

The MFA Student Handbook
Department of Art and Art History,
Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts,
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Updated August 2009

I. Entering the MFA program

A. Each graduate student is assigned a faculty mentor in his/her discipline who serves as a temporary major advisor and is available to answer questions about the program, curriculum and teaching.

B. New graduate students should plan to arrive on campus a week before their initial semester to confer with their assigned mentors about their course schedules and with the department chair about their studio assignments. All entering students are required to attend a University-mandated health and safety meeting and a department meeting in which they are introduced to the graduate faculty. Other meetings may be required, so students should check their email frequently.

C. Incoming graduate students who are receiving a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) or any other money from the university must sign the required federal paperwork before the end of July in their entering year. The government requires that this paperwork be filled out and signed in person, so each student will need to either visit campus, or arrive at the department before the end of July. Students who do not do so will not be paid until the end of September. Doreen Wagenaar, Department Accountant and Human Relations employee, will notify incoming grads of this date after their acceptance into the program. Those who cannot arrive on campus this early MUST contact Doreen and make other arrangements.

D. Both entering and returning students who have been awarded assistantships should be available the week before the first day of classes. They are required to attend university teaching workshops and other scheduled meetings during the week prior to the beginning of classes.

II. The MFA Degree Program

A. The Grad College has several helpful sites with information about graduate degrees

1. Overview: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/>
2. The Graduate Bulletin: <http://bulletin.unl.edu/>
3. Forms and Deadlines:
<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/masters.shtml>

B. The Master of Fine Arts degree is a NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design) accredited, 60-credit-hour studio program. A full-time student can complete the degree in three years.

C. Areas of emphasis are: ceramics, drawing, graphic design, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture.

1. An applicant must designate an area of emphasis.
2. Applicants can designate a single area or it is possible to pursue a combination of two.

D. Requirements for the MFA degree

1. Studio coursework: minimum 42 credit hours
 - a) Minimum hours in an area of emphasis, including thesis hours: 26
 - b) Thesis hours in area of emphasis: 6-10
 - c) Studio elective credit hours: 16
 - d) These may include, but are not limited to studio courses in the area of emphasis. ARTP 997 (Colloquium) a seminar course, is also included in this category. It may be repeated for a maximum 24 credits
2. Art History: 9 credit hours in seminar or formal lecture courses (not independent study).
3. General electives: 9 credit hours. These electives may be taken in art history (including independent study), graduate level courses outside the Department, or studio courses.
4. Thesis and oral examination (for details, see XIV, Finishing the MFA Program)

E. Passing grades for MFA candidates

1. The College of Graduate Studies sets the following minimum standards for grades:
 - a) A “B” in courses linked with undergraduate instruction (a 400-800 listing)
 - b) A “C” in courses offered exclusively for graduate students.
2. None of the courses intended to satisfy the degree obligation may carry a grade of incomplete. These grades must be resolved before the College of Graduate Study’s deadline (normally the day after the Final Examination Report Form is due, or four weeks before the oral examination is scheduled to take place). It does not endanger graduation to have incompletes or grades lower than the College of Graduate Studies standard, as long as these courses are not required to meet the 60-credit degree requirement.

F. For a semester-by-semester rundown of degree deadlines, see section XV of this document.

III. Studio Space

A. The Department of Art & Art History provides individual workspace for graduate students as well as general workspace in each of the studio disciplines. Graduate studio spaces are assigned by the chair of the department, in collaboration with the Department Graduate Committee.

B. Time Allotment for Studio Space

1. Studio space is normally offered for no more than six consecutive semesters and the summers in between.
2. Students whose advisory committee require them to do further studio work (beyond the 60-credit-hour requirement) will ordinarily be allowed to retain the use of their studios to satisfy that requirement.
3. Students who choose to extend their programs beyond three academic years are not guaranteed studio space.
4. Reallocation of studio space is considered every April for the following academic year. Requests for a change in studio should be sent, in writing, to the department chair.

C. Students are required to keep their spaces neat and orderly. No architectural alterations are permitted. Students may not attach anything to walls, ceilings or the floor. Walls can be used to pin up or hang artwork but no shelving units or other installed or attached structures are permitted. Painting the walls is not permitted, except to touch-up damage or patch pinholes.

D. Students are required to adhere to safety policies of the University concerning the use of potentially hazardous materials and to obey department and university rules governing the handling of such substances.

E. Studio walls must be patched, sanded, painted and otherwise repaired to a pristine state before being vacated. Keys must be turned in by the Wednesday before commencement of the student's final semester. There will be an inspection to verify compliance. Failure to comply will result in the student's graduation being blocked.

