary focus); 6 credits in studio (secondary focus) or outside the department 5000+ electives; 3 credits Media Strategies; 3 credits Professional Development; 6 credits in Graduate Critique Group; 6 credits in Graduate Colloquium; 6 credits in Thesis; 6 credits in Exhibition Design; Students admitted to the program will be provided with private studio space. Graduate faculty members hold regular studio visits and consultations.

The MFA, Visual Arts degree program fosters students' creative, intellectual, and professional development. The program cultivates the students' abilities to create excellent work and to contextualize their practice. Course work emphasizes applied study, art history, theory, and criticism.

A Visiting Artist and Scholar Program that brings a wide range of artists and scholars to campus on a regular basis enhances the MFA experience by providing lectures, workshops, and critiques. The program culminates in an exhibition of a body of work, a written analysis, and an oral defense of both.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete at least 60 graduate credits distributed as shown in the degree requirements table below.

Master of Fine Arts, Fine Arts - Course Number and Title Credits

FA 6201/6205 - Primary Focus - Selected Topics studio practice – 12 credits

FA 6201/6205 - Secondary Focus – Selected Topics studio practice – 6 credits

FA 6301 – Colloquium – 6 credits

FA 6401 – Critique Group – 6 credits

FA 6799 – Graduate Independent Study – 6 credits

FA 6900 – Exhibition Design – 6 credits

FA 6998 – Media Strategies – 3 credits

FA 6999 – Professional Development – 3 credits

FA 5000 and above art history classes – 6 credits

FA 7000 – Thesis – 6 credits

TOTAL = 60 credits

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The MFA, Fine Arts degree program is designed to engage the student in both the theory and practice of their elected discipline. Objectives of the program include the following:

- To prepare students to become professional studio artists/college level art instructors.
- To assist students to realize their intellectual and creative potential as it applies to their chosen fine art discipline.
- To assist students to gain awareness of their work in relation to contemporary art theory and practice.
- To direct students in an investigation of a broad range of historical and contemporary issues relevant to their work.
- To engage students in course work, research, and experimentation that supports their studio practice.
- To encourage students to explore other disciplines and to place their work in the context of the world at large.
- To provide feedback and guidance to students in rigorous individual and group critiques.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Primary Focus

FA 6201/6205 – Graduate Studio in (Photography, Digital Arts, Sculpture, Painting and Printmaking)

Students that enter the MFA in Fine Arts program will choose a primary focus discipline. Students are encouraged to pursue a focused personal vision through a combination of studio practice integrated with study of historical and contemporary art theory. Instruction is tailored to the student's individual

investigations. The ultimate goal is to develop a visually coherent and conceptually unified body of work. Students are not limited to their medium of choice but are encouraged to use it as an artistic jumping off point that will assist them on their creative journey. Students will meet with the upper-level undergraduate class in their chosen primary focus. In the class Throughout the semester MFA students will be expected to give 4 presentations of their practice to the undergraduate class as well as participate in their critiques and engage students in related discussion. Students will enroll in this class in each semester of year 1 and year 2 in the MFA program.

Secondary Focus

FA 6201/6205 – Graduate Studio in (Photography, Digital Arts, Sculpture, Painting and Printmaking)

Students that enter the MFA in Fine Arts program will choose a secondary focus discipline. Students are encouraged to pursue a focused personal vision through a combination of studio practice integrated with study of historical and contemporary art theory. Instruction is tailored to the student's individual investigations. The ultimate goal is to develop a visually coherent and conceptually unified body of work. Students are not limited to their medium of choice but are encouraged to use it as an artistic jumping off point that will assist them on their creative journey. Students will meet with the upper-level undergraduate class in their chosen secondary focus. In the class Throughout the semester MFA students will be expected to give 4 presentations of their practice to the undergraduate class as well as participate in their critiques and engage students in related discussion. Students will enroll in this class in each **FALL** semester of year 1 and year 2 in the MFA program.

FA 6301 - Colloquium

This class is designed to create open dialogue through a set schedule of topics that explore contemporary art production and related socio-political and cultural issues. Each theme will be anchored to major texts and essays from renowned philosophers, curators and artists, and they will be assessed and discussed in order to identify the strength and weaknesses of their theoretical framework. Throughout the semester, we will investigate concepts such as violence, pain, displacement, trauma, monstrosity, cruelty, obsession, repetition, desire and more with respect to artistic production, dissemination, institutionalization and social engagement. This class will be repeated 3 times.

FA 6401 – Critique Group

This course is designed to provide specific, practical, critical skills through which to enjoy, discuss, and understand the visual experience. Students will explore contemporary art through the critical lens of visual analysis and interpretation. Critique Group is designed to open up dialogue about the works of specific artists as it relates to the directed theme of the week. Students will present the work of artists from the week in relation to their own research and engage the class in an open critical dialogue about the perceptions of their work.

FA 6799 – Independent Studio Practice

This class provides an emphasis on self-directed research and opens up the freedom for students to visually explore without the restraints of the classroom. Students are encouraged to expand on their chosen area studio practice and develop a unique body of work that will serve as their thesis exhibition. This work will be done in collaboration with the faculty and with specific engagement with the UNO St. Claude Gallery director. The main goal here is to design an exhibition that utilizes the gallery space in the most functional way possible as it relates to the students specific artistic intent.

FA 6900 – Exhibition Design

Exhibition Design is a class that immerses our third-year graduate students in the professional gallery that our department operates. Students will work with the UNO Gallery Director to explore curatorial practices and installation techniques. During this class students will assist in the installation of the fall schedule of exhibitions while also working to develop their own exhibition with the Gallery Director.

FA 6998 – Media Strategies

This class is focused on developing a media footprint for the artist. This is an important aspect of interacting with professionals in the art world. Artists need a solid foundation in digital media fundamentals that will allow them to develop clean and fully developed websites, social media streams and printed materials. Class members will learn the necessary skills to develop and further refine their "art image" and marketing materials to better access and find success in the various art worlds.

