

# **GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

MA / MFA STUDIO ART PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT OF ART

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE



UPDATED MARCH 2019

**THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN STUDIO ART  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE**

**The Master of Arts with Emphasis in Studio Art (36 credit hours)**

The Master in Arts with an emphasis in Studio Art (MA) is a general graduate degree in studio art for students seeking to enhance their practical and conceptual skills in a particular medium or to attain the necessary credentials for professional development and advancement. Studio media include ceramics, painting, sculpture, photography, mixed, and multi-media. The MA degree is suitable for students seeking to improve their portfolio, gain educational credentials, or to place themselves in a competitive position to apply for a more advanced degree at A&M-Commerce or elsewhere.

**The Master of Fine Arts with Emphasis in Studio Art (60 credit hours)**

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree is considered the terminal degree in studio art. The MFA at Texas A&M University-Commerce is thus intended for students who are both committed to and capable of intensive, advanced study culminating in an individual and self-generated language of expression. MFA students are initially encouraged to explore a broad range of issues meaningful to their work, while simultaneously refining their technical skills. Their explorations may touch upon individual modes of expression, formal elements, experimentation with media and methods, themes and symbols, and relationships among the visual arts and other disciplines. Subsequent courses direct the student toward more mature and self-critical art, leading ultimately to a sustained and cohesive body of work that forms the Master of Fine Arts Exhibition.

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**Graduate Coordinator (MA/MFA in Studio Art)**

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William Wadley, PhD, art history

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**Overview of the Program**

The graduate curriculum in studio art provides students with the discipline, intellectual curiosity, research methods, technical skills and historical perspective required for success in the field of visual arts. Students, faculty, and staff are united in the goal to inspire creativity, foster critical inquiry, and develop advanced competencies necessary for effective leadership roles in the arts and related fields. Expectations include the mastery of techniques and methods of art-making, together with a broad knowledge of historical and contemporary art. Foremost is the production of quality artwork that is both unique and engaged in contemporary culture.

Depending on their intended paths of study, students are initially accepted into the MA track. Students do not become formal candidates for the MFA degree until they have completed no more than 42 semester hours and been admitted to official candidacy (see below). The first and second semesters of the program focus on the investigation of technique and ideas related to the student's artwork. Experimentation is highly encouraged. Although finished works will be created, the most important goal in the first year is for students to challenge their preconceptions and establish an open mindedness towards new ideas and forms of expression.

The third and fourth semesters (the equivalent of 18-42 hours) encourage students to develop more consistency and resolution in their artwork. Now under the guidance of an advisory committee, students will increase their interaction with the faculty at large and participate in periodic reviews of their work. By the end of the fourth semester, students will be prepared to confirm the degree (MA or MFA) they want to complete and will have a better grasp of their long-term goals in the art profession. After the prescribed 36 credit hours, students will have completed the requirements for the MA degree and gained both the skills needed to create graduate-level artwork and credentials required for many educational positions.

Before graduating, MA students who have accrued 27-36 hours and intend to transfer to the MFA degree must formally apply to transfer into the MFA program. Students who leave the graduate program after the MA degree must reapply for the MFA as an entering graduate student and be readmitted by the same selection process.

After completion of 42 semester hours, students in the MFA track will apply for official candidacy, a process that includes the submission of a proposal for the culminating MFA Exhibition scheduled for the final semester. The proposal must demonstrate the students' intent and ability to develop a cohesive body of work and plan for how to achieve it.

In the final semester (usually the last 9-12 semester hours), the student will prepare the MFA Exhibition and a supporting Exhibition Statement, both of which will be defended before the advisory committee once the exhibition has been installed. It is expected that this exhibition and statement will be the culmination of the hard work and creative growth experienced by the student in the pursuit of the degree, and that they will justify the level of achievement required for the MFA.

### Application Process

Students hoping to pursue a graduate degree in art must complete an application packet and meet the Department of Art's requirements for admission. It is important you submit the Apply Texas application *prior* to submitting the remaining application items. The university must receive all application materials prior to the semester in which the applicant intends to enroll. Additionally, all application items, with the exception of the Electronic Portfolio, should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Your Electronic Portfolio should be submitted to the MA/MFA Studio Art Graduate Coordinator.

#### Steps to Apply:

1. Apply via [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org).
2. Pay Application Fee via Apply Texas or the University.
3. Submit Official Transcripts to the Office of Graduate Studies at A&M-Commerce.
4. Submit Electronic Portfolio to the Office of Graduate Studies and the MA/MFA Studio Art Graduate Coordinator.
5. Submit a minimum of two Recommendation Letters (maximum of three) to the Office of Graduate Studies.
6. Submit a Statement of Intent to the Office of Graduate Studies.

Additionally, International Students must submit the following to the Office of Graduate Studies at A&M-Commerce.

1. TOEFL or IELTS Scores.
2. Transcripts and Diploma/Certificate.
3. Sponsor's Statement and Bank Statement (not needed for admission, but will be required for visa purposes).

*For detailed explanations of each of these steps, please see Appendix A: Application Procedures for MA/MFA in Studio Art and Appendix B: Application Procedures for MA/MFA in Studio Art, Information for International Students.*

### Evaluation of Application

To evaluate MA/MFA applications, the Graduate Coordinator reviews each application, and then determines a committee of graduate faculty in the applicant's media to evaluate the prospective student. The greatest emphasis is placed on the quality of the applicant's portfolio, although academic success and letters of recommendation are very important to the overall assessment of potential.

### Admission

Upon admission to the MA/MFA program, all students begin with **conditional status**, allowing for the graduate student to establish themselves in the program. Conditional status will be changed to full admission once the student has completed 12 semester hours of Texas A&M University-Commerce graduate coursework with a graduate GPA of at least 3.0. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA after completing 12 graduate hours will result in suspension of the student from further graduate study in any degree program for 3 years. For more information, see the Grading section.

**Good Standing**

After completion of 12 credit hours and advancing to a fully admitted status, the graduate student wants to remain in Good Standing. A student will remain in good standing if, and only if, he or she has a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.00 and is free of the following holds: holds indicating delinquent financial indebtedness, academic suspension, academic probation, provisional status, and disciplinary suspension. A graduate student must be in compliance with ethical and professional standards as determined by the student's academic department and university rules and procedures.

***Students who are not in good standing are not eligible to graduate until good standing has been achieved.***

**Graduation**

Commencement exercises are held three times each year in May, August, and December. Students must file for graduation with the Registrar's Office early in the semester they plan to graduate. Students will be approved for graduation and awarded the degree after they have satisfactorily completed all degree requirements and been approved by the academic department and the Graduate School.

Texas A&M University-Commerce has the right to rescind any conferred degree if the University becomes aware that the student did not meet all degree requirements including :

- Good Academic Standing
- No more than 3 Grades of "C" in the degree program
- Overall graduate GPA of 3.00 or better
- Overall graduate GPA of 3.00 or better on all graduate work taken toward the graduate degree program
- Departmental Course Requirements are met
- Successful Completion of Exhibition and all its requirements

**Semester Meetings**

At the beginning of each semester, all fully-enrolled students are required to attend a meeting. Taking place the first week of the semester, the Graduate Coordinator will schedule the meeting with all students. *This meeting is mandatory.* This meeting will include orientation information, graduate assistantship discussions, updating contact information, distribution of faculty lists for meetings with second- and third-year students, and more.