IV. Transfer Credits

A. Graduate credits earned before entering our MFA program may be applied, under certain circumstances, toward the 60-hour requirement.

B. No more than 20 credits may be accepted for transfer.

C. No credits that were part of a previously completed graduate degree may be applied towards the satisfaction of the department's MFA requirements. (This is a college rule)

D. A request for transfer credits may occur only after the candidate has begun the program, at the time of the first-semester review.

E. Requests for credit transfer must be in writing, directed to the chair of the student's advisory committee, and accompanied by an official transcript of the relevant courses

1. Transferred art history credits must be approved by a UNL art history faculty member.

2. The advisory committee is required to follow the rules of the UNL College of Graduate Studies (as stated in the Graduate Bulletin), which reads:

No graduate credits will be accepted as transfer credits unless earned at an institution fully accredited to offer graduate work in the field of the student's

major, nor should the student expect any graduate credits to be transferred unless the graduate committee evaluates the quality and suitability equal to or superior to offerings available at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

3. Meeting the above standard does not guarantee transfer credit. The review committees have the prerogative and the responsibility to rule on the propriety of applying particular credits towards a student's MFA degree.

F. Notification of decisions about transfer credit:

1. Any decisions about transfer credit must be submitted, in writing, by the chair of the advisory committee to the chair of the Department Graduate Committee.

2. The Graduate Committee, as the agent of the departmental graduate faculty, must ratify or reject these decisions and report either action to the department graduate faculty.

3. The chair of the Department Graduate Committee must notify the student in writing of the final decision.

4. The College of Graduate Studies is notified of the approval of transfer credit when the student submits the signed "Memorandum of Courses" form.

G. All work to earn a graduate degree at the University of Nebraska must take place within a six-year interval. Therefore, to be eligible for transfer, courses must have been taken within six years of completion of the MFA degree.

V. The Reviews and The Advisory Committees

A. A student's advisory committee supervises and guides the MFA student throughout the program.

B. Each graduate student has the responsibility to form his/her advisory committee. This must be completed by the middle of the student's first semester in the MFA program (the exact date will be announced at the beginning of each fall semester).

C. Procedure for forming the committee:

1. The student first obtains an agreement from a graduate faculty member to act as chair of the committee. The student may choose his/her entry advisor as committee chair but is not required to do so.

2. The student and the committee chair work together to select the other committee members. The student should contact each potential member to request participation in the advisory committee.

3. The student notifies the department graduate chair by submitting the Notification of MFA Committee Membership form. This must be completed by the announced deadline.

D. Responsibilities of the advisory committee

1. The advisory committee reviews the student's creative and academic progress in the program. Oversight activities include:

- a) A (required) review at the end of the first five semesters of the program and
- b) Additional reviews as needed. These would occur at the request of the student or of any member of his/her review committee.

2. The committee rules on requests for transfer of graduate credits.
3. The committee recommends any change in emphasis to the Department Graduate Committee.
4. The committee members ordinarily comprise the student's final Oral Examination committee

E. Membership of the Advisory Committee

1. Only members of the graduate faculty may be members of an advisory committee.
2. The committee must have at least four members but may have more.
3. At least three of the committee members must be studio faculty.
4. The department graduate faculty encourages students to include an art history faculty member on the advisory committee.
5. The department recommends that an advisory committee consist of faculty members with whom the student is extensively involved in course work.
6. The professor who is a student's primary instructor ordinarily serves as the student's advisory committee chair.

F. Changes in advisory committee membership

1. Changes in committee membership may be initiated by the faculty.
 - a) Faculty members have the prerogative to resign from a committee.
 - b) If a departure reduces a committee's personnel to below four, then the student will need to add another graduate faculty member to the committee.
2. Changes in committee membership may be initiated by the student.
 - a) A student may occasionally want to remove one or more members of the advisory committee and replace them with new members. For instance, an evolution of their studio work might lead the student to seek input from a different set of mentors. Each student may change committee members twice during their degree program.
 - b) The student must fill out the appropriate department form (that reports on advisory committee membership) and deliver it to the graduate chair.
 - c) A student-initiated change requires endorsement by the student's committee chair. This consent is necessary even if the committee member targeted for removal is the committee chair.

- d) If a chair vetoes a request for his/her own replacement, the student may appeal that decision to the Departmental Graduate Committee.
- e) Replacements driven by circumstantial necessity rather than by student option do not reduce the student's two-change option.
- f) A student must notify his/her committee members of any change in committee membership. This includes informing any committee member who is being dismissed from the committee.

