



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Art and Art History

Updated: August 2022

Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

**HANDBOOK
2022-23**

INTRODUCTION

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND ART HISTORY (DAAH)

The [Department of Art and Art History](#) website is one of your primary links to program information, upcoming events, contact information, and resources!

MFA PROGRAM

The Master of Fine Arts in the DAAH at the University of Calgary emphasizes practice-based creative research and culminates in a thesis exhibition. Students will develop a strong understanding of critical, theoretical, and historical issues relevant to their research in support of their exhibition and can gain teaching experience.

The program consists of a six-semester (including spring and summer) concentrated course of study in creative research within a university context, leading to the MFA degree. Students accepted into the program are enrolled in studio courses, where they can work in a range of media, or within a medium-specific discipline. In addition to the studio components, art history, art theory and criticism, form an integral part of the academic curriculum. The program culminates in a final exhibition of the student's artistic production, accompanied by a comprehensive written support paper. A photographic record of the exhibition will be retained for the departmental archive.

MFA HANDBOOK

This handbook provides information about the policies, requirements, and procedures of the MFA program. It supplements the policies and procedures of the [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#).

Faculty and graduate students should be familiar with the contents of the following Faculty of Graduate Studies documents:

- Calendar: ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/gs.html
- Academic Regulations: ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-academic-regulations.html
- Grad Assistants: ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-b-1.html
- Guide for Current Graduate Students: <https://grad.ucalgary.ca/current-students>

Any inquiries may be made to the Graduate Program Director by emailing trevor.stark@ucalgary.ca or the Graduate Program advisors by emailing artsgradsc@ucalgary.ca.

ARTS GRADUATE STUDENTS' CENTRE (AGSC)

For more information on graduate programs in the Faculty of Arts or for general inquiries contact [AGSC](#).

GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (GSA)

The GSA is the voice of University of Calgary graduate students at the UCalgary and to all levels of government. The GSA supports UCalgary graduate students to succeed academically and socially through valued programs and services and responsive communication channels: <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

Contents

SECTION I - FACULTY AND STAFF.....	4
DEPARTMENT HEAD.....	4
GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR.....	4
FACULTY MEMBERS – MAJOR AREA OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH.....	4
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF.....	4
TECHNICAL STAFF.....	5
SECTION II – PROGRAM AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.....	5
PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....	5
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.....	5
ACADEMIC STANDARDS.....	6
SECTION IV - SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS.....	6
SECTION III - EVALUATION PROCEDURES & STANDARDS.....	7
GRADUATE STUDENT APPRAISALS.....	7
REAPPRAISAL OF TERM WORK AND/OR APPEAL OF FINAL GRADES.....	7
FINAL APPRAISAL PRIOR TO THE ORAL DEFENCE OF THESIS EXHIBITION.....	7
SECTION IV - THESIS REQUIREMENTS.....	8
DEADLINE DATES.....	9
COPYRIGHT PERMISSIONS.....	9
THESIS SUBMISSION.....	9
SECTION V – FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE & TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES.....	10
SECTION VI – FACILITIES AND STUDENT RESOURCES.....	11
FACILITIES.....	11
STUDENT RESOURCES.....	12
PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL GALLERIES, ARTIST-RUN-CENTRES.....	12

SECTION I - FACULTY AND STAFF

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Joelle Welling, Interim Department Head (July 1st, 2022 – June 30th, 2023)

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Trevor Stark (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

FACULTY MEMBERS – MAJOR AREA OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Faculty Member	Major area of Teaching and Research	Email
Anuradha Gobin	Art History / Northern Renaissance	anuradha.gobin@ucalgary.ca
Denis Gadbois	Photography / 3D Fabrication	dgadbois@ucalgary.ca
Dona Schwartz	Photography / Social Life & Culture / Visual Narratives	dschwartz@ucalgary.ca
Erin Sutherland	Indigenous Heritage	erin.sutherland@ucalgary.ca
Gerald Hushlak	Painting, Drawing, Media Art	hushlak@ucalgary.ca
Heather Leier	Print Media / Installation	heather.leier@ucalgary.ca
James Parker	Media Art / Technology / Game Design	jparker@ucalgary.ca
Jean-Rene Leblanc	Digital Art / Media Art	jrleblan@ucalgary.ca
Jennifer Eiserman	Developmental Art / Art Theory and Aesthetics	jreiserm@ucalgary.ca
Judy Anderson	Canadian Indigenous Studio Art / Painting and Installation	Judy.anderson@ucalgary.ca
Kim Huynh	Print Media, Drawing, Installation Art	khuynh@ucalgary.ca
Michelle Hardy	Heritage Studies / Visual Art, Culture, Textiles and South Asia	mhardy@ucalgary.ca
Rob Furr	Digital Media / Interactivity & Design	rsfurr@ucalgary.ca
Robert Kelly	Developmental Art / Curriculum Development	rkelly@ucalgary.ca
Susan Cahill	Canadian Art History / Art of War & Surveillance	susan.cahill@ucalgary.ca
Tia Halliday	2D Studio Art / Performance	thallida@ucalgary.ca
Trevor Stark	Art History / Twentieth Century Art	trevor.stark@ucalgary.ca

