



THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

SCHOOL OF VISUAL AND MEDIA ARTS

**MFA / MA PROGRAM FOR
STUDIO ART AND MEDIA ARTS**

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

The School of Visual and Media Arts Graduate Handbook, updated July 2024

School of Visual and Media Arts Graduate Handbook

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This Graduate Handbook will help you understand the process and expectations of the Graduate Program in the School of Visual and Media Art. Please read carefully! It is your responsibility to understand and achieve all these requirements. This handbook is not a legally binding contract, rather it's an explanation of the requirements and expectations of the program. For general graduate school requirements, policies and procedures refer to the University of Montana Graduate School website or the Graduate Catalog. This handbook is a guide for the program participants, it is not intended to supersede or substitute information available through the UM Graduate School.

Welcome to the University of Montana (UM) – Mission Statement

The University of Montana-Missoula pursues academic excellence as demonstrated by the quality of curriculum and instruction, student performance, and faculty professional accomplishments. The University accomplishes this mission, in part, by providing unique educational experiences through the integration of the liberal arts, graduate study, and professional training with international and interdisciplinary emphases. The University also educates competent and humane professionals and informed, ethical, and engaged citizens of local and global communities; and provides basic and applied research, technology transfer, cultural outreach, and service benefiting the local community, region, State, nation and the world.

The College of the Arts and Media (CAM) – Mission Statement

The University of Montana College of the Art and Media serves as the flagship for the arts in the State of Montana. Embedded in our mission is a deep commitment to challenge each student with a professionally based process that provides readiness for success in a highly competitive marketplace. Committed to excellence in performance and education, the College offers a full complement of undergraduate and graduate degrees from the School of Visual and Media Art, the School of Theatre and Dance, the School of Music and the School of Journalism. The Creative Pulse, an innovative program within the College of Art and Media, is an interdisciplinary summer graduate program for master teachers leading to a master's degree in integrated arts and education. The College is also home to The Montana Repertory Theatre, a professional touring theatre company; The Buddy DeFranco Jazz Festival, and the Gallery of Visual Arts and the Montana Museum of Arts and Culture.

The School of Visual and Media Art (SVMA) – Mission Statement & Core Values

The School of Visual and Media Art - Mission Statement

The mission of SVMA is to educate and engage the next generation of artists and storytellers in a wide variety of creative practices and research. SVMA strives to promote a holistic, cross-disciplinary approach and foster diversity and inclusion in the study, creation, and dissemination of arts and media.

Central to this mission are opportunities to create original works, gain proficiency with a diversity of creative processes (narrative, audio, and visual; in both digital and material systems), critically analyze artworks and media past and present, collaborate within and across artistic disciplines, and research the contextual and cultural history of art, design, and media. We lead -- and teach students how to lead -- through excellence in creative scholarship and research.

Our students develop critical and creative thinking skills, cultivate an informed aesthetic, build proficiency in various modes, methods, technologies, and forms of expression, and gain the ability to assess, articulate, and evaluate a broad range of arts and media.

School of Visual and Media Arts - Core Values:

At the core of the specific degree programs in SVMA are the following basic learning objectives

Provide a high-quality visual arts education to students in the context of a liberal arts university. The graduating student must possess the requisite knowledge and understanding of the art form to demonstrate:

- Critical Thinking. Knowledge and competence in creative problem-solving as it relates to meaningful visual, audio and narrative communication.
- Creative Literacy/Language/Informed Aesthetic. Knowledge of audio, visual and/or narrative language in both creation and analysis of creative work, which include stylistic, comparative, historical and formal analysis.
- Technical Skills. Knowledge and competence in technical skills and basic processes in a variety of media, appropriate for chosen field of study.
- Creative Thinking/Visual Communication. Knowledge and competence in creative problem solving as it relates to meaningful visual communication.
- Advanced Writing Skills. Synthesize material from multiple sources and disciplines and organize into discursive and/or narrative formats.
- Research and Methodology Skills. Make connections and comparisons among creative works within their cultural and historical contexts. Engage in original research and employ current theoretical approaches. Demonstrate research skills by utilizing printed and electronic resources found in libraries, museums, and galleries.
- Professional Application. Demonstrate the ability to apply artistic and technical skill sets in a professional environment. Demonstrate skills necessary to organize, manage and promote a professional identity.

SVMA provides a comprehensive instructional program in visual art that develops professional studio and digital artists, art educators, game designers and filmmakers. Visual literacy is developed through rigorous practice and the continued analysis and research of works of art — contemporary and historical. Students and faculty are held to the highest standards of contemporary studio art, digital art and technologies, and film making practices. Engaging in visual communication by acknowledging its role as a dominant cultural language is central to the mission of SSMA

Graduate studies are a time of profound learning, rigorous questioning, intense studio practice and critical dialogue with both professors and peers. It is often said that this is the most challenging and rewarding of all education.

Best of luck with your endeavors, and welcome to graduate school.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Since its foundation, The University of Montana has been the leader in the instruction of the visual arts in the state. The visual arts have been a part of its curriculum since the establishment of the state university in 1895, with the first drawing course offered in 1896. Painting easels and plaster casts of classical sculptures graced the University Hall when it opened its doors in 1898. From 1902 until 1937, the art studios occupied the gabled third floor of celebrated architect, A.J. Gibson and the beloved Main Hall.

Eloise B. Knowles, the first graduate of The University of Montana, was also its first art professor and chair of the Department of Art. She is largely responsible for the establishment of a progressive curriculum that balanced instruction in design and art history. The courses cited in the earliest University catalogs underscore the modern and comprehensive nature of that curriculum: free-hand drawing, applied design, oil painting, watercolor, history of modern sculpture, history of architecture, artistic anatomy, metalworking, photography, and cartooning, to name a few.