G. Occurrence of reviews

1. Each student must undergo at least five reviews during his/her tenure in the MFA program, one at the end of each of the first five semesters.
2. Each student must provide a written Artist's Statement to their advisory committee one week prior to their scheduled review. This statement is the precursor to the Thesis Abstract, and the student should work to improve and perfect it each semester.
3. Reviews are usually held in the student's studio.
4. The chair of the department graduate committee schedules mandatory reviews.
5. Mandatory reviews usually occur on the third from last and the second from last Fridays of the semester, unless this is logistically impossible. In that case the student must schedule the review at a time convenient to all involved.
6. A request for an additional review by either the student or a member of his/her committee mandates that the review take place.
7. Additional reviews may take place at any time. The student or the committee will schedule them as they see fit. Additional reviews are not a punishment nor should they be seen as shameful. Reviews are simply another tool that a committee can use to assist the student.

H. Guests

1. A student may invite guests to reviews. This would usually be faculty members or visiting faculty members who are not members of the committee. This would not be fellow students, friends or family members.
2. Guests must have the approval of the advisory committee chair.
3. Guests may not participate in any vote the committee may take.

VI. Provisional Status

- A. Graduate admission at UNL may be restricted by one or more provisions. Provisional status in the MFA program usually results from a need for additional course work.

B. Provisional status exists on a semester-by-semester basis. Provisional acceptance into the MFA program is good only for the first semester. During the first or second semesters, the student's review committee has the options to recommend:

1. Converting provisional standing to full graduate candidate status;
2. Continuing it for another semester; or
3. Dismissing the student from the program

C. A student may function with provisional status in the MFA program no longer than three semesters.

D. A student may hold a graduate assistantship appointment while on provisional status, but not while the number of semester credit hours of his/her studio deficiencies is greater than nine.

VII. Probation and Dismissal

A. The Graduate Faculty of the Department of Art & Art History has the power to dismiss candidates from the MFA program or impose probation on them. Either action may be taken if faculty members judge a student's work in the program to be unsatisfactory.

B. In case of a dismissal, the following procedure will take place:

1. The student's advisory committee initiates a decision to dismiss.
2. The advisory committee must notify the chair of the Department Graduate Committee in writing (with a copy going to the student).
3. The Department Graduate Committee rules on the dismissal decision. If the dismissal is ratified, the grad chair notifies the College of Graduate Studies in writing of the decision with a copy going to the student.

C. When considered appropriate, probation may be offered as an opportunity for the student to recover his/her satisfactory status. The procedure for imposing probation is as follows:

1. The student's advisory committee initiates a decision to impose probation.
2. Upon imposition of probation, the advisory committee must provide the student a clear written statement of:
 - a) The causes of the unsatisfactory evaluation
 - b) The actions required for the removal of probation
3. The committee must inform the graduate chair of any probation decision.
4. A follow-up review must be scheduled during the semester after the one in which probation is imposed.
5. A judgment in the follow-up review that performance is satisfactory will remove probation.

6. A decision that performance continues to be unsatisfactory may result in the student being dismissed from the program.

D. Details of Graduate Studies rules concerning Probation, Termination and Appeals may be found in the Graduate Studies Bulletin at:
http://bulletin.unl.edu/graduate/Probation%2C_Termination_and_Appeals

VIII. Changes in Emphasis

A. A student may change his/her area of emphasis in the MFA program by permission. Two kinds of change are possible:

1. A change from one area of emphasis to another;
2. The addition or deletion of a second area of emphasis

B. A request for changes in area of emphasis should be presented to the student's advisory committee. The request will be processed in two steps:

1. The advisory committee will make a decision;
2. If the committee agrees with the proposed change, their decision will be forwarded to the Department Graduate Committee, which will ratify or reject it.

IX. The Memorandum of Courses

A. The Memorandum of Courses must be filed before the student has received grades in more than one-half of the prescribed program. In the MFA program, this effectively means that the Memorandum must be submitted during the third semester.

B. The form must be signed (approved) by the student's committee chair, the departmental Graduate Chair and by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

C. Courses on the final transcript must match those listed on the Memorandum of Courses for graduation to take place.

D. If the initial memorandum submitted by the student turns out to be inaccurate, then it must be corrected. To do so, the student should fill out and submit an updated Memorandum Form.

E. A student may NOT file a Memorandum of Courses and graduate in the same semester. This means that any changes in the Memorandum MUST be completed before grades are submitted at the end of the student's fifth semester.

