

MASTER OF FINE ARTS GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, ART, & CONSTRUCTION
ART DEPARTMENT

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Welcome to the Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts Program!

Our Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree was established in 1970 in what used to be the College of Architecture. The College was restructured to include the Humanities and Performing Arts, resulting in the College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities. Most recently, the College was restructured to form the College of Architecture, Art and Construction. The Department of Art includes both Studio Art and Art and Architectural History disciplines. We offer the BFA and MFA degrees in studio art with concentrations in Ceramics, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Printmaking and Sculpture, and a BA in Art with concentrations in Digital Art & Design Media, Studio Art and Art History. In collaboration with the School of Computing, the Department of Art contributes to the Master of Fine Arts in Digital Production Arts which started in 1998. This program has a separate curriculum including courses in both computer science and studio art.

This handbook, for the MFA degree in Visual Art, is intended to supplement the University Graduate Announcements catalog, providing you with the specific working procedures necessary to successfully complete your course requirements. If you read and consult this MFA handbook along with the Graduate Announcements information, you will be able to complete your graduation requirements with minimum confusion. It is important to note that Graduate School and university deadlines must be followed or substantial financial penalties will be imposed. Refer to the Graduate Announcements Catalog at <https://www.clemson.edu/registrar/academic-catalogs/>

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for this handbook, please contact Professor Kathleen Thum.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your Master of Fine Arts degree!!!

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Emeriti Faculty

- Professor John Acorn
- Professor Harold Cooledge
- Professor Sydney Cross / Alumni Distinguished Professor
- Professor David Detrich
- Professor Tom Dimond
- Professor Mark Hudson
- Professor Robert Hunter
- Dr. William Lew
- Professor Ireland Regnier
- Professor James Stockham
- Professor Mike Vatalaro
- Dr. Cecilia Voelker / Alumni Distinguished Professor
- Dr. Gerald Walker
- Professor Sam Wang / Alumni Distinguished Professor

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

FALL 2025

August

13 Wednesday – Graduate School Orientation for New Graduate Students
 14 Thursday – Art Department Orientation for New Graduate Students
 18 Monday - University Convocation
 18-19 Monday -Tuesday - Late enrollment
 20 Wednesday - Classes begin
 25 Tuesday - Last day to register or add a class or declare Audit

September

1 Monday – Labor Day Holiday, no classes
 3 Wednesday - Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without a W grade
 9 Tuesday - Last day to apply for December graduation

October

10 Friday - Last day for instructors to issue midterm evaluations
 13-14 Monday – Tuesday – Fall Break
 28 Tuesday - Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without final grades

November

3 Monday – e-Learning Day (all classes meet virtually)
 5 Wednesday - Registration for spring and summer terms begins
 26-28 Wednesday-Friday - Thanksgiving holidays

December

4-5 Thursday-Friday - Classes meet; exams permitted in labs and one-hour courses only
 8-12 Monday-Friday - Examinations
 15 Monday 9:00 A.M. - Deadline to submit candidate grades
 17 Wednesday 9:00 A.M.- Deadline to submit other grades
 17 Wednesday – Doctoral Commencement
 18 Thursday – Commencement Ceremonies

SPRING 2026

January

5-6 Monday-Tuesday - Late enrollment
 7 Wednesday - Classes begin
 13 Tuesday - Last day to register or add a class or declare Audit
 19 Monday - Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, no classes
 21 Wednesday - Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without a W grade
 28 Wednesday - Last day to apply for May commencement

February

27 Friday - Last day for instructors to issue midterm evaluations

March

13 Friday Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without final grades
 16-20 Monday-Friday - Spring break

April

4-11 Saturday-Saturday - Honors and Awards Week
 6 Monday - Registration for fall term begins
 23 -24 Thursday-Friday - Classes meet; exams permitted in labs and one-hour courses only
 27 – May 1 Monday – Friday - Examination

May

4 Monday 9:00 A.M.-Deadline to submit candidate grades
 6 Wednesday 9:00 A.M.- Deadline to submit other grades
 7-8 Thursday-Friday – Commencement

The MFA Program - A Brief Synopsis of Goals and Expectations

The Department of Art faculty is committed to providing a challenging and professional course of study for the Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art degree. The conceptual basis for the degree is to educate the student to achieve a high level of proficiency as a visual artist. Expectations include rigorous study of both techniques and concepts in art, which must be demonstrated in the production of high-quality artwork within the student's chosen medium.

The Department of Art conforms to program guidelines as stipulated by the College Art Association and NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design) and agrees with the principle that the MFA degree is the terminal degree in the Visual Arts and is equivalent to the terminal degrees in other disciplines.

The MFA degree program requires a minimum of 60 credit hours of graduate course work. The degree has been established as a two-year program. Depending on the individual though it may be extended into extra semesters allowing for 2 - 2 ½ years of study based on the recommendations of your advisor and the graduate faculty. Major areas of study include Ceramics, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Printmaking and Sculpture.

The studio art faculty comes from various educational experiences and a variety of studio disciplines. In this program, we have made a concerted effort to use a team-teaching approach. This provides the student with the expected expertise necessary in the focus discipline and enriches the educational experience by including various insights outside of the specific medium. This crossover of ideas, learning methods and insights is crucial in creating a rich and fertile educational environment for the student. The faculty has established an "open studio" forum to encourage as much professional exchange as possible. The entire graduate faculty attends the midterm and final semester reviews. In the same spirit, students are encouraged to interact between their different disciplines, appreciating the variety of approaches to art and learning styles.

The first semester establishes a rigorous investigation of technique and ideas related to the student's initial artwork. Experimentation is strongly encouraged, both in concept and medium. Although finished works will be created; the most important consideration is for students to challenge their imagination and establish an open mindedness towards new ideas and possibilities. Our students are encouraged in their first year to take at least three to six credits of studio in a medium outside their chosen major. Along with this studio effort are the Art History and Seminar requirements, each encouraging an intensive understanding of contemporary art as it impacts the student's efforts as an artist.

