

University of North Dakota
Department of Art & Design

Graduate Student Handbook

An Academic Catalog Companion

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Visual Art

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Introduction

This resource is intended to help students understand the purpose, procedures, and requirements for the Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art Program. It augments program materials and information found within the [University Academic Catalog](#); issued from the School of Graduate Studies or received from Faculty Advisors. This resource and the policies that it outlines are subject to change and amendment by the Department of Art & Design.

This handbook is not intended to replace regular meetings with Faculty Advisors or Committees. Students are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their Faculty Advisor/Committee throughout their time in the program.

Note: Also consult the document [MFA Program Requirements Timeline](#) which lists all the procedures, forms and deadlines required by the Department of Art & Design and the School of Graduate Studies.

Mission

The mission of the Art Department's Master of Fine Arts Program is to provide quality educational experiences to students that promote critical thinking and creative visual skills based upon the history of art, contemporary trends and theories, and technical skills in the fine art disciplines.

Graduates will be prepared to be active artist/researchers who are engaged in a dialogue, which critically examines the larger culture of which the visual arts play an integral role. They will be prepared to enter the professional art world as self-directed practitioners/artists, educators; or occupations in art museums and galleries. These goals are accomplished through a curriculum that includes hands-on studio experience, academic seminars, and professional activities in the field of visual arts.

Long-range Intended Outcomes for a MFA Degree

The MFA is a professional program that prepares students to be both appreciators and practitioners of the visual arts and is the terminal degree of study in the studio arts.

All aspect of the program contributes to prepare students to produce a refined cohesive body of artworks as the culmination of their studies. Upon completion of this degree program, students will posses an in depth understanding of technical skills; a vocabulary of artistic terms and historical trends and theories in the field of art. This body of knowledge serves as the conceptual basis for a professional body of artwork presented in a thesis exhibition. The students communicate their refined comprehension of the field of art through written artist statements and as articulated in public presentations and oral critiques.

MFA students are informed of the program's goals and objectives through materials such as the institutional academic catalog, standards outlined by the Graduate School, course syllabi, individual mentoring/advising by faculty, professional development workshops, the Department of Art & Design's Plan for Assessment, and its MFA Program Handbook.

Learning Goals

Throughout the facets of the program the Graduate Faculty will be looking for evidence of the student's ability to demonstrate that they have met the learning goals of the Department of Art & Design in a manner that is commensurate with students undertaking the completion of an MFA Program:

| | |
|--------|--|
| Goal 1 | Students will refine technical skills, with materials, techniques, and equipment specific to the production of their visual art. |
| Goal 2 | Students will refine oral and written skills as a means to communicate the conceptual basis of their visual research and to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, theoretical, and rhetorical issues in the history of art. |
| Goal 3 | Students will develop skills to refine their critical thinking and the conceptual basis for their artwork and contextualize their work within the history of art and/or contemporary trends and theories. |
| Goal 4 | Students hone professional skills as artists needed to promote their creative research and to advance within their chosen careers. |

Program Description

The MFA Degree Program in Visual Arts is a studio-oriented program that prepares its graduates for professional practice as working artists, educators and arts administrators.

The curriculum combines hands-on studio experience with comprehensive study in art history, theory and other supporting art disciplines. While inter-disciplinary exploration and growth is encouraged, students in the program work within these Major Emphasis Areas:

- Ceramics
- Drawing
- Graphic Design
- Jewelry & Metalsmithing
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture

The Program is comprised of credit hours and program requirements that can be completed in 2-3 years. Financial assistance such as tuition waivers, scholarships and assistantships are available on an annual basis pending availability of resources.

[Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts Admission Requirements \(UND Academic Catalog\)](#)
[Transfer of Graduate Credits \(UND Academic Catalog\)](#)

The MFA Degree Program in Visual Arts is an in-person / face-to-face program that can accommodate remote learning. MFA students are provided with individual studio spaces, facilities and equipment for their creative research at the Hughes Fine Arts Center on the UND campus. Students may work off-campus, but are expected to be on-campus for the following program requirements:

- First Year Critiques
- MFA Reviews
- Delivery of Artist Lecture
- Installing/De-installing Thesis Exhibition
- Thesis Exhibition Reception
- Oral Defense of Thesis Exhibition

If circumstances are such that students need to be physically off-campus at all other times they are expected:

- Have access to reliable internet service
- Conduct all other individual critiques with faculty via email and/or video conferencing (this option depends on the discretion of individual Faculty members).

Note: Faculty directly supervising the graduate student working remotely in enrolled course(s) may require documentation of the creative process that leads to final, finished work. The presentation format for this documentation will be established between the faculty member and the graduate student.

Advising

Advising is performed by the Graduate Program Director until students form their MFA Thesis Committees. Thereafter, advising is overseen by their MFA Thesis Committee Chair.

This handbook is not intended to replace regular meetings with your Faculty Advisor or Committee. Students are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their Faculty Advisor/ Thesis Committee throughout their graduate study.

Course Registration

In order to register for graduate-level courses students email the Faculty member teaching the course for a permission number then enroll online through Campus Connection. The faculty member may require a [Special Projects/Independent Study Contract-Agreement](#) (what is to be accomplished for the credits enrolled).

[Art & Design Visual Arts Course Descriptions \(UND Academic Catalog\)](#)

Department of Art & Design Faculty & Staff

[Department of Art & Design Faculty & Staff contact information.](#)

MFA Studio Procedures & Office Guidelines

Studio Procedures

Communication, Keys and U-Cards

Students' [UND assigned email](#) will be the official method for communication at UND.

To request keys for building access and access to specific areas needed for artistic production, students should contact the Department of Art & Design Administrative Assistant.

U-Cards are students' official University ID and are used for a broad range of activities including building and library access. [U-Cards can be obtained on campus at the Memorial Union.](#)

Parking

Consult the [UND Parking Office website](#) for information regarding parking passes.

Studio Assignments

The Graduate Program Director assigns studio space for all graduate students. Studio changes must be approved by the Director. Students will be notified of any studio re-assignments in advance. Any re-arrangement of studio spaces will be made or supervised by the Graduate Program Director and/or the Department Facilities Supervisor/Safety Officer.

