STUDIO ART, MFA

The Department of Art and Art History offers an MFA program where students can specialize in diverse disciplines and create engaging artworks as they prepare for a career as a visual artist and educator. Since its inception in 1972, the program has launched numerous artists into creative careers across the globe. Enrollments are modest by design, allowing students to have designated studio space and to work closely with faculty. The MFA degree requires 60 hours of coursework in graduate studio classes, seminars, art history, critiques, and electives. All coursework must be successfully completed within six years of entering the studio graduate program. Graduate students present public lectures and exhibitions during their studies, culminating with a written thesis and exhibition.

The primary studio art facilities are situated on Woods Quad. Sculpture and Ceramics are located in the Bureau of Mines building complex. The Sarah Moody Gallery of Art is located in Garland Hall and features a program of changing exhibitions of contemporary art. The gallery is an active collecting institution dedicated to contemporary works on paper and photography. The Sella-Granata Art Gallery in Woods Hall presents a changing schedule of shows including student work as well as other academically focused exhibitions.

Admission Requirements

Applicants to all graduate programs must satisfy admission policies established by The Graduate School of The University of Alabama, listed earlier in this catalog. The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and Miller Analogy Test (MAT) are not required for studio art applicants. Applications are submitted online through The Graduate School website. All studio art students enter the graduate program at the MA level. Strong applicants to the program usually hold a BFA in Studio Art or BA in studio art with a related minor. However, applicants with different academic backgrounds will be considered. Admissions decisions are based on the strength of the applicant’s portfolio and written statements, and their potential for growth and achievement in the program. Prospective graduate students should have a “B” average in art classes. Admit with permission to continue is possible. Permission to continue students must earn an overall GPA of 3.0 in the first 12 hours. Residency is required of all studio art students.

Applicants should choose one of the following areas for focused coursework: ceramics, painting, photography, printmaking, or sculpture. Faculty also specialize in drawing, digital media, graphic design, and installation, offering students the opportunity to work with a broad range of materials and processes. Each studio program applicant must submit a comprehensive portfolio of recent work. This portfolio should include a minimum of 20 works of art in the proposed area of focus. Please contact the department directly for directions on preparing application materials.

Campus visits are highly recommended. Applicants may visit graduate classes, tour studio facilities, and meet faculty and current graduate students. The department webpage offers more information about department resources and faculty activity. Prospective students are encouraged to contact faculty who specialize in their areas of interest.

Degree Requirements

Admission to the master of fine arts program is by recommendation of a faculty review committee, which meets at the time of the candidate’s MA thesis exhibition. The committee will recommend that the candidate continue within the MFA program or finalize studies at the University with a completed MA degree.

The MFA degree requires the completion of a minimum of 60 semester hours of graduate work, including at least 9 hours of art history, 30 hours in a major studio area, 6 hours Graduate Seminar, 6 hours Graduate Critiques, and 9 hours in art history or art studio electives. The degree must be completed within six years of entering the studio graduate program. A graduate student may select a minor studio concentration of study or choose a variety of graduate-level classes offered within the art department or approved graduate-level elective courses. Candidacy for the MFA degree is based on the delivery of a public lecture by the candidate addressing his or her research in visual arts. Successful candidacy is achieved when the candidate has proven able to defend his or her research clearly and coherently. The candidate must demonstrate proficiency in addition to displaying personal direction in his or her chosen area of study.

A thesis exhibition is presented at the end of the candidate’s final term. During the exhibition, an oral examination is conducted by the student’s faculty committee. At that time, the candidate defends their exhibition and written statement.

Review procedure. A graduate review committee is established by each graduate student. The committee consists of no fewer than four faculty members but may have an unlimited number of approved graduate faculty. Required appointees to this committee include the department chairperson (director of graduate studies), the major area professor, an art historian, and another art studio faculty member. The chairperson of the committee is the student’s major area professor.

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<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>ART 511 Graduate Seminar</td>
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<td>ART 511 Graduate Seminar</td>
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<td>ART 525 Graduate Critiques</td>
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<td>Select courses in accordance with research interests</td>
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Master’s Degrees

The primary purpose of master’s degree programs is to provide students with subject matter at an advanced level in their fields of study. Master’s degrees are designed to assist students either to continue their graduate studies or to meet the goals of their professions. In most cases, master’s programs also help students become familiar with methods of independent investigation.

Program Requirements

Two plans are offered for the master’s degree:

Plan I. Candidates for the master’s degree under Plan I must earn a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit in coursework plus earn a
minimum of 6 additional hours of thesis research hours, for a total of 30
hours.