The second semester is approached with a similar spirit of exploration. Toward the end of the second semester, a student may begin to develop a thesis idea from their work. With the help of the major advisor and a significant amount of studio effort, the student will most likely be ready to take on thesis credits in the following semester. A 30-hour review is then scheduled and upon successful completion, the student is directed towards an intense body of work culminating in a thesis exhibition and manuscript. The timing of thesis work is critical and is generally approached on an individual basis. Often students take time during the first summer to assemble their ideas for the 30- hour review/presentation. They may also choose to take another semester before feeling ready for thesis work.

After passing the 30-hour review the student chooses a thesis committee with the assistance of the major advisor with whom he or she has been working with. Upon approval by the Graduate Coordinator or Departmental Chair, this committee will meet with the student and help direct the final course work; the thesis orals, manuscript and thesis exhibition. A GS2 form must be filed in accordance with the Graduate School's time line. The form lists all the required courses and credits necessary to graduate. Deadlines for other related forms, etc. can be found at <http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/deadlines.html>.

The third and fourth semester in the 2-year track, or fourth and fifth semester in the 2 ½ year track, are focused on the production of work for the final thesis exhibition orals and the written manuscript. A calendar of expected dates for the Graduate School, the gallery exhibition and the oral review will be established. The gallery director will establish dates for the installation and removal of the exhibition as well as coordinate reception efforts. It is the **student's responsibility** to install the exhibition and meet all the dates and deadlines concerning the exhibition, written thesis, orals and graduation. Details about diplomas, manuscript copies and graduation are on-line at <https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/academics/graduation-ceremonies.html>

Overseas Study in Italy

Various faculty in the Department of Art organize and lead the biannual Art in Italy Study Abroad Program. Currently the program runs on even-number years in the early summer, the next one will be May-June 2026. The Program is a 21-day study abroad program for undergraduate and graduate students traveling in Italy to four locations- Rome, Orvieto, Florence, and Venice. Students study historically significant artwork, international contemporary artwork, create artwork in the form of on-site drawing and engage in the culture of Italy. Activities include visiting historically significant art works, on-site drawing and journal keeping, cooking class, and immersion into the Italian culture through engaging in art. The tuition for this program is not waived as it pays for the program, but there are special scholarships available to offset expenses. Talk to your major advisor, Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair for further information.

MFA Degree Course Outline

The following curriculum is proposed only as a working model for full-time MFA students wishing to complete their degree in 2 years. The 2.5 year model will require consultation with faculty and confirmation of funding for the extra semester. Students' progress at their own rate. **NOTE: There are many other potential combinations of courses beyond the options listed below. In general, a student working toward completion in 2 years should expect to take 15 credits per semester.** It is critical for both the student and major advisor to be in consultative agreement regarding appropriate credit load. Students may take elective credits in other programs and disciplines after consultation with their major advisor.

First Year - (2-year Model)

First Semester

ART 8050*	Visual Arts Seminar I	3
ART 8500**	Visual Arts Studio	3
ART 8510**	Visual Arts Studio	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	3
AAH 6300*	20th Century Art History I	3
Total credits		15

Second Semester

Option 1

ART 8060*	Visual Arts Seminar II	3
ART 8510**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8700**	Studio (Major Area)	6
AAH 6320*	20th Century Art History II	3
Total credits		15

Option 2

ART 8060*	Visual Arts Seminar II	3
ART 8510**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8700**	Studio (Major Area)	3
AAH 6320*	20th Century Art History II	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	3
Total credits		15

* Must be taken in the first and second semesters

**Studio credits taken in your studio focus area

***Studio credits outside of your studio focus area. You may also use the specific designated numbers for the studio area – ART 6050 Drawing, ART 6070 Painting, ART 6090 Sculpture, ART 6110 Printmaking, ART 6130 Photography, ART 6170 Ceramics.

Second Year - (2-year Model)

In the second year, beginning the 3rd semester the primary focus is on the creation of the thesis work and manuscript. Upon completion of 30 credit hours the student, if ready, is encouraged to present work for the 30-hour review. This is a presentation of proposed thesis work, its concept, its basis, and medium in which it will be accomplished (see 30-hour review guidelines). Upon successful completion of this review, the student will be allowed to sign up for ART 8910 thesis hours. An initial three hours is taken to start work on the written manuscript, which is usually followed, in the last semester with 12 hours of ART 8910 for a total of 15 thesis hours. Three additional credits of Art History are also required during this second year. This is usually taken as a Directed Studies (AAH 6110) within the student's specific discipline.

Third Semester

Option 1

ART 8710**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	6
ART 8910**	Thesis	3
AAH 6110	Art History Directed Studies	3
Total credits		15

Option 2

ART 8710**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8910**	Thesis	3
AAH 6110	Art History Directed Studies	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	<u>3</u>

Total credits 15

Fourth Semester

ART 8910**	Thesis	12
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	<u>3</u>

Total credits 15

**Studio credits taken in your studio focus area

***Studio credits outside of your studio focus area

First Year - (2 1/2 -year Model)**First Semester**Option 1

ART 8050*	Visual Arts Seminar I	3
ART 8500**	Visual Arts Studio	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	3
AAH 6300*	20th Century Art History I	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

Option 2

ART 8050*	Visual Arts Seminar I	3
ART 8500**	Visual Arts Studio	3
ART 8510**	Visual Arts Studio	3
AAH 6300*	20th Century Art History I	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

Second SemesterOption 1

ART 8060*	Visual Arts Seminar II	3
ART 8510**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 8700**	Studio (Major Area)	3
AAH 6320*	20th Century Art History II	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

Option 2

ART 8060*	Visual Arts Seminar II	3
ART 8510**	Studio (Major Area)	3
AAH 6320*	20th Century Art History II	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

* Must be taken in the first and second semesters

**Studio credits taken in your studio focus area

***Studio credits outside of your studio focus area. You may also use the specific designated numbers for the studio area - ART 6050 Drawing, ART 6070 Painting, ART 6090 Sculpture, ART 6110 Printmaking, ART 6130 Photography, ART 6170 Ceramics.