Studio Safety

Fire code requires a four foot wide walkway/hallway between studio spaces. Objects obstructing the walkways/hallways will be removed/disposed of. Extension cords and appliances for artistic use must be unplugged when not in use or when unattended.

Students vacating spaces will be expected to clean and vacate their studio space within two weeks after graduation, exit from the program or if the Department deems it necessary. Failure to do so will result in the removal and disposal of the contents in the studio space.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requiring special arrangements because of a disability in order to function in the studio should contact the Graduate Director as soon as possible to discuss their needs. If you plan to request disability accommodations, you must register with the [Disability Support Services \(DSS\) Office](#), Rm. 190, McCannel Hall, 777-2664.

Conduct and Responsibility

Use of the studio space is a privilege not a right. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or loss of studio space privileges.

University students, faculty, and staff are expected to comply with the rules, regulations, rights and responsibilities outlined in the [UND Code of Student Life](#).

Other policies and offices devoted to University conduct and responsibility:

Safety & Ventilation in the Hughes Fine Arts Center

At all times, practice appropriate safety procedures when working in your personal studio space and in all of the other various medium areas in the Department of Art & Design.

If you plan to work in an area and/or with equipment you are not familiar with, please ask Department Facilities Supervisor/Safety Officer or the Faculty Member in the area for training and/or assistance before working.

Ventilation: Do not use materials with toxic fumes/odors in your personal studios and/or other areas in the HFAC. If you need to use spray paint, drawing fixatives, etc. please use the ventilated spray booth located in the printmaking area (Room 119), or use these products outdoors.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) /Lecturer Office Guidelines

HFAC Room 259 is the office shared by all GTAs/Lecturers. Follow the guidelines below to ensure its fair use:

- This space is designated to conduct University related business; especially to meet with students to discuss classroom issues that violate FERPA.
- The schedule for using the office is on a first come, first serve basis. GTAs can hold Office Hours in their graduate studio spaces, however, they may use Room 259 to hold office hours if it is available.
- This is a shared space. All GTAs and Lecturers are expected to keep this office clean and orderly. There is limited cabinet space available to store students' projects. No personal items may be stored in the office. No additional furniture should be added to the office. When the room is not in use, please ensure the door is closed and locked.

In preparing syllabi, GTAs/Lecturers should please list Room 259 as their office. Since there is no working phone line in the room, GTAs/Lecturers should list the Department of Art & Design's office number (701.777.2257) as their phone number; and their UND email as their official contact for students.

MFA Program Overview & Requirements

Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
in Visual Art

MFA Program Overview

60 total credits hours in conjunction with the MFA Program Requirements.

| Credits Hours | |
|--|----|
| Major Emphasis Area <i>(Major Emphasis Areas: Ceramics, Drawing, Graphic Design, Jewelry & Metalsmithing, Painting, Photography or Sculpture)</i> | 30 |
| Art History & Theory (including ART 510 Art History: Issues in Contemporary Art) | 9 |
| Electives (including at least 12 credits in art) | 18 |
| Professional Exhibition (ART 599 Professional Exhibition) | 3 |

| MFA Program Requirements | |
|--------------------------|--|
| First-Year Critiques (2) | First Year Critiques provide a broad range of feedback to assist first year students with their creative research. |
| MFA Reviews (2) | MFA Reviews are critiques that are conducted with the student's MFA Thesis Committee. |
| Artist/Designer Lecture | The Artist/Designer Lecture is a summary experience as Candidates near the end of their formal training. |
| MFA Thesis Exhibition | The MFA Thesis Exhibition serves as a culmination of each Candidate's creative research in the program. |
| Oral Thesis Defense | The Oral Thesis Defense amounts to a final review and is conducted during the course of the MFA Thesis Exhibition. |

MFA Program Requirement Completion Timetable

While the Program can be completed in two years, the timetable reflects a 3-year plan started in the fall. Students customarily take 9-12 credits per semester.

| Year | Semester | Requirement |
|-------------|----------|---|
| First Year | Fall | First-Year Critiques |
| | Spring | First-Year Critiques Form Program of Study & Appoint MFA Thesis Committee |
| Second Year | Fall | MFA Thesis Committee Review (1) |
| | Spring | <i>Note: MFA Thesis Committee Review (1) can be completed in either semester</i> |
| Third Year | Fall | MFA Thesis Committee Review (2) |
| | Spring | Artist/Designer Lecture Art 599: Professional Exhibition MFA Thesis Exhibition Oral Thesis Defense |

MFA Program Requirements

Students are evaluated as they complete the requirements of the program. The Faculty will be assessing the student's ability to demonstrate that they have met the learning goals of the Department of Art & Design in a manner that is commensurate with students undertaking the completion of an MFA Program.

If a student does not meet expectations, or completes a requirement in an unsatisfactory manner, the Graduate Faculty or the student's Thesis Committee will make recommendations concerning their status in the Program. The evaluators will outline the work needed for improvement and ask the student to complete the requirement again.

The [MFA Program Requirements Timeline](#) enumerates all the procedures and forms required by the Department of Art & Design and the School of Graduate Studies.

First-Year Critiques

The First-Year Critiques are group discussions wherein students share their work and their ideas with fellow students and faculty. The Critiques provide a range of feedback to assist students in their creative research and help them understand the Program's performance expectations.

All MFA students are required to complete two First-Year Critiques before they can advance in the program. The Critiques customarily take place at the end of the Fall and Spring Semesters. All MFA students in the program are expected to attend and participate.

Preparing for the First-Year Critique

- *Artist/Designer Statement*: Prior to the Critiques, each first year MFA student emails an artist/designer statement to Graduate Faculty members.
- *Work*: Students should consult a Graduate Faculty member in their Major Emphasis Area regarding the amount and type of artwork to present. In general, the faculty will be looking for evidence of technical and conceptual growth commensurate with students in their first year of graduate study.

Each First-Year Critique is 50-60 minutes in length with time allotted for each student to present their own work as well as time for dialogue between the student, faculty, and fellow students.

Program of Study & MFA Thesis Committee Appointment

After advancing through First-Year Critiques, students submit their Program of Study and their MFA Thesis Committee Appointment to the School of Graduate Studies.

The Program of Study is a document that outlines proposed coursework for the completion of the degree program. It lists all the courses students have completed and those they are intending to take.