Plan II. Candidates for the master’s degree under Plan II must earn
a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework credit and pass the
comprehensive examination or complete a culminating or “capstone
experience” as described under the Comprehensive Examinations section
below.

Both plans require a minimum of 18 semester hours in the major subject.
With the approval of the major department, the remainder of the
 coursework may be completed in either the major or a related field.
In some divisions and in many departments of the University, candidates
are required to do their work under Plan I. Candidates working under
Plan II may be required to participate successfully in seminar or problem
courses that will give them an acquaintance with the methods of
research and an appreciation of the place and function of original
investigation in the field.

Residency Requirements
A student’s program at the master’s level must provide sufficient
association with the resident faculty to permit individual evaluation of the
student’s capabilities and achievements.

Graduate Credit
A student must be admitted to the Graduate School and must register
as a graduate student in order to receive graduate credit. Approval for
graduate registration must be obtained from program advisors prior to
registration.

Graduate Credit for Noncredit Experiences
All course credit used toward a UA graduate degree must be taught at
the graduate level. No graduate credit may be earned by correspondence
study or for experiential learning not conducted under the direct
supervision of graduate faculty of The University of Alabama. UA does
not offer graduate credit for noncredit workshops, seminars, continuing
education experiences, professional development, internships, work/life
experience, and so forth.

Transfer of Credit
Courses of full graduate-level credit earned in a regionally accredited
institution where a student was enrolled in the graduate school may
be submitted for review for inclusion in a master’s degree program.
Evaluation of credit for transfer will not be made until after the student
has enrolled in the Graduate School of The University of Alabama.
Acceptance of credit requires the approval of the student’s advisory
committee and the dean of the Graduate School. Only courses in which a
student earned a “B” grade or better may be transferred. Thesis Research
(599) may not be transferred in from an outside institution.

In some cases, foreign educational credentials may not meet the
Graduate School's criteria for transfer of credit. It may be necessary for
students in this situation to secure an evaluation of their credentials
from World Education Services Inc. (WES), an external foreign credential
evaluation service. Additional information on their services can be found
at their website.

A student initiates at the Graduate School's website a Request for
Transfer of Graduate Credit earned at another institution. It is also the
student’s responsibility to assure that the Graduate School receives an
official transcript from the other institution where the transfer credit has
been requested, well in advance of the final semester.

With the approval of the student’s department and the dean of
the Graduate School, the greater of 12 hours or 25 percent of the
required coursework for a master’s degree may be transferred from
another institution. The approved transferred coursework must be
earned during the six-year period (18 fall, spring and summer semesters)
preceding the semester of admission to the UA master’s program.
Departments may have more restrictive timelines. Revalidation or
recertification of graduate credits that will be more than 18 semesters old
at the time of UA master’s program completion is not an option.

Please note that some departments allow fewer than 12 hours of
graduate transfer credit. Be sure to check with your department’s
graduate coordinator regarding your department’s transfer policy.

400-Level Courses
A maximum of 6 semester hours of 400-level course credit may be
accepted for a master’s degree program. The department needs to
submit the Approval of 400-Level Course Work for Master’s Credit through
the UA DocuSign system in myBama and is approved by the Graduate
School prior to the semester in which the 400-level coursework will be
taken.

Time Limit
All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed during the
six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding
the date on which the degree is to be awarded. There is no provision for
an extension of the time limit beyond six years for master’s students.

Thesis
A thesis evidencing research capacity, independent thought, and the
ability to interpret materials is required of all master’s degree candidates
who pursue Plan I. The subject chosen must be in the major field and
must be approved by the graduate committee of the major department or
school and by the head of the student's major department or division.
A thesis committee must consist of at least three members appointed
by the dean of the Graduate School. Students set up their committee
through the Graduate Academic Activities portal on the Graduate School
website. The request normally is made as soon as the successful
defense of the thesis proposal has been completed. All members of
a thesis committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The
Committee Chair must be a full or associate member of the Graduate
Faculty. One member must be from outside the student’s major
department. The majority of the thesis committee must be full-time
regular University of Alabama faculty. If the outside member is not a full
or associate member of the UA Graduate Faculty (e.g., a highly qualified
person from another university, a business, or industry), the graduate
dean needs to appoint that member by approving Affiliate Graduate
Faculty status for the specific purpose of serving on the student's thesis
committee. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances meritng
approval by the graduate dean before the final oral defense of the thesis,
all members of the thesis committee must attend the defense.