The University demonstrated its commitment to the visual arts by establishing the Department of Fine Arts in 1908 and offering a major in art the following year. The department grew steadily in numbers and prestige until after World War II when need for space led to a move into the old Student Union Building (built in 1935 and known as the Fine Arts Building since 1953). That steady growth has physically dispersed the department throughout the main campus: art education, art history and criticism, and the 2-dimensional arts (drawing, painting, photography, and printmaking) are taught in the Fine Arts Building; 3-dimensional art (ceramics and sculpture) are taught in the Art Annex; the Gallery of Visual Arts is located in the Social Science Building; and additional graduate studios are located on the ground floor of the old Schreiber Gymnasium.

In the second half of the 20th century, the department distinguished itself through a rigorous curriculum and a faculty of professional artist/educators and art historians dedicated to the values of modern art as well as history and criticism. Directors of regional and national reputations Aden Arnold, James Dew, Walter Hook, and most recently Tom Rippon, have led the department. Its best-known chair was the internationally recognized artist and educator Rudy Autio. Celebrated artist/teachers Lela Autio, Tu Baixong, Maxine Blackmer, Dennis Voss, Don Bunse, Ken Little, James Todd, and Ted Waddell can be counted in the ranks of its past faculty. Its current, no less distinguished, faculty honors that legacy through its commitment to intellectual inquiry, creative research and service, and the continued education of UM's future artists and teachers.

The Media Arts Program came into existence in 1995 as the need for artistic and narrative exploration on digital platforms began to become important to the broader culture. Recognizing this, Dean James Kriley, working with newly hired professor Michael Murphy moved to integrate digital work across the then School of Fine Arts. This proved difficult given the requirements of traditional programs within the school, so Kriley and Murphy started a graduate program, housed within the Department of Theatre/Dance. Upon approval by the Board of Regents in 1997 Murphy became the first Head of the Program with Dr. Kriley also teaching classes. The first cohort of graduate students began in one room in McGill Hall with three computers and each with a copy of Adobe Photoshop and Premiere, along with a belief that a deep understanding of storytelling would be the core mission that the program would bring to these newly evolving technologies. Richard Hughes, the third MFA student in the program, joined its faculty after his graduation and began developing the undergraduate Digital Arts and Technology emphasis to go with the already emerging Digital Filmmaking track. The program added an undergraduate minor in 200, students across campus realized that training in digital technology and storytelling had great benefits when added to a traditional major.

The program kept growing quickly leading to a Bachelor of Arts being added in 2006. In 2008 Media Arts moved out from under the wing of Theatre/Dance, becoming its own Department and Hughes became Chair of the Department. That year also had a terrible loss for the school and our community, as Dr. Kriley died suddenly while sailing on Flathead Lake. The time he spent helping envision and guide the program will always be with us. With the growth of both sides of the program a BFA in Media Arts was added in 2011. Since that time the School of Media Arts has trained professionals in the world of digital filmmaking, design and art making who work in Montana, the region and the country. Over the course of twenty years Media Arts has gone from a little know emergent area to a major contributor to the health and vision of the College and the University of Montana. The merger with the School of Art in 2018 came at a time when the world of digital creation was undergoing another seismic shift. Digital technology evolves quickly, and it drives new ways of imagining art and storytelling. In 2019 a track in Interactive Media and Game Design, along with an emphasis in Sonic Art and Design were added. The growth and constant change that underly the world of Media Arts technologies has never changed the core mission of bringing story to whatever forms it may take in the future.

"History and Heritage: The University of Montana's School of Art" by H. Rafael Chacón 2010, with additions by Michael Murphy and Rick Hughes, 2024

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA:

Support through teaching:

- Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA)
- Graduate Assistant (GA)
- Graduate Instructor (GI)

Scholarships

Western Interstate Commission for Higher education (WICHE)

TEACHING AND GRADING OPPORTUNITIES IN SVMA (3)

1. Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA):

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) are awarded to students in SVMA graduate degree programs. These awards provide an annual stipend (approximately \$5000 per semester), and a tuition waiver for twelve credits for in state OR out-of-state students. Teaching assistants are generally assigned to teaching one course and perform 8-10 hours of service weekly, usually in grading. On occasion, a GTA will be asked to teach two sections of the same course. Student must apply for the GTA each year, they GTA are awarded by semester. This opportunity is competitive, and the needs of the school are taken into consideration when assigning the awards. Applications will be available from the Program Coordinator and your graduate advisor. Please see process and conditions of applying to and receiving a GTA.*

2. Graduate Assistants (GA)

Graduate Assistantships (GA) are awarded to graduate students to serve as assistants in large lecture and online courses. Students are paid \$1500 a semester. Students assist and grade for face to face and online courses. The following classes usually require a GA:

- ARTH 201 Art of World Civilization
- ARTZ 105.50 Foundation Drawing: Visual Language Drawing (online course)
- GDSN 149 Digital Imaging
- MART 101 Introduction to Media Arts
- MART 255 Photoshop: Art and Design
- MART 305 Modern Horror Film
- ARTH 150 Introduction to Art History
- ARTZ 284 Photo 1: Technologies and Processes
- GDSN 231 Graphic Design Applications
- MART 112 Introduction to Film Editing
- MART 201 History of Digital Art and Culture

3. Graduate Instructor (GI):

Graduate students can teach a three-credit class in the School of Visual and Media Arts. This Graduate Instructor (GI) position is like an adjunct professor. There is no tuition waiver associated with this position, but students receive \$3,600 per semester.