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Staff member	Position	Email
Constantina Caldis Roberts	Academic Program Specialist	constantina.caldisro@ucalgary.ca
Elizabeth Violo	Administrative Assistant	rosabel.choi@ucalgary.ca
General Advising	Graduate Program Advisor	artsgradsc@ucalgary.ca
Mary Lou Mendyk	Manager, Operations	mmendyk@ucalgary.ca
Rosabel Choi	Academic Program Specialist	elizabeth.violo@ucalgary.ca

TECHNICAL STAFF

Technician	Position	Email
Alex Linfield	Multi-disciplinary Technician	alex.linfield@ucalgary.ca
Anthony Reimer	Technician	areimer@ucalgary.ca
Louie Villanueva	Photography Technician	lhvillan@ucalgary.ca
Steve Nunoda	Workshop Technician	steven.nunoda@ucalgary.ca

SECTION II – PROGRAM AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master of Fine Arts engages students in intensive creative and critical research, drawing together the technical and interpretive skills required of a professional arts practice. Students work with a range of media or focus on a specific medium (such as Sculpture, Print Media, Photography, Painting, Drawing and Digital Art), and are given studio space and full access to the resources of the Department. In addition to studio work, historical and theoretical research, written analysis, scholarly critiques, and oral presentations form an essential part of the overall MFA program. The MFA program culminates in a final exhibition and a comprehensive written support paper, which articulates the critical and historical issues relevant to the student's work.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The program requires registration as a full-time graduate student for six consecutive terms in residence. All requirements for the degree must be completed within four years from the time of registration in the program, although studio space is not guaranteed after the first 24 months.

The program core for all Master of Fine Arts students is a minimum of 24 units. Within the first twelve months of the program each student must complete 6 units of 600-level studio course; 3 units of 600-level graduate seminar, and [Art 611](#) and [605](#). Three units of 600-level graduate seminar and 6 units of 600-level studio course must be completed in the second twelve months of the program. In some circumstances, the Department may require a student to complete more than the mandatory 24 units.

Typical course sequence is the following:

Year 1 Fall

- [Art 611](#) Research Methods in Art
- [Art 661.01](#) Advanced Studio Practice

Year 1 Winter

- [Art 609](#) Art Theory and Criticism
- [Art 661.02](#) Advanced Studio Practice

Year 1 Spring or Summer

- [Art 605](#) Critical Study and Research

Year 2 Fall

- [Art History 615](#) Conference Course in Art History
- [Art 661.03](#) Advanced Studio Practice

Year 2 Winter

- [Art 661.04](#) Advanced Studio Practice

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

B- is the minimum passing grade for any one course; however, an overall GPA of at least 3.00 (B) must be maintained in each year of the program. If, after consulting the Department and Supervisory committee, the Faculty decides that a student is not making satisfactory progress in either course work or research, the student may be required to withdraw. If a student fails a total of two or more courses within the total program, the student will be required to withdraw. Also, students who accumulate two grades of B- or lower can be required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies to withdraw from the program regardless of GPA.

A grade of A+ can be awarded to a student. The GPA associated with this letter grade will be 4.00.

SECTION IV - SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

Supervisory arrangements in the DAAH are based on the Faculty of Graduate Studies supervisory regulations. ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-j.html

Upon admission, an interim Supervisor will be assigned by the Graduate Program Director and approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The interim Supervisor will guide the students through procedures and help orientate them to the Department, specifically to the area of the student's specialization. During their first term of study, the student will be given the opportunity to meet with several faculty members to determine a suitable permanent Supervisor.