F. Master's Degree Forms and Deadlines may be found on the Graduate Studies website at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/masters.shtml>

X. Financial Aid and Graduate Assistantships

1. Funding sources that contribute to graduate assistantship awards include the State of Nebraska, Othmer Fellowship Awards, Regents Fellowships, Chancellors Fellowships, and Centennial Fellowships. These awards are provided by the College of Graduate Studies and awarded by the department. The Hixson-Lied

College of Fine & Performing Arts awards fellowships (Hixson-Lied Fellowships), the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery also provide fellowships. Financial packages are assembled from these various funding sources and assigned at the time of acceptance into the graduate program. An assistantship brings a stipend and may also include a reduction in tuition charges during the period of the assistantship.

- a) The duties of graduate assistants teaching and/or technical assistants requires 15 hours of work per week (.33 FTE)
 - b) First year teaching assistants usually help faculty members in the classroom for 12 hours a week with the other 3 hours per week assigned, as needed, by the department.
 - c) Technical assistants report to an area faculty member or to the department Chair, depending upon their assignments. The Chair supervises the gallery assistant.
2. Credit Hour Limitations: An assistant in the department must enroll for at least nine credit hours of course work per semester, but for no more than 12.
- a) The Department of AAH requires that all MFA students be full-time students, and nine credits is the minimum set by the College of Graduate Studies for full-time standing.
 - b) The full-time requirement may be waived in the final semester for students who need fewer than nine credit hours to complete the degree.
 - c) The 12-credit ceiling is a College of Graduate Studies rule. It applies to any assistant assigned a 15-hour-per-week workload, which is the load for all Graduate Teaching Assistantships in the Department of AAH.
3. Financial restrictions with assistantships
- a) The College of Graduate Studies rule states that the student an assistantship may not perform more than 20 hours per week (49% FTE) of income-producing work during the regular school year, including the 15-hour commitment imposed by an AAH assistantship.
 - b) The 20-hour restriction covers all employment, whether at the University or elsewhere.
4. During the summer an assistant may be employed as a GTA up to a full time basis (1.0 FTE or 40 hours per week). Summer assistants are hired by the Chair as the need arises.

XI. Other Available Financial Aid and Competitive Awards

A. Endowed fellowships awarded by the Hixson Lied CFPA or Department of Art & Art History:

1. Graduate Students have the opportunity to apply for competitive research and travel funds through the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. These competitions are described on the College website. Application forms may be found on Blackboard as well as the CFPA website.
2. **The Francis William Vreeland Award** is given each spring to the most outstanding graduating MFA student as determined by faculty vote.
 - a) Students may compete only one time during their MFA program, ordinarily during their final semester.
 - b) The date of the Vreeland Award is announced at the beginning of each spring semester.
 - c) December ~~and summer~~ graduates may choose to compete either the spring before or the spring after graduation.
 - d) . The applicants for the Vreeland Award compete by displaying a representative selection of their creative work. Work is displayed in the student's studio space.
 - e) In the event of a tie, a run-off vote will be taken on the Monday following the first vote.
 - f) Only full-time faculty members who view the displays during the prescribed time may vote. Each faculty member must vote for three candidates (in priority order).
3. **The Richard P. Trickey Award** is awarded by faculty vote each spring.
 - a) Students who have at least one remaining year in the program are eligible to compete.
 - b) Voting takes place at the same time as the competition for the Vreeland Award.
 - c) As with the Vreeland Award, only full-time faculty members who view the displays during the prescribed time may vote. Each faculty member must vote for three candidates (in priority order).
4. **The Dan and Barbara Howard Creative Achievement Award** is given in the spring and is determined by faculty vote. Judging is done on the same day as the Vreeland and Trickey awards. It is open to all graduate students in the MFA program, and the voting rules are the same as the Vreeland and Trickey awards.

XII. Teaching by Graduate Students

A. Duties of the Graduate Teaching Assistants

1. In the first year, students awarded graduate teaching assistantships usually do not teach their own classes, but instead work as assistants/apprentices to full-time faculty members or are assigned technical or gallery duties by the department

chair. This provides the student an opportunity to observe and learn from an experienced faculty member.

2. In the second year, most graduate assistants begin teaching classes of their own. The 15-hour teaching obligation is fulfilled as follows:

- a) The instructional segment consists of six contact hours of classroom duty per week. This takes the form of either one 3-credit course or a combination of classes which together meet for a total of six hours a week.
- b) Six hours per week is allowed for course preparation

The remaining 3 hours per week is unspecified. Students may be asked to help proctor exams, substitute for a faculty member who is absent, give tours of the department for prospective undergraduates and their parents, or assist at department events.

- c) A schedule posted in the department office records the on-call hours that GTA's work for the department. Each GTA fills in the dates and numbers of hours as they are completed. The office staff makes an effort to call upon the students who have served the fewest on-call hours that semester.