Second Year - (2 ½ -year Model)

In the second year, beginning the 4th semester, the primary focus is on the creation of the thesis work and manuscript. Upon completion of 36 credit hours the student, if ready, is encouraged to present work for the 30-hour review. This is a presentation of proposed thesis work, its concept, its basis, and medium in which it will be accomplished (see 30-hour review guidelines). Upon successful completion of this review, the student will be allowed to sign up for ART 8910 thesis hours. An initial three hours is taken to start work on the written manuscript, which is usually followed, in the last semester with 12 hours of ART 8910 for a total of 15 thesis hours. Three additional credits of Art History are also required during this second year. This is usually taken as a Directed Studies (AAH 6110) within the student's specific discipline.

Third Semester

Option 1

ART 8710**	Studio (Major Area)	6
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	3
AAH 6110	Art History Directed Studies	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

Option 2

ART 8710**	Studio (Major Area)	6
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	3
ART 6XX0***	Advanced Studio	<u>3</u>

Total credits 12

Fourth Semester

ART 8910**	Thesis	3
ART 8800**	Studio (Major Area)	6
AAH 6110	Art History Directed Studies	3

Fifth Semester

ART 8910**	Thesis	<u>12</u>
Total credits		12

**Studio credits taken in your studio focus area

***Studio credits outside of your studio focus area

Maximum Credits Allowed for 8000 Level Studio Courses

Given that there are other potential combinations of courses beyond the options listed above, here are guidelines for maximum credits that can be taken for the 8000 level studio courses. Again, it is critical for both the student and major advisor to be in consultative agreement regarding appropriate credit load.

ART 8500 - (3 maximum total credits)

ART 8510 - (6 maximum total credits)

ART 8700 - (6 maximum total credits)

ART 8710 - (6 maximum total credits)

ART 8800 - (15 maximum total credits)

ART 8910 - (15 maximum total credits)

Requirements for Awarding of a Degree

Students are required to complete the following:

1. A minimum of 45 credits with a B average or above in the student's professional curriculum, including 36 hours of ART 6000 and 8000 level courses, and nine hours in the history of art; **and**
2. A 15 credit hour thesis culminating in satisfactory completion of a written documentation of the "thesis exhibition" and an oral examination by the Graduate Committee.

MFA Program Procedures / Evaluations (Initial 30 Hours of Credit)

1. At the beginning of the first semester, each student will be assigned a faculty member to serve as the major advisor. This assignment may be changed at the end of the first semester, if desired, at the request of the student or the faculty member. The Chair of the Department will make the assignment of the faculty advisor with the approval of the faculty member.

A graduate student wishing to transfer to a studio area different from which they initially applied, must submit a formal petition outlining the rationale for transfer to the Chair of the Department, Graduate Coordinator and new studio area faculty advisor for approval. A determination will then be made if the transfer is deemed acceptable or not based on the student's aptitude and capacity to continue functioning at an appropriately high level in the MFA program. If the formal petition is not accepted, the student may remain in the program in the initial studio area of application, or may be asked to reapply to the MFA program in the new studio area. Reacceptance into the MFA program is not guaranteed at this point. The transfer of successfully completed course credits will be determined on a case by case basis if the transfer is approved. Additional course work may need to be considered.

It is important to note that during a student's enrollment, that their major advisor and/or other faculty members may be engaged in professional development activities that will take them away from their assigned duties and responsibilities in the Department of Art. These are activities including, but not limited to, sabbatical leaves, grant related research projects, artist in residencies, etc. Every effort will be made to give the student advanced notice of these activities as well as ensuring that the advising needs of the student are met during the faculty's absence.

2. Each semester there will be two review sessions in which students will report their progress. This will be in the form of a verbal/visual presentation. One will occur at mid-semester and the other at the end of the semester. The Department of Art Graduate Faculty attends these review sessions. Additional Department of Art Faculty attend the reviews based of their teaching schedules and commitments. These reviews should be looked at as a critical learning experience for both students and faculty. All graduate students are invited and encouraged to attend the midterm review session but are excluded from the final semester review

3. Following these review sessions, the art faculty will meet to discuss the growth, progress and direction of each student.

4. The grade evaluation of all courses prior to the completion of 30 hours of course work will be the decision of each instructor in the individual courses. The major advisor will make the grade evaluation for the student's major area of concentration with the advisement of the entire graduate faculty. This will be determined following the end of the semester review.

5. At all times the graduate students are encouraged to use the resources of the total faculty in addition to the major advisor.

6. At the completion of the second semester or at the completion of 30 hours of course credit, each student will be asked to present their work in accordance with the 30-hour review guidelines. Afterwards, the faculty will determine one of the following:

- a. Continuance in the MFA program thereby becoming a candidate for the MFA degree.
- b. Conditional status. A conditional status student will do additional course work for one semester or one summer session plus one semester. At the end of this semester, the student will again present with the faculty deciding upon continuance or termination. **This additional work may or may not be accepted as applicable toward degree credits.**
- c. Termination of graduate work.