The selection of a permanent Supervisor should be by mutual agreement between the student and faculty member and is approved by the Graduate Program Director. A permanent Supervisor should be appointed by January 1 of the first academic year of registration. Supervisors are full-time tenure track faculty members or board appointees with supervisory privileges.

The supervisor will select two other faculty members (from any department, program, or faculty) to serve as Supervisory Committee Members and the composition of the committee will be approved by the Graduate Program Director. In some instances, a graduate student may be co-supervised by two faculty members, who will act as primary and secondary supervisors. Graduate students are advised to make full use of the expertise of each member of the Supervisory Committee. Students and Supervisors have a shared responsibility to ensure that there is an adequate opportunity to meet on a regular basis, at least once every two weeks, including the summer months. The Supervisory Committee, once appointed, will have a formal meeting with the student at least four times per academic year.

SECTION III - EVALUATION PROCEDURES & STANDARDS

GRADUATE STUDENT APPRAISALS

Performance in Course Work

Standards of performance in course work are the responsibility of individual Departments and Faculties. The Faculty of Graduate Studies requires a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in good standing. See the Graduate Grading System in the Calendar: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-2.html>

Judgement of Student Performance

Graduate students are expected to maintain adequate progress, or they will be required to withdraw from the program. Progress includes timely completion of required course work, progress to candidacy according to the program's candidacy timeline, and steady and meaningful work on the thesis. Supervisors and graduate program directors should ensure, through annual progress reports and otherwise, that the student is informed in writing about concerns regarding progress.

Annual Progress Report

The Supervisor and each continuing student must jointly submit an annual progress report on the student's performance. This on-line form, administered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, must be filled out by the Supervisor, the Graduate Program Director, and the student. The student will receive an online copy of the report after the Supervisor and the Graduate Program Director have completed their comments.

REAPPRAISAL OF TERM WORK AND/OR APPEAL OF FINAL GRADES

Please refer to the Graduate Calendar, which outlines the process and timeline for appeals <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

FINAL APPRAISAL PRIOR TO THE ORAL DEFENCE OF THESIS EXHIBITION

The final appraisal prior to proceeding with the thesis will take place in April or early May of the fourth term of the student's program. The appraisal will be based on work conducted in Art 661.03 and .04 related to the thesis. The supervisory committee will review the student's studio work and a first draft of the support paper to the thesis exhibition. Students will provide a detailed outline of the supporting paper to committee members for review in February. A comprehensive first-draft is due to all committee members three weeks before the final appraisal meeting. This will include a table of contents as well as substantial draft of each chapter written in full form (rather than in point form or as a skeleton). Students are also encouraged to have a maquette or floor plan of their proposed exhibition at the final appraisal meeting.

For the appraisal, the student will give an opening statement of ten minutes, followed by questions from committee members. The appraisal will not exceed one hour.

Once the final appraisal is complete, the Graduate Program Director (or designate) in consultation with the committee will make one of the following four recommendations:

1. Student has demonstrated satisfactory advancement in both studio work and the first draft of the support paper to the thesis exhibition.
2. Student has demonstrated satisfactory advancement in studio work but needs to re-submit the first draft of the support paper to the thesis exhibition. (Specification required)
3. Student has demonstrated satisfactory advancement in the first draft of the support paper to the thesis exhibition but needs to re-submit studio work. (Specification required)
4. Student has demonstrated un-satisfactory advancement in both studio work and the first- draft of the support paper to the thesis exhibition. (Specification required)

If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of a final appraisal, the student will follow the guidelines provided by the Faculty of Graduate Studies: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-1.html>

If it is recommended that the student defer the defense, they may be required to vacate their studio and/or office at least three weeks before the beginning of the next academic term and will no longer receive departmental financial support.

Program support, including studio and office space, is not extended beyond the 24-month program. However, in certain situations a written request for continued use of facilities can be submitted to the Department Head. If space is available, these formal requests may be granted on a term-by-term basis.

SECTION IV - THESIS REQUIREMENTS

A graduate thesis is comprised of three interrelated components:

THESIS EXHIBITION

The candidate's thesis exhibition is the final requirement for the MFA degree and will take place in Calgary. The candidate, having successfully completed all course work and having received a positive recommendation from the final appraisal, will prepare for the final exhibition in consultation with their Supervisor. The candidate is expected to have produced a coherent body of work and to have completed the thesis support paper, which will accompany the exhibition. The final exhibition will normally take place in August or September.