FA 6999 – Professional Development

Students will expand their understanding of contemporary art and professional practices. Artists engage many social spheres as a means of artistic and financial survival. Professional gallery artist, museum artist, public commissions artist, and academic/professor are just a few of the communities many of us identify with and survive within. In this course we will look at and discuss strategies to identify and connect with the art world/s communities of your choice. This course will also serve as a forum for fostering academic community through networking, sharing resources, and beginning to consider planning special projects.

FA 7000 – Thesis

Research for and preparation of the MFA Thesis. This class is functions as the written portion of the master's degree that supports the final exhibition. Students will work with their thesis committee on developing a supporting document that helps guide viewers through their thesis exhibition.

MANDATORY 3 YEAR SCHEDULE

YEAR 1

FALL - 12 credits

FA 6201/6205 - Primary Focus
FA 6998 - Media Strategies
FA 6401 - Critique Group
FA – 5000 level and above Art History

SPRING - 9 credits

FA 6201/6205 - Primary Focus
FA 6201/6205 - Secondary Focus or outside the department elective
FA 6301 - Colloquium

YEAR 2

FALL – 12 credits

FA 6201/6205 - Primary Focus
FA 6999 – Professional Development
FA 6401 - Critique Group
FA – 5000 level and above Art History

SPRING - 9 credits - CANDIDACY REVIEW

FA 6201/6205 - Primary Focus
FA 6201/6205 - Secondary Focus or outside the department elective
FA 6301 - Colloquium

YEAR 3

FALL - 9 credits

FA 6799 - Independent Studio Practice
FA 6900 - Exhibition Design
FA 7000 - Thesis

SPRING - 9 credits

FA 6799 - Independent Studio Practice
FA 6900 - Exhibition Design
FA 7000 – Thesis

GRADES

- Grades in the School of Liberal Arts are reported as follows: A, B, C, D, F.
- A grade of C will count as graduate credit, but it is considered a weak grade at the graduate level and may be cause for departmental action such as probation or dismissal from the program.
- A course in which a grade of C+ or lower is earned cannot be counted for credit toward a degree program in the School of the Arts. Any grade of C+ or lower may be cause for probation or dismissal from the program.

GRADUATE COLLEGE CATALOG

The University of New Orleans Graduate Catalog is available online at the Registrar's website. The catalog contains general information on University Graduate School policies and requirements; outlines the various graduate degree programs offered by the university; includes a description of all graduate courses offered; includes an academic calendar; and lists deadlines for the submission of forms required by the Graduate College. Each graduate student is expected to have and to refer to this catalog on a regular basis. At the graduate level, there is an increased expectation that the student is responsible for knowing and abiding by University policies, procedures, and deadlines independent of faculty advisement.

MFA GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

In addition to student advising by the Graduate Coordinator, this handbook is the student's most important resource for information about policies, procedures, criteria, and forms required by the degree program. Students are expected to become familiar with the document and to refer to it on a regular basis throughout the program. The student is responsible for knowing and abiding by program policies, procedures, and deadlines independent of faculty advisement. The handbook is updated frequently and students are responsible for accessing the latest version online.

FORMS

All Department of Fine Arts and Graduate School forms are available online. Students should download each form when needed in order to have the most recent version. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate and submit all required forms in a timely fashion, according to the MFA Graduate Student Handbook and the deadlines published in the academic calendar in the Graduate College Catalog. Questions regarding forms should be directed to the Graduate Coordinator. <https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad>

STUDIOS

The Graduate Studios for Fine Arts are located in Milneburg Hall. The space is equipped with 16 private studios with windows that open to offer sufficient ventilation for certain art processes. Each studio is lockable and is between 120 and 200 sq. ft in size. There is a shared open area for displaying work for critique purposes and the area has both men's and women's bathrooms. The space does not accommodate heavily toxic processes and so we require that our graduate students perform that kind of work in the ventilated labs we have in the Fine Arts building.

The University has policies regarding the use and maintenance of the facilities. A building code states that nothing can project over the top of a doorway, hang from the top of a doorframe, or in any way obstruct passage in or out of doorways or entry areas. Objects, materials, and artwork must be stored in the studios and cannot be stored in the hallways or shared spaces. It is the student's responsibility to repair any damage caused in the studios or in other areas of the MFA facilities at the time the damage occurs. If the damage is severe, the Graduate Coordinator should be notified immediately. Objects can be hung on the wall, but the surface needs to be repaired and repainted. Any bookcase or furniture exceeding four (4) feet in height must be secured to the wall. **This is a 24 hr access space, DO NOT ABUSE the use of these spaces. Under no circumstances are these spaces to be used as living space. Using studios for this purpose may be grounds for expulsion from the program.**

MFA students may use on-campus studios for a maximum of three academic years. Within two (2) weeks after the end of the three-year period the studio must be cleaned and vacated. Students completing the degree must clean and vacate the studio within two (2) weeks after the end of the semester in which the thesis defense occurs. All university owned tools, furniture and computers are to remain in the Fine Arts Building. All personally owned objects, tools, furniture and artwork must be removed from the premises. Any objects (including artwork) left behind will be discarded.

In the event that a studio is unoccupied the space will be allocated to resident MFA students as a common (shared by all) workspace. If the area is not needed for this purpose, other uses may be considered on a semester-by-semester basis, to be determined by the Graduate Coordinator in consultation with the Graduate Student Liaison and Graduate Faculty.

Studios, Keys

- Each MFA student is assigned a studio in the Milneburg Building upon entering the MFA program.
 - MFA studios are campus property. There may be times when facilities need to access a studio for maintenance etc. Please remember that although your assigned studio space is yours for your time at UNO, it is also campus property, and should therefore not be regarded as completely private.
- MFA access to the Milneburg, including your studio, is 24 hours a day.
 - The following keys are checked out upon entering the program: individual studio key, Exterior Key to Milneburg, Fine Arts access through Sculpture- GGM 34, and keys to necessary classrooms/facilities in your area.