The Thesis Committee will be the primary group of faculty members directing and supervising students in completing the MFA Degree Program. The Committee must have a minimum of three faculty members, two of which must be Art & Design Faculty. Unless otherwise requested, faculty with Graduate Faculty Status serve as members.

Forming the Thesis Committee

- *Contact Faculty*: Students contact faculty members to ask of their willingness to serve on their Thesis Committee. After forming the Committee, students solicit one of the Committee members to be the Committee Chair. The Thesis Committee Chair serves as the students advisor during their remaining time in the Program.
- *Program of Study/Thesis Committee Appointment Form*: Students work with their Committee Chair to file the Program of Study/Thesis Committee Appointment Form with the School of Graduate Studies.

The Program of Study should be submitted and approved before the student's third semester of enrollment. Students should contact the Graduate Program Director regarding changes to the Program of Study or the constitution of the Thesis Committee.

Note: After completing 18 credits the Program of Study **must** be completed in order for students to be eligible for any available tuition wavers.

MFA Reviews

MFA Reviews are critiques that are conducted with the MFA Thesis Committee. After completing two Reviews students advance to Candidacy, apply for graduation and begin the process of forming their Thesis Exhibition.

Students arrange their own Reviews by contacting Thesis Committee members and coordinating a time, day, and location for the Review. Reviews are 60-90 minutes in length.

Note: *It is recommended that the 1st Review be conducted the first semester after the completion of the First Year Critiques and/or the completion of 18-20 credit hours; & the 2nd Review be conducted upon completion of 36-40 credit hours.*

Preparing for an MFA Review

- Artist/Designer Statement: Students email an artist/designer statement to Committee members before each Review.
- Work: Students consult their Thesis Committee Chair regarding the amount and type of artwork to include in their Review.

Note: *Students participating remotely can share their work in PowerPoint or other such appropriate presentation platform via video conferencing.*

Artist/Designer Lecture

The Artist/Designer Lecture is a summary experience as the Candidate nears the end of their formal training and serves as a benchmark in their career development. It is a critical discussion on the candidate's own work and its development. It gives students the opportunity to articulate their creative research and demonstrate the professional skills needed to promote themselves and advance within their chosen careers.

Customarily, the Lecture coincides with the Candidate's MFA Thesis Exhibition; but it can be scheduled anytime after the Candidate has completed 50 credit hours. While the Artist/Designer Lecture is open to the public it is evaluated by the Candidate's Thesis Committee.

Guidelines

The Lecture should focus on the Candidate's growth during the MFA Program. It can address any or all of the following points:

- The development of the work
- Procedures, processes and/or techniques
- Personal, cultural, historical, philosophical and/or theoretical context of the work

Each Lecture is open to the public and is delivered via PowerPoint or other such appropriate presentation platform. Students can consult their Thesis Committee Chair to help determine the

lectures overall length and content, but lectures should be between 30-40 minutes in length with time for Q & A after.

In consultation with the Candidate's Committee a time and day for the Artist Lecture will be scheduled. In-person Lectures will be delivered in the Paul E. Barr Memorial Lecture Room in the Department of Art & Design or other appropriate venue(s). Remote delivery will be conducted via video conferencing.

MFA Thesis Exhibition

The MFA Thesis Exhibition serves as a culmination of each Candidate's creative research in the program. Each Candidate mounts a solo exhibition of creative research and hosts an opening reception for the exhibition.

The Exhibition should be a cohesive body of artwork that reflects sustained creative research and/or scholarly activity. As they near the completion of the Program, Candidate's take ART 599: Professional Exhibition as well as work with their Thesis Committee and Department Staff in preparation for their MFA Thesis Exhibition.

The Colonel Eugene E. Myers Gallery in the Hughes Fine Art Center is available to MFA Candidates for their Thesis Exhibition. MFA Candidates may chose an off-campus location for the Exhibition, but it must be approved by their Committee and held within City of Grand Forks.

Preparing for the MFA Thesis Exhibition

- [MFA Thesis Exhibition Timeline, Guidelines & Templates](#): This section of the handbook contains the information necessary in preparing for the Thesis Exhibition.
- [ART 599: Professional Exhibition](#): Along with the presentation of creative research, the MFA Thesis Exhibition provides an opportunity to demonstrate professional skills associated with the display of various art forms in preparation for a variety of professional careers. *ART 599: Professional Exhibition* is a course that works in conjunction with the Thesis Exhibition; and provides Candidates a summary experience of mounting an art exhibition as they near the end of their formal training. Candidates enroll in this course the same semester they present their Exhibition.

Oral Thesis Defense

During their Exhibition Candidates must schedule an Oral Thesis Defense with their Thesis Committee. This meeting amounts to a final review encompassing the exhibition and the Candidate's overall development in the program.

MFA Program Requirements Timeline

This table lists the procedures, forms and deadlines required by the Department of Art & Design and the School of Graduate Studies. Students initiate all forms unless otherwise specified. Forms are to be distributed and signed via DocuSign. The timeline reflects a 3-year completion plan.

| |
|--|
| First Year |
| <p>First-Year Critiques 1 & 2 End of the Fall and Spring Semesters.</p> |
| <p>Program of Study / MFA Thesis Committee Appointment Form This form is filed with the School of Graduate Studies after completing First-Year Critiques and/or 18 credits. Program of Study / MFA Thesis Committee Appointment Sample</p> |
| Second Year |
| <p>MFA Review 1 Any time during the 2nd year, after filing the Program of Study / MFA Thesis Committee Appointment Form. After each MFA Review, the student's Thesis Committee files an MFA Review Form with the Department as well as the School of Graduate Studies.</p> |
| Third Year |
| <p>MFA Review 2 & Thesis Topic Proposal First Semester of the 3rd year. After completion of the 2nd MFA Review, and submitting a Thesis Topic Proposal Form with the School of Graduate Studies, the student advances to Candidacy. Note: <i>The student's artist statement can serve as the narrative for the Thesis Topic Proposal. If the student's research/creative agenda changes after this form is filed, a new form <u>does not</u> need to be filed.</i></p> |
| Final Semester |
| <p>Application for Graduation Form Filed with the School of Graduates Studies the semester the Candidate plans to graduate and/or by the School of Graduate Studies deadline.</p> |
| <p>Artist/Designer Lecture Scheduled by the Candidate and delivered during Candidate's final semester in the Program.</p> |
| <p>MFA Thesis Exhibition Mounted in the Candidate's graduating semester. Candidates contact the Exhibition Coordinator regarding scheduling the semester before their Exhibition.</p> |
| <p>Oral Thesis Defense Delivered to Thesis Committee in conjunction with the MFA Thesis Exhibition. Arranged and scheduled by the Candidate during the course of the Exhibition. After the Oral Thesis Defense, the Candidate's Thesis Committee files a Final Report Form with School of Graduate Studies after completion of the Oral Thesis Defense and/or by School of Graduate Studies deadline.</p> |