THESIS SUPPORT PAPER

The support paper is an essential component of the graduate thesis. It should be prepared in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar grad.ucalgary.ca/current/thesis/guidelines

The support paper should be 25-50 pages in length. The paper is a definitive statement about the exhibited work: it should describe the personal, historical, and/or theoretical origins of the student's work; and explain its relationship to contemporary and/or historical art. The thesis support paper should demonstrate that the candidate is acquainted with the published academic literature about their thesis; that appropriate research

methods have been used; and that they have developed a critical analysis of their research subject.

All examiners must receive the support paper at least three weeks prior to the oral examination date. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that examiners receive a digital copy of the paper by the deadline.

For support with writing, please consult the Writing Support Services at the Student Success Centre:

<https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Dare to be Different: consider a non-traditional thesis: <https://grad.ucalgary.ca/current-students/thesis-based-students/thesis/non-traditional-thesis>

ORAL EXAMINATION

The oral examination will be based on the work in the candidate's exhibition and the written paper, and will consist of 2-3 rounds of questioning by the examining committee. This formal examination will not exceed two hours. The oral examination will take place at least three weeks after the submission of the thesis support paper and ideally during the thesis exhibition. This examination is open; however only examiners may question the student.

The Oral Examination Committee will consist of at least four people: the Supervisor, the External Examiner, and the Supervisory Committee members. The Graduate Program Director or designate will act as a non-examining, neutral chairperson. If a larger oral examination committee is deemed necessary, a specific request to the Graduate Program Committee will be required. The composition of the oral Examination Committee is approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Graduate Program Committee of the DAAH.

DEADLINE DATES

Graduate students should be aware of all deadline dates as listed in the current Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/academic-schedule.html>

COPYRIGHT PERMISSIONS

For any questions regarding copyright, please refer to <https://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright>

THESIS SUBMISSION

Please refer to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Website for information about [thesis preparation and submission](#).

SECTION V – FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE & TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

The University of Calgary is very proud of its graduate student awards program. In addition to recognizing academic achievement, scholarships are important in helping to bridge the gap between the rising cost of attending university and limited student income. Attracting top national and international students to the University of Calgary continues to be a very high priority.

Full-time students registered in a graduate degree program at the University of Calgary are eligible for awards and financial assistance. [Scholarship](#) information, application forms and instructions are found on the graduate award website and through the searchable awards database at grad.ucalgary.ca/awards. In addition to internal university awards, awards are available through external agencies and Canadian and international governments. If you are an international student, check with your home government for funding options.

In particular, there are two scholarships available that are specific to MFA students in the DAAH: The [Alberta Foundation for the Arts Graduate Scholarship](#) and the [Anne Severson Memorial Graduate Scholarship in Fine Arts](#). We recommend that eligible students apply for a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master's (SSHRC CGS-M).

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts also has several other awards available to emerging artists, with application made directly to the AFA. Please visit their website, affta.ab.ca, for more information.

There are also several funding opportunities available for Indigenous graduate applicants available through the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Please visit <https://grad.ucalgary.ca/awards/award-opportunities/indigenous-external-awards> for more information.

Students are encouraged to research awards in the graduate calendar and the **Graduate Students' Association** for eligibility requirements: <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial-support/awards/>

Many graduate students receive funding from the Division through [Graduate Assistantships](#), either teaching (GAT) or non-teaching (GANT) positions. All aspects of graduate assistantships are based on a [Collective Agreement](#) between the Governors of the University of Calgary and the Graduate Students' Association.

Government student assistance programs (student loans) are also available to Canadian citizens, permanent residents, protected persons, and American citizens. Please see [student loans](#) for more details.

SECTION VI – FACILITIES AND STUDENT RESOURCES

Graduate students are provided with their own allocated studio space. In addition, they have access to the following facilities on campus:

Visit ucalgary.ca/map for a campus map or to use the interactive room finder. Rooms on campus use the first two or three letters to designate the building and the number to designate the room. A room with a number in the 100s is on the main floor, in the 200s is on the second floor and a room such as 004 or 012 is in the basement. For example: the main office for the DAAH is CHD 100. It's located on the main floor of Craigie Hall, Block D.