B. Evaluation of GTAs

1. Evaluation by the Faculty

- a) GTAs will meet with their advisors (or the assigned faculty member within each media area) to design a syllabus and assignments for whatever course they are teaching. This advisor will also provide guidance and feedback to the GTA, in order to help them become a better teacher.

2. Evaluation by Students

- a) GTAs who teach their own classes (like all faculty members) are required to have their students complete a standardized course evaluation and turn it in to the Art Department office.
- b) Standard forms (available in the department office) must be used.
- c) The GTA should understand that their students have the right to submit their evaluations anonymously.
- d) The GTA must not be present in the classroom while the students are filling out the evaluations and the forms must be collected and carried to a secretary in the AAH department office by one of the students in the class.
- e) The teacher may not see a class' evaluations until after the grades have been turned in.

XIII. Completing the MFA Program

A. Each student must pass an oral examination during the final semester of the graduate program. The "orals" are usually held during the time that the MFA show is on display.

B. Students can locate all forms and deadlines for graduation on the Graduate Studies site:

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/masters.shtml>

The office of Graduate Studies often changes due dates and forms so students should check the website for specific information.

C. Early in the final semester in school, each student must fill out the ***Application for Advanced Degree*** form and submit it to the Records Office. The exact date will be published on the grad studies web site about one semester ahead of time.

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/masters.shtml>

D. The student has the responsibility to select his/her Oral Examination Committee. Except in unusual circumstances, the Oral Examination Committee would have the same membership as the student's advisory committee.

1. The committee must have at least four members chosen from the graduate faculty members of AAH. The four must include at least one member who is from the student's area of emphasis.
2. The graduate faculty recommends that the committee include a faculty member from any area of secondary studio emphasis.

E. *At least four weeks before the oral exam*, each student must complete the student portion of the form ***Final Examination Report for the Masters Degree*** and submit it to the grad college. The oral examination must be scheduled in order to do this. The grad college will either approve the form and forward it to the student's committee chair, or they will return the form to the student for correction.

F. Present a Thesis Exhibition.

1. Students earning a masters degree in other fields are required to write a Masters Thesis. In the MFA, the Thesis Exhibition takes the place of the written thesis. This exhibition takes place during the student's final semester and is shown in the Eisentrager Howard Gallery in Richards Hall.

G. Write a Thesis Abstract.

1. The Abstract is a short essay (one to two pages) in which the student sets down the goals and intentions in his/her creative work and rationalizes and substantiates his/her aesthetic procedures. It would be the equivalent of an abstract in a scholarly discipline in which the degree candidate summarizes the thrust of his/her research thesis or dissertation. The Graduate College stipulates no limit on the length of the abstract for MFA candidates, though a 350-word limit exists for other master's degree thesis abstracts. The norm for the MFA is one to two pages. All of the specifics concerning the thesis abstract are contained in the *Guidebook for Preparation and Submission of an Electronic Thesis*. You can download the guidebook in PDF format from:

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/masters.shtml>

The download link is in red and is at the top of the page.

2. The thesis abstract should be double spaced. The margins should be one-and-one-half inches (1.5”) at the left and one inch (1”) on each of the other three sides. The abstract must be approved by the student’s advisor (the chair of the Orals Committee).
3. The candidate must provide a copy of the abstract to each member of his/her oral examination committee at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the time of the candidate's oral examination.
4. The candidate must post a copy of the abstract in the area where the candidate’s Thesis Exhibition is displayed.
5. The student must submit the title page and text of the thesis abstract to the Graduate Office for approval at least two weeks prior to the date of the oral examination. The document should be properly formatted and sent as an email attachment to Terri Eastin at teastin1@unl.edu .

H. Take the oral examination before the Final Oral Examination Committee in the presence of the thesis exhibition and any members of the public who wish to attend.

1. The committee will question the candidate for up to two hours. Towards the end, the committee will ask the candidate and any visitors to leave the room, and will then decide if the student will graduate. In its discussion and deliberations, it will evaluate both the thesis exhibition and the written abstract.
2. The committee chairperson will bring the *Final Examination Report for the Masters Degree* form to the oral examination. At the conclusion of the examination the committee members will each sign the form and designate “pass” or “not pass” in the proper space. From the Grad Bulletin:
 - a) *In the event that members of an oral examining committee are not unanimous regarding passing a Candidate, the student is to be approved for the degree if only one examiner dissents. However, in each case, the dissenting member of the committee will be expected to file a letter of explanation in the Office of Graduate Studies.*
 - b) *If a student fails to pass the final oral or written examination for an advanced degree, their committee must file a report on the failure in the Office of Graduate Studies and indicate what the student must do before taking another examination. Another examination may not be held during the same semester or the same summer session in which the student failed.*

3. Guests at the Oral Examination

- a) A student may invite guests to his/her thesis orals.
- b) Guests must have the approval of the advisory committee chair.
- c) Guests may not participate in the discussion or in any vote the committee may take.
- d) Guests will leave the room (along with the candidate) during the final committee discussion and vote.