MFA Thesis Exhibition Timeline, Templates & Gallery Floorplan

Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
in Visual Art

MFA Thesis Exhibition Timeline

All artwork and exhibition information (artist/designer statement, poster and text panels/wall labels) must be approved by the Candidate's Thesis Committee prior to the exhibition.

Semester Before the Exhibition

Schedule Exhibition

Contact Exhibition Coordinator and schedule the exhibition in the Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery.

One Month Before the Exhibition

Exhibition Announcement Cards

Start the production process for the exhibition announcement card. Email an image of both sides of the card to the Thesis Committee and the Exhibition Coordinator prior to printing.

Two Weeks Prior to Opening

Deliver Announcement Cards

Deliver the exhibition announcements to the Department of Art & Design Office.

Exhibition Approval Form

Submit an [Exhibition Approval Form](#) along with the exhibition information and images of the Exhibition art or design work to the Thesis Committee via DocuSign.

One Week Prior to Exhibition

Installation

With all exhibition materials printed and mounted, discuss the installation of the exhibition with the Thesis Committee Chair and the Exhibition Coordinator. The installation is scheduled on the Friday before the opening, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm.

Plan Artist's Reception

Consult the Exhibition Coordinator regarding preparation and accommodations for the Artist's Reception.

Oral Thesis Defense

Schedule a time with the Thesis Committee to deliver the Oral Thesis Defense during the exhibition.

After Exhibition

De-Installation

Remove the exhibition from the Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery on the last Friday of the exhibition week from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. In the event of a holiday, make other arrangements with the Exhibition Coordinator in advance.

Documentation

Provide the Graduate Program Director with a ZIP file (filename: Name_MFA_Year) documenting the Exhibition with the following materials:

- Artists Statement (pdf)
- Exhibition Announcement (front & back on one pdf)
- Exhibition Poster (pdf)
- Artist Lecture (pdf of PowerPoint compressed to 96ppi)
- Exhibition Images: 72dpi jpgs of each work in the Exhibition as well as two (2) installation shots with image information in filename (e.g., title_date_medium_dimensions.jpg; instllation_1.jpg etc.)

Artist's Reception

Candidates host an Artist's Reception in conjunction with their MFA Thesis Exhibition. It can be scheduled for the opening or closing of the Exhibit. Candidates are responsible for all the costs, as well as all set-up and clean-up, related to the reception.

Consult the Exhibition Coordinator regarding preparation and accommodations for the Reception. Refreshments for the Reception can be staged in the area just outside the Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery. The refreshments offered for guests can be simple or elaborate—but always presented professionally in appearance. Space to prepare refreshments, along with some service wear, can be found in Room 123 of the Department of Art & Design.

MFA Exhibition Templates

The Department of Art & Design requires Candidates to design and produce their own exhibition announcement cards, posters and text panels. Graduate students are responsible for all costs associated with designing and printing the materials for their Exhibitions.

Announcements, posters and text panels can be designed and printed through a variety of means.

Exhibition Announcements can be designed and printed through the [UND Print Center](#). For other options, an internet search will quickly reveal numerous companies specializing in printing the type of cards needed for the announcement. Regardless of where they are printed, the Exhibition Announcements should be of professional quality.

Graduate students can print their poster and text panels using the printer/plotter in Room 107. *Consult the Exhibition Coordinator for assistance in printing these materials for the exhibition.*

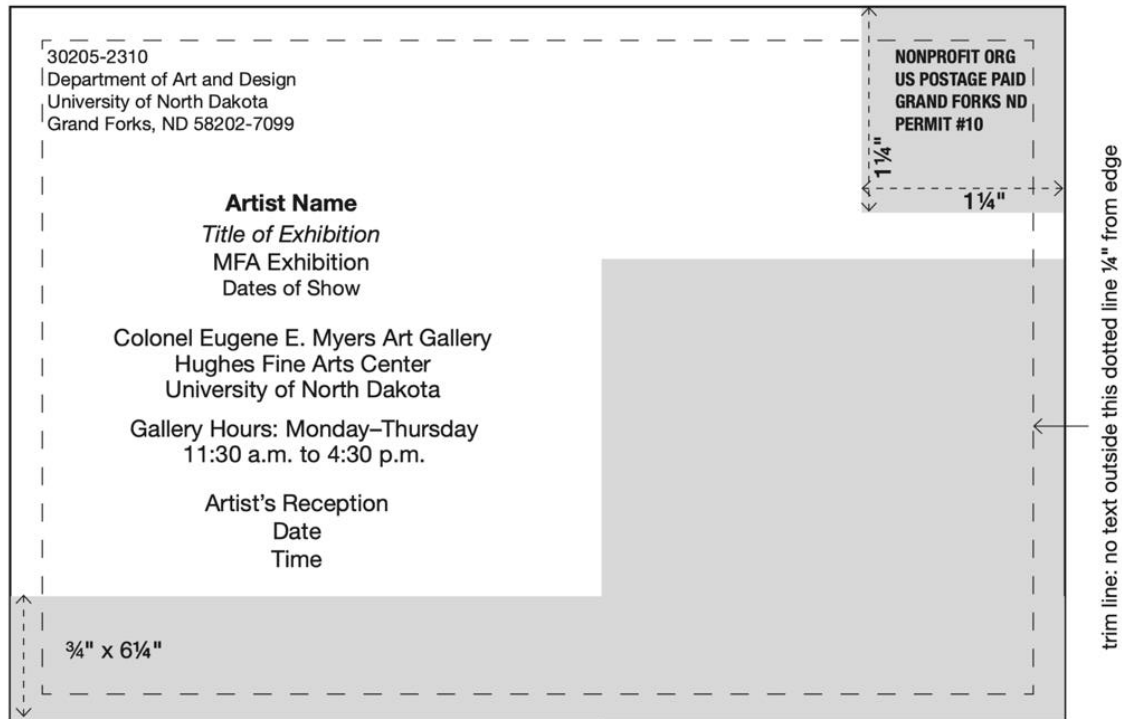
Announcement Card Guidelines & Template

The design process for the exhibition announcement postcard should be started at least one month before the opening of the exhibition.