The candidate must give members of the examining committee a
minimum of two weeks to read the thesis before the date of the final
oral examination. All members must agree that the student is ready for
the final oral thesis defense. A final oral thesis defense is required of all
students completing a thesis. All members of the thesis committee must
be members of the UA graduate faculty and must attend the final oral
thesis defense unless there are extraordinary circumstances warranting
the graduate dean’s approval of the absence prior to the defense meeting.
The final oral thesis defense is the culminating experience in the master’s
program. As such, all members of the thesis committee are expected
to attend and participate in real time. Virtual attendance via interactive
video or teleconference is permitted for off-campus external committee
Virtual Participation

Scope and Goals

All members of a student’s graduate committee are expected to attend and participate, usually in person, in any oral examination as part of the student’s graduate (Master’s or Doctoral) degree program. Traditionally, oral examinations are conducted with the student meeting their committee while gathered in one physical location on campus. However, the need occasionally arises for virtual participation in the oral examination. In these cases, graduate programs must ensure adherence to the following if any graduate-level oral examination involving the student’s entire thesis/dissertation committee includes virtual participation.

- The student’s consent must be sought and obtained in advance of conducting the oral examination with virtual participants.
- Virtual participation by committee members must include both audio and visual capability so that:
  - each committee member can hear the student and view the student, any presentation slides, and any demonstrations;
  - the student can hear and view each committee member.
- All committee members must participate interactively and in real-time for the entire examination, including any preparatory discussion leading up to it, the presentation itself, its discussion and evaluation.

The following sections provide detail on the technical and attendance requirements for an oral examination with virtual participation. Departments and programs may enforce stricter guidelines than those outlined, including an on-campus-only policy if deemed necessary and appropriate.

Technical Requirements

Real-time and fully interactive audio and video communications must be maintained throughout the examination and any related discussion. The audio/video communications facilities must allow the student and all committee members to see and hear each other during the entire examination. There must be adequate provision for the transmission of text, graphics, or writings referenced or generated during the examination (e.g., slides, whiteboard). The use of audio-only communications is not permitted.

In case of technical difficulties or technology failure, the committee will decide whether to continue the examination once the difficulty is resolved, or to cancel the examination and reschedule it for a later date, without prejudice to the student.

If the student or any committee member(s) have a disability that will be impacted by virtual participation, reasonable accommodations should be provided.

Attendance Requirements: campus-based programs

Programs should ensure that students are advised about virtual participation guidelines related to an oral examination, including reference to these guidelines as well as any other program-specific requirements.

It is generally expected that members of a graduate student’s committee be physically present with the student for each oral committee examination. However, an oral examination may have virtually participating committee members according to the following rules:

- Any one member of the graduate student’s committee (excluding the chair/advisor) can participate at a distance without seeking further authorization.
- The committee chair will be allowed to participate at a distance only if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when they are on campus would cause hardship to the student. In this case, the committee chair should submit a petition to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining the reasons leading to the request.
- Similarly, a petition from the committee chair to the Dean of the Graduate School is also required if more than one committee member is to participate at a distance. Such petitions will only be considered if rescheduling the oral examination to a time when only one member of the committee would be participating at a distance would cause significant hardship to the student, as outlined in the petition.

All committee members participating virtually must be able to fully interact in the oral examination via audio and video capability; participation by viewing a recording of the oral examination is specifically prohibited. All members of the committee, on- or off-site, must participate in the evaluation of the examination; provisions must be made to record their vote and collect their signatures as necessary.

Student participation at a distance in graduate oral examinations involving their committee is generally not allowed for campus-based graduate programs. However, the committee chair and/or the graduate program director, in agreement with the student, may draft a petition to seek permission from the Dean of the Graduate School to conduct such an oral examination. This arrangement will only be considered if the committee chair agrees to it, and if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when the student is on campus would cause great hardship to the student; the petition should clearly outline the extenuating circumstances leading to this need.

Attendance Requirements: online or hybrid programs

An online graduate program is defined as a program in which no aspect of the degree program occurs on-campus, including oral examinations. A hybrid program is defined as a program which has both online and on-campus elements.

For online and hybrid programs that handle oral examinations in an online setting, all committee members as well as the student may participate virtually in the oral examination. However, these programs must fully adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Technical Requirements section above for any oral examination involving the entire committee.

Hybrid programs that require oral examinations to take place on campus must adhere to the guidelines set forth for campus-based programs.

Article Style vs. Journal Format

Article Style.

At the doctoral level, “article-style dissertations” are unified works that include several distinct but related studies of research or creative activity, each of which is of publishable quality. The University does not permit an “article-style thesis” to be presented for a master’s degree.

Journal Format.