Equipment and Labs

Digital Art labs (115/116)

This lab features 10 top of the line HP Pro workstations with 34 inch cinema monitors and 13 inch Wacom drawing tablets. The lab runs Cinema 4D, Pixologic Zbrush, Substance Painter and Paint Studio as well as other software. This lab is made up from 2800 sq ft. of lab space that can be divided in half with a moveable wall to create two separate classrooms. This lab is rounded out with a mixture of mac and pc machines for lab instruction.

Printmaking Classroom/Lab (132)

This lab is 3,200 sq ft. facility that is set up to accommodate traditional and non-toxic printmaking practices. It has 3 exhaust stations for acid-based etching and aquatinting. The lab contains a large-scale stone lithography press and a range of etching presses. The lab maintains a 60-inch NuArc UV light exposure unit with screen printing stations, emulsion coating darkroom and print storage racks. The lab has 3 large sinks with traps and a specialized area for doing acid-etching. We no longer use Nitric acid for printmaking but we still maintain a safety closet for proper chemical storage.

Photography/Lighting Studio/Darkroom (118/119/125/127/)

The photography facilities consist of a 1600 sq. ft lighting studio that doubles as a classroom/lecture space. It is fitted with moveable tables that allow for maximum flexibility. The darkroom is made up from two small rooms that encompass about 250 sq. ft. These rooms are designated for analog/traditional film-based and alternative processes. Equipped with enlargers that accommodate film up to 4 x 5 inches, and film processing tanks and reels.

The department also maintains a suite of cameras for instructional and research use. We stock:

- 1 – Black Magic Cinema Camera Rig
- 1 – Black Magic Pocket Camera Rig
- 3 - Canon 5D Mark II
- 2 – Canon 6D
- 2 – Canon 5DRS
- 2 – Canon 60D
- 2 – Canon Rebel t5
- 1 – Fuji X-Pro 1 kit
- 1 – Fuji XT1 kit
- 1 – Sony A7 kit
- Canon – 50mm lens
- Canon – 100mm lens
- Canon 24-105mm lens
- Canon 70-200mm lens
- Canon Pro Flash system

Sculpture/Fabrication lab/Foundry (130/131/132/133)

The sculpture fabrication lab, classroom and foundry are 6000 sq. ft. of interconnected spaces that allow students to learn a wide range of processes and engage with many different kinds of materials. The front room of sculpture contains 12 mobile modeling stands and 6 work tables equipped with vices. The lab contains a wide range of hand tools for working clay, wax, plaster, wood and metal. In the fabrication lab we have a wide range of wood and metal working tools that are highlighted by:

- TiG welding unit
- MiG welding unit
- Arc welding unit
- metal munching
- 32 inch metal folding machine
- 32 inch metal rolling machine
- 14 inch metal crimping machine
- 8 ft. panel saw
- 60 inch. wood lathe
- 60 Gallon Air compressor

The foundry is a semi-outdoor space that houses two gas-run burn out kilns for lost wax casting processes as well as two electric kilns for working with ceramics. The foundry is encapsulated by a heat dampening wall that maintains the proper temperatures outside of the foundry.

Appropriate instructions and guards against personal injury are in place, including eye and ear protection, eye-wash stations, protective clothing when necessary, and restrictions against the use of certain pieces of equipment by inexperienced operators. Emergency cut-off switches (panic buttons) have been installed for all large equipment items. A protective cage has been installed around the foundry area to keep by-standers from getting dangerously close to the hot-metal area.

Painting (117)

The painting lab/classroom is a 2400 sq ft. facility that allows the department to teach up to three classes a semester. We use 22 large scale metal easel workstations in the painting lab with adjoining work tables. The lab is equipped with an industrial size exhaust fan to manage air quality related to fumes that occur during the oil painting process. The lab uses a 30-gallon disposal container for students to clean their brushes with. The campus safety officer has developed and now enforces safety programs specific to each area of the facility including a procedure to dispose of toxic solvents.

Design (137)

The design lab/classroom is a 2400 sq ft. facility that contains 22 art drafting tables and is mainly used for teaching a range of design-based classes. The lab also contains a 40" speed-o-matt cutter, joiner and guillotine for frame building as well as a woodshop equipped with a 6 ft. panel saw, 5 in. compound saw and floor mounted table saw for stretcher building. The design lab is used as a sister lab to the painting lab. Graduate Students will have access to this lab after a proper introduction to the tools.

Art History Lecture room (Liberal Arts building room 104)

Fine Arts maintains a dedicated lecture space in the Liberal arts building across the street from our Fine Arts building. Graduate Art history classes and many of the visiting lectures will be held in this classroom.

Digital Printing lab (116A and B)

The digital printing lab is a 240 sq ft. room that allows us to offer digital photography as a strong component of our photography area. We house 2 large format Epson inkjet printers and a 4 color HP digital copier workstation. Graduate students will have open access to these printers during building operational hours 9:00AM – 4:00PM.

GRADUATE LAB ACCESS

Graduate students will have keycard access (via their UNO ID) to the printmaking lab and the digital arts lab. Graduate students will also be issued a BA1 key which will allow them 24 hours access to the lighting studio and the woodshop/design studio. With regards to equipment and tools, students are allowed to check out cameras and other forms of technology for a period of 3 days. The equipment must be returned by 2:00PM on the 3rd day or the student will lose the ability to check out equipment in the future. Students will be able to check out equipment from the Department Program Coordinator – Jeff Rinehart, jrineha1@uno.edu.

ST. CLAUDE GALLERY

In November 2008, the Fine Arts department opened an off-campus gallery at 2429 St. Claude Avenue in the heart of the emerging St. Claude Arts District. The St. Claude neighborhood is historically economically and socially diverse and has emerged as a vibrant, alternative venue for showing contemporary art.

