Art History, M.A.

Degree Offered

• Master of Arts

Nature of the Program

The Master of Arts in art history degree is a two-year program that provides a solid foundation in historical and theoretical study of art history. The program emphasizes independent exploration and interdisciplinary research with supportive individualized mentoring from the faculty.

Art history studies the traditions and techniques of the visual arts. It is an interdisciplinary field, drawing upon philosophy, history, literature, religious, studies, and many other fields to examine works of art and their contexts. The history of art and architecture provides means to penetrate cultural constructions and their aesthetic and artistic productions. To assist the student in developing skills needed to analyze and understand the object, the program includes requirements in academic coursework and research.

One of the hallmarks of WVU’s Art History program is its emphasis on studying the materials of art, architecture, and artifacts. In addition to considering the importance of materiality in art history courses, MA students can take courses in Technical Art History and the studio arts as cognates. The School of Art and Design’s affiliation with San Gemini Preservation Studies in Italy also offers students the opportunity to learn through hands-on conservation and historical reconstruction techniques.

The collection of the Art Museum of West Virginia University provides both first-hand experience with works of significant aesthetic and cultural value and introduces students to curatorial and museum practice. The Mesaros Galleries in the Creative Arts Center and the Visiting Artist and Scholar program form a crucial link in the course of study, presenting installation and curatorial opportunities. Through the School of Art and Design’s association with regional institutions, museum and gallery internships are encouraged.

Degree Requirements

Students must matriculate having attained reading proficiency in a language other than English through course credit or to be demonstrated by passing a proficiency exam. If incoming students have not yet acquired reading proficiency in a second language, they should plan to obtain it before completing the MA degree.

The MA degree consists of 30 total credit hours and culminates in a written master’s thesis, which may take a variety of forms within the context of art’s historical and critical practices. The thesis consists of an original work of research that demonstrates critical knowledge of relevant sources, skill in analysis and interpretation, and the ability to present the results in a well-organized and intelligent manner. The thesis must be defended in an oral examination.

Admissions

Applicants for admission to the master’s program are expected to demonstrate competence in the history of art, equivalent to an undergraduate major, demonstrated through coursework and a sample research paper. The B.A. degree in an area of substantial humanistic research plus a foreign language may also be considered appropriate preparation. It is recommended that the applicant have reading competence of at least one language other than English (four-semester equivalent).

Major Code: 2504

Degree Requirements

Art History

Selected from the following:

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Major Learning Outcomes

ART HISTORY

• Demonstrate a broad general knowledge of the history of art, as well as specialization in a more limited area.
• Knowledge of historiography and methods of scholarship and be capable of undertaking independent research.
• Demonstrate knowledge of at least one foreign language.

ART HISTORY COURSES

ARHS 501. Independent Study. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Independent research, closely supervised, on topics of student's selection. Proposal must be well-defined and contain historical, critical, and theoretical issues. Contractual course.

ARHS 504. Asian Art. 3 Hours.

ARHS 507. Native American. 3 Hours.
Advance investigation of the visual material culture of the First Peoples of North American north of the Rio Grande, pre-contract to present. Focus on formal analysis with careful contextual studies.

ARHS 510. Intro Curatorial Practice. 3 Hours.
PR: ARHS 120 and ARHS 160. Specifically the role of the curator. The objective is to assess exhibition display and develop a critical perspective on curatorial practice.

ARHS 520. Greek and Roman. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. The architecture, sculpture, and paintings of the Aegean world, c.2000 BCE, Greece and Rome to 400 CE. Critical and historical context of this time period will be considered.

ARHS 531. Medieval. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. The arts of Europe from c. 312 to c. 1350. The theoretical, historical, and literary contexts will be established. Architecture, sculpture, painting, and portable arts will be included.

ARHS 533. Medieval Architecture. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation into the architecture of western Europe and its builders, from 313 through the sixteenth century: monumental buildings, architectural ornament, and the fusion of sacred and secular, in context of medieval world views.

ARHS 538. History of Stained Glass. 3 Hours.

ARHS 541. Art of the Review. 3 Hours.
PR: Grade of C- or higher in ARHS 120 and ARHS 160, Junior or Senior standing, or graduate status. This advanced readings and discussion-based seminar is designed to introduce students to the role of art criticism in the arts professions and to develop skill with writing for the unique format of the short exhibition review.

ARHS 544. Art Theory. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Examination of the development and tradition of the literature of Western art theory and its relationship to artistic practice.
ARHS 545. Modern Art Theory. 1-12 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit.) PR: Consent. Studies in art education and related areas. The development of a master's degree project in conjunction with a faculty committee.

ARHS 546. Medieval Painting. 3 Hours.

ARHS 547. Romantic Painting. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation into artistic movements and the underlying cultural and intellectual factors that inspire painters to use imagination and appeal to the emotions, reflecting the complexity of both the world and the self.

ARHS 548. Women in Art. 3 Hours.
Graduate-level study and research on the art of female artist and of women as subjects in art. There will be an historical view along with a strong theoretical component.

ARHS 550. Northern Renaissance. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. The arts of Northern Europe from 1350 to 1560 will be studied in an historical and theoretical context. Painting and sculpture will be the focus of study.

ARHS 554. Italian Renaissance. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Early Renaissance through Mannerism. The course will emphasize both the historical context and theoretical foundation of 15th- and 16th-century Italian art and architecture.

ARHS 560. Baroque. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Art of the late 16th through the early 18th centuries, of both Northern and Southern Europe. Issues of historical context and theoretical interpretation will be emphasized.

ARHS 570. American. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. The arts in the United States from the Colonial to the Modern era placed upon factors which define American art and the critical foundations for the works.

ARHS 575. Nineteenth Century. 3 Hours.
PR: ARHS 120 and ARHS 160. The course focuses upon European and American art from the late 18th century through 1900. Issues of theory, historical context, and literary foundation will be considered.

ARHS 580. Modern. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. The revolutionary experience of visual art, from its foundation in 19th century European movements through the modern era. Critical theory and historical context will be stressed.

ARHS 581. Modern Architecture. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation of architecture from the industrial revolution to the present. Theoretical consideration of style, form, technique, material, and meaning in the architecture of the modern and contemporary periods.

ARHS 582. GPS-Architect Frank Lloyd Wright. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation of the life and work of America's most noted and controversial architect. Close examination of his work in the context of the development of modern architecture.

ARHS 585. Print, Propaganda and Art. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation of the history and theoretical implications of printing, printmaking, and other forms of imaging in the western world from the earliest printed materials to present.

ARHS 588. The Art of Andy Warhol. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation of the ground-breaking and controversial art of Andy Warhol. Examination of his work in the context of 1960's Pop Art movement and recent contemporary art.

ARHS 589. Contemporary. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Exploration of the various artistic movements from World War II to the present. Emphasis will be given to the change from modern to postmodern. Familiarity with images and critical texts will be expected.

ARHS 591. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation in advanced topics that are not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ARHS 592. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

ARHS 593. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ARHS 594. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ARHS 595. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.
ARHS 601. Thesis. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Topic selected by student in consultation with art history faculty. Research must indicate familiarity with primary and secondary sources and regard for evidence of art historical research, methodology, and criticism.

ARHS 602. History of Chinese Ceramics. 3 Hours.
Advanced investigation of pre-history to present with emphasis on historical development of ceramics and culture of important dynasties in Jingdezhen, China. Students will visit historical archaeological sites, traditional production centers, and museums.

ARHS 605. Chinese Language and Cultural History. 3 Hours.
Covers basic cultural and written Chinese, an introduction to China's many cultures and customs, and a brief history of China. Field trips offer experiential learning at sites discussed in class.

ARHS 691. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation in advanced topics that are not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ARHS 692. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

ARHS 693. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ARHS 694. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ARHS 695. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty-supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

ARHS 696. Graduate Seminar. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

ARHS 697. Research. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.)

ARHS 698. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision is needed during the writing of student reports (698), theses (698), or dissertations (798). (Grading is Normal.)

ARHS 699. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use the University’s facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium, to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is Normal; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

ART COURSES

ART 502. Game Design. 3 Hours.
PR: First year graduate standing. Introduces the multiple components of a game environment and how to create meaningful interactive experiences on and off the computer. Focuses on core game design tasks in the professional practice of conceptualizing and prototyping board games and digital media-based games, including analytical and practical skills such as pitching, iteration, target audience identification, and planning for quality assurance.

ART 503. Game Theory. 3 Hours.
Critical theory and scholarship that addresses the idea of games as a form of designed human culture contained in complex aesthetic, immersive, and experiential artifacts. Addresses visual storytelling, temporal/spatial montage theory, and frameworks to understand player experience. Provides an overview of research methods and multi-disciplinary analytical paradigms for the study of games. Integrates the history of online and offline games.

ART 505. Game Production. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 503. The technical creation of digital games, coding, game programming, and audio production for the game production pipeline. Hands-on development experience that transfers theoretical knowledge into the procedures and design decisions needed to production a functional game. Multiple game engines are employed in a series of game development project cycles.

ART 506. Game Design Residency. 1 Hour.
PR: Acceptance into the MA in Game Design program. Four-day all day on-campus annual game design conference; an online course frames and organizes the experience. Includes program orientation and on-boarding presentations for students newly accepted into the program, work-in-progress presentations by peers, and capstone project defense presentations by graduating students. Guest lecturers and game design competitions are included in residency activities.
ART 507. 1 Hour.
PR: Acceptance into the MA in Game Design program. Focus modules vary in topic to address state-of-the-industry expectations for game designers. The purpose of each single credit focus module is to provide game design MA candidates with the ability to develop a specific skill in game design and development. A sampling of topics include animation, 3-D modeling, digital photography, project management, sound editing, among many others.

ART 513. Graduate Painting. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Encompasses the significant issues and developments of contemporary painting, including visual resources, critical and pictorial structures, and technical proficiency to establish a coherent aesthetic vision in the medium.

ART 515. Arts Administration. 3 Hours.
This course provides a practical approach to understanding arts management in not-for-profit organizations. Topics include facilities management, leadership, programming, audience development, board relations, and fundraising.

ART 523. Graduate Graphic Design. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Integration of current and historic resources leading to the development of design projects while working within the independent and existing courses. Areas of special interest include the book arts and electronic multimedia.

ART 524. Graduate Graphic Design/Professional Practice. 1-6 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Students assist and work on projects in a model studio setting, helping to coordinate and manage communication with clients, printers, and undergraduate students in graphic design studio.

ART 526. Graduate Sculpture. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Encompasses the significant issues and developments of contemporary three-dimensional form, including visual resources, critical theory, historic foundations and technical proficiency to establish a coherent comprehension of the media.

ART 530. Graduate Printmaking. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Encompasses the germane aspects of contemporary printmaking including visual resources, theoretical and historic structures, and comprehension technical processes, designed to establish a rigorous comprehension of the medium. Areas of specialization include lithography, intaglio, relief, serigraphy, and electronic media.

ART 532. Graduate Photography. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Engages the essential issues and developments of contemporary photography, from traditional to digital photo processes, theoretical and pictorial foundations, and technical proficiency designed to afford a coherent aesthetic vision in the medium.

ART 534. Alternative Media. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Engages the primary issues and developments of alternative and interdisciplinary media such as installation, video, performance art, or other media along with the critical foundation and technical proficiency to establish a comprehensive utilization of chosen forms.

ART 540. Graduate Ceramics. 1-15 Hours.
(May be repeated for credit) PR: Consent. Involves the essential concerns and developments of contemporary ceramics, including traditional and current practices. Emphasis is on technical processes designed to provide a rigorous comprehension and expression in clay. Area of specialization include both functional and sculptural ceramics.

ART 564. Intro to Art Education. 3 Hours.
PR: Limited to graduate students who are seeking certification for teaching art. Introduction to objectives, procedures, resources, and activities related to art education for the culturally responsive and creative arts educator. Emphasis on content knowledge and student growth and achievement connected to self-motivation, emotional wellbeing and active engagement. Limited to students enrolled in art education majors, or consent of school. Online lectures and activities.

ART 565. Pre-Student Teaching. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 564. Focuses on curriculum development to prepare students for teaching art. Studies curriculum theory and research, practices, and addresses the wide range of issues and topics of curriculum necessary for new teachers in the art field. Includes discussions of historical, sociopolitical and cultural aspects of schooling as they relate to art curriculum.

ART 566. Art Education: Secondary. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 564. Focuses on curriculum development to prepare students for teaching art. Studies curriculum theory and research, practices, and addresses the wide range of issues and topics of curriculum necessary for new teachers in the art field. Includes discussions of historical, sociopolitical and cultural aspects of schooling as they relate to art curriculum.

ART 567. Technology Methods in Art Education. 3 Hours.
PR: Any graduate art or education major. Examines multiple aspects of classroom technologies used in art and design education. The course combines hands-on computer techniques, critical analysis of digital art and practical experiences in the K-12 classroom and focuses on the integration and teaching of new and emerging technologies within elementary and secondary school classrooms.

ART 580. Art and Environment. 3 Hours.
PR: Registered graduate student. Interdisciplinary studio/seminar course investigating art's relationship to the environment through readings, field trips, presentations, and studio practice.
ART 590. Teaching Practicum/Professional Practice. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. This course is designed to develop aspects of college teaching experience such as writing a syllabus, organizing a classroom, or improvising with materials or topical issues. Preparation for establishing professional practice as a studio artist will be addressed.

ART 591. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ART 592. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

ART 593. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ART 594. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ART 595. Independent Study: Graduate Studio. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. (May be repeated for credit.) Intensive, self-directed research involving special projects in studio production. Areas of study include, but are not limited to painting, drawing, intermedia, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, and design.

ART 600. Graduate Exhibition and Thesis. 3-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. (May be repeated for credit.) Research will be directed towards the production of a solo exhibition and a written thesis which documents the processes and philosophical principles of the artwork.

ART 602. Master's in Art Education Project. 3-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. This course is designed to develop the master's project in art education. The in-depth project must be approved by the advising committee.

ART 603. Thesis: Concept & Research. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 502 and ART 503 and ART 505. Develop the thesis game concept based on game industry, player experience, and artistic intention. Involves research of the digital games industry, identification of a design opportunity, development of a research question, systematic investigation, and formation of a game conceptual design in response to research conclusions.

ART 604. Thesis: Design & Project Plan. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 603. Design game and create the game design document, develop and document a detailed project plan to produce the game using original concept document and applying project management techniques. Define production team needs.

ART 605. Thesis: Project Launch. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 604. Begin thesis game production to create a functional game. Execute game development project plan to build a playable digital game. In order to complete the course, the game must receive faculty approval and be presented in demo format at a game conference.

ART 606. Thesis: Production. 6 Hours.
PR: ART 606. Complete thesis game and present for MA defense and professional conference. In order to complete the course, the game must receive faculty approval and be presented in demo format at a game conference.

ART 610. Introduction to Visual Arts Therapy. 3 Hours.
PR: Must have a bachelors degree in art, counseling, psychology, education, or special education. Introduces students to basic principles and practices of visual arts therapy through historical background, theoretical frameworks, and in-field issues. Provides information on pioneers in the field, how and where art therapists practice, training required for the profession, as well as interactive art explorations to incorporate art therapy principles into their own teaching and/or artistic practice. Online lectures and discussion.

ART 611. Theory of Art Education & Art Therapy. 3 Hours.
PR: Graduate standing. Introduces students to the historical, theoretical and philosophical foundations of visual arts therapy. Provides students with an overall understanding of how visual arts therapy relates to practice in art education. Specific theories relating to creativity development and visual literacy are explored.

ART 612. Art Methods/Materials for Special Populations. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 611. Provides students with in-depth understanding of art methods and materials used in artistic development of children, adolescents and adults, while using creative process of art making to enhance the physical, mental and emotional well being of individuals of all ages. Research, assigned readings, online discussions, and hands-on projects and critiques. On-campus art-making seminar is required.

ART 613. Art Assessments and Evaluations with Special Populations. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 611. Explores the assessment and evaluative practices of techniques, tools and concepts used in Visual Arts Therapy projects. Course consists of research, assigned readings, online discussions, written essays and visual explorations. A one day off-campus practicum is required.

ART 620. Advanced Problems in Art Making. 3 Hours.
PR: ART 611 and ART 612 or students who have completed an MFA or an MA in Art Studio may waive this course per the consent of the instructor. Provides students with an in-depth understanding of advanced studio art experiences and practices used to enhance learning outcomes for students with physical, emotional or social disabilities. Students will teach individual lessons to a select population using the modified lesson plan developed in this course. On-campus seminar and off-campus practicum is required.
ART 690. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of art. Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It also provides a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading will be P/F.).

ART 691. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation in advanced topics that are not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ART 692. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

ART 693. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ART 694. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ART 695. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

ART 696. Graduate Seminar. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

ART 697. Research. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper, or equivalent scholarly project, or dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.).

ART 698. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision is needed during the writing of student reports (698), theses (698), or dissertations (798). (Grading is Normal.).

ART 699. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use the University's facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

ART 930. Professional Development. 1-6 Hours.
Professional development courses provide skill renewal or enhancement in a professional field or content area (e.g., education, community health, geology). These tuition-waived continuing education courses are graded on a pass/fail grading scale and do not apply as graduate credit toward a degree program.