A “journal-format thesis” is acceptable. Such a thesis follows the format of a particular journal in which the student and advisor want the thesis to be published. To prepare a journal-format thesis, the student uses the journal’s “information for authors” or similarly titled guidelines in
conjunction with the Graduate School’s Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

All theses are submitted electronically rather than on paper. See the Graduate School’s homepage for a link to information on Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) for details.

Theses must comply with the regulations set out in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations, available on the Graduate School’s website. Approval of the thesis by the graduate dean is necessary before graduation.

The thesis should be completed, if possible, while the student is in residence at the University. To request permission to complete a thesis in absentia, the student must, before leaving the University, submit a satisfactory outline of the thesis, as well as evidence that adequate facilities are available where the work will be done, to the head of the student’s major department.

Protection of Human Subjects for Research
Scientific research involving human subjects has produced substantial benefits for society, but it also can pose troubling ethical questions. The mission of the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects is to ensure that research involving human subjects is conducted ethically. University and federal policies require that review and approval to use human subjects in research precede the research.

In the case of thesis research that involves the use of human subjects in any way, the principal investigator is responsible for contacting the college Human Research Review Committee to obtain approval for the planned research.

Final Thesis Defense
The final oral thesis defense is the culminating experience in the master’s program. As such, all members of the thesis committee are expected to attend and participate in real time. Virtual attendance via interactive video or teleconference is permitted for off-campus external committee members, but Tuscaloosa campus faculty should attend in person unless extraordinary circumstances dictate the need for virtual attendance. The thesis must comply with the regulations in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

"Completed" means submitted to ProQuest after being successfully defended, carefully edited following the defense meeting, and having the Committee Acceptance Form (CAF) signed by all committee members, department chairperson, and graduate dean. A majority of the thesis committee must approve the written thesis and defense before submission to the Graduate School. Following the thesis defense, the Committee Acceptance Form is submitted by the thesis chair through the UA DocuSign system in myBama.

Graduate School deadlines, including each semester’s thesis deadline, are available at the Graduate School’s homepage. Consult the ETD website for details of ETD submission, including information on what needs to be submitted to the Graduate School. The graduate dean must approve the thesis before the student can be cleared for graduation.

Comprehensive Examinations
In addition to the regular course examinations, a final comprehensive examination representing a "culminating" or "capstone" experience for a degree is required of all candidates for the master’s degree (except for those candidates pursuing the Master of Accountancy, the Master of Business Administration, the Master of Library and Information Studies, the Master of Social Work, and the Master of Tax Accounting). The comprehensive examination is a culminating experience in which the student is expected to integrate prior learning. Each department, with approval of the Graduate Council, determines the most appropriate format. The various exams may consist of one or more of the following:

- a written and/or oral examination based on the content of the degree program;
- a thesis and final oral defense;
- a course requiring interpretation and integration of information from previous courses;
- a research paper, a "policy and practice" paper, or equivalent experience;
- a public performance or exhibition along with a contextualizing paper; and/or
- a practicum or internship.

If the comprehensive exam requirement is met with option 1 and/or 2 above, then the examining committee for comprehensive examinations must consist of at least three members of the graduate faculty from that department and appointed by the dean of the Graduate School.

The examination must be given at least six weeks before the date of graduation (two weeks before for Plan II) and reported promptly to the dean of the Graduate School on appropriate forms. The final report is submitted by the department through the UA DocuSign system in myBama. The form should be submitted when all examinations are completed. A student may take the final oral or written examination only twice. Failing the examination twice results in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School.

Application for Graduation
Each candidate for a master’s degree must submit an Application for Degree via myBama no later than the last day to register or add a course for the semester (or first term of the summer semester) in which requirements for the degree are to be completed. That specific date is published each semester at the Graduate School’s website under Current Students/Deadlines for Graduate Students.

Second Master’s Degree
Six (6) semester hours of eligible credit from one master’s degree at The University of Alabama may be applied to the requirements for a second master’s degree, but only if the department of the second master’s agrees to the courses in the plan of study. Any hours from the previous master’s degree must have been earned during the six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding the date on which the second degree is to be awarded. **Please note that if a student double counts six hours between two master’s degrees, no hours may double count toward any additional master’s degrees.

Faculty
Chair
Guynes, Jason

Professors
Guynes, Jason
Wedderspoon, Craig

Associate professors
Dooley, William
Jordan, Christopher
Marshall, Sarah
Schulte, Peter
Shineman, Sky
Speed, Bryce

**Assistant professors**
Cumberland, Jonathan
Grant, Allison
MacDonald, Wade