The gallery maintains a rotating schedule that focuses on Graduate Thesis exhibitions, local artist features and Prospect New Orleans affiliated artists. The St. Claude Gallery impacts the St. Claude Arts District as an anchor institution that provides a footprint for the University in one of the most interesting and diverse neighborhoods in the city.

As a graduate student you will enroll in Exhibition Design during your third year in the program. During this time students will assist the Gallery Director with the

installation of exhibitions during the Fall semester. Students will learn a range of curatorial practice and installation techniques while preparing a plan of installation for their own exhibition in the spring. During the spring semester students will prepare and install their thesis exhibitions at the St. Claude Gallery. Your exhibition will be scheduled between January and May of your last semester and you will share the gallery with another successful graduate candidate. This gallery has a split footprint, which makes it very easy to accommodate two exhibitions at one time.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate Assistantships are awarded competitively in the Fine Arts Department. Assistantships include a tuition waiver and a stipend. Full and half assistants must meet the requirements as set forth by the Graduate School and the Fine Arts Department. Students automatically are eligible for the award once they have applied to the university. Assistantship duties vary, but are usually focused on classroom proctoring and instructional preparation. 2nd and 3rd year Assistants may be asked to teach classes as the instructor of record. Teaching is focused on the CORE STUDIO section of the undergraduate curriculum. Assistants will spend a semester preparing to teach with a faculty mentor before the assistant is asked to teach a class. A nine-credit course load is required AT ALL TIMES to keep an assistantship.

Graduate Assistantship Stipend

In addition to the tuition waiver, all graduate students awarded an assistantship are paid a stipend that is issued as a biweekly paycheck.

- The total amount for the 2020-2021 academic year is \$6,666 for full time (20 hours/week), and 3,333 for part-time (10 hours/week).
 - This amount can vary based on the University's budget
 - This is an annual reappointment

Assistantships are JOBS that have been appointed and there are expectations from the area or faculty member you are working for. If you have other jobs outside of UNO, we understand, but they should not take precedence or affect scheduling your GA work. If anything arises that would compromise your ability to meet your GA responsibilities, you need to communicate that first with the faculty member you are working with and with the graduate coordinator.

If it is continually problematic for you to fulfill your GA responsibilities, or you receive poor evaluations, or you receive a C in any of your courses then you may not get reappointed in future semesters.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS

Students in the MFA, Fine Arts Program are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, the Statement of Diversity and Inclusivity, and the Standards of

Conduct as stated by the Office of the President. Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary action when the action has a direct impact on the MFA Fine Arts Program or with any sub-community therein. Behavior will be addressed by the Department through the following process at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator:

- The Graduate Coordinator will notify the student that this process is being initiated via email.
- The student will be requested to provide a written statement regarding the behavior and/or incident within three (3) business days of the notification from the Graduate Coordinator that the behavior is under review.
- A meeting with the Graduate Coordinator and at least one additional graduate faculty member designated by the Graduate Coordinator may be requested by the student within eight (8) business days of the initial notice to address questions and further clarify the situation and/or behavior. The graduate student may request an additional faculty member from the MFA, Fine Arts Program to attend the meeting as an advocate. Within two (2) business days following this meeting, the student has the option to provide an additional written response to further clarify.
- A decision will be made by the Graduate Coordinator in consultation with the graduate faculty, shared with the student, and relayed to the appropriate office(s) on campus.
- Potential outcomes could include but are not limited to the following:
 1. removal from the MFA, Fine Arts Program
 2. restriction on studio space
 3. restriction on Department of Art, Design & Visual Studies facilities
 4. potential alternate class accommodation
 5. loss of employment within the Program
- The student will be notified of the Program's decision within twenty (20) business days of the initial notice. Any delays will be communicated with the student.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The MFA, Fine Arts degree is structured so that students move through two distinct levels or stages of academic preparation in order to complete the program. Students enter the program at the Candidacy Stage, and during the 4th semester students will be engaged in the Candidacy Review. The second part of the degree program is the Thesis Stage, which consists of the final 2 semesters and is almost completely focused a culminating exhibition, a 5-8 page written document that supports the exhibition, and an oral defense of both.

The MFA degree must be started and completed within a single continuous interval of no more than seven years.

While enrolled in the program, if a student requires travel of longer than one week they must submit a written request to their sponsor and to the

graduate coordinator. If they are a graduate assistant then they must also request permission from the faculty member they are working for during the semester of requested travel.

Critiques

- **Formal/Graded Critiques**

The full graduate faculty holds critiques of the student's work at the middle of each semester and at the end of each semester. Students will present their research and give an oral defense. Students are required to present their work in a professional manner and be prepared to engage a public examination of their work for up to 30 minutes. Students should be prepared to talk about the items on the list below during their critique.

- 1) Full name of the student and their studio area of focus
- 2) Description/explanation of the intentions/goals of the studio work
- 3) Description/explanation of any significant themes, concerns, or concepts dealt within the studio work
- 4) Description of the technical and formal issues that inform the structure and meaning of the work
- 5) List of the most significant resources for the studio work (artists, bodies of work, scholars, books, historical periods, cultures etc.)
- 6) Description/explanation of the relationship of the studio work to historical or contemporary practices and concerns

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the student's work during a formal critique:

- The level and degree of a development of technical and formal issues that inform the structure and meaning of the work
- The level and degree of awareness of a historical and contemporary context for the studio work
- The nature, suitability, and integrity of technical and formal processes utilized in the work
- The extent to which the candidate is able to think, speak, and write clearly and critically about the essential ideas, processes and intentions in the studio work
- How the work evolves as a response to critiques
- The degree and nature of personal interpretation, experimentation, innovation, creative thinking and problem solving evident in the studio work

*Using social media or other public/online platforms to vent your grievances will not be tolerated. Recording critiques is also not permitted, unless the student has been given permission from graduate faculty for the express purpose of being an integral part of the art work. Otherwise these acts are grounds for expulsion from the program.