I. Delivering the Thesis Abstract

1. Once you have passed your final oral defense, make any changes to your written thesis as required by your adviser or committee. Obtain the appropriate signatures of **all committee members** on your *Final Examination Report Form*.
2. Convert the final thesis abstract to a PDF file and send it (as an email attachment) to Terri Eastin teastin1@unl.edu for final review.

Once you receive email notification that the format of your abstract has been reviewed and approved, upload the file to the Digital Commons at <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/gsdissinfo/>. Before doing so, there are two documents there that you need to download and read: ***Where to deposit your master's thesis in the UNL Digital Commons***, and the ***Step-by-step Guide to Uploading Your Master's Thesis in UNL Digital Commons***. Both are in PDF format.

3. When you have successfully uploaded your thesis file to the Digital Commons, you'll receive email confirmation. ***Print the email confirmation***.
4. The process of **delivering the Thesis Abstract** must begin in the Office of Graduate Studies before 4:00 PM, as it requires you to visit several offices.
5. Go to the OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES, 1100 SEATON HALL. Bring these items to Terri Eastin:
 - a) the printed email confirming your upload to Digital Commons,
 - b) your *Final Examination Report Form*,
 - c) two paper copies of your abstract, and
 - d) one copy of your title page.
6. Go to the OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF LIBRARIES, 318 LOVE LIBRARY. Present the upload confirmation and one copy of your title page and abstract, then have your *Final Examination Report Form* signed.
7. Go to the CASHIER, 121 CANFIELD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. Pay the \$25 digital archiving fee at the cashier's window and have your *Final Examination Report Form* signed. One copy of the cashier's receipt should be attached to the *Final Examination Report* form; the other copy is for your records.
8. Go back to the OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES, 1100 SEATON HALL. Bring the completed, signed *Final Examination Report Form* to Terri Eastin.
9. Jump in the air, raise your arms in triumph and do a short victory dance: you have now completed your MFA degree.

XIV. The degree checklist

A. First Semester

1. Select an advisor

2. Select additional Advisory Committee Members.
3. Write an artist statement (about one page in length) and distribute it to the Advisory Committee Members at least one week before your review.
4. Have your work reviewed by your advisory committee. This is always scheduled towards the end of the semester.

B. Second Semester

1. Rewrite and update your artist statement and distribute it to the Advisory Committee Members at least one week before your review.
2. Have your work reviewed by your advisory committee.

C. Third Semester

1. Fill out the Memorandum of Courses form, submit it to your advisor, the department grad chair and the Grad College, in that order. It **MUST** be completed before grades are issued at the end of the third semester.
2. Rewrite and update your artist statement and distribute it to the Advisory Committee Members at least one week before your review.
3. Have your work reviewed by your advisory committee.

D. Fourth Semester

1. Rewrite and update your artist statement and distribute it to the Advisory Committee Members at least one week before your review.
2. Have your work reviewed by your advisory committee.

E. Fifth Semester

1. Work with the Department Chair and the Gallery director to organize the schedule for the MFA Thesis Exhibitions.
2. Rewrite and update your artist statement and distribute to the Advisory Committee Members at least one week before your review. Keep in mind that this is your last review before your orals and your artist statement should be approaching the final version that will be your Thesis Abstract.
3. Have your work reviewed by your advisory committee.
4. When you pre-enroll for your final semester, take a final look at your Memorandum of Courses and *make sure* that the courses you are taking will complete your degree, and that the memorandum is complete and correct. This is your final chance- *you cannot change your memorandum of courses in the same semester you graduate.*

F. The Last Semester

1. . During the first month of the semester, fill out the ***Application for Advanced Degree*** form and submit it to Registration and Records, 107 Canfield Administration Building South.