## Requirements

### MA Requirements

6 hours of graduate studio courses of your choosing (ART 5XX)

3 hours – The Creative Process (ARTS 505)

3 hours – Practices and Techniques in Studio Art (ARTS 509)

9 hours of graduate level Art History courses (ART 5XX)

3 hours – Research, Lit, & Technique (ARTS 595)

6 hours of Studio Hours I (ARTS 525)

6 hours of Graduate Seminar (ARTS 503)

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36 hours total

### MFA Requirements

6 hours of graduate studio courses of your choosing (ART 5XX)

3 hours – The Creative Process (ARTS 505)

3 hours – Practices and Techniques in Studio Art (ARTS 509)

9 hours of graduate level Art History courses (ART 5XX)

3 hours – Research, Lit, & Technique (ARTS 595)

12 hours of Studio Hours I (ARTS 525) – optional 8 hours can be Studio Project (ARTS 528)

9 hours of Graduate Seminar (ARTS 503)

9 hours of Studio Hours II (ARTS 526) – optional 3 hours can be Pedagogy in the Arts (ARTS 530)

6 hours – MFA Exhibition in Studio Art (ARTS 515)

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60 hours total

MFA Students must also:

- Apply for Candidacy after 42 credits.
- Undergo Candidacy Review after 42 credits.
- Prepare an Exhibition Statement in the final semester, when 60 credits are being completed.
- Complete an Exhibition Statement Defense in the final semester.
- Complete an Exhibition Defense in the final semester.
- Create work for, prepare, promote, plan, and install an Exhibition of their work at the completion of the program.
- Submit the following to the Graduate Coordinator, Art Office, and Gallery  
Coordinator: exhibition statement, historical documentation of work, and exhibition installation documentation.

### **Suggested Plan of Courses**

On the next few pages you will find four different course plans.

- MA Fall/Spring Curriculum
- MA Summer Curriculum
- MFA Fall/Spring Curriculum
- MFA Summer Residency Curriculum
- MFA Year-Round Curriculum

### **Helpful information**

- “Studio Course” refers to a practical class in a medium or media of the visual arts, such as painting, sculpture, ceramics, etc. Studio courses may meet at designated times or be organized in a tutorial fashion where the student works independently under the guidance of a professor. Graduate students normally take studio courses at the 500-level (Master’s level), but they are permitted to apply two advanced undergraduate courses (300-400 level) to a Master’s degree with the written approval of the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate School.
- “Art History Course” refers to graduate-level and advanced undergraduate-level art history classes. Students wishing to apply advanced undergraduate courses to the MA or MFA degrees must have written approval from the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate School to do so. A maximum of two advanced undergraduate courses may be applied to a Master’s degree. Every fall semester, History of Contemporary Art is offered and students are expected to complete this course in their first year of the program if possible.
- Complete course descriptions can be found in Appendix A.
- The following curriculums are proposed only as a working model. Students’ progress at their own rate. It is critical for both the student, Graduate Coordinator and their committee to be in consultative agreement regarding appropriate credit load.

**MA Program  
Fall/Spring Curriculum**

Year One, Semester 1:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 505:	The Creative Process	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	9

Year One, Semester 2:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 509:	Practices & Techniques in Studio Art	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	9

Year Two, Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3
ARTS 595:	Research, Lit, & Technique	3
	Total Hours:	9

Year Two, Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	9

**Total Hours Completed: 36**

**MA Program  
Summer Curriculum**

Year One, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 505:	The Creative Process	3

Year One, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 509:	Practices and Techniques in Studio Art	3

Year One, Fall Semester:

ARTS 595:	Research, Lit, & Technique	3
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Year One, Spring Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year One Total Hours: 18

Year Two, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3

Year Two, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3

Year Two, Fall Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year Two, Spring Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year Two Total Hours: 18

**Total Hours Completed: 36**

**MFA Program  
Fall/Spring Curriculum**

Year One, Semester 1:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 505:	The Creative Process	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	9

Year One, Semester 2:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 509:	Practices and Techniques in Studio Art	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	9

Year Two, Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	6
ARTS 595:	Research, Lit, & Technique	3
	Total Hours:	12

Year Two, Semester 2:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	6
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
	Total Hours:	12

Year Three, Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	3
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	
OR		3
ARTS 530:	Pedagogy in the Arts	
	Total Hours:	9

Year Three, Semester 2:

ARTS 515:	MFA Exhibition in Studio Art	6
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	3
	Total Hours:	9

**Total Hours Completed: 60**

**MFA Program**  
**Summer Residency Curriculum**

Year One, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 505:	The Creative Process	3

Year One, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 509:	Practices and Techniques in Studio Art	3

Year One, Summer Mini:

ARTS 528:	Studio Project	4
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Year One, Fall Semester:

ARTS 595:	Research, Lit, & Technique	3
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Year One, Spring Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year Two, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3

Year Two, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3

Year Two, Summer Mini:

ARTS 528:	Studio Project	4
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Year Two, Fall Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year Two, Spring Semester:

ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
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Year Three, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	
OR		3
ARTS 530:	Pedagogy in the Arts	

Year Three, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 515:	MFA Exhibition in Studio Art	6
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	4

**Total Hours Completed: 60**

**MFA Program  
Year-Round Curriculum**

Year One, Semester 1:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 505:	The Creative Process	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
		Total Hours: 9

Year One, Semester 2:

ARTS 5XX:	Studio Course	3
ARTS 509:	Practices and Techniques in Studio Art	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
		Total Hours: 9

Year One, Summer Semester 1:

ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3
ARTS 519:	Graduate Seminar	3
		Total Hours: 6

Year One, Summer Semester 2:

ARTS 525:	Studio Hours I	3
ARTS 524:	Graduate Seminar	3
		Total Hours: 6

Year Two, Semester 1:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	3
ARTS 595:	Research, Lit, & Technique	3
		Total Hours: 9

Year Two, Semester 2:

ARTS 503:	Graduate Seminar	3
ARTS 597/ART 5XX:	Art History Course	3
ARTS 526:	Studio Hours II	
OR		3
ARTS 530:	Pedagogy in the Arts	
		Total Hours: 9

Year Two, Summer:

ARTS 515:	MFA Exhibition in Studio Art	6
ARTS 526:	Third Year Studio Hours	3
		Total Hours: 12

**Total Hours Completed: 60**

**Transfer Credits for the MA/MFA Degree**

Students desiring to transfer graduate courses toward their degree requirements at A&M-Commerce will contact the Graduate Coordinator of the program for which they are applying. A maximum of 12 semester hours for the MA degree and 20 semester hours for the MFA degree may be accepted from another accredited graduate program. Transfer credit must be in studio art or art history and will be granted only for those courses in which the student received a grade of B or better and can demonstrate evidence of work in the form of a portfolio review. For transfer credits to be counted, the *Application for Transfer Credits* must be submitted during the student's first semester. The Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with a committee of graduate faculty in the student's area of specialization, will determine what transfer credits will be conferred.

**First-Year Mentor**

During the first year in the program (until 18 credit hours), students will report to the Graduate Coordinator as their main adviser. However, they will also be assigned a Faculty Mentor by the Graduate Coordinator. This faculty member will be in the student's specialty, and will serve as a person that the student can seek out advice on the program as well as help with their artistic development. Students should meet with the Graduate Coordinator and their Faculty Mentor regularly each semester their first year, at their own initiative.

**MA/MFA Advisory Committees**

First-year graduate students will report to the Graduate Coordinator for orientation and advising. By the end of their first year (or the equivalent of 18 credit hours), students will submit a *Request for MA/MFA Committee* to the Graduate Coordinator.

The MA/MFA advisory committee consists of a chairperson and two other members of the art faculty. Its purpose is both to assist the graduate student in achieving educational goals and to provide guidance on the rules and timetables inherent in graduate degrees. The chairperson may be any full-time member of the graduate faculty in studio art, though it is advisable that the chairperson be an instructor in the student's area of concentration. At least one instructor in the student's major area must be included among the three members of the advisory committee. Students are required to consult with their committees on a regular basis and to receive their signatures and approvals for key administrative forms.