To summarize:

1. Each semester students will have two large group critiques. One at Mid-term and one at the end of the semester.
2. In the 4th semester students candidacy review will replace the final crit.
3. Students do not participate in critique during their final semester.
4. The critique will involve observation and questioning by faculty to track student progress and support new research and artistic production.
5. Show your most developed work. *During mid-term reviews this can be work in progress. If you choose to present multiple directions be ready to defend or explain their relevance to your current direction and the projection of your thesis work.
6. When presenting work in general reviews make sure you introduce your work succinctly and specifically. Address what you are doing /saying with the work as well as how your formal or technical considerations support this. Don't be afraid to help direct the conversation or ask specific questions to help make the review as productive as possible. When it is not your review, you are strictly there to listen. It is recommended that each student select another student (in advance) to take notes for them during their review but is not necessary.

THE CANDIDACY STAGE

The Candidacy Review:

In the fourth semester of the program, (after a student has completed at least thirty credit hours), with a GPA of 3.00 or above, or is in the final of the four semesters of Studio Practices, they must pass the Candidacy Review. All MFA students are required to participate in a Candidacy Review process in order to move from the Advisory Stage to the Thesis Stage of the degree program. Each student installs an edit of their artistic production in Milneburg Common Area and prepares a corresponding artist statement. The date for Candidacy Review will be sent out at the beginning of the fall semester. Prior to participating in the Advisory Review process, the student must have completed or be currently completing:

Master of Fine Arts, Fine Arts - Course Number and Title Credits

FA 6200/6205 - Main Focus - Selected Topics studio practice – 12 credits

FA 6200/6205 - Secondary Focus – or outside electives – 6 credits

FA 6400 – Critique Group – 6 credits

FA 6500 – Colloquium – 6 credits

FA 6998 – Media Strategies – 3 credits

FA 6999 – Professional Development – 3 credits

FA 5000 and above art history classes – 6 credits

The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.00 at the time of the Candidacy Review, and must earn at least a 3.00 during the semester in which the review is held. Upon passing the review the student will need to complete the Candidate Plan of Study, located at the link listed below

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/masters-degree-requirements>,

Students will need to submit it to the Graduate School. The (Plan of Study) must be submitted to the Graduate School in the semester prior to semester in which you will be graduating:

Fall: May 15

Spring: October 1

Summer: March 1

Candidates will develop a series of materials for review which will be distributed to all members of the Graduate Faculty **no later than two weeks prior** to the Candidacy Review.

1. 250-word artist bio
2. 300-word artist statement
3. 500-word self-reflection statement about past, present and future work. It should contain:
 - a) An introduction that addresses the student's past work and what led to the current research.
 - b) The content and framework of the current research.
 - c) Sources of inspiration and references that apply to this content and framework. Influences do not have to be limited to contemporary art and the visual arts in general. They can include music, literature, film, etc. Whatever is most inspiring, but you should be aware of the standing of the work/author that interests you. For instance, you should know if that work/author are considered minor or major as that will impact the way you discuss them with others.
4. A conclusion that describes anticipated research plans while in the thesis stage
5. **An annotated** Bibliography/Cited Works (Minimum of 5, Maximum 15) Students should consult the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Univ Chicago Press). This manual can be supplemented with the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, (Univ Chicago Press).

The review is run similarly to a mid-term or final critique. However, in this meeting students meet individually with all graduate fine arts faculty. In the curation of works to show they may show work made in previous semesters that they feel strongly support their written statement. They must present their work and their paper (summarizing in a few minutes) which then opens the room up for discussion. The review will last approximately 30 minutes. During this critique the student must be able to demonstrate to the graduate faculty that they are ready to develop and complete a focused body of studio work and a supporting written analysis.

At the completion of the review the student will step out of the building and the faculty votes as to whether the student that was just reviewed has shown sufficient progress in order to “pass” Candidacy Review. The result of the review will be communicated that same day to the student by their Graduate Sponsor. A Candidacy Review that is failed on the first attempt can be repeated once, but only if a second attempt is requested by the student and approved by the MFA, Fine Arts Program. The request by the student for a second attempt must be in writing to the Graduate Coordinator and must be made within five (5) working days after the student is notified of their failure by the Graduate Coordinator. If a second attempt is not requested by the student, or if a request is made by the student but not approved by the MFA, Fine Arts Program, the student is dismissed from the program and the University of New Orleans by the Graduate School.

Upon passing the Candidacy Review the student must select a Thesis Committee within 5 working days and submit the signed MFA Thesis Committee Signatures Form to the Graduate Coordinator. Faculty members usually serve on no more than three committees and are not allowed to serve on more than four committees (due to scheduling). Please keep in mind that everyone cannot choose the same faculty members.

Evidence supporting advancement to the Thesis Stage will include:

- The existence of a substantive, ongoing production of studio work since admission to the program
- A discernable improvement in the strength and thoughtfulness of studio work done since admission to the program
- The presence of clearly articulated written statements that underscore and explain the technical and conceptual aspects of the studio work done since admission to the program.
- An articulate and coherent verbal discussion of the studio work accomplished since admission to the program
- A discernable commitment to the program, the required coursework, the studio work, and the supporting written research required for the completion of the degree
- An overall GPA of 3.00

Annotated Bibliography

A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, Web sites, periodicals, poems, events, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "References" or "Works Cited" depending on the style format you are using. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An annotation is a brief summary and a substantial / critical evaluation of how the source relates to your research topic. Therefore, an annotated bibliography includes a summary and evaluation of each of your sources. For your thesis paper your annotations should focus primarily on the "REFLECT" category.

- Summarize: Briefly and concisely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? This should be one brief paragraph.
- Reflect: Once you've summarized a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. How will you use it to shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project to expand your argument and offer your "position" momentum? Has it changed how you think about your topic? This should be one, more substantial, paragraph.

Why should I write an annotated bibliography?