2. Select your Oral Exam Committee. Except under unusual circumstances, this committee will have the same members as your previous advisory committee.
3. Work with the members of your committee to schedule the time of your Oral Exam. It is the candidate's responsibility to find a time and date that works for all. The Oral Exam should occur while the Thesis Exhibition is on display.
4. *At least* four weeks before your oral exam fill out the ***Final Examination Report for the Masters Degree*** form.
5. Resolve all grades of Incomplete from previous semesters (if the courses involved are needed for graduation).
6. At least two weeks prior to your oral exam, complete your Thesis Abstract and distribute it to the orals committee and to the Grad College.
7. At least two weeks before your oral exam, prepare copies of the Thesis Abstract and submit a copy to the Grad College for approval.
8. Present your Thesis Exhibition and take your Oral Exam. Make sure you post the Abstract with the exhibition.
9. Immediately after the Oral Exam, deliver the signed *Final Exam Report* to the Grad College. *Carefully* follow all the instructions contained in section XIII.I.
10. Clean, patch and paint your studio and return your keys to the department office on or before Wednesday of the final exam week (the week before graduation). ***A hold will be placed on your graduation if you do not complete this.***

XV. Letters of Recommendation

A. At some point in the program, you may need various letters of recommendation for fellowships or teaching jobs. In order to help you get the best possible letters of reference, here are a few guidelines that may help:

1. Contact the faculty member at least two weeks before the letter is due.
2. Ask the faculty member by email, in person or by phone for a recommendation, not by mail.
3. Describe the type of position or grant for which you are applying. Specificity will help the faculty member. If possible, provide a web link to the grant or position.
4. Provide the faculty member with a current resume, digital images of recent work or (in the case of Art History faculty members) copies of the papers that you wrote for his/her courses.
5. Give the faculty member all necessary information about the letter, including the name and title of the addressee, where the letter should be sent and any deadlines.

6. Provide any special forms that the prospective employer or granting institution requires.
7. Sign any necessary waiver releasing your right to read the recommendation.
8. If the letters are to be sealed and mailed by you, provide addressed, stamped envelopes.

XVI. Student Representation

A. Students are invited to elect a representative to attend faculty meetings. The representative serves as a liaison between graduate students and faculty members.

XVII. Addendum: copies of important forms

A. These forms are samples only: unlike the original PDF documents they are not interactive. Please download the latest versions from the Grad Studies website.

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/masters.shtml>

B. Tips for filling out the *Memorandum of Courses*

1. All spaces on the form are interactive, except the signature lines at the bottom. Fill out the form on your computer, then print it out and distribute it for signatures.
2. For *degree*, check MFA.
3. For *Option*, check **I** (option one is the only one available to MFA students)
4. For *Major*, write **Art**, not your media discipline. Leave *Minor* and *Specialization* blank.

C. Tips for filling out the *Application for Degree*

1. Fill in all blanks before printing it out.
2. Check either *May* or *December* for graduation and fill in the year.
3. The check box for the MFA is found under the Graduate College, not Fine and Performing Arts.
4. Your *Major* is **Art**. Leave *Minor*, *Option* and *Concentration* blank.

D. Tips for filling out the Final Examination Report

1. Fill out all of *Part 1: Student and Program information*. As with the Memorandum of Courses, check **MFA** and **Option I**, write **Art** in the line for *Major* and leave *Minor* and *Specialization* blank.
2. Leave *Parts 2 and 3* blank.
3. In *Part 4: The Oral Examination*, you need to fill out the *schedule* for the orals, and in the first column list all the members of your orals committee. If there are more committee members than blanks, then just do your best to squeeze in another name in the final blank.

4. In *Part 5: Thesis*, write the name of your MFA exhibition.

Final Examination Report

For the Master's Degree | Office of Graduate Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln



INSTRUCTIONS

Before submission to Graduate Studies, complete Parts 1 through 5, including signatures in Part 3 but omitting signatures in Part 4. All information must be typed. Due in Graduate Studies at least four weeks before the final oral examination, if required, but not later than the deadline for filing final report for degree.

PART 1: STUDENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

Full Name _____ NU ID Number _____

Mailing Address _____ Phone _____

Applies for admission to candidacy for the degree of MA MAE MAg MArch MAT MBA MCRP MEd MEng
MFA MLS MM MPA MPE MS MScT MST

Option I II III Major _____ Minor _____

Specialization (if applicable) _____ Expected Graduation Date _____

PART 2: WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

When required, the written comprehensive examination must be taken within 24 months of completion of degree requirements.

MAJOR: Written exam waived? No, scheduled for (date) _____ and passed (date) _____ Yes, therefore oral must be taken.

MINOR: Written exam waived? No, scheduled for (date) _____ and passed (date) _____ Yes. Minor oral exam waived? No Yes
The comprehensive exam (written and/or oral) in the minor department may be waived if all grades in the minor are at least a B or Pass.