Unless staffing changes require otherwise, a student will be allowed to make one change on the committee. That change must be made before the student advances to candidacy. If a student wants to change their committee, they must submit the *Request to Change MA/MFA Committee* to the Graduate Coordinator.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Applications for graduate assistantships are reviewed and assigned on a semester basis if available. If turned down for an assistantship at the time of admission into the graduate program, the student can later reapply. Applications can be made by submitting the Application for Graduate Assistantship to the Graduate Coordinator.

There are three types of Assistantships:

1. Graduate Assistant Teaching (GAT)
2. Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT)
3. Graduate Assistant Research (GAR)

*Assistantships may be awarded in the following periods: Fall and Spring (9 months), Summer I and II (3 months), or Fall OR Spring semesters only (4 ½ months).*

Requirements:

- Student must have full or conditional admission into the program, and must be in Good Standing.
- Possess an overall graduate GPA of at least 3.00 for all courses completed.
- Must be registered every term of assistantship, and maintain a 3.00 GPA.
- Teaching assistants listed as instructor of record must have completed at least 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught.
- Graduate students whose native language is other than English must demonstrate a sufficient level of oral and written proficiency before being awarded a teaching assistantship.
- Research assistants are required to successfully complete the Responsible Conduct in Research Scholarship training.

Workload:

Assistants begin work the first class day and end work the last class day of each semester/term. Assistants have the same University holidays and official closings as faculty and staff. Assistantship positions must be held on one of the A&M-Commerce campuses. Assistants cannot work overtime or earn comp time and cannot be paid overtime and cannot work more than the requirements listed below. There is no exception to this procedure.

- Full-time GANT/GAR – 20 hours per week each semester/term of assistantship
- Full-time GAT – teaches 6 hours of undergraduate courses in fall/spring semester
- Full-time GAT – teaches 3 hours of undergraduate courses in the summer term
- Half-time GANT/GAR – 10 hours per week each semester/term of assistantship
- Half-time GAT – teaches 3 hours of undergraduate courses in fall/spring semester

Course Load:

To be eligible for an assistantship, a student must be enrolled each term of assistantship for the following hours

- Full-time assistants for fall/spring semesters: 6-13 hours graduate credit
- Half-time assistants for fall/spring semesters: at least 3 hours graduate credit
- Full-time assistants for Summer I semester: 3-7 hours graduate credit
- Full-time assistants for Summer II semester: 3-7 hours graduate credit

- Half-time assistants for Summer I semester: at least 3 hours graduate credit
- Half-time assistants for Summer II semester: at least 3 hours graduate credit

Time Limit of Assistantship Appointments:

Students pursuing an MA/MFA degree may hold an assistantship appointment for 4 semesters, though that may be extended up to 2 additional semesters at the discretion of the department head. Summer term assistantships are excluded from this time limit.

Assistantship Orientation and Training:

All new assistants are required to complete the Graduate Assistant Orientation, which is an online media presentation and **MUST BE COMPLETED** the first week of employment. This can be found on the Graduate School's website. Additional training may be assigned, and must be completed in full and promptly. Failure to complete orientation or any assigned training may result in termination of the assistantship.

Salary:

GAT & GAR salary payments are distributed once a month, on the 1st working date of each month. GANTs are paid every two weeks and are required to complete a time sheet. Specific salary information can be found on The Graduate School's website. Teaching assistants are eligible to purchase blue parking permits (will need a memo from the department acknowledging the assistantship to give to the university cashier).

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers:

Full-time non-resident assistants employed by census date for each semester are eligible to pay resident (in-state) tuition. Once the student has accepted the assistantship verbally or in writing, the student is obligated to stay in the accepted position until the end of the semester. Failure to remain employed in the position until the end of the semester will result in the loss of the non-resident tuition waiver and payment of the additional tuition fees will be required.

GAT & GAR Tuition Remission:

Full-time GATs and GARs are eligible to receive tuition remission for 6 graduate hours. GATs and GARs must be on payroll by the 12th class day of the semester to receive remission. Each GAT and GAR receiving remission must complete the Graduate Assistant Research Accountability Summary Report and submit to the Office Graduate Studies.

- Fall/Spring (full time): must be registered for a minimum of 6 graduate hours to be eligible to receive a maximum of 6 hours tuition remission.
- Summer I & II (full time): Summer I and II are considered one semester. GARs/GATs must enroll in one of the below combinations to be eligible to receive a maximum of 6 hours tuition remission:
  - 6 hours in Summer I (hired as full time GAR/GAT in Summer I only)
  - 6 hours in Summer II (hired as a full time GAR/GAT in Summer II only)
  - 3 hours in Summer I and 3 hours in Summer II (hired as a full time GAR/GAT in Summer I & Summer II)

- 3 hours in Summer I or II plus 3 hours consisting of one course which is all summer long (hired as GAR/GAT for both Summer I and Summer II with coursework spanning the entire summer).

#### Assessment of Assistantship:

Teaching assistants will be assessed by their students every semester/term and evaluated annually by the department head or faculty supervisor. The evaluations will be maintained in the department office for three years. Assistantships are subject to satisfactory performance of assigned duties, progress toward the degree or program goal and maintaining an overall graduate GPA of at least a 3.00.

#### Additional Information:

Please consult the website of the Graduate School for more information, at <http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/>.

#### **Graduate Studios**

Private studios are provided for MA/MFA graduate students when they are available, as determined by the Graduate Coordinator, on a semester-by-semester basis. Students must be enrolled in art courses to receive a studio assignment and must vacate the studio when their enrollment ends. Studio locations may change from semester-to-semester, and students must be prepared to relocate if needed. When students relocate from a studio or leave the graduate program, the studio originally occupied must be restored to the condition in which it was found. Items left behind, including personal ones, may be confiscated or thrown away.

Keys to private studios and other art facilities are issued by the administrative assistants in the Department of Art office. Students who sign out keys must comply with all rules regarding their use and are specifically prohibited from making copies or sharing keys with other students. When using their studios, students must observe all University rules and procedures (including all safety and compliance codes). Failure to do so may result in the loss of the studio, holds on one's records, or even criminal liability. Students may be removed from a studio for any activity or behavior that is deemed inappropriate, unsafe or a nuisance. If the key is lost or not returned, there will be \$50.00 fine/hold. All students who have a studio, must complete a *Studio Space Contract*.

#### **Grading**

In courses that meet at regularly scheduled times under the guidance of a single instructor, grades will be determined by the instructor. Grades of studio art courses in which a student works independently or in a tutorial format will be determined by the student's advisory committee, who will consider opinions of the entire graduate faculty and the students' performance in the Graduate Reviews.

Most graduate courses are graded on an A-F scale, though some courses are graded on a pass/fail basis. Pass/fail grades are not included in the student's overall academic average. Only grades of C and better will result in semester hours credit and are thus applicable towards a graduate degree. Students must maintain a cumulative B average in all graduate level

courses, excluding those taken on a pass/fail basis. No more than 3 graduate courses with a grade of C may be applied toward a Master's degree.

### **Academic Probation and Suspension**

Students with full admission status who fail to achieve and maintain an overall graduate GPA of 3.00 after the completion of 12 semester hours of graduate enrollment will be placed on academic probation. [We must clarify “conditional acceptance” before allowing this and the following paragraph to remain in the handbook.] Students who fail to achieve a 3.00 overall GPA by the end of the next semester of enrollment will be placed on academic suspension for a period of 2 semesters (Two summer terms count as one semester). After the academic suspension is served, the student may be allowed to re-enroll only upon the recommendation of the department head and the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Failure to achieve an overall 3.00 graduate GPA during any subsequent semester of enrollment will result in suspension, and the student will not be allowed to pursue further graduate study in a degree program for 3 years.