*Process and Conditions of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA):

- Graduate students are required to take the ARTZ 506 Pedagogy course before being considered for a teaching assistant award. Most graduate students do not receive a GTA their first semester of graduate school. However, on a very rare occasion, if a student does receive a GTA their first semester, they can enroll in ARTZ 506 concurrently.
- Graduate students must apply for GTA's each year. Through this application, the faculty understand their experience and skills. The applications are reviewed by the faculty and there is every effort to be fair and consistent with this support, it is competitive and ultimately based on the GTA applications and the needs of the school.
- Applying graduate students have a variety of teaching skills and abilities. Consideration will be given to those students who exhibit strengths in the needed areas for the school. The programmatic needs of the school are the first consideration.
- The Graduate student's level of maturity and ability to work cooperatively with the faculty and the candidate's potential to teach at the college level is strongly taken into consideration.
- A student's ability to fulfill GTA responsibilities without hampering their thesis responsibilities is essential. Responsibilities may include but are not limited to assisting or teaching beginning courses, grading large lecture or online classes, studio maintenance, and ordering supplies. The faculty and director will supervise assignments and training. Beginning class assistance assignments and training will be supervised by the faculty via Canvas.
- Improper conduct, as determined by the director of the school, will immediately exclude the teaching assistant from the classroom and their award will be terminated.
- Provisions of the federal "Patient Affordable Care Act" include the maximum number of hours that can be worked by an employee before becoming eligible for employer paid health care insurance. Student employees – work-study, non-work study, or graduate students – may not work more than 29 hours per week.
- To receive a GTA a student must be enrolled in at least 6 credits, international students must be enrolled in at least 9 credits.
- All courses are evaluated by standardized SVMA student course evaluations, an anonymous process. The Director reviews these student course evaluations, and reviews with GTA when appropriate.

All GTA, GA and GI contracts are processed through the School of Visual and Media Arts. When received the offer of an award, the students must respond to accept the award or not in a timely fashion.

Applying for teaching and grading opportunities:

The Graduate student must have a GPA of 3.0 and demonstrated exceptional talent in both technical and creative abilities for a GTA, GA and GI. All applications are due on February 12. The students should meet with the graduate advisor for help with the application. Usually, the applications process is addressed during the Pedagogy course. If a student does not apply, they cannot receive the opportunities.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are available for graduate students in the School of Visual and Media Art. All students apply through the UM Scholarship Portal. This process is time consuming and would be difficult to fill out at the last minute, please plan carefully. *There will be scholarship application workshops Friday afternoons for the month of January and until the deadline in February. If you cannot make this training, please email Program Director for assistance.*

Incoming Graduate students can apply for scholarships after they have been accepted to the program. This acceptance process can take a long time, the delay in their scholarship application will not have a negative effect on their scholarship.

The School of Visual and Media Arts scholarship for all deadline for all current SVMA students is February 15.

Graduate Students are NOT GUARANTEED the same award each semester. The amounts awarded can vary based on student performance, number of students in the program, and available funding. All students who receive scholarships are required to write a thank you letter, and if they do not do this, they will not receive their award. The instruction for this letter is enclosed with your award letter. Scholarships can affect a student financial aid package. If you do not apply, you cannot have money awarded to you.

<https://www.umt.edu/finaid/scholarships/um-scholarship-portal/default.php>

WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (WICHE)

Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) is an agreement among WICHE's 16 members, through which participating Western public universities allow WICHE-region students to attend select out-of-state graduate certificate, master's, and doctoral programs – and pay up to 150 percent of resident tuition.

Since public-university nonresident tuition rates are typically much higher than resident rates – sometimes by 300 percent or more–WRGP increases affordable higher education options for students and minimizes student loan debt.

If an out of state enrolls in WRGP, they would pay one and a half instate tuition, instead of out of state tuition. Once a student does this, they can no longer apply to be a resident and can receive this reduced tuition for all three years of their education. For more information about this program, please visit the graduate school.

<https://www.wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wrgp/>

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA RESIDENCY POLICY

NOTE: The Information about establishing residency, or ""in-state"" status is listed on the University of Montana Graduate School website. PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION AND UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS SERIOUS IN CONTENT AND IN DEADLINE.

If an out of state incoming students enrolls in more than 6 credits fall semester and 6 credits spring semester, they are considered a out of state student for the entire time they are in school. If a incoming student does not exceed 6 credits both fall and spring semesters, and do ALL of the task listed below (with the exception of buying a house in Montana) the students can apply to be a Montana State resident and be considered for instate tuition. If the student misses even ONE of the items listed below, they will not qualify. This is not flexible in content or deadline.

The University of Montana classifies students, including applicants for admission, as either in state or out-of-state for tuition purposes. The following are general guidelines for a person wishing to establish in-state status. Please review this links for a successful application: <https://www.umt.edu/grad/current-students/residency.php>

- A person must reside in Montana for 12 continuous months and not be out of the state more than a total of 30 days. The 12-month waiting period typically begins when a person takes one of the following actions:
- Registers an automobile in Montana (should be done immediately upon moving to the state)
- Obtains a Montana driver's license (should be done within 90 days of the start of the 12-month waiting period)
- Registers to vote in Montana
- Purchases a home in Montana
- Files a resident Montana individual income tax return (all taxable income earned during the 12-month waiting period and thereafter for as long as in-state status is desired, should be reported on a resident Montana individual income tax return)