PART 3: EXAMINATION PROCEDURE APPROVED

Signature, Major Adviser Date Signature, Minor Adviser Date

Signature, Chair of Graduate Committee, Major Dept. Date Signature, Dean of Graduate Studies Date

PART 4: FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

SCHEDULED (at least four weeks after filing this form): Date: _____ Time: _____ Building/Room: _____

WAIVED? No Yes, final copy of thesis approved by: _____
Signature, Graduate Faculty in Major Dept, other than Adviser Date

EXAMINING COMMITTEE. List proposed members. Three members are required. All members on the examining committee MUST be Graduate Faculty. Affix signatures of committee members after final oral examination.

Typed Name	Pass / No Pass	Signature	Date
Chair _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Member 2 _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Member 3 _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Member 4 _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Member 5 _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

PART 5: THESIS

Title of thesis: _____

Final grade for all incomplete thesis hours: _____ Approved by major adviser: _____
Signature Date

PART 6: THESIS DEPOSITED IN LIBRARY

Librarian _____ Cashier _____
Signature Date Signature Date

PART 7: RECOMMENDED FOR DEGREE

Dean of Graduate Studies _____
Signature Date

Revised 2008/11



APPLICATION FOR DEGREE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY 04-08

A \$25 non-refundable application fee, payable to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, must accompany your application. This fee applies only to the term marked on this application and is not transferable to another term.

PLEASE PRINT NU ID NUMBER _____ DATE _____

FULL NAME (As you want it printed on diploma) First _____ Middle _____ Last/Family Name _____

MAILING ADDRESS (Where you will receive mail this semester) Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

HOME TOWN (For commencement program and newspaper announcement) City _____ State/Province _____ Country _____

GRADUATION DATE: I will graduate in May August December Of 20 _____

COLLEGE	TYPE OF DEGREE		COLLEGE	TYPE OF DEGREE	
AGRI SCI & NATURAL RES	<input type="checkbox"/> BS	(indicate major below)	FINE & PERFORMING ARTS	<input type="checkbox"/> BA	<input type="checkbox"/> BFA
ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BSD	<input type="checkbox"/> M ARCH		<input type="checkbox"/> BMUS	<input type="checkbox"/> BMED
ARTS & SCIENCES	<input type="checkbox"/> BA	<input type="checkbox"/> BS	JOURNALISM & MASS COMM	<input type="checkbox"/> BJ	
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	<input type="checkbox"/> BSBA		LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> JD	<input type="checkbox"/> LLM
EDUCATION & HUMAN SCIENCES	<input type="checkbox"/> BSEH	<input type="checkbox"/> Au D	GRADUATE	<input type="checkbox"/> MA	<input type="checkbox"/> MAE
<input type="checkbox"/> Also apply for the Nebraska Initial Teaching Certificate.	<input type="checkbox"/> BHRT			<input type="checkbox"/> MAT	<input type="checkbox"/> MBA
				<input type="checkbox"/> M ED	<input type="checkbox"/> MENG
				<input type="checkbox"/> MLS	<input type="checkbox"/> MM
				<input type="checkbox"/> MPE	<input type="checkbox"/> MS
ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY	<input type="checkbox"/> BS	<input type="checkbox"/> BSAE		<input type="checkbox"/> MST	<input type="checkbox"/> MSCT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BSBS	<input type="checkbox"/> BSCE		<input type="checkbox"/> ED S	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Yr Cert
	<input type="checkbox"/> BSCM	<input type="checkbox"/> BSCP		<input type="checkbox"/> DMA	<input type="checkbox"/> ED D
	<input type="checkbox"/> BSIE	<input type="checkbox"/> BSME		<input type="checkbox"/> PH D	

MAJOR(S) _____ MINOR(S) _____ Option(s) (For CASNR only) _____ Concentration(s) (For JMC only) _____

CURRENT ENROLLMENT Are you currently enrolled at UNL? Yes No
 Are you currently enrolled at UNO? Yes No (If yes, list course(s) below.)
 Are you currently enrolled at UNK? Yes No (If yes, list course(s) below.)
 Are you currently enrolled in extended education course(s)? Yes No
 What course(s)? _____
 Are you currently enrolled at another college/university? Yes No
 If yes, where? _____
 What course(s)? _____

GRAD AND LAW STUDENTS ONLY		Adviser Name	_____
Previous Degrees	Type	Year	College or University Name
Received	_____ degree in	_____	_____
Received	_____ degree in	_____	_____
Received	_____ degree in	_____	_____

Please report changes in graduation plans to UNL, Graduation Services, 109 Canfield Adm Building, Lincoln, NE 68588-0416, (402) 472-3636.