Students with conditional admission status who fail to achieve a 3.00 graduate GPA after the completion of 12 semester hours will be suspended and barred from pursuing further graduate study in a degree program for 3 years. The student will be contacted by Graduate Studies if this is the case, and they will be given an opportunity to appeal if they desire. This provision applies to all courses taken, with the exception of duplicated courses (courses with the same prefix, number, and title), in which case only the most recent grade will be used. This provision also applies to all pass/fail courses and all incomplete courses in which an “X” has changed to an “F.”

Courses from other institutions will not be transferable if they were taken during a period of suspension from Texas A&M University-Commerce. A student who fails to meet the academic expectations of the Department of Art or the professional standards in the field of art may, at any time, be suspended from further graduate study.

### **Incompletes**

Students who are unable to attend classes or complete assigned work because of circumstances beyond their control will, upon written approval, receive a mark of “X” (incomplete) in all courses in which they were maintaining passing grades. When an “X” is given in a course, the credit hours are not included in the student’s GPA for one year. A grade of “X” converts to a grade of “F” after one year if the course requirements have not been satisfied and will be included in both the GPA and the number of hours attempted.

Recording a grade of “X” requires the submission of a plan for completion. The plan will include (1) the reasons why the grade of “X” was given and (2) the steps necessary for the student to complete the assignments of the course and receive a final grade. After the instructor signs off on the plan, it moves to the Department Head, who then forwards it to the Dean's office for final approval. Once an incomplete has been assigned, the course cannot be dropped; a grade must be assigned.

**Graduate Reviews**

During their second and third years, following the successful completion of 18 semester hours, MA/MFA students are required to (1) schedule studio visits with the graduate faculty and (2) present artwork for the Graduate Reviews. First-year students must attend the Graduate Reviews but will not be required to present work.

**Studio Visits with the Graduate Faculty**

During their second and third years, or following the successful completion of 18 semester hours, all students are required to meet with each member of the graduate faculty at least once before the mid-term Graduate Review and at least once before the final Graduate Review in order to show work in progress. Students will initiate the meetings by scheduling appointments with the graduate faculty. These meetings must take place at least one week prior to the mid-term or final Reviews. As these meetings take place, the student should make sure that each faculty they have met with signs the *Graduate Review Form*. If a student does not meet with 85% of the faculty, their final grade will be lowered by a letter grade. If a student does not meet with 50% of the faculty, their final grade will be lowered by two letter grades.

**Artist Statements**

One week before the review is scheduled to take place, the student must submit their current artist statement electronically to the Graduate Coordinator. There is no required length, but the statement should deal with the work being presented at the review. This should be submitted formatted accordingly (see Appendix D: Formatting Guidelines for All Documents Submitted to the Department of Art) and submitted as a Word Document. The Graduate Coordinator will distribute all of the artist statements to the Graduate Faculty. If a statement is not submitted to the graduate coordinator by the expressed due date, the student will be docked points on that portion of their rubric for Graduate Reviews.

**Graduate Reviews Process**

Graduate Reviews occur twice during the regular semesters and are the chief means both of determining grades for studio art courses and of evaluating the student's overall progress in the graduate program. Graduate Reviews are group critiques, normally of 30 minutes in length, in which the student presents work for evaluation by four or more members of the graduate faculty. At the beginning of the Review the student is expected to speak briefly in order to elucidate the work under consideration. This should be no more than a five-minute reading of any written statement or discussion of their artwork presentation. Thirty minutes is the usual amount of time scheduled for a graduate review although discussion may continue beyond the half-hour limit if the need arises.

The first Review is normally scheduled on the Friday one week before the official mid-term date. The second is scheduled for the Friday before final examinations. The Graduate Coordinator will provide detailed schedules of the Reviews at the beginning of the semester and work with students throughout the semester to designate a place of exhibition. Students should strive to present a body of work that is indicative of graduate study with respect to quantity and quality. Students may video-record the Reviews or ask fellow students to take notes for them.

Afterwards, students who have exhibited in the Reviews will meet with their advisory committee chairperson to receive their grades and discuss aspects of their artwork that may need improvement or reconsideration. Each faculty member will fill out a rubric after the final review, which the student's committee will discuss and determine the final grade. To see the rubric and detailed information about the grading criteria, consult Appendix H.

**Completion of 27 Credit Hours**

Upon the completion of 27 credit hours, students are required to complete *Intent to Complete a Master's Degree*. At this point, each graduate student will confirm what degree track they intend to complete: MA or MFA.

Students are admitted to candidacy on the basis of evidence that they have achieved a sufficient degree of technical expertise in and intellectual mastery of their chosen media. Further, the student's work must portend continuing high standards. The completion of course requirements before the application for candidacy does not assure the student's admission to candidacy.

**Advancement to Candidacy**

After the successful completion of no more than 42 semester hours in the graduate program, MFA-track students must apply in writing for official candidacy for the MFA degree, by submitting the *Application for Candidacy* in consultation with the advisory committee and Graduate Coordinator. Accompanying this form is the Exhibition Proposal, a document designed to help students focus on their central project and to articulate the goals they want to accomplish in the last semesters of the MFA degree. It should be clearly and comprehensibly written.

*The Application for Candidacy and Exhibition Proposal are due to the Graduate Coordinator on the following dates in the semester that the student is applying for candidacy: Fall Semester Deadline - Dec 1 / Spring Semester Deadline - May 1 / Summer Deadline - July 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend, it will be due the following Monday.*

## Exhibition Proposal

### Overview:

- Title Page
- Statement about exhibition
- Annotated bibliography
- IRB certificate of completion if project involves the use of models or other activity that would involve human or animal subjects. Please contact the Graduate Coordinator if you have any questions.

*The document should be formatted according to the guidelines laid out in Appendix D.*

### Elaboration of Exhibition Proposal Components

#### Application for candidacy:

Attach and fill out the form. Make sure to acquire all required signatures before the due date (signatures must only be obtained *after* the proposal is complete and reviewed by the committee).

#### Title Page:

Items that must be included:

- Title of project
- Student's Name
- Date Submitted
- List of Committee Chair, Committee Members, and Graduate Coordinator

*For a Sample Title Page, see Appendix E.*

#### Statement about Exhibition:

This document should be no less than 3 pages, and no more than 4 pages, and should be double-spaced. In it, the student should introduce their artistic project and make their goals for the future development of their work and exhibition at the completion of the MFA. If references are made to sources, they should be footnoted and given full bibliographic information in the citation (following Chicago Style).

#### Organization:

1. Introduction, ending with a clear, concise summary of the project.
2. Discussion of necessary research that needs to be completed.
3. Conclusion, addressing ideas for an exhibition project.

Annotated Bibliography:

This is the beginning of your research project, and intended to show that you are on the right track for the project. The document is single-spaced, with one line between each entry, and each annotation. The sources chosen for this should be broad and diverse, to show your breadth of knowledge of the material and emphasize that you can find valid academic and relevant sources. You should include *a minimum of ten sources*.

*For a more information, see Appendix F and for a Sample Annotated Bibliography see Appendix G.*

IRB certificate of completion:

Please consult the Graduate Coordinator, and follow the University's protocol for fulfilling the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements.

**Candidacy Review**

After submitting the Application for Candidacy for the MFA Degree and the Exhibition Proposal, the applicant will make a presentation in the final Graduate Review of the semester to showcase (1) what they have learned while in the graduate program and (2) their goals for their remaining semesters, with particular emphasis on plans for the MFA Exhibition. The graduate faculty will convene after the Final Reviews to consider whether or not to accept the applicant. All members of the graduate faculty at that review will consider the application, but the student's advisory committee will have the final say in the decision. At least one person from the student's committee must be present at this review, and in the absence of other committee members will act on their behalf with their consultation.