To learn about your topic: Writing an annotated bibliography is excellent preparation for a research project. Just collecting sources for a bibliography is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read each source more carefully. You begin to read more critically instead of just collecting information. At the professional level, annotated bibliographies allow you to see what has been done in the literature and where your own research or scholarship can fit. To help you formulate a thesis: Every good research paper is an argument. The purpose of research is to state and support a thesis. So a very important part of research is developing a thesis that is debatable, interesting, and current. Writing an annotated bibliography can help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic. By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you'll start to see what the issues are, what people are arguing about, and you'll then be able to develop your own point of view. The format of your sources WILL vary. You will need to refer to either Chicago or MLA format references to ensure accurate formatting per source. Your sources should be organized alphabetically. Please format everything to either MLA or Chicago Manual of Style Formats. Just remember that whichever you choose you need to keep that format consistent throughout your paper. Please keep in mind that the examples below are:

1. MLA format
2. Do not necessarily give proper clarification as to how they intend to deploy such a reference in their research, which you *are* expected to do.

Examples of an Annotated Bibliography Entry :

Example 1: Broude, Norma. *Impressionism: a feminist reading*. New York: Rizzoli, 1991.

In this publication Broude has taken full advantage of her feminist lens to scrutinize modern French science. Her text is accessible and reader-friendly and uses poststructuralism without becoming a slave to its theories. Her systematic ex

amination of the field, particularly in "The Gendering of Art, Science, and Nature in the Nineteenth Century," reveals underlying patterns of gender discrimination inherent in traditional French philosophy, which upholds Descartes' "I think, therefore I am." Her examination of the social relations between art and science compels readers to take a harder more skeptical look at the sexual politics of postmodernism, whose theory seems to be rooted within the French Cartesian tradition. Her book should be required reading for anyone interested in art, the feminine principle, and how it is treated in a male-oriented universe. (*From Feminist Art Criticism; an annotated bibliography. New York, G.K. Hall, 1993*)

Example 2: Dorival, Bernard. "Ukiyo-e and European Painting." pp. 27-71. In *Dialogue in Art; Japan and the West*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1976.

Known in France around 1860, Ukiyo-e prints had an immediate influence on the vision and the craft of painters. First, Theodore Rousseau and Millet and then Whistler, Manet, and mainly Degas were profoundly affected. Asymmetrical compositions, scenes and landscapes represented from above or below, figures shown in close-up, pale palette, flat areas of color, the replacement of Albertian perspective with the system of opposed diagonals: all these innovations were taken up by the Impressionists, particularly Monet, who learned moreover not to reduce the scene he was painting to the limits of the canvas, and absorbed a pantheistic feeling for nature contrary to traditional Western humanism. Japanese graphic art had a continuing influence on French painting from the Post-Impressionists to the Nabis and the Fauves, as well as on the work of Ensor, Munch, Klimt and others. After the Renaissance rediscovery of ancient art, nothing had so influenced European painting as Japanese prints. (*From Les Fauves; a sourcebook. Westport, Greenwood Press, 1994*)

MLA Citation Formatting Samples:

In-text Citation

Material Type	In-text Citation
Author's name in text	Magny develops this argument (67-69).
Author's name in reference	This argument has been developed elsewhere (Magny 67-69).
Two authors' names in reference	The most notorious foreign lobby in Washington is the "Sugar Mafia" (Howe and Trott 134).
Quotation found in indirect or "secondhand" source	The philosopher Alain states that "admiration is not pleasure but a kind of attention. . ." (qtd. in Magny 66).

Creating a Works Cited Page - With MLA style, you must include at the end of your paper a Works Cited page, which is an alphabetical listing resources cited in your paper.

Material Type	Works Cited
Book in print	Card, Claudia. <i>The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil</i> . Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. Print.
eBook	Dzau, Victor J. and Mark A. Creager. "Chapter 231: Diseases of the Aorta." <i>Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine</i> 1999. McGraw-Hill. Web. 7 Sept. 2006.
An article in a print journal	Doggart, Julia. "Minding the Gap: Realizing Our Ideal Community Writing Assistance Program." <i>The Community Literacy Journal</i> 2.1 (2007): 71-80.
An article in an electronic journal	Sherrard-Johnson, Cherene. "'A Plea for Color': Nella Larsen's Iconography of the Mulatta." <i>American Literature</i> 76.4 (2004): 833-869. EBSCOhost. Web. 10 Sept. 2009.
A encyclopedia entry	Foster, John S., Jr. "Nuclear War." <i>The Encyclopedia Americana</i> . Intl. ed. 1998.
A government publication	United States. Federal Maritime Commission. <i>Hawaiian Trade Study: An Economic Analysis</i> . Washington: GPO, 1978.
An interview you conducted	Brandt, Deborah. Personal Interview. 28 May 2008.
A film/DVD	<i>Sense and Sensibility</i> . Screenplay by Emma Thompson and Jane Austen. Dir. Ang Lee. Perf. Emma Thompson, and Kate Winslet. Sony, 1999. DVD.
Website with no author	"New Media @ the Center." <i>The Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison</i> . U of Wisconsin-Madison Writing Center, 2009. Web. 11 Sept. 2009.
Website - with author	Peace, Richard. "Fathers and Children: Understanding Nature." <i>The Novels of Turgenev: Symbols and Emblems</i> . U of Bristol P, 20 July 2002. Web. 5 May 2005.
Website - online government publication	United States. Dept. of Justice. Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Trends in Violent Victimization by Age, 1973-2005." 10 Sept. 2006. Web. 3 Oct. 2006.
Email	Woodward, Julian. "Newborn FAQs." Message to Michelle Roberts. 28 Mar. 2008. E-mail.
Discussion list (listserv)	Stein, Cindy. "Chessie Rescue - Annapolis MD." Message to Chessie-L listserv. 16 May 1997. E-mail.
Radio/TV episode - from library database	"Beyond Vick: Animal Cruelty for Sport." <i>Morning Edition</i> . NPR. 8 Aug. 2007. <i>Academic OneFile</i> . Web. 5 May 2008.
Radio/TV episode - from website	"Federal Prosecutors Eye MySpace Bullying Case." <i>All Things Considered</i> . NPR. 14 Jan. 2008. Web. 15 Jan. 2008.
Film - from website	<i>The Landlord</i> . Perf. Will Ferrell and Adam McKay. 2007. <i>Funny or Die</i> . Web. 15 Jan. 2008.