Procedures/Evaluations– Degree Candidates

1. Upon successful completion of the 30-hour review, graduate students who continue as a degree candidate will select a chair for their graduate committee. This will be done with the assistance of the Graduate Coordinator and or the Chair of the Department. The chairperson is typically the same person as the previous major advisor but there may be exceptions.
2. The graduate student will also select a thesis committee at this time. The committee is to be composed of a minimum of three faculty members. The majority of this committee will be chosen from the tenure track faculty in consultation with the student's major advisor. The chair of your thesis committee must be Graduate directing faculty. The members of your thesis committee must be Graduate directing faculty and/or Graduate advising faculty. Please see the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures PDF for more information about your committee composition, along with a discussion with either the Graduate Coordinator, the Chair of the Department or your major advisor. After you have selected your committee, a University Graduate School GS2 form is initiated.
3. Upon successful selection of the thesis committee the graduate student will review with the committee and Lee Gallery director the Thesis Exhibition Contract. The Thesis Exhibition Contract lays out the expectations, requirements and rules for substantial and professional quality gallery installation of the graduate student's MFA exhibition project. This contract will be a continued reference as the graduate student moves through their final thesis semester.
4. The GS2 is online and accessible through iROAR. Submitting your GS2 is a two-part process that includes A) Committee Selection and B) Plan of Study.
<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/plan-of-study/index.html>. The graduate school has specific deadlines for forms GS2 through GS7. The calendar is published in the graduate announcements. All forms can be downloaded online at the Graduate School home page **<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/forms.html>**
5. In the last semester, the graduate student will primarily be engaged with the Graduate Thesis Committee. However, the graduate student is encouraged to participate in other students reviews when possible. It is suggested that the student, with the assistance of the Thesis Committee Chairperson, set up additional committee meetings as needed for consultation, direction, assistance, etc.
6. Graduate evaluation is the responsibility of the entire Graduate Thesis Committee for all course work within the student's major area of concentration.

Thesis

The thesis is the final 15 hours of credit in the program. This includes a written thesis as well as the studio artwork in the thesis exhibition. It is primarily the "pulling together" of the major work of the graduate student. Therefore, it may be in the form of continuation, including work executed prior to the thesis credits. It may also be a specific body of works that is the outgrowth of the prior graduate work. The content of the thesis work is the responsibility of the student under the direction of the Chairperson and Committee.

1. Information on Manuscript Preparation and Graduation Clearance from the Graduate School can be found at **<http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/theses-and-dissertations/index.html>**
2. It is advisable to begin work on the thesis as early as possible. Make use of past thesis manuscripts that are available on-line in a thesis repository via the University library website. Make full use of the committee and provide rough draft copies well in advance of completion deadlines.

3. The primary element of the thesis work is the thesis exhibition. The exhibition is held in the Lee Gallery approximately one month prior to graduation. The Graduate Faculty and the Gallery Director oversees scheduling this exhibition. As explained in the Thesis Exhibition Contract, the graduating student is responsible for arranging and installing the exhibition in consultation with their Graduate Thesis Committee and the gallery director. This installation should reflect and consider the nature of the work on exhibition and therefore, should be approached as an important creative part relative to the work.

4. A final Orals examination is required no later three weeks prior to graduation. This exam consists of a review of the exhibition and a question-answer (oral exam) session conducted by the faculty of the department. A MFA Thesis Oral Statement is required as part of the exam. The student is also required to provide a written 2 page MFA Thesis Oral Statement, which summarizes their Oral Thesis presentation, to the faculty, several days in advance of the review.

5. Final approval of the thesis manuscript must be unanimous by the Thesis Committee. Thesis work is graded as “pass” or “fail.”

Note:

Do not approach the written thesis as a burden upon your studio work. Think of it as a documentation of your work and as a creative extension in another medium. It is an opportunity for the clarification of ideas and concepts, the chance to be reflective, and to produce a document.

Additional Program Information

Graduate Reviews

Each semester during midterm and finals week the graduate faculty reviews the studio efforts of each full-time student in the MFA program. The Graduate Coordinator will designate a place and time to display the semester’s work. The student is encouraged to display all studio work both finished and in progress. The student is also required to provide a written statement, which states the goals and considerations of the work to be reviewed, to the faculty, several days in advance of the review. Within the allotted 30 minutes, the student will verbally present the work and then take questions and comments from the faculty. Students may record the review on audiotapes or may choose to have a fellow student take notes for them. The midterm review is open to allow MFA students to attend each other’s reviews. The final review is with faculty only; to allow for a more focused assessment of the student’s progress in the program. Afterwards, students should meet with their major advisor to receive their grades and discuss future efforts and improvements for the work.

Grading

Most graduate courses are graded on an A+/-, B+/-, C+/-, F scale. Thesis research courses are graded on a Pass/No Pass basis. Courses graded as Pass/No Pass are not included in the academic average, however the grade is placed on the student’s final academic record.

A minimum grade of C must be made on all course work to obtain graduate credit. The graduate student must maintain a cumulative B average in all graduate level courses (6000 level or above), excluding those taken on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail to meet these requirements become ineligible for graduation and are placed on academic probation. This probationary status will remain in effect until nine additional semester hours of graduate credit have been attempted and passed with a B or better average. Students who fail to remove the probationary status are subject to academic dismissal and will not be permitted to continue in the graduate program without the recommendation of the program coordinator and written approval of the Graduate School.

Incomplete Graduate Course Work

The grade Incomplete (I) may be given for incomplete work for any graduate student when a small amount of their work remains unfinished and cannot be completed within the regular semester due to serious circumstances. The student receiving the (I) grade is responsible for contacting their professor regarding the work required to complete the course. The grade of (I) will be valid for only 30 days after the beginning of the next scheduled semester session. The grade will automatically default to an (F) after this 30-day make-up period. An (I) grade that is not quickly resolved may impact a student’s standing and graduate assistantship.