The Department of Art & Design requires 350 exhibition announcements. In order to accommodate the Department's mailing list please divide the announcements up into piles of 30, 120, and 200. You may include 50 additional exhibition announcements at no additional cost, but these must be addressed, separated and ready for mailing.

Deliver the printed and divided exhibition announcement postcards to the Department of Art & Design Office at least **two weeks prior** to the exhibition opening.

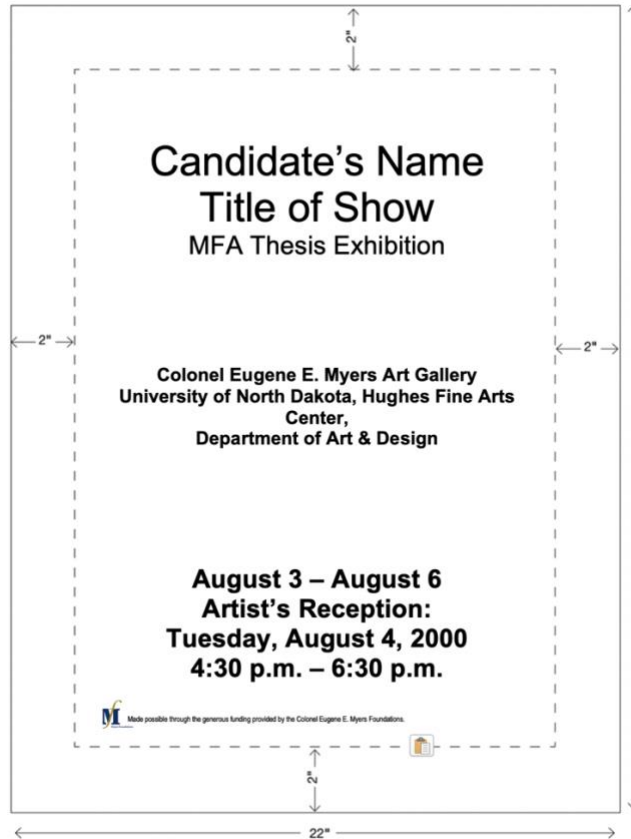
Customarily, the front of the announcement card displays an image of a work from the exhibition. The following is a template for the information that must be printed on the back:



- 4 1/2" x 6" Postcard
- Non-glossy paper on backside of postcard
- No text or markings of any kind in the grey areas (postal use only)
- Add the information specific to the exhibition; do NOT alter the other information:
 - **Artist Name** (in bold)
 - *Title of Exhibition* (in italic, not quotation marks)
 - Dates of Show: Do NOT include Friday (Fridays are reserved for installation and take down)
 - Date format for Artist's Reception: Weekday, Month, Year (e.g., Monday, January 19, 2021)
 - Time format for Artist's Reception: 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (**Note:** this is the preferred time)

Poster Guidelines & Template

The exhibition poster is displayed in a case just outside the Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery in the UND Department of Art & Design:



- Poster Size: 22"W x 34"H at 300 dpi with 2" margin on all sides
Note: All poster images and text must fall within the margins.
- While students design their own posters, the following information must be provided (there will be one poster for each show containing student's information):
 - Candidate's Name
 - Title of show
 - MFA Thesis Exhibition
 - Date of Exhibition (with no year listed)
 - Date of reception (including the year)
 - Time of the reception (including a.m. or p.m.)
- The following information also must be included:
 - Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery
 - University of North Dakota, Hughes Fine Arts Center,
 - Department of Art & Design
 - Myers Foundation Stamp (fully visible within margins at lower left of poster)**Note:** Contact Administrative Assistant Kris Meisel regarding access to the Myers Foundation Stamp.

Text Panel Guidelines & Templates

Candidate's will produce text panels for their MFA Thesis Exhibitions: an artist's statement panel and informational wall labels for individual artworks. It is important that these text panels all be in either Arial or Helvetica font; are professional in appearance; and are well-crafted.

One sheet of white Foam Core (approximately 20" x 30"; 1/4" or 1/8" thick) should be enough to construct all the text panels for the exhibition.

Informational Wall Labels

Below is template and basic order of information for an individual artworks wall label:



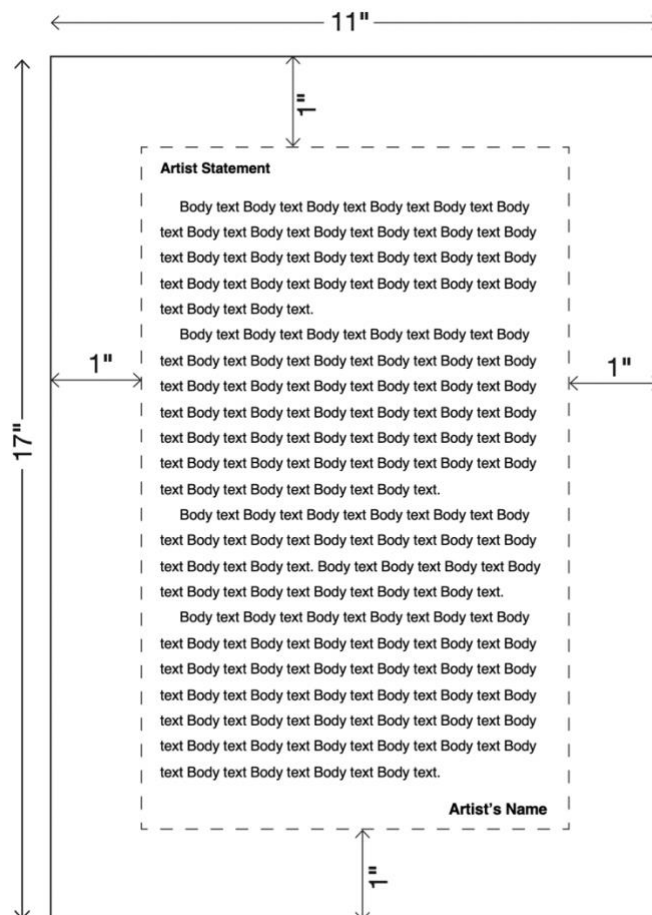
- No smaller than a 2" x 4" overall dimension (dimensions may be expanded depending on length or amount of information)
- Font size can vary from 12-16 pt. font
- Information left-justified within the overall label dimensions with top and bottom margins as equal as possible
- The artworks information:
 - Name
 - *Title*, Date (*Title* of the work in italics)
 - Medium/materials: first word uppercase, the rest lowercase (i.e., Oil on canvas). For audio/video works include duration: 00:00:00 - hours, minutes, seconds.