The faculty will determine one of the following outcomes for the applicant:

1. Continuance in the MFA program thereby achieving MFA candidacy.
2. Probationary status as an MFA-track student, meaning that the student will enroll in and complete additional course work in the following semester. At the end of this semester, the student may reapply for candidacy and undergo a second candidacy review, after which the faculty will decide upon continuance or termination. Only two candidacy reviews may be attempted. **Additional course work under probationary status may or may not be accepted as applicable toward degree credits. The graduate faculty and advisory committee will confer to make this determination.**
3. Suspension from the MFA program and recommendation that the student apply for an MA degree, the required courses of which will have already been completed.

**MFA Exhibition**

When enrolled in the course, MFA Exhibition in Studio Art (ARTS 515), the student will complete a body of works that is representative of his or her experiences and achievements in the MFA program, with a decided emphasis on a unified theme developed during the final twelve months of the program, including work from the final semester. These works will be exhibited in an MFA Exhibition at the end of the semester and will be accompanied by an Exhibition Statement.

The student is expected to work very closely with the advisory committee during this final semester, both on the body of work and on the written statement. The artist's statement must deal with issues that are central to the exhibit and must be written in clear and purposeful language. It should elucidate the works in the exhibit as well as defend, in the spirit of a thesis, the unique qualities of the student's work. It should serve as a "bridge" between the student's intentions, the work, and the audience.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to schedule the thesis exhibition with the gallery coordinator in advance ***within the first week of the semester in which the student intends to exhibit and graduate***, and to arrange printing of his or her exhibition announcements and publicity. The Department of Art will contribute up to \$50.00 toward printing costs. It is strongly recommended that this be done as soon as possible so that bulk-mail can be used efficiently.

### **Exhibition Statement**

The Exhibition Statement is designed to help students articulate their artistic endeavors and exhibition project. Students should address their artistic ideals, studio practice, artistic influences, relevant research on their chosen themes, and the goals of the exhibition. A finalized draft of this statement is required by the below due date to help facilitate the editing process, thus helping to ensure that the final due dates. To be clear, the draft should be a final paper, as complete as possible.

A draft of the final exhibition statement is due to the entire committee prior to the final due. Draft due dates are as follows: **Fall Semester Deadline – September 15 / Spring Semester Deadline – February 15 / Summer Deadline – July 15.**

*Due to the Coordinator of the Graduate Program in the semester that the student is planning on presenting their exhibition and graduating: **Fall Semester Deadline - October 10/ Spring Semester Deadline - March 10 / Summer Deadline – July 20.***

*Failure to meet these deadlines can result in your graduation being delayed a semester.*

### Overview of Components of the Exhibition Statement

- Title Page
- Exhibition statement
- Annotated bibliography
- Curriculum Vitae

### Elaboration of Exhibition Statement Components

Title Page:

Items that must be included:

Title of project

Student's Name

Date Submitted

List of Committee Chair, Committee Members, and Graduate Coordinator

*For a Sample Title Page, see Appendix E.*

### Statement about Exhibition

This document should be no less than 6 pages, and no more than 8 pages, and should be double-spaced. In it, the student should introduce their artistic project and elaborate on their development during their time pursuing an MFA. If references are made to sources, they should be footnoted and given full bibliographic information in the citation (following Chicago Style).

#### Organization:

1. Introduction, ending with a clear, concise statement about their artwork.
2. Elaborate on key themes and process in artwork.
3. Address important artistic influences.
4. Clarify the necessary research needed to complete the exhibition.
5. Conclusion, explaining the exhibition project and design.

### Annotated Bibliography

This is the documentation of your entire research project, and intended to show that you have laid the groundwork for your exhibition, as well as having gained a mastery of your specific topic and investigation. The document is single-spaced, with one line between each entry, and each annotation. The sources chosen for this should be broad and diverse, to show your breadth of knowledge of the material and emphasize that you can find valid academic and relevant sources. **Include a minimum of fifty sources.**

*For a more information, see Appendix F and for a Sample Annotated Bibliography see Appendix G.*

### Exhibition Statement Defense

Once the Exhibition Statement is submitted to the Graduate Coordinator, an Exhibition Statement Defense will be scheduled within two weeks of this deadline. The entire committee must be present at this event, and it is the student's responsibility to find a time when all members can meet. Prior to this meeting, the MFA candidate should ensure that each committee member has received a completed Exhibition Statement document.

At this defense, the committee will review the Exhibition Statement, examine recent work, and complete the *Exhibition Statement Completion Form* and submit to the Graduate Coordinator. The defense is an oral question and answer session that concerns both the paper and the plan for the exhibition. This signifies that the student is prepared to move forward and stage the exhibition. If the defense is not approved, the student's exhibition cannot move forward. The student can choose to either apply for an MA, or work one more semester on the project and attempt the exhibition statement defense at that time (This defense can only be repeated once). If the paper is not completed by the due date or if the exhibition is not moving along appropriately by the date of the exhibition defense, the committee reserves the right to request that the student extend their graduation by one semester.

### **Exhibition Defense**

Just prior to the opening of the exhibition, the MFA candidate will schedule an Exhibition Defense with their entire committee (which will replace their final graduate review). The committee members will review the work, ask any questions they see fit, and decide if the student has successfully completed the requirements for the MFA degree. The student will prepare the *Exhibition Completion Form*, and have it on hand for the faculty to approve and sign, before submitting it to the Graduate Coordinator. If the defense is not approved, the student's exhibition cannot move forward. The student can choose to either apply for an MA, or work one more semester on the project and attempt the exhibition defense at that time. (This defense can only be repeated once). After the defense, the MFA candidate must digitally submit the following to the Graduate Coordinator, Art Office, and Gallery Coordinator: exhibition statement, copies of marketing materials, historical documentation of work (10-20 images), and exhibition installation documentation (10-20 images). Failure to do so may delay graduation.

### **Exhibition Checklist**

- At the start of the final semester, consult with committee members about the content, exhibition statement, gallery space, and other details of the exhibition.
- Make sure to fill out appropriate graduation documentation.
- Select and schedule exhibition dates with the Gallery Coordinator and Graduate Coordinator.
- Finish and submit Exhibition Statement Draft.
- Finish and submit Exhibition Statement.
- Successfully complete Exhibition Statement Defense.
- Design and produce exhibition materials (announcement, poster) and distribute them in consultation with the Gallery Coordinator.
- Prepare the gallery for exhibition. Mount the exhibition.
- Successfully complete the Exhibition Defense.
- Submit exhibition statement, historical documentation of work, and exhibition - installation documentation to Graduate Coordinator, Art Office, and Gallery Coordinator.
- Restore the gallery for next exhibition.

## Miscellaneous

### Time to Degree Limits

All work for the master's degree must be completed during the 6 years immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded. Credit earned over 6 years prior to graduation requires specific written departmental justification and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School to be counted toward a master's degree. The discipline in which the course(s) was taken shall be involved in the validation of an old course. In no case may courses more than 10 years old be applied toward the master's degree. These same limitations apply to all transfer courses. A master's student who has not been enrolled for one calendar year must apply for readmission under current admission & program standards for master's/specialist programs.

### Leave of Absence Policy

If, for whatever reason, a student needs to take a semester off, the student should notify the Graduate Coordinator. This applies to one of the student's *main* semesters (So if a student is primarily taking classes in the fall/spring and they will take fall off, they should contact the Coordinator. If a student is primarily taking classes in the summer, and needs to take a summer term off, they should contact the Coordinator). If a student misses more than one of their main semesters, without alerting the Graduate Coordinator and Department of Art, they will have to reapply to the program by completing the Reapplication to the MA/MFA Program. Upon submitting the form, the Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with a committee of graduate faculty members in the student's specialty will make a decision regarding the re-admittance to the program.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any kind of academic dishonesty is unacceptable in this program. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, theft of instructional material or exams, representing the work of someone else as one's own, and misrepresenting absences. Academic dishonesty is a severe transgression, and may result in a failing grade, referral to the Dean of Students, expulsion from the class, program, and/or university.

