

School of Art and Design University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Art Education Master of Arts (MA) Handbook

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1. The Program of Study

The MA program provides advanced level study for art educators. The program's objectives are to enable participants to:

- Become familiar with key debates and concepts in art education
- Develop the capacity to reflect on and to analyze their own practices in art education
- Gain a deeper insight of the role of art and visual culture in education and everyday life
- Develop a critical understanding of both theoretical and practical perspectives on art education and general education
- Develop the ability to contribute to informed development of policy and practice in arts education and general education
- Preparation for a variety of careers, such as museum education, community arts, arts advocacy, arts policy formation
- Professional development for art teachers and supervisors in the public schools
- Preparation for future studies at the doctoral level

The MA program provides students a flexible curriculum to meet these objectives. MA students take graduate courses that are offered by art education faculty and by faculty across the School of Art and Design and the university at large. Students can choose from graduate courses located online in the *Course Explorer*, which is located at <http://www.courses.illinois.edu/>

A. Course of study

Students seeking this degree take a minimum of 8 graduate level courses (500 level; and not more than two at 400 level) making up a total of 32 credit hours *and* complete a significant research paper to fulfill the thesis requirement. Completion of the degree takes at least three semesters, though some students take longer. Students must complete a minimum of 20 credit hours (usually 5 courses of 4 credit hours each) with art education program faculty. Remaining credit hours can be taken with additional art education courses, studio, art history, education, or any other graduate courses offered by the university that complement their studies or aspirations.

The art education courses offered by the program change from year to year and some are available online. Commonly, these may include:

ARTE 480 Popular Visual Culture

ARTE 501 Issues in Art Education: Arts-Based Research

ARTE 501 Issues in Art Education: Art and Cultural Theory

ARTE 501 Issues in Art Education: Writing for Publication

ARTE 502 Curriculum Development in Art

ARTE 505 Foundations of Art Education

ARTE 591 Independent Graduate Studies (4 credit hours)

ARTE 591F Independent Graduate Studies: Art Education Forum (1 credit hour)

ARTE 593 Survey: Qualitative Methodologies

ARTE 599 Thesis Research

Note that ARTE 501 is a shell course, that is, a number of different topics can be explored in different semesters under this number. It can be repeated for credit as long as it is a different topic. Students should be alert to what is being offered each semester under this number.

ARTE 591: Independent Graduate Studies. With the consent of the Art Education Graduate Coordinator and the student's academic advisor, students may count this course [only once] for credit toward their Master's Degree in Art Education.

ARTE 591F: Independent Graduate Studies Art Education Forum is for 1 credit hour for the Forum that takes place in the Fall semester. Registration in this course is a mandatory requirement and it is graded on the basis of attendance but does not count towards the required 32 hours of course credit.

ARTE 599: Thesis Research should be taken while the student is actively writing the thesis. It may be taken several times but can count only once for credit toward the degree.

2. Academic Advising

When you enter the program, you will be assigned an initial advisor. Your advisor will help you select courses until you choose a thesis advisor. The initial advisor is not intended to be your

academic advisor, unless you intentionally choose this person. When you have chosen the area of your thesis research, you should ask one of the Art Education faculty members to be your academic advisor. The role of the academic advisor is to help students choose their coursework in a way that supports their future research and professional aspirations and to advise on the writing of the thesis. Selection is based primarily on mutual research interests and is negotiated between the student and the faculty member. The Art Education Graduate Program Coordinator should be advised of this selection via the *Advisor Change Form*.

Later, a second faculty member should be asked to serve as a member of the Master's Thesis committee. Selection is based again primarily on mutual academic interests and is negotiated between the student and the faculty member. The thesis advisor and this additional faculty member together will constitute the Master's Examination Committee.

For a variety of reasons, usually a change in the direction of the student's research, a student may want to change academic advisors. In order to change advisors, your current advisor must be told and the paper form "Advisor Change Request Form" obtained from them. This must be signed and taken to the new advisor. This person must agree and also sign the form. There is no penalty for this, though it may slow down academic progress.

A. Preparing the Thesis

Because of the time taken to write a thesis, it is helpful to make a decision about the thesis topic as early as possible –within the first two semesters. This can be achieved by talking with individual faculty about their research interests, how they match the student's interests and background, and what specific topics would be suitable to pursue.

The thesis is at least 50-75 pages long (including references, content, and cover pages). It must have a clearly defined question and use clearly defined terms, have clearly identified parameters, be grounded in appropriate literature, and be fully and appropriately referenced. When finished, it must be deposited with the Graduate School. The Graduate School has requirements for format and style (see their website: www.grad.illinois.edu/) and the thesis must conform to them in all aspects. Students should be aware that some time will be needed to comply with these requirements. www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis

Institutional Review Board

No research involving human subjects can proceed without the approval of the Institutional Review Board. Consideration of a proposal takes at least a month, often longer, and sometimes it requires resubmission. On the website you will see links to forms and instructions, regulations, ethics, informed consent and vulnerable populations. The purpose of the review board is to ensure that the student's research is undertaken with full regard to contemporary ethical standards. <https://oprs.research.illinois.edu/irb-procedures-policies-processes>

Working with your Thesis Chair

The process of working with your Thesis Chair (remember, this is usually the same as your Academic Advisor, though it does not have to be) is as follows:

1. Meet with your Thesis Chair to negotiate your topic. Then write a two-page abstract, in APA format, that explains the following:

1. Purpose/significance of the research
2. The research question(s)
3. Identification of the literature to be consulted
4. The research method to be employed

This will form the basis for further discussion with your Thesis Chair.

2. Following such discussion, revise and expand the abstract into a draft of the introductory section of your thesis. Hand in this material along with a draft of the literature review.

3. Begin work on the later sections of your thesis as appropriate. These include sections on methodology, data, findings, conclusions, significance, and implications.

4. Revise sections of your thesis on the basis of feedback, and hand in your revisions in a timely manner.

5. In the early part of the semester in which you intend to deposit your thesis, go to the Graduate College website and download the check sheet and information deadlines for depositing with the Graduate College.

6. At least six weeks prior to your intended deposit deadline, submit a final copyedited draft of your completed thesis to both your Thesis Chair and Thesis Committee member, and make an individual appointment with your Chair and with your Thesis Committee member for feedback. Discuss your work with these two professors after they have read and evaluated your thesis.

7. Based on feedback from your Thesis Chair and your Thesis Committee member, revise and resubmit your thesis to them for final approvals.

8. Make an appointment with the Coordinator of Graduate Academic Affairs [Ellen de Waard] to review the format of your thesis. Email your thesis before this meeting.

9. Once approved by both your Thesis Chair and the Graduate College Specialist you will deposit the completed thesis online in the Graduate College. *Failure to deposit by the designated time will usually mean not being able to deposit until the next Graduate College designated time for doing so.

It is the student's responsibility to plan appropriately with University of Illinois rules, procedures and deadlines in mind. Students are expected to make and keep appointments on a regular basis

with their Thesis Chair, to submit high quality scholarly work for consideration by the Thesis Chair and Thesis Committee member, to coordinate this work in a time sensitive manner, and to comply with all APA and IRB regulations. Students may expect timely feedback from their Thesis Chairs, subject to the individual terms and expectations negotiated between the student and the Thesis Chair.

Do not expect members of the Thesis Committee to serve as copyeditors; all work submitted must adhere to the highest standards for professional scholarly writing. Over summers, during holidays, over fall and spring breaks, and just prior to and during the annual conference of the National Art Education Association, your Thesis Chair and Thesis Committee member may not be available for thesis work.

The Art Education Program requires that thesis manuscripts be written according to the requirements specified in the current edition of the American Psychological Association {APA} Publication Guidelines. There are also guidelines for preparation of the manuscript published in the UIUC Graduate College thesis advisory.

3. Teaching Assistantships

The School of Art and Design (“School”) offers highly competitive opportunities for teaching assistantships for those pursuing an MA degree in art education. Teaching assistants [TAs] are generally expected to teach courses in the School. Examples of courses that TAs teach include *Everyday Arts Lab* and *Introduction to Art*. In the *Everyday Arts Lab*, TAs supervise undergraduate art education student teachers in their early field experiences. For *Introduction to Art*, TAs introduce general education undergraduate students to art appreciation and art making. Respective art education faculty members supervise TAs based upon their teaching assignments.

TA appointments run from August 16 to December 31 and January 16 to May 15. Students must plan to be available during the academic year with the exception of officially designated University holidays. Teaching assistants are generally expected to work 10 hours per week, which is a “25%” appointment. These assistantships carry a modest salary in addition to a tuition and partial fee waiver. Assistantships will not extend beyond three semesters for the MA degree. If MA students are also seeking certification as a teacher, a maximum of two further semesters may be considered.

Decisions regarding funding for teaching assistantships are based upon students' qualifications and the needs of the School and art education program. Funding is subject to satisfactory academic progress and performance of TA responsibilities. Supervisors will evaluate the performance of teaching assistants working under their direction and will share their performance evaluations with the faculty of the Art Education Program. TAs will be notified of their teaching responsibilities preferably at least 60 days before the start of the appointment or one month before the end of the previous appointment.

Teaching assistants may use equipment and resources available in the TA office in the performance of their TA responsibilities. This includes preparation for teaching, assisting in program events and activities, grading work, preparing artwork for exhibition, meeting with undergraduate students, and other TA responsibilities. All users of this facility are expected to use the resources and the room in accordance with departmental policies. Teaching assistants (with authorization from the supervising faculty member) may obtain a key to the TA office and to other necessary rooms, from Chris Bonner, 142 Art + Design. jrbonner@illinois.edu

4. Annual Review

In accordance with Graduate School policy, the Program of Art Education conducts an annual review of all of its enrolled students. The review helps students by identifying and clarifying academic expectations, opportunities and deficiencies. It is based on a self-report that should serve the student as a guide to the program and as a continuing record of academic progress. Students are required to keep their own record continuing semester by semester through the Plan of Study.

The review requires students to complete the Plan of Study, sent to them at the beginning of their graduate studies. The form requests information about the student's academic accomplishments and the completion of specific program requirements.

The Program faculty, acting as an Annual Academic Progress Review Committee, meets in a timely way to review the information provided by students. They write a draft of an evaluation of each student's performance and suggest goals for the coming academic year. Students are given a copy of this draft and are offered to meet with their advisor to discuss it. They may then submit written comments/responses to the draft review if they wish. The Review Committee then finalizes its review and sends a copy to each student. The student's advisor retains a final copy.

5. Other Practical Notes

A. Academic Editing Services

It is common for graduate students, both native English and ESL speakers, to have their written work proofread and copy edited by a professional editor before submitting it to faculty. Working with a professional editor is highly recommended. Students should not expect faculty to act as copy editors.

In seeking an editor, begin by asking other students or faculty if they could recommend someone. If not, seek a qualified editor online by using the keywords *academic proofreading* or *academic editing*. Locate the biographical details about the editor's professional experience and qualifications. Normally, a qualified editor lists their basic vita. Avoid using services that do not specify who the editor(s) is. Next, see samples of their edited work. Some editors will give you a try out, meaning that you can email a 5-6-page paper for pre-evaluation. This is important if the intention is later to send a much longer paper.

Students should make sure they know how much they are paying and what they are paying for. Highly qualified editors work with university faculty and graduate students, both native English and ESL speakers. Naturally their fees are higher than regular editors. High-quality/low cost editing services exist but they require some searching online. Fees are based on different levels of editing. Some editors will pre-assess the level of editing required upon request. Students should make sure they understand how much will be spent before sending out a paper for editing.

PLAN AHEAD. Get in touch with an editor before sending out a paper. Schedule a couple of weeks ahead for large projects. Working with a qualified editor is much like seeing a doctor. During peak months – usually April and May, and November and December - their calendar can be backed up for weeks. Specify any requirements; for example, the paper needs to use the latest edition of the APA Guidelines. Describe weaknesses in the writing to the editor so that he or she pays particular attention to them. Since a professional editor is not an expert in the field, they will not intentionally revise or alter the content. They will give some critical comments whenever they fail to comprehend what meaning was intended. A good editor is an English mentor. **Upon receiving edited work, do a final proofreading. The meaning may have been unintentionally altered.

B. Additional Items from the Graduate College

Please see their website www.grad.illinois.edu for links to each item below:

GradLINKS (electronic newsletter)

GradLINKS is our weekly e-newsletter for graduate students. We update the recipient list after 10th day registration, meaning new graduate students will be added after 10th day. However, anyone can sign up for it at any time. Please subscribe at: <http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradlinks>.

Graduate Assistant Employee Orientation (for TAs, RAs, GAs, and PGAs)

Co-sponsored by Academic Human Resources and the Graduate College, this orientation provides information for teaching, research, pre-professional, and graduate assistants regarding appointments and benefits. See also: <http://humanresources.illinois.edu/employees/new-hires/orientations.html>. This information session is offered twice.

Getting Started Guide (pdf)

Tailored to graduate students, the Getting Started Guide includes information about several campus resources. It is available as a downloadable PDF. The Graduate College sends a link to the Guide to both prospective and newly admitted students, but it also contains useful information for students who are new to campus.

Grad School 101: How the Graduate College can Help You (video)

This short, 5-min. video provides an overview of Graduate College resources for graduate students.

"Need Help?" The Graduate College posts information on our web page for graduate students who may be coping with anxiety and stress or need assistance in some way.
<http://grad.illinois.edu/need-help>