Note: Generally, the "sale price" of an artwork is not included on the wall label. A separate "Sale Price List" can be made available in the gallery by the Candidate if they so choose.

Artist/Designer Statement Panel

The artist/designer statement should be at least 200-300 words and no more than one page in length.

Artist/Designer Statement Guide



- 11" X 17" page size with one-inch margins on all sides
- Artist's Statement headline: upper left; 20-22 pt. font in **bold** type
- Body text: 20-22 pt. font with 1.5 line spacing
- Artist's Name: bottom right; 26-28 pt. font in **bold** type
- Align text left-justified

Suggested Text Panel Construction

Print information on white paper (FYI - multiple panels or labels can be printed on one sheet). Using spray adhesive, affix the sheet of paper to white Foam Core Board. Using a Mat Board Cutter or utility knife and metal ruler cut individual text panels and labels. In the Department of Art & Design there is a spray booth for spraying adhesive in Room 119; and a Mat Board Cutter in the Matting and Framing Room in Room 125.

Text Panel Placement

Each text panel (i.e., wall label and artist statement) should be mounted in the fashion described above then adhered to the gallery wall using "mounting putty" available in the gallery or at office supply stores.

While text panels like the artist statement should be displayed on a wall close to the gallery entrance; all wall labels should be placed at the same height around the gallery walls. Some galleries/museums use a “standard” height placement of 48” above the floor:

- *Placement of labels for two-dimensional artwork*: most professional galleries/museums place informational labels to the lower right of the artwork, about 8” from the edge of artwork.
- *Placement of labels for three-dimensional artwork*: On the wall in the nearest location to the artwork (generally, it is not recommended to place labels on bases or pedestals).

Note: *If the entire exhibition is 3D work, an information list can be mounted to the wall that includes all the basic information for each work. The list can be numbered, and then a small number can be placed on the base of the corresponding artwork.*

Sale Price List (optional)

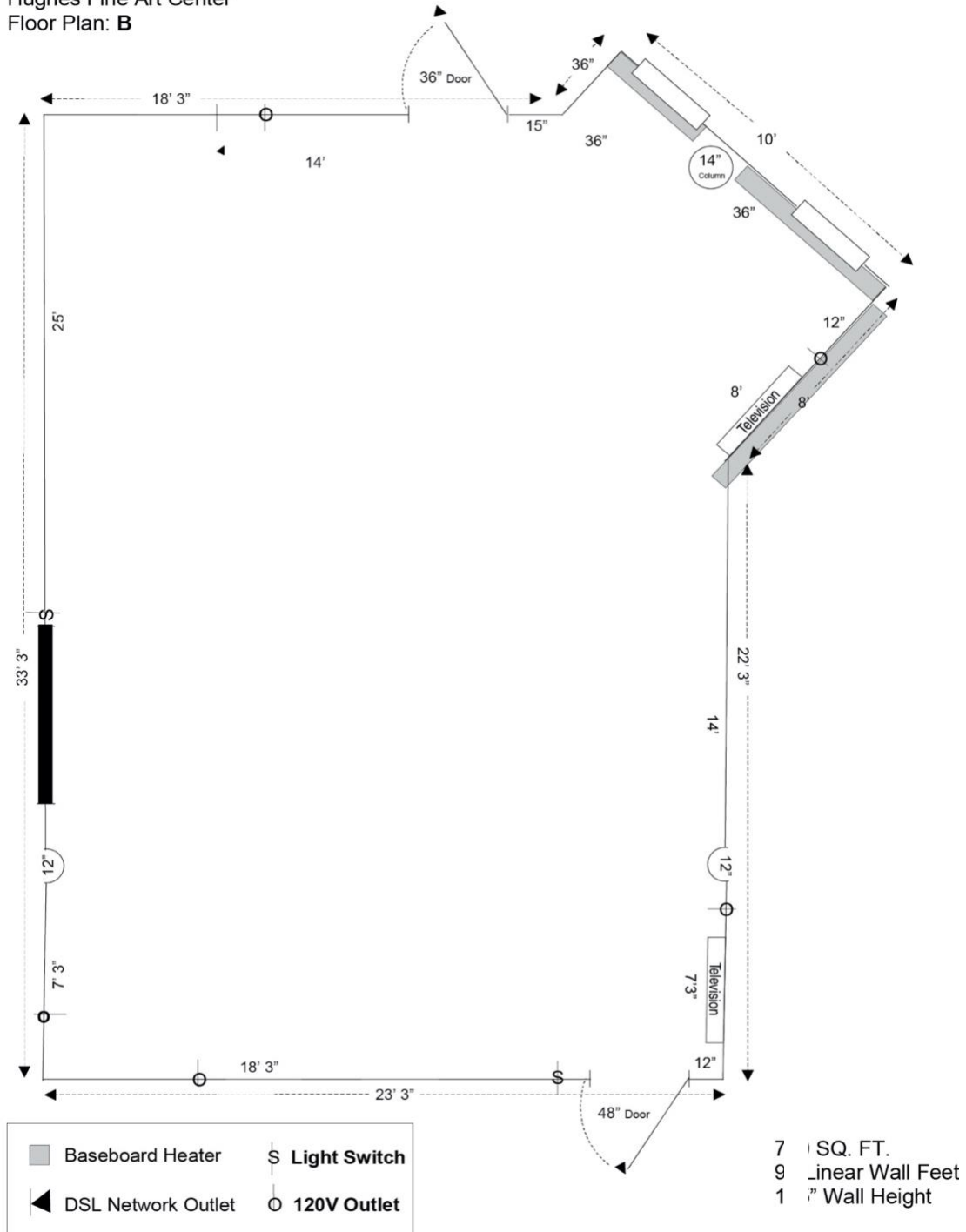
A price list is usually available (with other exhibition information like the announcement cards) at the attendance desk or on a pedestal in the gallery. Below is an example:

| Candidate Name <i>Title of Show</i> MFA Thesis Exhibition | | |
|---|--|----------|
| Price List | | |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$375.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$175.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$750.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$450.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$450.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$750.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$175.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$375.00 |
| <i>Title, Date</i> Medium Dimensions | | \$200.00 |

- 8 ½ x 11” sheet of paper
- Font size: 12-14 pt. font
- Candidate’s Name, *Title of Show* (in italics) and MFA Thesis Exhibition at headline
- Price format: dollars and cents (e.g., \$100.00; NFS if not for sale)
- Include the following information for each artwork:
 - *Title, Date* (*Title* of work in italics)
 - Medium/materials: first word uppercase, the rest lowercase (i.e., Oil on canvas)
 - Dimensions (audio/video works include duration: 00:00:00 - hours, minutes, seconds)

Gallery Floorplan

Colonel Eugene E. Myers Art Gallery
 Hughes Fine Art Center
 Floor Plan: B



Artist/Designer Statement Guide

Department of Art & Design :: University of North Dakota

The artist/designer statement should be on your work and can address any or all of the following points:

- The development of the work
- Procedures and/or techniques
- Personal, cultural, historical, philosophical, and/or theoretical context of the work

Statements should be at least 200-300 words and no more than one page in length. Faculty in your Emphasis Area or on your Thesis Committee can help you determine the statement's overall length and content.

Writing an Artist/Designer Statement

Writing an artist/designer statement can be a difficult process, but it is also an enormously valuable exercise as it can help you to achieve a greater understanding of yourself as an artist. Here is a beginners guide that may help to steer you in the right direction.

Think it Through

1) Be honest with yourself. Before you write a word, take some time to just think about you and your art. You need to understand what it is that you are trying to achieve, before you attempt to explain it to anyone else.

- Ask yourself **what** you're doing and **why** you're doing it.
 - What motivates you to create art?
 - What emotions or ideas are you trying to convey?
- Ask yourself **how** you're doing it.
 - What tools and materials do you use?

2) Consider your influences. Think about the things that influence you, whether it's art, music, literature, history, politics or the environment. Think about how these influences have made an impression on you and how they manifest themselves in your work. Try to be as specific as possible.

3) Determine what you want people to understand. Think about what you want people to take away from your work. What message or emotion are you trying to convey?

Strategies

Make a mind-map

Mind-mapping is a good way to free your thinking. It will also help you to trace the relationship between different ideas. Jot down a key idea that informs your work in the center of a blank page. Then spend 15 minutes writing down any words, phrases, feelings, techniques etc. related to that idea.

Free write

Free writing is another technique that can help get the creative juices going. Spend 5-10 minutes writing whatever pops into your head when you think about your art.

Piece it Together

1) Make a statement about why you do what you do. The first section of your artist/designer statement should begin with a discussion of why you make art. Try to make it as personal as possible. Talk about what your goals are and what you hope to achieve through your work.

2) Describe your decision-making techniques. In the second section of your statement, tell the reader about your decision-making process. How do you select a theme? How do you choose what materials to use? What techniques to utilize? Keep it simple.

3) Talk about your current work. In the third section, provide some insight into why you make the work. How does it relate to your previous work? What life experiences informed it? What are you exploring, attempting or challenging through this work?

4) Keep it short, sweet, and to the point. Your statement is an introduction to your work, not an in-depth analysis of it. It should be one to two paragraphs and no longer than a page. Your statement should answer the most commonly asked questions about your art, not overwhelm readers with irrelevant facts and minute details. Brevity and efficiency of language are key. A good statement will leave your readers wanting more.

5) Use simple language. Write in simple, straightforward, everyday language. An effective statement reaches out and welcomes people to your art, no matter how little or how much they know about art to begin with; it never excludes. It should make your work more accessible, not obscure it with convoluted language filled with artsy jargon.

Applying the Finishing Touches

Let it rest. Once you've finished writing, let it rest overnight before your reread it. Taking some time will help you take a step back and give you the detachment necessary to polish the writing.

Seek feedback. Feedback on clarity, tone and technical matters such as spelling and punctuation never hurts. Show your art and statement to friends and family. Make sure your readers get it, that they understand what you want them to understand. When they don't, or you have to explain yourself, do a rewrite and eliminate the confusion.

Revise as needed. Many times, a little rearranging is all that's necessary to make your statement a clean, clear read.

Save all your notes and drafts. Save all the notes and drafts that you've made. You'll want to revise and update your statement from time to time to reflect changes in your work. Having your original notes and drafts at your disposal will help you to immerse yourself in your past thought processes and will give you a sense of creative continuity.

Tips

- Avoid comparing yourself to other artists or designers. It can seem presumptuous and you may not come out of the comparison favorably. Let the critic's decide who you're like.
- Not all artists or designers can write well. Do the best you can to convey what you want your statement to convey in language that ordinary everyday people can understand.

Forms

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Visual Art

Forms & Form Submission

All forms are to be submitted digitally either through DocuSign or via email.

DocuSign Instructions

Forms can be found on the [Department Resources page of the Department of Art & Design website.](#)

Pay attention to the instructions below as well as on the instructions on each form:

- 1) To initiate a form, click on the "DocuSign Link" at the top of the Sample Form.
- 2) As "Signers", students enter their name and @UND.edu email address. Fill in all signing parties when necessary.
- 3) To fill in the form, click "BEGIN SIGNING".
- 4) Complete the required form fields and upload the required attachments, then click "FINISH". The form will begin automatically routing through the to the designated recipients and remaining required signers.