For more information please see the Academic Dishonesty Policy, discussed by The Graduate School in Administrative Procedures in The Graduate School Catalogue, [http://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/office-of-graduate-studies/#administrative\\_procedures](http://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/office-of-graduate-studies/#administrative_procedures).

### Letters of Recommendation

At some point in the program, you may need various letters of recommendation for fellowships or teaching jobs. In order to help you get the best possible letters of reference, here are a few guidelines that may help:

Contact the faculty member at least two weeks before the letter is due.

Ask the faculty member by email, in person or by phone for a recommendation.

Describe the type of position or grant for which you are applying. Specificity will help the faculty member. If possible, provide a web link to the grant or position.

Provide the faculty member with a current resume, digital images of recent work or (in the case of Art History faculty members) copies of the papers that you wrote for his/her courses.

Give the faculty member all necessary information about the letter, including the name and title of the addressee, where the letter should be sent and any deadlines.

Provide any special forms that the prospective employer or granting institution requires. Make sure to sign any necessary waivers.

If the letters are to be sealed and mailed by you, provide addressed, stamped envelopes.

**Visiting Artist Program**

Each semester, the Department of Art brings prominent artists from around the country and the world to campus. Visiting artists present a public lecture and also meet with graduate and undergraduate students for individual critiques. Graduate students are *strongly* advised to attend as many of these lectures and critiques as possible.

## Appendix A: APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR MA/MFA IN STUDIO ART

Students hoping to pursue a graduate degree in art must complete an application packet and meet the Department of Art's requirements for admission. It is important you submit the Apply Texas application *prior* to submitting the remaining application items. The university must receive all application materials prior to the semester in which the applicant intends to enroll. Additionally, all application items should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Your Electronic Portfolio should be submitted to the MA/MFA Studio Art Graduate Coordinator.

### 1. APPLY

Please go to [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org) to submit your application for the program.

### 2. APPLICATION FEE

The application fee is \$50 for domestic students and \$75 for international students. There are several ways to pay your application fee: online while applying at Apply Texas; online at your MyLeo account; by calling 903.886.5591; and by mailing a check to the Office of Graduate Studies (Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Texas A&M University-Commerce, P.O. Box 3011, Commerce, Texas 75429).

### 3. TRANSCRIPTS

Request official transcripts from all institutions you have attended, including all undergraduate and graduate coursework. Your official transcripts can be mailed to the Office of Graduate Studies (Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Texas A&M University-Commerce, P.O. Box 3011, Commerce, Texas 75429). The Office of Graduate Studies may be able to accept electronic transcripts that are sent directly from the institution. Please contact the MA/MFA Studio Art Graduate Coordinator as to whether or not our university can accept electronic transcripts from your previously attended institutions.

### 4. ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

Portfolio of 20 images, clearly labeled with the applicant's name, title of piece, medium, dimensions, and date completed. The portfolio should emphasize the applicant's proposed area of study. (Examples of sites for building an electronic portfolio – SquareSpace.com and Blogger.Com) Your Electronic Portfolio should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and the MA/MFA Studio Art Graduate Coordinator.

### 5. RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

A recommendation letter template is attached to this document. Please note that two letters of recommendation are required; however, you may submit up to three letters of recommendation.

### 6. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Please address your interest in the program, as well as your goals for your education and career. Please also make clear whether you are applying to the MA or the MFA program, and why.

**Appendix B: APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR MA/MFA IN STUDIO ART**  
**Information for International Students:**

In addition to the previously described application requirements, you must also complete the following:

**1. TOEFL OR IELTS SCORES**

Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit proof of English proficiency. A minimum TOEFL score of 79 or a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 is required.

**2. TRANSCRIPTS & DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE**

Request official transcripts from all institutions you have attended, including all undergraduate and graduate coursework. You must also submit an official diploma/certificate representing your completed undergraduate studies.

**3. SPONSOR'S STATEMENT & BANK STATEMENT**

These items are not required in order to gain admission into the program. If admitted into the program, these documents will be required for visa purposes. Please consult the International Student Statement of Finances Form on the Graduate School's website

(<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/documents/sponsorstatement1.pdf>)

to learn more about this required portion of your application or contact International Student and Scholar Services (903-886-5097 or [New.Intl@tamuc.edu](mailto:New.Intl@tamuc.edu)).

**Appendix C: COURSE DESCRIPTIONS****ARTS 503 – Graduate Seminar**

Hours: 3

Graduate Seminar primarily emphasizes research, readings, and writing as a means of understanding historical and contemporary trends in the visual arts and how a student's work fits within them. Continuing to learn about studio practices and the art profession, students will work to refine their own artist statement, continue to digitally document their work, and maintain updated websites. Note: Students may repeat this course, up to a maximum of twelve hours.

**ARTS 505 – The Creative Process**

Hours: 3

Taken in the first year of the Master's degree, this class considers what it means to be an artist. Students will experiment with both proven and experimental methods of art-making in a team based environment. Other topics include practical aspects of the art profession including grant writing, web site construction, professionally photographing their art, preparing and submitting work for exhibitions, and business practices.

**ARTS 509 – Practices and Techniques in Studio Art**

Hours: 3

This course expands upon the techniques and best practices of art-making acquired at the undergraduate level. Students will work with members of the graduate faculty to improve the ways in which techniques and materials can strengthen the conceptual premises of their work.

**ARTS 515 – MFA Exhibition in Studio Art**

Hours: 6

Upon the approval of the major advisor and admission to candidacy for the MFA degree, students will mount an exhibition that demonstrates a unified theme and is supported by an exhibition statement and visual documentation. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 525 – Studio Hours I**

Hours: Variable

This course focuses on unique student-driven solutions to artistic problems. Normally taken after the successful completion of 18 semester hours of graduate study, Studio Hours I allows students to work independently, albeit under the supervision of an instructor or an advisory committee. Students enrolled in this course will be expected both to participate and exhibit in the Graduate Reviews. Topics, media and objectives may vary each term. Note: Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve hours overall. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 526 – Studio Hours II**

Hours: Variable

Normally taken after the completion of 30 semester hours of graduate work, this course allows students to pursue advanced projects under the broad supervision of an instructor or advisory committee. Students enrolled in this course will be expected both to participate and exhibit in the Graduate Reviews. Topics, media and objectives may vary each term. Note: Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve hours overall. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 528 – Studio Project**

Hours: Variable

Focused on a singular theme that is realized in a unified body of work, this course allows for students to create a body of work in a concentrated period of time. With at least two major critiques and a final review, the student works largely on their own to fulfill the project. However, regular meetings with fellow students and the professor oversee development. Note: May be repeatable up to eight hours. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 530 – Pedagogy in the Arts**

Hours: 3

Students work with members of the graduate faculty to consider and implement various methods and approaches to teaching in the field of visual arts. In practice and theory, students will focus on teaching methods in their chosen area of concentration, but will also engage in broader examinations of pedagogical strategies. Assignments will include teaching by critiques, developing a teaching philosophy, and effective classroom and studio practices. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 531 - History of Photography**

Hours: 3

An examination of the scientific and aesthetic history of photography from its origins to the present. Emphasis is placed on early processes, the pioneers of photography, photography as a visual art and developments in modern photography. Media, trends, and the work of photographers are analyzed. This class will develop reading, writing, and appropriate analytic and critical thinking skills appropriate for graduate work. Cross-listed with: ART 333. Permission of instructor required.