Graduate Assistantships

General information regarding graduate assistantships is can be found in the Graduate Announcements. Graduate students that are awarded a departmental assistantship are required to work 20 hours per week. These assistantships allow for a significant tuition waiver and a stipend of approximately \$6,970 per year.

The duties and responsibilities for the assistantship are determined by departmental and program needs and may vary from semester to semester. The employment period is August 15 to May 15 annually. Assistantship scheduling of hours may vary and occasionally may occur in the evening and on the weekends.

- A 20-hour assistantship is split between 10-hour Teaching Assistantships (TA) and 10-hour Research Assistantships (RA) duties.
- Typically, in TA-ships, students assist in beginning and advanced undergraduate studio courses, foundations courses, or art history.
- RA-ships support secondary assignments include but are not limited to lab duties in your studio, assistance with gallery programming or coordination, social media assistance, or specific research projects.
- In the second year, there is the possibility of becoming a Graduate Teacher of Record (GTR) for an undergraduate course. This may include: a beginning studio in your discipline, Art Appreciation, or other studio course according to your qualifications. Based on the fluctuating needs of the program and the availability of funding, it is important to note that there are no guarantees that a student will become a GTR.
- Each semester the specific details and responsibilities of your graduate assistantship will be outlined in the **Clemson University Offer of Graduate Assistantship** form.
- The Graduate School has mandated that faculty overseeing assistantship assignments administer graduate student performance evaluations each semester. Returning students will not be cleared for next term registration or assistantship renewals otherwise. Graduate students will have access to the evaluations and be able to comment on performance assessment by faculty.

Students receiving an assistantship are required to be enrolled for a minimum of 9 hours per semester (3 hours for Summer) and need to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average to remain in good academic standing. The employment period is August 15 to May 15 annually. Graduate Assistants work on the same schedule as faculty, including term breaks (but not official holidays). Please refer to the Graduate Assistantships, Holiday Leave policy <https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/academics/policies-and-procedures.html>

Students on a 20-hour assistantship should not retain outside employment during the 9-month academic year. As a graduate assistant, you must log on to the **Time Capture System** weekly and record your assistantship hours. Here is a link to the instructions: http://media.clemson.edu/humanres/aca/time_capture_instructions.pdf

Here is the link that you must use weekly to record your assistantship hours: <https://www.clemson.edu/human-resources/current-employees/student.html>

FAILURE TO DO THIS WEEKLY CAN RESULT IN THE LOSS OF YOUR ASSISTANTSHIP

Graduate Studios: Assignments and Responsibilities

The graduate faculty assigns individual graduate studio spaces. These spaces are usually assigned at the beginning of the year, but may need to reassign on a per semester basis. These space assignments are based on individual considerations, which vary within each discipline and studio facility, i.e. noise, equipment, ventilation, etc.

Our goal is to give each student the best studio space possible while maintaining the overall demands of the program. A student's individual requests or needs are important and when possible accommodated.

The assigned studio should be considered a semi-private space, which usually has an impact on other surrounding studio areas. Shared major spaces (ceramics, sculpture, photography, printmaking and the wood shop) require students to be responsible for individual use of equipment and clean up. Students are expected to work together in such a way as to benefit the mutual needs of all participants in the MFA program. It is expected that students maintain a professional individual studio environment and behave appropriately within the university's rules and regulations regarding campus behavior. Refer to the Graduate Announcements Catalog at <https://catalog.clemson.edu/index.php>

Thesis Exhibition

The MFA thesis exhibition is generally scheduled towards the end of the semester in which the student has enrolled in their final 12 to 15 credits of ART 8910 Masters Research thesis work. Exhibitions typically take place in the Lee Gallery averaging 2-3 MFA students contingent upon the number of graduate students needing to have their thesis exhibitions and on scheduling and other programmatic events affecting the gallery and department. The Lee Gallery calendar is established at least one year in advance, with consideration being given to the many complex needs of our department, college and Lee Gallery programming. The Graduate Studio Art Faculty, in consultation with the Lee Gallery Director, will determine the composition and number of graduate students in each thesis exhibition, and when it will take place. The Thesis Exhibition Contract will be reviewed and signed by the graduate student, Graduate Thesis Committee Chair and Lee Gallery Director to establish the agreement to install the thesis exhibition. This contract agreement along with other necessary supporting material must be signed soon after successful completion of 30-hour review and thesis committee selection. Failure to meet this responsibility will jeopardize the opportunity to have the thesis exhibition in the Lee Gallery and may require the student to install his/her work in another location to complete thesis and orals review.

Digital promotional materials of the thesis exhibitions for social media will be developed by the department and will follow the brand guidelines of Clemson, however, the graduate student must provide the department with required materials by established deadline. Self-developed promotional materials in print or on social media by the graduate student are allowed but must not contain any Clemson brand logos.

Thesis Oral Review

The deadline for the oral review is set by the Graduate School and is listed with other important graduation dates on-line at <https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/about/>. At times this date does not coincide with the thesis exhibition dates for a given semester. In such a case the student will set up an appropriate representative body of his/her work, which is intended for the thesis exhibition in another suitable space for the faculty to review. In addition to the Thesis Exhibition and Written Thesis, the Thesis Oral's presentation is a required component for awarding the MFA degree. It is an element of specific course work (ART 8910 Master's Thesis Research) and is considered an examination and a defense of the graduate student's thesis position.

Thesis Oral Review continued

The written requirement, Thesis Oral Statement (two-page minimum/double spaced) must be distributed at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled presentation. During the oral examination the graduate student expounds upon the physical artwork in the thesis exhibit while providing insight into the written research that gives greater context to the work. The Orals presentation further extends the Art Department MFA Program's pedagogical philosophy founded on a team-teaching approach to graduate student education. As such, the presentations are attended by the Art Department graduate faculty representing the six major studio areas, representative thesis chairperson and committee members and the MFA graduate student population. Individuals that hold academic and administrative positions at Clemson may also attend the oral's presentations upon approval of the student's thesis committee, department chairperson and graduate coordinator.