"During the 12-month waiting period, a person is expected to act in a manner consistent with Montana residency and do ALL those things required by law of a Montana resident. If you take the steps to establish residency AFTER course registration, you're in-state status would not start until AFTER course registration the following year"

IMPORTANT: If attending school during the 12-month waiting period, registering for more than 6 credits per semester (including summer school) creates a strong presumption you are here for educational purposes and will likely disqualify you from achieving in-state status. `

HEALTH & SAFETY

Safe Working Environment

Each student must take responsibility for a safe working environment. Please be careful and mindful of your own safety and of those around you. It is expected that students will always consider and research safe solutions to any problems and will work with equipment and materials with which they are comfortable. Some studios and processes may require safety training. Unique problem solving or artwork does not give license

for creating dangerous environments or for endangering one's health or that of others. MSDS manuals with material safety data sheets are provided in each studio. In some studio's there is a requirement of graduate students to purchase their own safety equipment: respirators, gloves, safety glasses etc. Please discuss safety needs of a specific studio with the professors or technicians who work there. Please see section on studio etiquette for specifics. The Fine Art Building and Art Annex often has a technician, and their priority is the safety of the students.

There are specific paperwork needs for checking out equipment for sonic needs and film making. Please contact the Graduate Advisor in Media Arts for more information.

Health & Safety: Extension Cords and Surge Protectors

The University has concerns about fire safety and our use of extension cords and surge protectors. UM health & safety office inspects all studios for health and safety issues and the School of Visual and Media Art most consistent violation is the use of extension cords. The OSHA regulations and National Electric Code related to these devices is as follows:

- Extension cords are to be used for only temporary wiring for up to 90 days.
- An extension cord can be used when it is running directly from the appliance to the wall, but only as temporary wiring.
- Multi-plug adaptors used on the end of the extension cords or plugged into outlets are prohibited.
- Extension cords are not to be used to energize surge protectors far from outlets. Increased cord length increases total electrical resistance and results in heat generation, increasing the chance for fire.
- Surge protectors (SPs) are designed for use with a few low-powered loads such as computers, peripherals or audio-visual components, protecting them from electrical surges or spikes.
- Underwriters Laboratory (UL) surge protectors need to be directly connected to a permanently installed branch circuit receptacle; they are not to be series connected (daisy-chained or piggy-backed) to other surge protectors.
- Daisy-chaining surge protectors can cause them to become overloaded, leading to their failure and a possible fire. Surge protectors were not designed to be used as additional outlets in lieu of properly hard-wired outlets.
- Extension cords can be used for power tools, clamp lights, etc. for temporary power connections. The cord must have a grounding pin (3-prong-plug) or be polarized (one blade is wider than the other) and be in good condition. A cord with damaged outer insulation, crushed outer jacket, or exposed wires must not be used.
- Extension cords may not be fastened with staples or otherwise hung in such a fashion as could damage the outer jacket or insulation. Only one cord can be used for powering one piece of equipment. When using three-prong plugs, use only the proper grounding type of extension cord (one with three prongs).
- Polarized electrical plugs should be used only with polarized or grounding type extension cords.
- Portable electric equipment and flexible cords used in highly conductive work locations (such as those inundated with water or other conductive liquids), or in job locations where employees are likely to contact water or conductive liquids, shall be approved for those locations.

Every Studio Art graduate student has a studio space to work in, and as much as possible, these spaces are close to needed facilities and equipment. These spaces are assigned and managed by the coordinator of each division. The division coordinator from the area in which the student was accepted determines the location of a graduate student's space. The location of the graduate space may vary over the course of study in response to the graduate student's needs. As much as possible, division heads try to accommodate the production needs of the student. Spaces are usually assigned two weeks before classes start or by appointment with division coordinator.

Upon completion of their thesis exhibition, the graduate student should vacate their studio space in a timely fashion – this deadline is determined by the studio area head. Studio spaces must be returned to the same condition in which they were originally presented. Please read section on studio etiquette. Media Art graduate students are not guaranteed studio space, however there are various studios and galleries that are available, please plan and sign up for shared spaces ahead of time.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Snail mail:

Snail mail for all Graduate Students is delivered to the fine Arts Building. Students can receive mail at: c/o the School of Visual and Media Arts, 32 Campus Drive, Missoula, MT 59812

Email:

Each student is assigned a grizmail email address. Students can obtain their email account from Information Technology. The email address that is assigned is a umontana address through the form of: first.last@umontana.edu. It is **STRONGLY** recommended to use a umontana email address through Cyberbear. If another mail system is desired (gmail, yahoo, hotmail ect.) please have the university email forwarded to the personal account. *SVMA will send email to the university email address only*, not to an alternative address. Much of the needed information from SVMA (scholarship deadlines, visiting artist information) will come via email. **It is expected that students check their email daily.**

Keys/Swipe Card System:

All graduate students receive swipe card entry to the work areas they need access to. Some buildings work areas also require keys, please see the program coordinator if you need keys to access your workspaces. Please bring the room number for the area where you need key access. It often takes 2 days to get a key so plan. Keys are collected at the facilities building and most keys have a deposit.

Facilities Etiquette:

In accordance with the University of Montana policy, there is no smoking or drinking of alcohol in any of the facilities in all SVMA facilities. A graduate student space must be a safe place to work, egregious messiness, hazardous vapors and fumes, as well as excess dust or noise is not acceptable. All hallways must be kept clear of debris and the division coordinators must approve any permanent alternations to the studio spaces.

When working in shared space all materials brought in by students must be removed by the student within one week of the finish date of any project. Failure to remove materials can result in a hold on the student's account.