## ARTS 532 - Gender, Art and Popular Culture

Hours: 3

Through the careful study of artworks and popular culture, students will be engaged in an extended, historically-based examination of issues concerning gender. In this course, we will pay particular attention to societal constructions of gender, exploring the way that art, television, film, graphic novels and other media shape the way that we understand what it means to be “male” and “female.” Students will read challenging, sophisticated and seminal texts while demonstrating their command of such texts in short responses and online discussions. At the end of the course, the student should not only have a better understanding of gender, but should be able to evaluate its place in society while gaining the tools to be able to better explain gender to others.

## ARTS 533 - Public Art

Hours: 3

Through the careful study of artworks and art historical texts, students will be engaged in an extended, historically-based examination of the development of contemporary public art across the United States and abroad. Students will read seminal and important works that have shaped public art history and project the construction of a piece of public art on the campus of Texas A&M–Commerce. Students will also research public art organizations and spaces to consider various opportunities to pursue public projects. The course will culminate in each student's proposal for a public piece of art, following existing submission guidelines.

## ARTS 539 - History of Contemporary Art

Hours: 3

This course considers criticism, theory, styles, processes and other issues relevant to an understanding of art since 1960. Cross-listed with: ART 404. Permission of instructor required.

## ARTS 595 – Research, Literature, and Technique

Hours: 3

This class prepares the student for writing their exhibition statements and proposals, through a thorough examination of writing, research practices, and exposure to important theoretical issues and significant texts in the field. Permission of instructor required.

## ARTS 597 – Special Topics in Art History

Hours: 3

Organized class. Topics may vary, but can include The Exhibition in Global Art History, Spirituality in Contemporary Art, Gender and Identity in Art and Popular Culture, among others. Note: May be repeatable up to nine hours. Permission of instructor required.

**Appendix D: FORMATTING GUIDELINES FOR ALL DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ART**

- 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins on all sides
- page numbers in the upper right corner, on every page except the title page – should include Last Name here (for example, Newman 2)
- double space all documents (unless otherwise specified)
- for research and citations, please follow the Chicago Manual of Style. For easy reference, please consult Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

**Appendix E: EXHIBITION PROPOSAL SAMPLE TITLE PAGE**

TITLE OF THESIS: MAKE SURE THE TOP LINE IS LONGER  
THAN THE SECOND LINE

An Exhibition Proposal

by

YOUR NAME HERE

Date Submitted: March 1, 2019

Approved by

Committee Chair: NAME HERE

Committee: NAME HERE 1  
NAME HERE 2

Graduate Coordinator: NAME HERE

**Appendix F: INFORMATION ON SOURCES AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY****Source Guidelines for Annotated Bibliography****Good sources**

Books and articles from peer-reviewed journals (print or online).  
 Helpful resources available on the university library's website  
 Worldcat  
 JSTOR  
 EBESCO Host – EJS (Electronic Journals Services)  
 Project Muse  
 Taylor & Francis Online  
 Electronic Collections Online

**Unacceptable sources**

Book Reviews, Encyclopedias, WIKIPEDIA.  
 Websites are strongly discouraged. If, however, absolutely necessary, they must have a clear author and fully documented sources. If there is any question on the legitimacy of a source, contact the arts librarian at Gee Library.

**Annotated Bibliography Components**

- A list of your sources, complete and formatted correctly. These should be formatted to the most updated version of the Chicago Manual of Style. Suggested resources include the manual itself, or, preferably the most updated version of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*.
- An annotation for each source. Below each entry of your bibliography you should include a clear, concise paragraph that explains how each source is useful. What information did it include that is relevant to your project? How was it helpful? How does it relate to your project on the whole? If there is a really valuable or helpful quote, you can include that - A minimum of FOUR sentences (excluding quotes). If you include any quotes or direct paraphrasing, you MUST include a page number.

**Appendix G: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY****Annotated Bibliography**

*Bad Girls* (catalog). Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994.

This exhibition catalogue is one of the first and most important examination of the role of women artists who challenge “rules” in the artworld. Marcia Tucker’s thoughtful compilation of a wide array of artists was particularly helpful in guiding my discussion on those that challenge preconceptions about the notion of the carnivalesque. This will be useful in my discussion of women and humor. Additionally, the parts on Hannah Wilke and Barbara Kruger was key, as those are two of the women discussed in my exhibition statement.

Chave, Anna C. “‘I Object’ Hannah Wilke’s Feminism,” *Art in America* 97, no. 3 (March 2009): 104-109+.

In this article, Chave challenges our conventional understanding of Hannah Wilke. Positing that Wilke’s feminist ideals were not accurately perceived, Chave is determined to clarify that Wilke was in fact challenging the idea of heterosexual seduction. She explains, “Besides positioning herself as sexual prey, for that matter, Wilke also disported herself as sexual huntress. . . . In playing both sexual subject and object, however, Wilke violated feminist edicts against soliciting the male gaze; by the same stroke she challenged an abiding fiction that the contemporary art market . . . disdained to deal in objects or commodities” (108).

Isaak, Jo Anna. *Feminism and Contemporary Art: The Revolutionary Power of Women’s Laughter*. New York, NY: Routledge Press, 1996.

Jo Anna Isaak is a must when looking at humor in feminist art. However, more than just exploring humorous art, Isaak also takes the time to provide an important history lesson about women and their relationship to comedy. It is through comedy that women have been able to challenge femininity and subvert the roles prescribed to them by society at large. When humor is added to feminist art works, it allows a candid view into the problematic areas of issues such as motherhood, identity, sexuality, and race.

Nochlin, Linda. “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists? Thirty Years After.” In *Women Artists: The Linda Nochlin Reader*, edited by Maura Reilly, 311-321. New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, 2015.

A follow-up to one of Nochlin’s most famous articles, “Thirty Years After” revisits issues within the field of art history, and how they had changed or progressed since she first addressed them in the 1970s. Although acknowledging that strides have been made over the decades, Nochlin argues that feminism is still necessary, and its ultimate point will always be to upset the institution of art, which still remains highly male focused.

**Appendix H: SAMPLE RUBRIC FOR FACULTY USE DURING FINAL REVIEW**

**RUBRIC FOR FACULTY USE DURING FINAL REVIEW**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

For reference, 1 means the criteria does not meet the standards of the MA/MFA degree, 3 is average, and 5 means the work excels and exceeds the standards of an MA/MFA degree. The scoring below is a consensus of the Graduate Faculty upon review completion.

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Artist Statement						
Oral Presentation						
Skill with Media						
Visual Presentation						
Conceptual Understanding						
Research						
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>/30</b>					27-30 = A    24-26= B 21-23= C    20-below=failure to progress
<b>Recommended Letter Grade</b>	_____					

Further notes and comments:

## **Graduate Review Grading Criteria**

### **Artist Statement**

- quality of writing
- clarity of content
- strength of argument

### **Oral Presentation**

- clarity of expression
- ability to answer questions without prompting
- compatibility of question and answer

### **Skill with Media**

- handling of medium is reflective of the graduate level
- medium effectively communicates the concept
- medium is appropriate for the work of art

### **Visual Presentation**

- installation reinforces and elucidates the content of the art
- presentation of art is professional and finished
- complies with all university policies, including safety procedures and human subject research and when necessary, has coordinated efforts with university officials

### **Conceptual Understanding**

- student expresses a considered and comprehensible subject or theme
- concept is sufficiently original and is informed by contemporary art
- concept is clearly articulated within a cultural context

### **Research**

- Reflects graduate-level investigation and scope
- Demonstrates breadth yet capacity to focus on a single topic
- Uses discipline-appropriate methods of scholarship and investigation
- Research is conducted in consultation with Committee and Chair
- Complies with all university policies, including human subject research

**Appendix I: IMPORTANT DATES**

During First Semester of Enrollment (if applicable):

- Apply for Transfer Credits
- Studio Space Contract

After completion of 18 credit hours:

- Apply for MA/MFA Committee

After completion of 27 credit hours:

- Complete the Intent to Complete a Master's Degree

For MFA Students Only:

In the semester following completion of 42 credit hours:

- Application for Candidacy (***Fall Semester Deadline - Dec 1 / Spring Semester Deadline - May 1/ Summer Deadline - July 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend, it will be due the following Monday.***)
- Candidacy Review will take place at the last Graduate Review of the Semester.

