Introduction
The Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Master of Fine Arts Handbook is a guide to the policies, procedures and requirements of the Department of Art + Design for the MFA degree program. For additional information or clarification, students should consult with the Graduate Coordinator or other Departmental Administrators.

Graduate Assistant Handbook

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Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

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Graduate Academic Advisor, College of Graduate Studies

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MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Program Description
The Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art is a comprehensive three-year program designed to guide students toward expertise in studio art practices, aesthetics, and scholarly inquiry while expanding proficiency in art history, criticism and theory. Students have additional opportunities to acquire experience in classroom instruction and pedagogy, and gallery practices.

The MFA is a distinguished terminal degree that prepares students to excel as professional practicing artists in a global context and for careers in higher education.

MFA Students will:

- Demonstrate breadth of knowledge pertaining to key critical and theoretical frameworks within their area(s) of concentration and research.
- Engage with and analyze their work within these frameworks.
- Apply knowledge in their concentration(s) of choice, media, and techniques to create a thesis project or exhibition exploring the contextual framework related to their research and creative scholarship.
- Demonstrate knowledge of theory, methodologies, and discursive vocabularies in a disciplinary or interdisciplinary context relative to their proposed thesis project.
- Articulate ways in which their scholarly inquiry, practice, and thesis project or exhibition and written thesis are a part of and contribute to the fields of contemporary Studio Art or Design during applicable critiques, public presentation, and oral defense.

Application Requirements
For application for admissions requirements or to apply for the MFA program, please see here.

Degree Requirements
Candidates must complete (60) semester hours in art with a minimum 3.0 GPA to be considered in good academic standing and assistantship eligible. No more than two grades of “C” earned at this university will be accepted as credit for this degree. A failed course may be repeated once.

MFA Studio Art Degree Requirements with a concentration in: Ceramics, Painting & Drawing, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture, or Interdisciplinary Art:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio Art</td>
<td>36 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History/ Theory &amp; Methods/Research Topics</td>
<td>12 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA Seminar</td>
<td>6 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA Project and Thesis</td>
<td>6 semester hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distribution of semester hour requirements is as follows:

**MFA Studio Art – (36) semester hours in an Area of Concentration**
- (18) semester hours of courses focused within one discipline
- (18) semester hours in Studio Art Electives
  - At least (9) semester hours are required in Studio Art Electives
  - Up to (9) additional semester hours can be in Area of Concentration
  - Enrollment in Graphic Design is subject to approval of the Graphic Design faculty. The candidate may be required to complete up to (9) hours of leveling coursework as a prerequisite to enrollment.
- Up to (6) semester hours can be completed in graduate level, creative-based courses beyond the Department of Art + Design in consultation with Graduate Coordinator.

**MFA Studio Art: Concentration in Interdisciplinary Art – (36) semester hours in Studio Art courses**
- Enrollment in Graphic Design is subject to the approval of the Graphic Design faculty. If deemed necessary, the faculty may require the candidate completes up to (9) hours of leveling coursework as a prerequisite to enrollment
- Up to (6) semester hours can be completed in graduate level creative-based courses beyond the Department of Art + Design in consultation with Graduate Coordinator.

**Art History/Theory & Methods/Research Topics – (12) semester hours**
- (3) semester hours in ARTS 5392: Art Theory & Methods
- (3) semester hours in ARTS 5393: Art History and Aesthetics
- (6) semester hours of research topics:
  - ARTS 5393: Graduate Art History and Aesthetics
  - ARTS 5394: Faculty-led Research. Enrolled in consultation with Graduate Coordinator
  - Graduate-level research-based course beyond the Department of Art + Design in consultation with Graduate Coordinator

**MFA Seminar – (6) semester hours**
- (3) semester hours in ARTS 5191: Professional Practices
  - (1) semester hour course taken each Fall covering professional and creative development and pedagogy.
- (3) semester hours in ARTS 5192: Graduate Critique Seminar
  - (1) semester hour course taken each Spring supporting preparation for the first-year review, second-year review, and Oral Defense.

**MFA Project and Thesis – (6) semester hours**
- ARTS 5398: MFA Project and Oral Defense
- ARTS 5395: MFA Thesis

Total: 60
**Program Sequence**

Full-time MFA candidates are required to enroll in (10) semester hours of credit during Fall and Spring semesters and follow the program sequence outlined below. The Graduate Coordinator assists in scheduling classes and tracks/updates individual student progress each semester.

MFA candidates are required to demonstrate outstanding progress in their creative research and must meet with Area of Concentration faculty, the Graduate Coordinator, or Thesis Committee at the end of each semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>FALL (10 hrs)</th>
<th>SPRING (10 hrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course</td>
<td>hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Area of Concentration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art Theory Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Practices Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Area of Concentration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art History or Research Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Practices Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Area of Concentration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio Elective or Area of Concentration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Practices Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MFA in Studio Art Program Requirements with a concentration in Graphic Design: Professional Practices or Academic Appointment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
<td>36 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Electives</td>
<td>6 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History/ Theory &amp; Methods</td>
<td>6 semester hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA Project and Thesis</td>
<td>12 semester hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of credit hour requirements is as follows:

**Graphic Design: (36) semester hours (Area of Concentration)**
- (30) semester hours in ARTS 5314: Graphic Design
- (6) semester hours in ARTS 5397: Graphic Design Graduate Teaching Assistant Practicum

**Art History/Theory & Methods: (6) semester hours**
- (6) semester hours in ARTS 5392: Art Theory & Methods and ARTS 5393: Art History and Criticism. *(These semester hours can both be in ARTS 5393: Art History and Criticism with varying topics).*

**MFA Project and Thesis: (12) semester hours**
- (6) semester hours ARTS 5398: MFA Project
- (6) semester hours ARTS 5395: MFA Thesis

Total: 60

**First-Year Review and Second-Year Review**
The Department of Art + Design faculty review a candidate’s work following completion of (20) semester hours (first year of graduate study) and following completion of (40) semester hours (second year of graduate study) before permitting advancement and toward completion of an MFA Project and MFA Thesis.

- **20 Credit Hour Review**: Candidates must present their work in a professional manner before the entire Department of Art + Design faculty, accompanied by a research statement. Upon conclusion, the faculty confer privately to determine if the candidate passed or failed.
  - If the candidate fails the review, they must re-present their work at the conclusion of the following term. A second failure results in dismissal from the program.

- **40 Credit Hour Review**: Candidates must present their work in a professional manner before the entire Department of Art + Design faculty, accompanied by a research statement. Upon conclusion, the faculty confer privately to determine if the candidate passes onto their MFA Project.
  - Upon passing, candidates will complete a Masters Thesis Advisory Committee Appointment Form (Form A).
If a change is deemed necessary, a Thesis Committee Member Change Request Form (Form D) may be submitted.

The candidate must submit an MFA Exhibition Proposal Form one semester prior to the projected exhibition.

If the candidate fails the review, they must re-present at the beginning of the following term. A second failure results in dismissal from the program.

Exit Requirements

For all MFA Candidates with a concentration in Studio Art i.e. Ceramics, Painting & Drawing, Photography, Printmaking, and Interdisciplinary Arts:

Each MFA Candidate must create and present a professional MFA Project at the conclusion of (60) credit hours, including:

- A Solo Exhibition
- An Artist Statement
- A Written Paper: 5000-7500 words in length – exclusive of apparatus – supporting the MFA exhibition by discussing the work and its place within theoretical, historical and contemporary contexts. Papers must discuss techniques used, subject matter/content and include a bibliography. The paper must be formatted according to The Chicago Manual of Style. It must be completed prior to the Oral Defense. Failure to do so will warrant a grade of “Incomplete.” Candidates have until the end of the following term to complete the paper. The paper must be uploaded to ProQuest (5) business days prior to graduation.

- A Comprehensive Oral Defense: Administered by the Thesis Committee, it must be performed over the course of the exhibition. Candidates must complete a Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis Defense (Form B) five days prior. The candidate will answer a series of questions based on the exhibition and written paper. Upon conclusion, the committee will confer privately as to whether the candidate passed or failed. A failing defense may be repeated once. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program.

- Only upon passing all above listed Exit Requirement criteria will the committee sign the Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report (Form C). It must be submitted to the College of Graduate studies the Friday prior to graduation.

- Graduating MFA candidates must submit a bound copy of the written paper to the Graduate Coordinator including a thumb drive containing photographic documentation of individual works and the installation of the Solo Exhibition.
For all Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art Candidates with an emphasis in Graphic Design:

Each candidate must create and present a professional MFA Project at the conclusion of (60) credit hours, including:

• **A Written Paper:** 15-20-pages in length serving as the foundational context for the candidate’s multi-media campaign developed for their client of choice. It will discuss applicable research supporting their proposed design solutions, consider the client’s market and category competitive analyses, review target audience behaviors and demographics and defend technical and conceptual methodologies of the proposed campaign touchpoints. It must be completed prior to the Project Defense. Failure to do so will warrant a grade of “Incomplete.” Candidates have until the end of the following term to complete the paper. The paper must be uploaded to ProQuest (5) business days prior to graduation.

• A Multi-media Campaign Project for a client of choice to be professionally presented, as either a bound printed deck or digital website.

• **Project Defense:** A comprehensive oral defense of the candidate’s final project and paper is administered by the Graduate Faculty before the degree may be conferred. Candidates must complete a Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis Defense (Form B) five days prior. They will answer a series of questions based on the campaign project and written paper. Upon conclusion, the committee will confer privately as to whether the candidate passed or failed. A failing defense may be repeated once. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program.

• Only upon passing all above listed Exit Requirement criteria will the committee sign the Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report (Form C). It must be submitted to the College of Graduate studies the Friday prior to graduation.

For all Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art Candidates with an emphasis in Graphic Design pursuing careers in higher education:

• **Additional Capstone Requirements:** Under the department’s MFA Portfolio and Professional Practices Course, the candidate will tailor their self-promotional collateral for application to positions in higher education and include a Teaching Philosophy, Statement of Research, and Student Work samples.

**Exit Requirement Forms**

- MFA Thesis Forms
- Thesis Formatting Guidelines
- Thesis Submission Guidelines
Graduate Assistantships and Teaching

Graduate Assistant Handbook

MFA candidates receiving assistantships are assigned (20) documented hours per week of Assistantship Duties. Students may not involuntarily work more than (20) hours per week.

First-year MFA Assistantship Duties:

- MFA candidates are required to assist a faculty member for two semesters before becoming a Graduate Teaching Assistant of Record. (6) contact hours per semester.
- Other first-year assistantship duties include Building Monitor hours and may include assisting full-time faculty with research or studio duties, or a Gallery Assistant.
- The Graduate Gallery Assistant is selected through a formal interview process with the Galleries Director and Galleries Manager. Gallery Assistants are not to exceed (20) hours of work per week.

Graduate Teaching Assistants (of Record) account for (15) weekly hours. GTA’s are required to work (5) additional documented hours per week to fulfill assistantship requirements.

MFA candidates must be present and available in Corpus Christi by the faculty start date of each semester through the end of finals week. See Academic Calendar

Graduate Scholarships
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi offers a number of Academic Scholarships based on achievement, educational objectives, evidence of leadership and service.

Out-of-State Tuition Waivers
For non-Texas residents, a Request for In-State Tuition form must be completed each semester.

Graduate Studios
Graduate Studios are available for full-time MFA candidates and are currently divided among two buildings. A Graduate Studio Contract form must be completed before spaces and keys are assigned.

- Center for Arts: A select area is currently available for graduate students in ceramics.
- Classroom West (CESS): dedicated private and shared spaces are located on the first and second floors.

Galleries
The University Galleries provide an important pedagogical component of the fine arts curriculum at TAMUCC. They include the Weil Gallery located on campus in the Center for Arts and an upcoming location in Downtown Corpus Christi. These spaces are used for the exhibition of work by TAMUCC graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and select visiting artists. Exhibitions serve the immediate TAMUCC campus as well as the greater Corpus Christi community and beyond.
Visiting Artists
Attendance at scheduled public lectures and exhibitions with visiting artists is required for all MFA Candidates. Studio visits with participating artists will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis.

Safety
This document is a general summary and cannot be viewed as a complete safety guide to the Center for the Arts.

It is critical that all activities including proper use of tools and materials in the Center for Arts and CESS be performed safely. Graduate students must know how to safely use a tool or material before use. Questions about safety should be directed to the supervisor(s) of the studios to which they belong or the Building Supervisor.

In addition, graduate students must set a responsible example for undergraduate students to follow. All Graduate Instructors are required to provide students with a tour of studio procedures and safety on the first day of class, followed by Safety Training in Blackboard

The campus emergency number is 4444 from any campus phone, otherwise dial 361-825-4444. The Safety Office number is 5555.

Specific Rules
- Hazardous materials must be accompanied by approval of the studio area faculty or Center for Arts Building Supervisor.
- Hazardous materials must be accompanied by a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and stored in each area of concentration. A copy must be given to the Center for Arts Building Supervisor.
- Flammable liquids, strong acids and bases, and other chemically reactive or hazardous materials cannot be stored in student lockers.
- Sweeping in ceramics and sculpture creates airborne hazards. Whenever possible, graduate students must use wet-cleanup techniques to minimize these hazards.
- Graduate students needing access to materials and tools in areas beyond their concentration must first confer with area faculty.
- The woodshop is utilized by all areas of the department. Students are required to implement safe practices and thoroughly clean after use.
- Undergraduate students are not granted after-hours privileges unless accompanied by a full-time faculty member.
- Improper and unsafe use of materials and tools, especially willful, may result in removal of access to materials, tools and space. Serious violations may result in removal from the program. Appeals to these decisions must be made through the Dean of Students and the Campus Safety Officer.

Campus Health Resources
Student Health Services  Counselling Services
Advisement
Advisement of MFA Candidates occurs on several levels. The most important advisor is the Graduate Coordinator who assists the College of Graduate Studies in matters of specific program administration, resolving scheduling conflicts and other program related issues. Faculty in your area of concentration provide information regarding career opportunities as well as topics relevant to the Area of Concentration. Additional advisors include: The Department Chair, the Administrative Associate and Building Manager.

Transfer of Credit
In addition to the University’s general policy on transfer of credit, the following regulations apply to the MFA in Studio Art. Subject to the recommendation of the graduate faculty and a portfolio review, Candidates may have up to (15) semester hours of graduate credit (not including Exhibition or Thesis Project) applied to the Master of Fine Arts program. No grades less than a “B” and no courses earned toward another completed graduate degree will be accepted as transfer credit. Credit more than seven years old will not be counted toward the MFA degree.

Continuous Enrollment
The University does not have a continuous enrollment policy for MFA students. Students not attending for two years are required to reapply to the University. Students should consider applying for a leave of absence (see below), especially if the time-to-degree and recency of credits requirements will be impacted by a needed absence.

Leave of Absence
Students experiencing life changing or catastrophic events should consult with their graduate coordinator and/or department chair and request a Leave of Absence in writing from the College of Graduate Studies using the Request for Leave of Absence form. A student who is in good standing may petition for a leave of absence of no more than two full academic terms. The maximum number of leave of absence requests permitted in a program is two. A request for a leave of absence requires approval in advance by the faculty advisor, Graduate Coordinator, College Dean, and Graduate Dean. If the Graduate Dean approves the petition, the registration requirement is set aside during the period of time of the leave. Students should be aware that leaves of absences require suspension of all activities associated pursuit of the degree. See the catalog for more information.

Time Limit to Degree
A Master of Fine Arts degree at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must be completed within (7) years subsequent to admission to the program. The seven-year period begins the first semester of enrollment and is calculated from the date of degree conferral. Credit that is more than seven years old will not be counted toward the degree. Exceptions require strong written justification from the student as well as submission of a revalidation plan. Credits earned at another university are not eligible for an exception. Written approval from the Department Chair, the CLA Dean, the Graduate Dean, and the Provost are required. In order to revalidate dated courses, students should see Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements section of the catalog. Revalidation requests should be made using the Revalidation Request Form.
Graduation Deadlines

Attendance at graduation ceremonies by terminal degree candidates is recommended as it increases the stature of the Department of Art + Design within the University. Students must submit an application for graduation through their S.A.I.L. account by the posted deadline. Deadlines and pricing are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Fees are non-refundable.

Commencement

Dates, times and location of the commencement ceremonies

Regalia – Graduates must wear official regalia to the commencement ceremony. These items can be rented or purchased at the Campus Store.

- Diplomas are made available once an audit has confirmed completion of all requirements. This process may take several weeks following graduation. Once complete, diplomas may be picked-up in person or are mailed by the Registrar’s Office. For more information, contact 361-825-2624 and press option 2 to be connected.

Additional Information

Information, policies, and procedures about tuition, fees, financial assistance, scholarships, and other topics important to graduate students can be found in the catalog. In addition to the catalog, web pages for offices and services on campus provide expanded information, forms, and contact names/phone numbers. Some of those webpages include the following:

- College of Graduate Studies
- Office of Student Financial Assistance
- Office of International Education
- GROW
FACULTY

**Meg Aubrey**, Associate Professor, Foundations Coordinator  
BFA, Rhode Island School of Design; MFA, Savannah College of Art and Design.

**Ivanete Blanco**, Associate Professor, Department Chair  
BFA Oklahoma State University; MFA University of Oklahoma

**Andrea Canchola**, Assistant Professor  
BA, University of Texas-Austin; MFA, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

**Joshua Duttweiler**, Assistant Professor  
BFA, Houghton College; MFA, Boston University

**Jennifer Garza-Cuen**, Associate Professor  
BA, University of Cairo; MA, MFA, Rhode Island School of Design.

**Andrea Hempstead**, Associate Professor  
BS, North Carolina State University; MBA, Le Moyne College; MFA, Marywood University.

**David Hill**, Professional Assistant Professor, Galleries Manager  
BFA, University of South Alabama; MFA, University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

**Nancy Miller**, Associate Professor  
BFA, Texas Christian University; MFA, Full Sail University.

**Ryan O’Malley**, Professor  
BFA, University of South Dakota; MFA, Louisiana State University.

**Joe Peña**, Associate Professor  
BFA, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; MFA, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

**Greg Reuter**, Professor Emeritus  
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**Carey Rote**, Ph.D, Professor  
BA, Texas Christian University; MA, Tulane University; Ph.D., University of Texas-Austin.

**David Shields**, Associate Professor  
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**Leandra Urrutia**, Assistant Professor  
BFA, Texas State University, MFA University of Mississippi