Once the form is finished, all parties who signed the document will receive a confirmation email with a PDF of the completed form attached.

Note: *Forms cannot be corrected/changed once they have been signed. If corrections are necessary, students will be required to submit a new form.*

DocuSign Tips

- Always use the @UND.edu email (not @ndus.edu or personal) address for yourself and other signers.
- To initiate a form when a direct DocuSign link is not available, or to track the progress of forms en route, [students can login to DocuSign by following these instructions.](#) Students login using their NDUS dotted ID and password (same as Blackboard and Campus Connection).
- [DocuSign eSignature: How to Send an Envelope](#) will familiarize students with the procedure for creating and initiating documents.

Special Project/Independent Study Agreement-Contract

Department of Art & Design :: University of North Dakota

Fall 20__

Course #: _____

Spring

Course Title: _____

Summer

Credits: _____

Brief description of work/objectives to be accomplished under contract (*attach additional pages if necessary*):

Criteria for grading work accomplished under contract (completed by Instructor):

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Email:

MFA Review Form

Department of Art & Design :: University of North Dakota

This form is initiated by the Thesis Committee Chair then distributed and signed by Committee members via DocuSign.

Student Name

Date

Student ID

Email

Review Period

First Review Second Review

Major Emphasis Area

Ceramics Drawing Graphic Design Jewelry/Metalsmithing Painting Photography Sculpture

Student has been reviewed and approved to continue in the Program.

MFA Thesis Committee Chair Signature

Committee Member Signature

Committee Member Signature

MFA Exhibition Approval Form

Department of Art & Design :: University of North Dakota

Via DocuSign, complete an Exhibition Approval Form and submit it along with the required attachments.

Candidate Name Date

- Required Attachments:**
- 1) Artist/designer statement
 - 2) Poster image
 - 3) Text panels/wall labels
 - 4) Images of exhibition art or design work

Note: *DocuSign envelopes can not exceed 25 MB in size. Compress documents before uplaoding them as attachments.*

MFA Exhibition information and artwork has been approved.

MFA Thesis Committee Chair Signature

Committee Member Signature


Committee Member Signature

Program of Study/MFA Thesis Committee Appointment Sample

This form is filed with the School of Graduate Studies after completing First Year Critiques and/or 18 credits. Students work with their Committee Chair to file the Program of Study / Thesis Committee Appointment Form. Students initiate this form by following the links below.

The form is distributed, signed, and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies via Docusign.

[Program of Study / MFA Thesis Committee Appointment Form](#)

 **SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

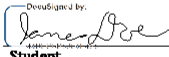
**Master's Program of Study and
Committee/Advisor Appointment**

Student ID: 0123456 **First Name:** Jane **Last Name:** Doe
Program: MFA Visual Arts **Option:** Professional Exhibition
Subplan: Drawing **Minor:**

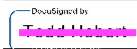
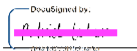
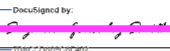
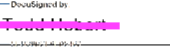
UND Courses Only

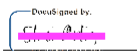
| Dept | Course Number | Credit | Note | Title of Course | Minor "X" | Cognate "X" | Substitutions (UND Course Replaced) Dept | Number |
|-------|---------------|--------|------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---|--------|
| | | | | Area of Emphasis (30 Credits) | | | | |
| ART | 530 | 30 | | Drawing | | | | |
| | | | | Art History (9 Credits) | | | | |
| ART | 510 | 3 | | Issues in Contemporary Art | | | | |
| ART | 410 | 3 | | Advanced History of Art | | | | |
| ART | 410 | 3 | | Advanced History of Art | | | | |
| | | | | Electives (18 Credits) | | | | |
| ART | 410 | 3 | | Advanced History of Art | | | | |
| ART | 520 | 15 | | Painting | | | | |
| ART | 599 | 3 | | Professional Exhibition | | | | |
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| Total | | 60 | | | | | | |
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| Transfer Work | | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|--------|-------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Institution | Course Dept | Course Number | Credit | Grade | Title of Course | UND Course Replaced |
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| Student Approval | |
|--|------------------|
| Deauthorized by:  Student | 8/6/2021 Date |

| Committee/Advisor Appointment and Approval | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| This section of the form is used to notify the School of Graduate Studies of your committee or permanent advisor. All faculty must hold UND Graduate Faculty Status. If a proposed new member does not hold UND Graduate Faculty status or is at another University or profession, please attach their Curriculum Vitae (or Resume) to be reviewed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. | | | |
| Changes to advisors or committee members should be submitted on the Change Form. | | | |
| Faculty signing this section are 1) agreeing to serve on your committee or as your advisor, and 2) approving the Program of Study document. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------------------|--|------------------|
| Deauthorized by:  Chair/Advisor | 8/6/2021 Date | | |
| Deauthorized by:  Committee Member | 8/6/2021 Date | Deauthorized by:  Co-Chair/Co-Advisor | 8/6/2021 Date |
| | | Deauthorized by:  Graduate Director | 8/6/2021 Date |
| Minor Dept/Additional Member | Date | | |

| SGS Review | |
|---|-------------------|
| Deauthorized by:  School of Graduate Studies | 8/18/2021 Date |
| | |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Transfer Credits: | |
| UND Credits: | |
| Total: | |

UND SGS SR Program of Study
UND-SGS-Student Records

Fillable fields once student information has been completed:

- **Program:** MFA Visual Arts
- **Subplan:** student's Major Emphasis Area
- **Option:** Professional Exhibition
- **UND Courses Only** (as above with *Department*, *Course Number*, and *Credits* filled when applicable):
 - *Area of Emphasis (30 credits):* each student lists their particular Major Emphasis Area courses.
 - *Art History (9 credits):* all MFA students fill this section as seen above.
 - *Electives (18 credits):* each student lists their particular choice of Electives outside their Emphasis Area.
 - *ART 599 – Professional Exhibition (3 credits):* all MFA students fill this section as seen above.
- **Transfer Work:** list transfer credits when applicable.
- **Student Approval & Committee/Advisor Appointment and Approval:** before initiating this form, students contact faculty members to ask of their willingness to serve on their Thesis Committee and solicit one Committee member to be the Committee Chair.