Graduate students are welcome to use the Knowles, Lightshaft and Off-Center galleries. Please sign up for

these spaces ahead of time. The sign-up sheets are on the wall or clipboard near the gallery. When the exhibition is complete, spackle, sand and paint over any nail holes, as well as any repair is a must. The gallery must be swept and mopped as needed. Please take care of all gallery materials (paint, spackle, hand tools ect). Please see the program coordinator for the keys to the Knowles Gallery. Though generally the University Campus is a safe place, any disruption of student's artwork while on display is not the responsibility of SVMA. The Gallery of Visual Art has very specific requirements for using the space.

Media Arts Equipment listings and check-out procedures are available at the equipment room (McGill 122).

Student Etiquette:

All Graduate students should be thoughtful of their peers, faculty and studio community. Be considerate in terms of music, noise, mess as well as inhabiting common spaces. In addition, if a graduate student is a GTA, GI or GA, they are a UM employee, and such must maintain a strictly professional relationship with their students. Any questions as to professional boundaries, please ask the director or the division coordinator. This also applies for working in the community, like film shots for example. As a graduate student, you represent SVMA and the University.

In addition, if there is a conflict between students, please first try and work it out between yourselves. If needed, your primary professor or the Director of SVMA can assist with conflict resolution – please understand that SVMA expects graduate students to be clear mature communicators, treat each other with respect and be thoughtful and supportive of each other. Graduate school is a stressful time, a supportive community is a must, a little grace and compassion goes a long way.

Graduation:

The candidate is responsible for seeing that all requirements for the degree are completed and that all approvals are obtained within the times stated on the Graduate School semester calendar. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in a delay in the granting of the degree. Please visit the Graduate School website (www.umd.edu/grad) for current dates and deadlines.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITY

In general, all full-time tenure and tenure track faculty work with at least two graduate students each semester. Studio Art graduate students have formal access to faculty when they enroll in ARTZ 505 Graduate Research. Media Art graduate students have formal access to faculty when enrolled in MART 578 Graduate Studio. Students enroll in between 1- 4 credits per faculty, and this determines how often the students and faculty meet. Students send the faculty an email request to enroll in those credits, however, this does not guarantee that a specific faculty is available. Students can request to do research hours with non-tenure track faculty via email. In effort to keep a balanced workload for faculty, the graduate advisor helps with matching faculty and students when needed.

All faculty serve on thesis committees. It is suggested that faculty serve on no more than 4 committees a year. It is strongly suggested that students enroll in Graduate Research/Studio hours with the chair of their committee. Students are not required to sign up for credits with their other committee members.

All faculty have weekly office hours, either face to face or online. These are excellent times to find faculty members with questions or seeking advice. Request these times from the faculty or the Program Director.

GRADUATE ADVISOR

Graduate Advisors in SVMA address graduate student needs to include course selection, faculty mentorship, and Degreeworks. The Graduate Advisor also assist with the following:

- The process of reviewing graduate applications communicate consistently with applicants.
- Help the incoming and current graduate students sign up for classes each semester.
- Assist in continual credit audit for graduate requirements, meet for advising each semester.
- Work with professors teaching the general graduate classes for a cohesive graduate experience.
- Assist with Art student's Pre-Candidacy evaluation/Third Semester Assessment Mid-Degree Review as needed.
- Assist with GTA / GA / GI Assignments
- Graduate advisors also help with forming the graduate committees and the timeline to graduation.
- Work with the Graduate School and SVMA to keep the SVMA websites up to date.

The Director of SVMA, not the Graduate Advisor, oversee conflicts and complaints that may arise, with intervention following the contractual student grievance procedure. The Director also officially oversees the graduate student's passage of their PC/ Third Semester Assessment, and/or thesis paper and thesis exhibition/project*, as well as any kind of formal processes (being dismissed from school, taking a leave, illness, or family emergency). The Graduate Advisor may perform a support role to any of these situations. If a student receives a communication, email or phone call from the graduate advisor or Director of the School, please reply promptly.

EXPLANATION OF DEGREES AND REQUIREMENTS

(these are the degree requirements, and specific courses and curricular pathway, please see page XX)

SVMA offers the following degrees:

- Master of Art in Art (MA) with a concentration in (Studio) Art
- Master of Fine Art (MFA) in (Studio) Art
- Master of Fine Art MFA in (Media) Art

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

The MFA is a graduate level degree that allows but does not require a media specific area of concentration. A minimum of 60 graduate credits is required with 40 credits taken in Studio, Research and Practicum courses and thesis projects. Graduate degrees from the University are required to include at least one-half from 500+ level courses. This degree is for Studio Art and Media Art.

The Master of Art (MA) – with a concentration in Studio Art

The MA in Studio Art is a graduate level degree that allows in-depth exploration of studio mediums and Art History and Criticism topics. A minimum of 30 graduate semester credits beyond the BA is required, with 20 credits from studio classes and thesis credits.

Degree Requirements

Master of Fine Art (MFA) - Studio

10 – 12 credits	Graduate Critique Seminar
6 credits	Critical Theory in Visual Art 1 & 2
24 – 26 credits	Independent Graduate Research
3 – 9 credits	Open Elective, Art History or Internship, 400 – 600 level
7 credits	Professional Course: Pedagogy, Beyond Art School, Pre-Candidacy
3 credits (v)	Thesis Paper, Thesis Exhibition (variable credit)

Master of Fine Art (MFA) - Media Arts

18 credits	Individual Research and Practice (Studio)
6 credits	Core Research
6 credits	Professional Development
12-18 credits	Media Practicum and Skill/Technique Courses
12-24 credits	Final Portfolio (Thesis)
60 credits	Total Hours

Master of Arts (MA) of Art - concentration in Studio Art

6 credits	Graduate Critique Seminar
6 credits	Critical Theory in Visual Art 1 & 2
12 credits	Independent Graduate Research
3 credits (v)	Thesis Paper, Thesis Exhibition (variable credit)

Please note: A student may take internship credits in lieu of ARTZ 505 Independent Graduate Research Credits. This could include an internship with the Montana Museum of Art and Culture, the Missoula Art Museum, the Tippet Rise Art Center, or Blackfoot Pathways: Sculpture in the Wild.

Media Arts students find internship and job possibilities during their time in the program in film industry jobs as well as in teaching and support positions at film festivals in the area and the local community movie theatre, The Roxy. Game design students work with faculty to find connections with the industry to facilitate individual opportunities for internship and work after degree completion.

GRADING POLICY

All graduate students must maintain a "B" average in courses taken for graduate credit at the University of Montana; no grade below "C" will be accepted toward any degree requirement. If a student earns a "C" they are automatically placed on academic probation. If the cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0, the program or the Graduate School may place limits on the time allowed for the student to remedy the academic problem. Pass grades are not included in grade point calculations but may apply toward degree requirements when earned in courses offered only on a Pass/Not Pass basis.

Graduate students may retake up to 6 semester credits, with approval of the director. Only "N" (Continuation), "NCR" (no credit received) and "CR" (credit) grades are awarded for research or thesis work. The grades of "CR" and "NCR" are not defined in terms of their relationship to traditional grades for graduate courses, but rather if the student completed the required work or not. Grades of I (Incomplete) not removed within one year revert to the alternate grade, usually "F", or a grade assigned by the instructor when the incomplete is submitted. The process for challenging courses provided in the UM General Catalog is not applicable for graduate credit. For more information about grading, please visit the Graduate School website.

Remember that:

- The instructor sets the conditions for the completion of the course work and notes these conditions on the final grade report.
- When a student has met the conditions for making up the incomplete, the instructor will assign a grade based upon an evaluation of the total work done by the student in the course.
- An incomplete which is not made up within one calendar year will automatically revert to the alternate grade which was assigned by the instructor at the time the incomplete was submitted.
- An incomplete remains on the permanent record and is accompanied by the final grade, for example, IA, IB, IC, etc.
- Please note, the grades for some specific classes are credit (C) or no credit (NC), not letter grades. These classes are: ARTZ 699 Thesis Exhibition, ARTZ 504 Pre- Candidacy. MART 699 Final Portfolio II is also C or NC as it is the final course representing the student's thesis portfolio.

GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS AND REQUIREMENTS

Nine credits per semester are considered full time. Full time graduate status is granted to students working toward an advanced degree and whose applications present clear promise of satisfactory graduate work, with reference to the amount and level of performance in prior academic preparation, possession of a bachelor's degree (BFA or equivalent credits to enter the MFA program) from an accredited institution, and satisfactory letters of recommendation. Graduate students in degree programs must register for credits each autumn and spring semester. Credits at the 400 level must have UG designation and are limited to six credits at the 400 level. No 300 level courses can be put towards a graduate degree.

Time Limits

All degree requirements for the master's degree in SVMA including the use of transfer and non-degree credits, must be completed within five years. Courses that fall outside this time limit must be recertified for currency of knowledge by the SVMA Director. Students are not given a studio space or office facilities after three years. Committee members are not required to review written thesis when they are not on contract. Please review the policy of time limits on the graduate school website.

Transfer Credits

It is uncommon for SVMA to accept transfer credits to be used towards a MA or MFA degree. Graduate-level classes from NASAD-approved schools may be considered. The student must meet with the Graduate Advisor and then the Director in all cases. Often a syllabus of possible transfer courses is required. If the Director supports these transfer credits, this request will be sent to the Graduate School for further approval. Courses with a grade of "C" or lower are not transferable. In all cases, a minimum of one academic year in residence on campus is currently required. No more than one full summer session may be applied toward this requirement.

THESIS ACTIVITIES

Pre-candidacy (PC) or Second Year Review

The Pre-candidacy Review takes place in the third semester for studio art students. Media Arts students do not have a PC review; however, they have process presentations at the end of semester 2 and 4 to insure that they are tracking well towards their final year's Final Portfolio. Student's working on a MA will have their PC review at the end of the second semester. The SVMA Director assigns the PC review date to the graduate student the semester before.

Before the PC Review, student should review the rubric to better prepare for their review. In effort to help student prepare the rubric has been developed and is included in the appendix. This rubric is used to evaluate three aspects of the candidate's research: the content of their presentation, their response to questions, and their work.

Passage of the PC Review allows the students to move toward their thesis research. Studio Art Graduate Students are required to mount a small exhibition of their work in either the Student Gallery in the Fine Art Building, in the Off-Center Gallery in the Art Annex, in the UC Art Gallery, or with permission of the Director, a reasonable alternative. Instead of an exhibition, the Media Arts students present their thesis portfolio presentation.

Students give a 20–25-minute formal presentation explaining how their proposed thesis work is developing. They present a clear sense of their project or body of work and plans for their final thesis. Faculty and the public are invited to this presentation and non-presenting graduate students are also strongly encouraged to attend. After a 20–25-minute question and answer period all public and students are asked to leave, and the faculty privately discuss the student's success. At the time the faculty vote pass / no pass, and there is a 24-hour waiting period for additional consideration. The students meet with the Director of SVMA the following day and informs the students of their progress. If a student does not pass their Pre-Candidacy they can reapply the following semester. If a student does not pass their PC a second time, it will be recommended to the graduate school that the student be asked to leave the program. On some occasions, if a student fails their PC a second time, they could be considered for the MA degree. Studio Art Students meet with the Director of the Gallery of Visual Art the beginning of the following semester.

Thesis Committee

The student will form a Thesis Committee in consultation with their academic advisor the same semester of their Mid Semester Review. The committee is composed of a minimum of three faculty members. Two of these committee members are from SVMA and the third must be from outside of SVMA – this is a Guest Thesis Committee Member. This committee member is selected from the UM campus tenure and tenure track

faculty. The student should meet one on one with the outside SVMA committee member and review their thesis work and the MFA Thesis Committee guidelines.

If a committee member from outside of the UM faculty is desired, please formally discuss this with the Director of SVMA. A "qualified" graduate committee member is one satisfying the following standards: They must have a degree which is at least at the level of the degree to be awarded. Programs may petition for exemption to this policy on the grounds that a prospective member possesses specialized experience and expertise relevant to the student's thesis, professional paper, or dissertation. Please see the Graduate School policy and petition form.

It is strongly recommended that at least one of the committee members be from the student's specific area of study. Other advisement or interactions with people outside of the University can be valuable as well, and those advisors are welcome to join in official thesis committee meetings but are not voting members of the committee.

This committee needs to be in place by the end of the fourth semester of the student's enrollment in the program. It is also recommended that the student select one of the committee members, usually the chair, to meet with on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The graduate student is responsible for setting up all committee meetings.

Formal Thesis Committee Meetings

Full thesis committees meeting occurs during the fourth, fifth and sixth semesters. The students schedule the meetings at least three weeks ahead. All members of the committee are present. Please see appendix for the expectations of these meetings and the thesis year process. Please see Appendix for the expectations of the thesis committee meetings.

	Studio Art	Media Arts
Third Semester	Mid-Degree Review Thesis Committee Formed	
Fourth Semester	Thesis Committee Meeting (1): Meet with Director of the GVA Students meet with Committee Chair bi/weekly	Thesis Committee Formed Thesis Portfolio Presentation Process and Timeline: Meeting One
Fifth Semester	Thesis Committee Meeting (2): Meet with Director of the GVA Students meet with Committee Chair bi/weekly	Thesis Process Meeting: Meeting Two Written Thesis (if applicable) Proposal due to Committee Students meet with Committee Chair weekly or bi-weekly
Sixth Semester	Thesis Committee Meeting(3): Meet with Director of the GVA Meeting with Committee Chair as needed Thesis Exhibition,Written Thesis Thesis Oral Exam(4)	Students meet with Committee Chair bi/weekly Thesis Portfolio Presented: Meeting Three Portfolio Presentation and Final Committee Meeting

***Please find additional information about Formal Thesis Committee meetings, Thesis Exhibition, Final*

POST-THIRD YEAR GRADUATION POLICY

After completing the third year of coursework, a student must maintain matriculation until graduation. If the thesis portfolio is not completed and reviewed within the four semesters of maintenance of matriculation, the MFA candidate may be required to reapply to the program. For students to complete their degree the Graduate School requires that all semesters from the date of entry into the program through the graduation semester be noted on the student's records as being enrolled for credit.

GRADUATION

Students must apply for graduation one semester BEFORE their graduation date. For the specific dates and paperwork requirements, please visit the Graduate School web page under Timeline Navigation: Graduation <https://www.umt.edu/grad/student-journey/current-students/completing-degree/deadlines/>. It could be helpful to meet with the graduate advisor for help with the application. The deadline for graduation is a hard deadline – don't miss it!

CURRICULAR PATHWAY

MFA STUDIO ART

Establishing residency in Montana?

Year 1 – 6 credits ARTH 503 Critical Theories in Visual Art I 3 cr. ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 1 cr.	Year 1 – 6 credits ARTH 509- Critical Theories in Visual Arts II 3 cr. ARTZ 506- Pedagogy 3 cr.
Year 2 – 12 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 504- Pre-Candidacy 1 cr. ARTZ 400 or 500- Level Open Elective 3 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 6 cr.	Year 2 – 12 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 7 cr. ARTH 400- Level Art History 3 cr.
Year 3 – 12 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 8 cr. ARTZ 507- Beyond Art School 2 cr.	Year 3 – 12 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 2 cr. ARTZ 697- Thesis Paper 2 cr. ARTZ 699- Thesis Exhibition 3 cr.

Not establishing residency in Montana?

Year 1 – 10 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTH 503- Critical Theories in Visual Art I 3 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 2 cr. ARTZ 400/500-Level Open Elective 3 cr.	Year 1 – 10 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTH 509- Critical Theories in Visual Art II 3 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 2 cr. ARTZ 506- Pedagogy 3 cr.
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Year 2 – 9 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 504- Pre-Candidacy 1 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 6 cr.	Year 2 – 11 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 6 cr. ARTH 400- Level Art History or Elective 3 cr.
Year 3 – 10 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 6 cr. ARTZ 507- Beyond Art School 2 cr.	Year 3 – 10 credits ARTZ 501- Graduate Critique Seminar 2 cr. ARTZ 505- Independent Graduate Research 5 cr. ARTZ 697- Thesis Paper 1 cr. ARTZ 699- Thesis Exhibition 2 cr.

MFA MEDIA ARTS

Year 1 – 9 credits 510 Core: Creative Process and Story 3 cr. 508 Graduate Studio 3 cr. 577 Media Practicum 3 cr.	Year 1 – 9 credits ARTZ 506 Pedagogy 3 cr 578 Graduate Studio 3 cr. 577 Media Practicum 3cr.
Year 2 – 9 credits .500 Core: Practice-Led Research 3 cr 578 Graduate Studio 3 cr. 688 Practicum 3 cr.	Year 2 – 9 credits ARTZ 507- Beyond Art School 2 cr. 578 Graduate Studio 3 cr. 688 Practicum 3 cr.
Year 3 – 12 credits 687 Final Portfolio I 6-9 cr. 578 Graduate Studio 3 cr. Out of Program Elective 0-3 cr.	Year 3 – 12 credits 699 Final Portfolio II 6-9 cr. 578 Graduate Studio 3 cr Out of Program Elective 0-3 cr.

STUDIO ART GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ARTZ 501 Graduate Critique Seminar, G, 500 Level, 2 credits.

Weekly meeting to critique graduate student work. Offered fall and spring semesters. Graduate students take this class five-six times for a total of 10-12 credits.

ARTZ 506 Graduate Pedagogy, G, 500-level, 3 credits.

Lecture-style course discussing current pedagogical practices in college level art education. Includes development of a syllabus and teaching philosophy, as well as the more routine elements of teaching their first course at UM. This course will prepare graduate students for TA application and must be taken during their first semester of graduate study. Also includes a semester of course shadowing. This entails working closely with an assigned instructor from the beginning of the assigned course until finals. Should assist the assigned faculty member with all activities pertaining to curricular delivery.

ARTH 503 Critical Theories in Visual Arts I, G, 500-level, 3 credits.

Seminar on the history of art criticism as a particular type of discourse about art. Contemporary theories of Modernism including Formalism, Abstraction, Marxism, and Social Realism; and Postmodernism including

Deconstruction, Revisionism, and Feminism. Offered each Fall semester only, MFA required to take this course first semester of their first year.

ARTH 509 Critical Theories in Visual Arts II. G, 500-level, 3 credits.

Lecture-based Critical Theory course for graduates only, to be in sequence with the current Critical Theories in Visual Arts course, which will be the first in the paired sequence and have a name change to Critical Theories in Visual Arts I. Should take readings up where Critical Theories in Visual Art I leaves off and work towards application of these ideas through writing. Offered Spring Semester only. MFA requires this course in the second semester of the first year.

ARTZ 504 Pre-Candidacy, G, 500 level, 1 credit.

Course emphasizes one-on-one instruction with faculty from the student's area of concentration in preparation for the student's all-faculty review prior to thesis work. Offered Spring or Fall sem.

ARTZ 505 Independent Graduate Research, G, 500-level, 2-6 credits.

(R 24) Independent study graduate course focusing on personal research and/or studio development. Meeting times independently scheduled. Graduate students take this class four to six times for a total of twenty-one to twenty-six credits. All faculty teach this course over the course of a year, but not every faculty member is available each semester.

ARTZ 507 Beyond Art School, G, 500-level, 3 credits.

Lecture-Style course discussing the transition and progression from graduate study into the workforce. Should involve the preparation of a job application and all the materials therein, as well as the development of a post-institution art practice. This could include nurturing a web presence, prioritizing juried opportunities, and how to solicit or seek representation. An additional facet could delve into grant writing and/or a tour of regional residencies.

ARTZ 697 Thesis Paper, G, 600 level, 1 credit or variable credits.

Guided one-on-one instruction with the chair of the thesis committee working toward researching and writing the thesis paper. Offered Fall and Spring semesters.

ARTZ 699 Thesis Exhibition, G, 600 level, 2 credits or variable credits.

Investigation of the discipline of art history, its elements, boundaries, historiography, and practitioners. Offered Spring Semester or as needed.

Open Electives:

Graduate Students enroll in 3-6 Open Elective credits. Generally, students take these courses within the CVPA or the larger UM campus to help research their thesis. Only courses at a 400 level or above will count towards their degree. Not more than six credits at the 400 level can be put towards the degree requirements.

MEDIA ARTS GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

MART 510 Core Research: Creative Process and Story - 3 credits

Exploring linear and non-linear story theory, students engage theoretical reading and discussion, creating projects that engage in multiple processes and structures.

MART 578 - Graduate Studio (12-18 cr.)

(R-18) Offered every semester. Each semester students work on individual projects under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Each year begins and ends with a faculty and peer review of projects in progress.

MART 688 - Media Practicum 1-4 credits

(R-12) Offered every term. Pursuit of Practical Experience in Media Arts projects both personal and Professional.

MART 500 Core Research: Practice-Led Research in the Arts and Technology - 3 credits

While researching media history, theory, contemporary and media arts processes, students create projects addressing the possibilities of art and storytelling in the digital age. The emphasis is on exploring a wide range of approaches to art and meaning making in the 21st century.

ARTZ 506 Pedagogy 3 credits Students explore pedagogical models in arts education by researching and developing online and in-person teaching modules for courses that connect with their creative work.

Successful modules may be proposed as summer elective classes, where students can teach and further develop their work.

ARTZ 507 Beyond Art School 3 credits

Students prepare to move forward in their professional creative career as they develop artist statements, resumes, grant and proposal writing skills, and discuss making a life in the media arts. In addition to professional development, students will complete an academic paper and/or presentation of creative research suitable for conference submissions, visiting artist opportunities, portfolio reviews, and academic journals.

MART 687 - Final Portfolio I 1-12 cr.

Ongoing production and content work relating to thesis projects.

MART 699 - Final Portfolio II 1-12 cr.

Final work on thesis portfolio. Approval by the student's thesis committee is required for graduation.