Thesis Manuscript / Documentation of Work

The MFA degree requires a written thesis that is offered as support and documentation to the thesis artwork in the exhibition. The thesis committee will serve as the primary resource for developing and approving this document.

The Graduate School has determined the appropriate format and has established deadlines for its completion. Information on Manuscript Preparation and Graduation Clearance from the Graduate School can be found at:

<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/academics/theses-dissertations/index.html>

Once the Thesis Committee has approved and signed the GS7 Form (Final Exam and Thesis Approval Form) the student must submit to their Thesis Chair and the Graduate Program Coordinator digital images of work completed during the time of enrollment and a copy of the approved thesis document and image list in MS Word format.

Honors and Awards

In April of each year, the University recognizes outstanding achievements of students in both academic studies and service to the department or college. The faculty award four certificates to both graduate and undergraduate students, usually in their final year in the areas of Studio Art and Art and Architectural History.

Department Scholarships

MFA graduate students can apply for department scholarships for workshops, special courses, study abroad, travel (creative research related), conferences or self-designed research projects. given to selected individuals enrolled in the Graduate Master of Fine Arts/Studio Art program that demonstrate outstanding performance and contribute to the fulfillment of the goals and mission of the Department of Art. There are two application periods a year. Calls for applications and deadlines are announced in Fall and Spring semester.

Graduate Travel Grants

MFA graduate students can apply for Graduate Travel Grants, which are reimbursement-based grants from the Graduate Student Government that support graduate student travel to conferences, workshops and field experience. There are three application periods a year. More information about these grants here: <https://gtgs.sites.clemson.edu/>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Studio Space

Each full-time graduate student will have a personal studio space available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Other facilities, such as the Materials Lab, are available for use by all students.

Security

In consideration of the 24-hour access to Lee Hall facilities, it is important to be conscientious about security measures while using the building during off hours. Access to University security, is available by dialing **656-2222**. This is also the number to call in the case of any emergency or fire. Students are encouraged to lock their studios while working during off hours and to feel free to contact security if threatened or in need of an escort to their cars at night. Refer to the Graduate Announcements Catalog at <https://catalog.clemson.edu/index.php>

Drugs / Alcohol and Smoking

Clemson University has explicit rules regarding the use of Drugs and Alcohol on Campus. Clemson University recognizes that the illegal and/or abusive use of alcohol or drugs by members of the University community jeopardizes the safety of the individual and others, and it is not conducive to the academic learning process. This policy is implemented in compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to promote the health and safety of our students. Clemson University is a tobacco-free campus. All forms of tobacco and smoke-related products are prohibited under the policy. Along with cigarettes, the ban includes chewing tobacco, smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes/vaping, which have gained popularity as a tobacco alternative. The policy applies to all university faculty, staff, students and campus visitors and is in place for all Clemson campuses, as well as university-owned and leased facilities.

Keys

You may obtain keys for your studio space and other related areas from Art Department Administrative Assistant Lori Gugan in the Art Department office. All keys should be returned to Lori at the end of course work or at the request of the faculty prior to end of course work if necessary. The keys issued to you are the property of the State of South Carolina and may not be duplicated under any circumstances. The Lee Hall building complex is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is closed only during specific times, which will be posted accordingly prior to closure. Your TigerOne ID is your key to campus. While some buildings are open to the public without ID access, throughout campus, you will encounter various access control readers that will require you to tap your TigerOne ID to gain entry.

Supplies/Materials

Depending on the nature of the studio course, individual student supplies for will be purchased on your own (i.e. local retailers, Amazon), through the [Department of Art store on CU Marketplace](#), or in the [Clemson University Barnes & Noble Bookstore](#). Please refer to your course syllabus and instructor for more information. The Department of Art CU Marketplace link: https://secure.touchnet.net/C20569_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=19&SINGLESTORE=true

Computers

Clemson Computing and Information Technology (CCIT) found on the web at (<http://www.clemson.edu/ccit/index.html>) supports graduate student course work and research through a network of on-campus computers and computer labs. CCIT maintains and supports 13 computer labs located throughout the campus. Computer training is available to all students as part of regular university courses, through short courses and in special training programs. Students in the MFA Program are required to have their own laptop. Please refer to this link for recommendations on laptop requirements <https://www.clemson.edu/ccit/it-help/new-student.html>

Libraries

Clemson University's main library, the Robert M. Cooper Library, is located at the center of campus providing the students with a variety of services and up-to-date collections. More than 16 million items are available as periodicals, books, microfilm, government publications and electronic materials. Access is provided to the Libraries collections through the On-Line Catalog, a part of the Libraries CU Explorer System. CU Explorer is accessible from most computers on campus. In addition to the Cooper Library, the University Libraries include the Emery A. Gunnin Architectural Library located in Lee Hall. This library holds most the collections of Art and Architecture materials.

Along with books and periodicals it also holds an extensive digital collection as well as up to date audiovisual equipment.

Graduate Student Government

Every graduate program in the University is allotted 2 Senator positions to represent their program. The graduate coordinator in discussion with the graduate faculty will nominate 2 students to represent their fellow graduate student in the Graduate Student Government (GSG). If serving as a Senator, it is expected that the student attend all GSG meetings, professionally represent the program and fellow students and bring important information from GSG back to the their fellow graduate students.