FACILITIES

Studios and Regulations

The studio spaces at the DAAH are well-equipped, purpose-built spaces that enable students to engage in a variety of mediums and approaches. The studios have been set up for the benefit of all of those registered in classes and are intended to foster a positive, community-based, learning environment.

- **Painting and Drawing** - Studios with storage areas, controlled lighting, still life room, and a collection of anatomical specimens of human skeletons.
- **Photography** - Standard black and white and color equipment, means for transparency masking color separation, internegatives, dye transfer printing and gum printing.
- **Printmaking** - Separate studios for etching, lithography, serigraphy, and relief printing. Equipment includes enlarger, platemaker, process camera, vacuum silkscreen printer.
- **Sculpture** - Bronze and metal casting equipment, welding and metal forming shop, studios for plaster, wood, clay, and stone.

These studios are subject to proper use ensuring the well-being, security, and safety of all individuals. All students must comply with the [studio usage regulations](#) and abide by its policy. Failure to do so can result in all privileges and access being revoked. Students in violation of the rules may also be restricted from receiving studio space in the future. All students will be required to read the regulations carefully and sign the digital agreement form.

Department of Art and Art History Galleries- Little Gallery, Arnett Gallery and 621 Gallery

These [Exhibition spaces](#) are available for students and faculty to book. Students are required to participate in one, two or three-person exhibition each term. The works exhibited must be comprised of research done by the end of each fall/winter term throughout two years of program.

Integrated Arts Media Labs

The [Integrated Arts Media Labs \(IAML\)](#) are a dedicated digital arts education and production environment located on the 6th floor of the Art Building (Parkade), created specifically for students in DAAH, Dance, Drama, and Music. The IAML consists of the Main Lab (AB 659, 22 stations) and the Small Lab (AB 605, 10 stations). Each station is equipped with a Mac computer, MIDI keyboard, and a color-calibrated display(s). It offers a full range of creative software, including video editing, 2D graphics and animation, 3D modeling and animation, CAD, music/audio sequencing, music notation, and interaction design and authoring. Equipment for short-term loan (e.g., audio recorder, DSLR) and printing services are also available for Art and SCPA students.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI)

We are committed to achieving equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible employment practices and workplaces. We must measure where we are now, how we are doing compared to the diverse make-up of our wider community and evaluate progress. The [OEDI](#) is committed to establishing an equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus that is accessible to all and free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

Taylor Family Digital Library (TFDL)

The University of Calgary [Libraries and Cultural Resources](#) supports the DAAH programs with extensive collections and services, including research advice and accessing materials (audio/visual, books, periodicals, online databases). These collections and services are a valuable resource for students and faculty so please make good use of them. View the [Library Research guides](#) and find additional support by contacting Alex Alisauskas (alexandra.alisauskas@ucalgary.ca).

The Nickle Galleries

Located in Taylor Family Digital Library, the [Nickle Galleries](#) offers a full program of exhibitions and related events covering most aspects of the visual arts nationally and internationally. There is no admission cost for faculty and students, and is available for research in contemporary art, including the availability of a Prints and Drawings Study Room. The Nickle Galleries is normally the location for the MFA final graduating Exhibition.

UNICARD

The [Unicard](#) is the official campus identification for students, faculty, and staff. Your Unicard acts as an access card, a pass to transit, the libraries, and Active Living facilities.

PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL GALLERIES, ARTIST-RUN-CENTRES

- Alberta Printmakers Society
- Alberta University of the Arts (AUArts) Galleries-Illingworth Kerr Gallery and the Marion Nicoll Gallery,
- Artist Proof Gallery
- Burns Visual Arts Society
- Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts
- Centennial Art Gallery
- Contemporary Calgary
- EMMedia
- Esker Foundation
- Glenbow Museum
- Herringer Kiss Gallery
- Image 54 Gallery
- Jarvis Hall Fine Art
- Kensington Downtown Art Gallery
- Masters Gallery
- Newzones Contemporary Art
- Nickle Galleries, University of Calgary
- Paul Kuhn Fine Arts
- Stride Gallery
- The Bows
- The New Gallery
- Trepanier Baer Gallery Inc.
- TRUCK Contemporary Art in Calgary
- Virginia Christopher Galleries
- VivianeArt Gallery
- Wallace Galleries
- Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre
- Webster Galleries Inc.
- Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff