Art (MA)

This program is offered by the Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts.

Program Description

The master of arts (MA) in art is offered with areas of emphasis in studio art (ceramics, drawing, graphic design, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture), and in art history and criticism.

The MA in studio art degree is an initial professional degree, comprised of a series of class/studio and independent experiences to enhance and develop individual studio practices. This is an ideal degree option for students intending to seek admission to competitive MFA programs, as an advanced degree for secondary art teachers, and as a culminating educational pursuit in its own right.

The MA in art history and criticism typically prepares students to enter PhD programs in the field, and also provides a background in art historical research and contemporary criticism for those interested in art museum and gallery professions.

By design, the MA in art program admits only a limited number of students. Typically there will never be more than a few graduate students admitted in any given area and much of the instruction by its nature is individualized. The program is therefore considered very selective.

This program is offered at the St. Louis home campus.

Program Curriculum

Studio Art Emphasis

A student pursuing the MA in art degree with an emphasis in studio must successfully complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework that is relevant to the student’s area of emphasis including:

- ART 5000 Graduate Seminar in Art (3 hours)
- ART 6250 Thesis (3-6 hours)

Additional Requirements

- Emphasis coursework (18 hours)
- Graduate Art electives (9 hours)

The thesis requirement for an MA student in studio art comprises a written thesis and a presentation of an exhibition of selected works completed in the program. The thesis, abstract, and proposal must be presented in accord with Webster University Graduate Thesis guidelines and departmental specifications as outlined in the Department of Art, Design, and Art History Student Handbook.

Art History and Criticism Emphasis

A student pursuing the MA in art degree with an emphasis in art history and criticism must successfully complete a minimum of 36 hours of coursework including:

- ART 5000 Graduate Seminar in Art (3 hours)
- ARHS 5700 Historiography and Methodology (3 hours)
- ARHS 5000/6000 level coursework (24 hours)
- French/German reading (0 hours)
- Comprehensive exam (0 hours)
- ARHS 6250 Thesis (3-6 hours)

Within the first 18 credit hours of graduate work, the MA student in art history is expected to demonstrate the ability to read art historical writings in either French or German. This requirement may be filled by successful examination of reading knowledge administered by the Department of International Languages and Cultures, or completion of the fourth semester (with at least a 3.0 grade average) of a college or university language course.

During the semester in which a student completes 20 credit hours of graduate work, the MA student in art history must pass a comprehensive written examination (approximately 4 hours) broadly covering the field of art history. The comprehensive exam may be retaken only once.

MA students in art history must submit a formal research thesis demonstrating significant original research and examination of bibliographic sources. The thesis area or topic will be determined in consultation with a thesis committee comprised of three readers (one reader will be the Director of the Graduate Program in Art). The thesis, abstract, and proposal must be presented in accord with Webster University Graduate Thesis guidelines and departmental specifications.

Admission

Students who are interested in applying to this degree program should also see the Admission Section found in the front of this catalog for general requirements, or the Graduate Admissions website. In addition, applicants should demonstrate advanced preparation through portfolio review, previous coursework, and résumé. Applicants must satisfy the admission requirements listed below and petition to study within one of the areas of emphasis.

Admission Requirements

For Studio Art:

- Online Application, $50 application fee, and official transcripts
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) or Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Studio Art or approved equivalent from an accredited institution
- Statement of approximately 500 words examining reasons for graduate study in art
- Three letters of recommendation, at least two of which must be from former teachers
- Digital portfolio consisting of about twenty recent works of art

For Art History and Criticism:

- Online Application, $50 application fee, and official transcripts
- Bachelor of Arts (BA) in art history or approved equivalent from an accredited institution
- Statement of approximately 500 words examining reasons for graduate study in art
- Three letters of recommendation, at least two of which must be from former teachers
- Writing sample demonstrating research and writing abilities from an area of the humanities

Send all admission materials to:

Office of Admission
Webster University
470 E. Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy in the MA in Art program is achieved by completion of a minimum of 12 credit hours with grades of B or above and a positive faculty evaluation in the Graduate Advancement to Candidacy Review.

Policies and Procedures

One grade of F, or two grades of C constitute dismissal from the program.
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The candidate should also consult the Academic Policies and Procedures section of the catalog for further Webster University policies regarding course attendance; conduct; grades; academic warning, probation, and dismissal; transcripts; and diploma.