Materials Lab / Other Resources

The Materials Lab (wood shop) located in Lee Hall 1-G04 is utilized by the Department of Art, School of Architecture and the Landscape Architecture programs in Lee Hall. It is maintained and monitored by a full-time shop supervisor with the assistance of a selected group of trained/experienced graduate students. After an orientation session conducted by personnel in the wood shop, students have adequate access to the facility during weekly operating hours, evening hours and on weekends. So that the highest standard of safety is maintained the privilege of using the facility may be revoked for a time or taken away entirely if shop use guidelines are not followed. Additionally, there are digitally based Makerspace recourses available to all Clemson students in the Watt Center and Cooper Library.

MFA Guidelines

Criteria for Review of MFA Work

- Demonstrate an investigation of their work and show high promise of development.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the operational and theoretical development of their work.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the contemporary and historical context that the work operates within.
- Demonstrate an understanding and /or expertise of technique, process and materials.

30-Hour Review

At the end of the second semester (24 - 30 hours' credit) a formal written and oral presentation will be given by the student to determine candidacy for the Master of Fine Arts degree. The written requirement (two-page minimum/double spaced) must be distributed at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled presentation. The oral component should be no longer than 30 minutes. The Department of Art faculty in consultation with the student's major advisor will evaluate this presentation. If the 30-Hour review is deemed successful, a thesis committee is established and a thesis exhibition contract is signed shortly thereafter. The committee is generally composed of your major advisor acting as Chair and two-three other Department of Art Faculty. Your thesis Chair will advise you as to the timing and frequency of committee meetings throughout the semester. It is highly suggested that the first committee be scheduled mid-semester and be followed by at least two additional meetings prior to the end of the semester. If the review is considered by the faculty to be lacking in some significant capacity you will be asked to present again. Please bear in mind that this is not your thesis presentation and that a thesis topic can and probably will develop over time.

Guidelines in Preparation for 30-Hour Review*

To assist students in preparing for the 30-hour review the following considerations may be helpful as you respond to the four concerns listed in the MFA guidelines.

Demonstrate an investigation of their work and show high promise of development.

- Show the most recent and best work.
- Clarify and articulate the investigation and work that led to it.
- How is it developing? Directions suggested?
- Is there an ongoing studio process that fosters creativity?

Demonstrate an understanding of the operational and theoretical development of their work.

- How is the work read?
- How might it operate with the audience?
- What is its theoretical base?
- Explain the development of the work from idea (concept) to its physical completion.

Demonstrate an awareness of the contemporary and/or historical that their works exists within.

- Awareness of contemporary or historical art that is similar in any significant way.
- Awareness of any specific historical technique or imagery that has impacted the work.

Demonstrate (in the work and verbally) an understanding and/or expertise of technique, process and materials.

- Show technical facility, knowledge and resolution.
- Understanding of both the mental and physical processes used.
- Knowledge of materials investigated.

After a successful evaluation by the Department of Art faculty a thesis committee will be formed. The committee will be comprised of the student's major advisor and two to three other faculty members. After committee selection the student will review and sign the Thesis Exhibition Contract with committee members and gallery director.

* **Note:** These considerations are meant to help you expand your thinking on the listed guidelines, please keep in mind that each student will show different emphasis in their chosen direction and medium. Remember this is preliminary response to these questions, from which you will begin the investigation and demonstration of your thesis work.

Guidelines for the Thesis Orals Presentation

- Demonstrate and articulate the development and investigation of the work.
- Demonstrate and articulate an understanding of the operational and theoretical development of the work.
- Demonstrate and articulate an awareness of the contemporary and historical context that the work operates within.
- Demonstrate and articulate an expertise of technique, process and materials.

Guidelines for Written Thesis

All matters mentioned in the Oral Presentation Guidelines should be addressed in a manner that includes support material that a written document affords. The proper format for style (footnotes, margins, etc.) as prescribed by the Graduate School should be followed.

Through a written statement, essay, or prose:

- Demonstrate development of understanding and investigation of the work. This may include but is not limited to, discussion of studio experience during graduate school.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the operational and theoretical development of the work. This may include but is not limited to; discussion of cultural influences or studies within or outside visual arts subjects.
- Demonstrate a grasp of what contemporary and/or historical context the work operates within. This may include but is not limited to discussion of artists working in a similar mode.
- Demonstrate an expertise of technique, process and materials. This may include but is not limited to; discussion of medium and its importance to the visual statement it conveys. An addendum may also be constructed for special recipes, techniques and processes, etc.

Appendix

- General Deadlines
- Criteria for Artist Statements
- GS2 Plan of Study
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Installation of Art and Architecture studio work in and around Lee Hall Complex

GENERAL DEADLINES

Distribution of Artist Statements prior to Mid-Term and Final Reviews

24 - 48 hours prior to scheduled review

Distribution of Artist Statements prior to 30-Hour Review

24 - 48 hours prior to scheduled review

Formation of MFA Thesis Committee

2 weeks after successful completion of 30-Hour Review

Thesis Exhibition Contract

2 weeks after successful formation of MFA Thesis Committee

Filing of GS2 material (Committee Structure & Plan of Study)

Based on deadline published by Graduate School for the term on the Graduate School website

Distribution of MFA Thesis Orals Statements

24 - 48 hours prior to scheduled review

Filing of GS7M Form (Passing of Orals Presentation and Committee Approval of Final Formatted Written Thesis)

Based on deadline published by Graduate School for the term on the Graduate School website

First Formatted MFA Thesis Writing Draft

Shortly after passing the thesis orals presentation and well in advance of the Graduate School deadline for the GS7M form.

MFA Thesis writing draft submission to Thesis Committee

All drafts must be distributed to each committee member at least 48 hours (2 business days) prior to scheduled meeting.

CRITERIA FOR ARTIST STATEMENTS

Preceding each of your reviews this semester you will prepare a 1-2 page double spaced artist statement. These statements must be distributed to all Studio Faculty at least one day before each scheduled review.

Do Not distribute them the day of the review.

Suggestions for developing an artist statement.