Final Semester, in which 60 credits will be completed:

- Exhibition Statement Draft (***Due to the student's Committee: Fall Semester Deadline – September 15 / Spring Semester Deadline – February 15 / Summer Deadline – July 15).***)
- Exhibition Statement (*Due to the Coordinator of the Graduate Program in the semester that the student is planning on presenting their exhibition and graduating: **Fall Semester Deadline - October 10/ Spring Semester Deadline - March 10 / Summer Deadline – July 20.** Failure to meet these deadlines will result in your graduation being delayed a semester.*)
- Exhibition Statement Defense - within two weeks of this deadline, a defense must take place.
- Exhibition Defense – must take place just prior to exhibition opening and the Exhibition Completion Form must be completed and submitted.
- Submit the following to the Graduate Coordinator, Art Office, and Gallery Coordinator: exhibition statement, historical documentation of work, and exhibition installation documentation.



**To be completed by applicant:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ CWID (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Specialization \_\_\_\_\_

MA Program in Studio Art     MFA Program in Studio Art

I request access to this letter.     I waive access to this letter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**To be completed by the Recommender:**

1. In what context and for how long have you known this applicant?

2. Does the applicant's undergraduate performance suggest potential for graduate study?

yes                       no                      If no, please elaborate:

3. Please rank the applicant in the following categories.

O=Outstanding, AA=Above Average, A=Average, P=Poor, U=Unable to rank

\_\_\_\_\_ BREADTH OF GENERAL EDUCATION

\_\_\_\_\_ WORK HABITS

\_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND IN ART

\_\_\_\_\_ SPEAKING ABILITY

\_\_\_\_\_ CREATIVITY

\_\_\_\_\_ MASTERY OF OWN MEDIUM

\_\_\_\_\_ WRITING ABILITY

\_\_\_\_\_ ABILITY TO PROBLEM SOLVE

\_\_\_\_\_ COMPETENCY IN OTHER MEDIA

\_\_\_\_\_ POTENTIAL AS A TEACHING ASSISTANT



Name \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please use the space below or additional paper for comments about the suitability of this applicant for graduate study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Recommender

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

Please return letter to Graduate School Coordinator, **Rebecca Stevens**  
([rebecca.stevens@tamuc.edu](mailto:rebecca.stevens@tamuc.edu)) or mail to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research,  
Texas A&M University-Commerce, P.O. Box 3011, Commerce, Texas 75429.



APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP AND INFORMATION SHEET

Student information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ S.S. # \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Email \_\_\_\_\_ CWID \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Email \_\_\_\_\_ UIN # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address is same as Mailing Address

Permanent Address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Degree/Emphasis \_\_\_\_\_ Studio \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Members \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Members \_\_\_\_\_

Have you applied for Candidacy \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

----- To be completed by office -----

Assistantship Date \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer I \_\_\_\_\_ Summer II \_\_\_\_\_

GANT/GAT/GAR \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Duties \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



STUDIO SPACE CONTRACT

Student information:

_____	_____
printed name	email
_____	_____
CWID	signature
	date

- Priority is given to MA/MFA students that are beyond their 1<sup>st</sup> semester in the program.
- Move requests will only be possible on a situational basis deemed appropriate by the Art Facilities Coordinator.
- Do not dispose of any hazardous materials down the sink.
- A key will be issued to the graduate studio. If lost or not returned, there will be \$50.00
- Hazardous materials must be labeled and stored in yellow flammable cabinets located in each building when not in use. Unmarked containers will be discarded.
- Full time enrollment is required to keep or obtain a graduate studio.
- Do not store any materials outside of the graduate studio.
- Do not block egress to the door, fire extinguishers and utilities.
- Do not alter the space (wall construction, shelves, remove furniture, etc.) without the consent of the Art Facilities Coordinator.

Location of studio: \_\_\_\_\_

Condition: (Initial Move-in)

Condition: (Move-out)

Walls: - Great Good Fair Poor

Walls: - Great Good Fair Poor

Floors: - Great Good Fair Poor

Floors: - Great Good Fair Poor

Ceilings: - Great Good Fair Poor

Ceilings: - Great Good Fair Poor

Keys returned: YES or NO

*The Art Facilities Coordinator and the student have completed a final walk-through of the space and have determined that the studio had been returned to its original condition. If the space is not returned to its original condition and/or the student has not moved out the belongings, the department reserves the right to place a hold on the student's record.*

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Art Facilities Coordinator Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Coordinator Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_







APPLICATION TO GRADUATE OR CHANGE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN STUDIO ART

Student information:

\_\_\_\_\_ printed name email

\_\_\_\_\_ CWID signature date

\_\_\_\_\_ I am enrolled in the MA program, and intend to graduate with the MA degree.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am enrolled in the MA program, and intend to transfer to the MFA program.\*

\_\_\_\_\_ I am enrolled in the MFA program, and intend to transfer to the MA program.\*

\*By submitting this form, I acknowledge that I have submitted the Change of Major form with the Graduate School found on their website.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/graduateAdmissions/changeMajor.aspx>. The signatures required on this form must be completed before submittal.

To be completed by the applicant's committee

By signing this form, the committee members acknowledge and support the student's decision to either graduate or transfer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson signature date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member signature date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member signature date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member signature date

Graduate Coordinator Information

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Information Complete: YES or NO

Approved: YES or NO

Comments, if needed:



APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

Student information:

\_\_\_\_\_ printed name \_\_\_\_\_ email

\_\_\_\_\_ CWID \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

Semester and Year of intended exhibition and graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

*All blanks below must be initialed and a majority of the student's committee must approve application before the candidacy review can take place.*

\_\_\_\_\_ I have achieved a graduate grade point average of at least 3.0 overall and on all courses in my major and I have accumulated 42 credits.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have attached my exhibition proposal following the guidelines in the handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, printed name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

APPROVED/PASSED \_\_\_\_\_ or DENIED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Coordinator, printed name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_ date

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_



**EXHIBITION STATEMENT COMPLETION FORM**

**Student information:**

_____	_____
printed name	email
_____	_____
CWID	signature
	_____
	date

This document verifies that the entire committee has met with the student at the Exhibition Statement Defense as well as read the exhibition statement, reviewed recent work, and understands the student's plan for exhibit. This form must be completed and approved before the student's exhibition can open.

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove

_____	_____	_____
Chairperson, printed name	signature	date
_____	_____	_____
Committee Member, printed name	signature	date
_____	_____	_____
Committee Member, printed name	signature	date
_____	_____	_____
Committee Member, printed name	signature	date
_____	_____	_____
Graduate Coordinator, printed name	signature	date

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_



EXHIBITION COMPLETION FORM

Student information:

\_\_\_\_\_ printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ email

\_\_\_\_\_ CWID

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

This document verifies that the entire committee has met with the student at the Exhibition Defense and viewed the completed work and installation. This form must be completed and approved before the student's exhibition can open.

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member, printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

\_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Coordinator, printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ date

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_