Artwork - from library database	Clark, Larry. <i>Man with Baby</i> . ca. 1960's. George Eastman House, Rochester, NY. <i>ARTstor</i> . Web. 15 Jan. 2008.
Artwork - from website	Close, Chuck. <i>Ronald</i> . 2002. Museum of Modern Art, New York. <i>MoMA</i> . Web. 5 Jan. 2008.
Photograph	<i>Viewing the Unfortunates at the Morgue</i> . N.d. <i>The Triangle Factory File</i> . Cornell University ILR School, 2005. Web. 16 Oct. 2010.

THE THESIS STAGE

THESIS:

An artistic process becomes illuminated when one's idiosyncratic, subjective, and often very private approaches to their work are examined and re-examined. How your work fits into historical, conceptual and aesthetic lineages should be at the forefront of your inquiry. What questions rigorously generate your work? What histories influence it and what others repel it—also with rigor.

Your thesis should begin from, and work to defend, your POSITION / PERSPECTIVE as an artist. The written portion of thesis is not intended to cultivate a specific type of student or artist. Writing is an attempt to urge you to take a position in the world, nurture your perspective, and clarify that position as clearly and as urgently as possible through language and your connection to your particular time and place through historic precedents (recent and / or distant). You are to contextualize your position based on current events, academic discourse, history, poetry, prose, science, mathematics, and music just to name a few. You will learn immensely about yourself, your Art, and your ideas through the process of writing your thesis. It will be nurtured over the final year in UNO's MFA Fine Arts program and there to support your art, round out your ideas, and expand your intentions.

In order to begin the Thesis Stage the student must:

1. Have regular status and maintain a 3.00 GPA
2. Pass the Candidacy Review
3. Select and obtain signatures of a Thesis Committee
4. Submit through email the Committee Member Approval Form to the Graduate Coordinator

RECOMMENDED READING :

Umberto Eco: *How To Write A Thesis*
 Joseph M. Williams: *Style-The Basics of Clarity and Grace*
 Helene Cixous: *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*
 Gilda Williams, *How to Write About Contemporary Art*
 Jan Svenungsson: *An Artist's Text Book* (PDF download)

A. The Thesis Committee

Immediately upon passing the Candidacy Review, the candidate will have selected a Thesis Committee comprised of at least three members of the graduate faculty from the MFA, Fine Arts Program in the Department of Fine Arts who agree to serve. The student's graduate sponsor serves as chair of the committee. Additional graduate faculty members can be added to the committee from either outside or in the Department.

The Thesis Committee will guide the candidate during the entire Thesis Stage of the program. A candidate may request to substitute a member of the Thesis Committee with any other graduate faculty at any time during the Thesis Stage as long as at least three of the committee members are from the MFA, Fine Arts Program in the Department of Fine Arts. Any member of the Thesis Committee may request to be removed (and replaced) at any time during the Thesis Stage. The individual making such request will submit a Request to Change Thesis Committee form to the Graduate Coordinator. The request will be approved or denied by the Graduate Coordinator. Members of the candidate's Thesis Committee examine and provide critical input on the development of the studio work and the accompanying written component of the thesis. It is the responsibility of the candidate to schedule regular studio visits and meetings with the Thesis Committee. Individual meetings with committee members are encouraged throughout the Thesis process (at least 3 per semester). It is important to have an appropriate frequency of candidate-faculty interaction to facilitate progress throughout the Thesis Stage. While the Thesis Committee provides the bulk of the oversight for a thesis project, students are encouraged to solicit studio visits from any member of the graduate faculty.

The student is also responsible for inquiring into faculty schedules to make sure that faculty will be available for the student to complete the thesis process, and finally, to schedule their oral thesis defense.

B. Culminating Activity of the Thesis Stage

The Thesis Committee will work with the candidate up until the completion of the culminating activity of the Thesis Stage. There are four components to the culminating activity: a) the MFA thesis exhibition, b) the written analysis, and c) the oral defense of the exhibition and the written analysis and d) an exhibition catalog (see separate document in MFA Moodle shell for instructions and guidelines for this portion of the thesis)

a) MFA Thesis Exhibition

The thesis exhibition must be installed by the candidate in the St. Claude Gallery following the schedule approved by the Thesis Committee and Graduate Coordinator. The candidate is responsible for any additional materials and equipment needed for the exhibition. The candidate is also responsible for designing, producing, and disseminating appropriate promotional materials as well as covering the gallery hours for the duration

of their exhibition. Normal gallery hours at UNO St. Claude Gallery are Saturday and Sunday from 12-5pm.

b) Written Analysis

The written analysis is a document that coherently discusses the content of the thesis project while framing the studio practice within theoretical, historical and contemporary contexts, including a concise analysis and understanding of the studio work. It is the responsibility of the candidate to submit drafts of the written analysis to the Thesis Committee at least two weeks prior to any formal or informal meeting to discuss it. All drafts of the analysis must be proofed and edited prior to their submission to faculty. Without exception, the following parameters will be followed:

1. 2,000 to 2,500 word analysis plus [150](#) word abstract
2. 1" margins
3. 12 pt. font
4. double space
5. end notes
6. images are to be included within the body of text and are not to be counted in the word count limit. This document will make up the catalog for the thesis exhibition.
7. Captions for each image, with title, execution date, medium/s, dimensions
8. Bibliography/Works Cited - minimum of TEN sources: listed in standard MLA or Chicago Manual Of Style academic format.
9. Attach at the end of thesis document an updated artist statement (revised from Candidacy) as well as an artist CV

*****Thesis title must match on Scholarworks and thesis approval form**
(Students initiates thesis approval form)***

TIMELINE :

The success of a thesis depends largely on the student meeting regularly with their committee to insure the project is advancing as expected and will meet appropriate levels of achievement.

1. **Monday - First week in September** of your third year SUBMIT Proposal for Thesis Form to Graduate Coordinator
2. **Monday - First week in November - First draft due** to your sponsor
3. **Monday - First week in February - Second draft due** to your committee. At this point you should fully review recommendations from committee members and discuss with advisor
4. **Monday - First week in March - Third draft due** to your committee
5. No later than **two weeks** prior to the oral defense the student must provide a copy of the final written thesis to each member of the committee.
6. **Monday - First of April - Final Thesis text and Oral Thesis Defense DUE**

All drafts of the written analysis must be thoroughly proofread before their submission to the Thesis Committee. It is the student's responsibility to assure that all spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. is correct. The analysis must be thoroughly—and correctly—proofread prior to its submission to the members of the Thesis Committee.

c) The Oral Defense

The defense occurs with the student's thesis committee. Both the thesis exhibition and the accompanying written analysis are the focus of the oral defense. The candidate must meet with the Thesis Committee for guidance and recommendations prior to the oral defense. The defense is scheduled in-line with Graduate School deadlines, found here: <https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/masters-degree-requirements> and lasts anywhere from 30-60 minutes.

d) Exhibition Catalog- further instructions on Moodle

C. Evaluation of the Thesis

The following criteria are used to evaluate the thesis:

- The level and degree to which an awareness/understanding of various contexts relevant to the thesis, including an awareness of historical precedents and or contemporary parallels of thought is evident in the studio component, the written component, and in the candidate's oral defense.
- The nature, suitability, and integrity of technical and formal processes utilized in the work.
- The degree and nature of personal interpretation, experimentation, innovation, and creative thinking evident in the work.
- The extent to which the candidate is able to think, speak, and write clearly and critically about the essential ideas, processes and intentions in the work.
- The level and degree of discernable commitment, deliberation, and focus given to the studio and written component by the candidate.

The committee will meet immediately after the oral defense to evaluate the thesis and will decide upon one of the following options:

- i. Accept the studio component, the written component, and the oral defense of the thesis as presented during the final review and recommend the candidate for graduation.
- ii. Accept one or two components of the culminating activity as presented during the final review and recommend the candidate for graduation pending the successful completion of specific revisions/additions to other component(s) of the thesis.
- iii. Accept neither the studio component, the written component, nor the oral defense as presented during the final review and recommend the candidate for

- graduation pending the successful completion of specific revisions/additions to each of the components.
- iv. Accept neither the studio component, nor the written component, nor the oral defense and not recommend the candidate for graduation.

The Chair of the Thesis Committee will communicate the decision to the candidate. If option (b) or (c) is selected, the candidate's Thesis Committee will determine when and if the candidate complies with the specific revisions/additions recommended.

After the candidate has completed and defended the studio and written components of the thesis and has successfully passed, the candidate must obtain signatures from all Thesis Committee members and submit an electronic Thesis and Dissertation Approval Form: <https://unograduateschool.formstack.com/workflows/tdapprovalform>

D. Thesis Documentation

Upon successful completion of the MFA, Fine Arts Program, the student must submit a digital copy of their exhibition catalog, with written analysis. The formal version of the paper must be submitted to the Earl K. Long Library on the campus of UNO through the Graduate School. The student should check the graduate school's website for thesis workshops, format checks and final version deadlines.

Email scholarworks@uno.edu for submission. The catalog will remain in an archive and may be used for recruitment or promotion of the Department of Fine Arts MFA, Fine Arts Program.

IMPORTANT LINKS:

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/graduate-forms>

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/masters-degree-requirements>

E. Postponement of the Culminating Activity

If a student must postpone the Culminating Activity/Oral Defense of the thesis, the student must petition the faculty for approval. If approval is given the student will receive a passing grade for the thesis credits but they will not graduate. In order to graduate the student must enroll in FA 7040 Thesis Extension. This is a 1 credit class that will allow them to finish the thesis process.

F. Completion of Graduate Degree

The Graduation Application form is to be filed electronically at the beginning of the semester in which the student graduates. This form is only available on the University of New Orleans Graduate School site. A fee must be paid at the time this application is submitted. Students will not be allowed to graduate if the dates to turn this form in are missed.

G. Changes to the Admission to Candidacy Form

Any changes— either required or elective—in the course work as outlined on the Application for Admission to Candidacy form must be submitted to the Graduate School. Contact the Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate School for further assistance.

H. Non-continuous Enrollment and Request for Leave of Absence from the Program

Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator to request a leave of absence from the program. A leave of absence may be granted for a period of one semester for reasons of illness or other extenuating circumstances. In order to be granted a leave of absence the student must complete and sign the Request for Leave of Absence form (available on the MFA web site) to the Graduate Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the requested leave period, if possible.

In the case of a leave of absence, the assigned studio will be held for one semester only. If a leave of absence is requested for two or more nonconsecutive semesters, the student must submit a separate request for each semester they will be absent.

If a student is not enrolled in the MFA, Fine Arts Program for two consecutive semesters for any reason the student must re-apply for admission in order to continue their studies in the MFA, Fine Arts Program.

I. No Request for Extension of Time

The MFA degree must be completed within seven years following entrance to the program. Students will not be allowed to request additional time to complete this degree.

J. Thesis Documentation

Upon successful completion of the MFA, Fine Arts Program, the student must submit a digital copy of their exhibition catalog. The formal version of the paper must be submitted to the Earl K. Long Library on the campus of UNO through the Graduate School. Email scholarworks@uno.edu for submission. The catalog will remain in an archive and may be used for recruitment or promotion of the Department of Fine Arts MFA, Fine Arts Program.

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/graduate-forms>

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/masters-degree-requirements>