What are your aspirations relative to what you wish to communicate?

Content; essentially, what are you trying to impress upon the viewer?
What are some of the potential issues in the work; the sociopolitical, beauty, the need for connection on a visceral level in the face of technological advancement, etc?

What influences are you researching/observing in and outside of the field of art?

What is informing your work? How are you educating yourself about what you are interested in? Keep on top of what is happening in your related discipline. There are periodicals in the Architecture Library that will help.

Art does not happen in a vacuum. We as artists respond to culture in the broadest sense. We play an important roll in this. What are you responding to????

How does your choice of technique/material etc., support your aspirations?

In each of the studio disciplines we have many choices relative to material usage. In this section of the statement think about your choices and the effect of how the work is read. How does thick vs. thin application of paint help to create an emotion? How does glaze and form establish a relationship? Is a wood cut better than a lithography or screen print relative to what is being said? etc...

It will be important for you to work closely with your area advisor in the development of these statements.

PLAN OF STUDY – GS2 FORM

The GS2 is online and accessible through iROAR. Submitting a GS2 is a 2-step process that includes A) Committee Selection and B) Plan of Study. You may find more information at <http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/gs2-hints.html>

Policy: A degree-seeking student must file a Plan of Study or graduate degree curriculum (Form GS2) in accordance with the Office of Enrolled Student Services' timeline. The Plan of Study must be filed near the beginning of each student's program of study. Students pursuing the master's or specialist's degree must submit the curriculum by the middle of their second semester following matriculation and doctoral students must submit the curriculum no later than the beginning of their fourth semester of study following matriculation. Students who do not submit their Plans of Study in accordance with these guidelines will have their privilege to register for courses blocked until the Form GS2 is received by the Office of Enrolled Student Services. Since fixed curricula normally do not exist for graduate degrees, this planned program represents an individual student's curriculum as recommended by the advisory committee. It must adhere to departmental as well as University policies. All transfer courses listed on the GS2 must be courses taken for credit from accredited degree-granting institutions whose scholastic reputation is acceptable to Clemson University.

Procedure for student: The student must consult with the major advisor and other members of the advisory committee to agree on the appropriate courses and other experiences necessary to earn the intended graduate degree. Before a Plan of Study (Form GS2) is officially approved by the Graduate School, it must be signed by the student, the advisory committee, department chair and college dean. It is then forwarded to the Office of Enrolled Student Services for approval and distribution. Students are not allowed to submit preliminary Plans of Study thru the electronic Work Flow but many departments recommend students to do this as being part of the normal planning process. The Plan of Study may be created as a document for approval on the student's Self-Service Banner Portal under the Student registration tab and labeled GS2 Plan of Study.

Memorandum of Understanding for Installation of studio works in and around Lee Hall Complex **rev*
12.2024

I, _____, a student in the Department/School of _____, am proposing to install course-related artwork(s)/studio project(s) in or around **Lee Hall I, Lee Hall II, Lee Hall III** (circle one or more that apply).

The work will be installed beginning, _____ (date) at _____ (time), and will be promptly removed on _____ (date) at _____ (time).

The proposed work is being created for my coursework in: _____ / _____ / _____
course semester year

By submitting this form, I acknowledge that:

- The proposed work has been reviewed & approved for installation by my professor/ instructor.
- I have secured permission from the Lee Hall complex Building Manager, and any Department Chairs, faculty and key individuals who may be impacted by the project.

I understand and accept the following:

- I understand that I must secure signatures from all concerned individuals before any work begins.
- I understand that any modifications to the proposed work must also be approved and signed off on by concerned parties.
- I understand that my work can—and will—be dismantled if it is not removed by the date and time outlined in this agreement. It may also be removed if it does not coincide with the proposal. Any extension of removal date must also be approved.
- I understand that inappropriate installation procedures may result in substantial fines by university facilities.
- I understand that failure to remove my work according to the agreement may result in reduction of a project grade and/or an incomplete for the semester until resolved to the instructor / administration's satisfaction.

Form Submission:

CAAC students should complete and submit this proposal to their faculty for approval and signature. Multiple students in the same course should be condensed for approval by the Building Security Coordinator, and a copy should be provided to their home department. Students should retain a copy for their records.

NAMES and SIGNATURES

Student's Name (please print)

Student's Signature and date

Student's email

Student's phone number

Name of Faculty member approving project

Faculty member's signature

Name of Lee Hall Building Security Coordinator

Lee Hall Building Manager's signature

Other individuals impacted by installation:

Name & Title

Signature

Name & Title

Signature

It is the student's responsibility to type (or carefully print) **additional sheets to be attached to this form.**

All proposals must address the following:

- **Working Title of Installation:** Provide a descriptive, working title for the purposes of identification.
- **Written Description:** Briefly describe size and nature of the project. Provide an overall understanding of the scope, footprint and materials to be used in the execution, installation and removal of the installation.
- **Drawings and/or Photographs with Measurements:** Provide detailed drawings and or photographs of installation area with measurements of installation included.
- **Condition Report:** Provide a condition report of the installation site that details any existing damage, so you are not blamed for this damage after your work is removed. Any attachments to existing structure must be outlined and approved in the proposal. Any damage or fines resulting from the installation/deinstallation and the resultant repair work required to return the site to its original condition will be the responsibility of the student.
- Installations shall not violate any existing university safety codes and regulations.

*This sheet must be posted within 5 feet of the installation, or project may be removed.

INSTALLATION APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

Memorandum of Understanding for Installation of Art and Architecture Studio work in and around Lee Hall Complex

Student name _____

Student contact information _____

email

Professor's name _____

Professor contact information _____

email

Course for which work is being installed _____

example (ARCH 351)

Installation Title _____

Brief description of installation (to help with identifying the size and elements of the project):

