Introduction
This is the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Master of Fine Arts Handbook. It 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 faculty and with other university personnel who are available to assist them.

Graduate Assistant Handbook

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Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

Dr. Mark Hartlaub
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts

Cindy Sheehy
Graduate Academic Advisor, College of Graduate Studies

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Chair, Department of Art + Design

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Administrative Associate

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Center for Arts Building Supervisor
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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. In addition, students have 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 careers in higher education.

MFA Students will:

- Demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge of key critical and theoretical frameworks pertaining to their discipline(s) and area(s) of concentration and research;
- Engage with and analyze their own work within these frameworks;
- Demonstrate knowledge of theory, methodologies, and discursive vocabularies in a disciplinary or interdisciplinary context relative to their proposed thesis exhibition or project;
- Apply their knowledge in the concentration(s) of choice, media, and techniques to create a thesis project or exhibition that explores the contextual framework as related to their research and creative scholarship;
- Articulate ways in which the combination of 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 and Design during applicable critiques, public presentation, and oral defense.

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.

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

<table>
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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<td>Studio Art</td>
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<td>6 semester hours</td>
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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
  - Up to (9) additional semester hours can be in Area of Concentration
  - At least (9) semester hours are required in Studio Art Electives
  - 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 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
MFA in Studio Art Program Requirements with a concentration in Graphic Design: *Professional Practices or Academic Appointment*

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

**Program Sequence**

Full-time MFA candidates are required to follow the program sequence outlined in the Matriculation Guide. The Graduate Coordinator assists in scheduling classes and tracks and 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 and the Graduate Coordinator, or Thesis Committee at the end of each semester.

**First-Year Review and Second-Year Review**

The Department of Art + Design faculty will review each 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 current transcript, current CV, and artist statement. Upon conclusion, the faculty will confer privately to determine whether the candidate passed or failed the review.
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 current transcript and CV. Upon conclusion, the faculty will confer privately to determine whether 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 – which supports the MFA exhibition by discussing the work and its place within its 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 Public Presentation:** 40-45 minutes in length, discussing components of the exhibition and written paper.

- **A Comprehensive Oral Defense:** Administered by the Thesis Committee, 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. They 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 in 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, considers the client’s market and category competitive analyses, reviews target audience behaviors and demographics and defends 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, either 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 in 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) hours per semester.
- Other assistantship duties may include: Building Monitor hours, assisting full-time faculty with research or studio duties, or a position with the University Galleries.

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

MFA candidates must be present in Corpus Christi and available 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

Studio space for the MFA Graduate Program is currently divided among three separate 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.
- Photo Modular: This facility houses graduate studios for Photography, as well as access to space for the documentation of work.
- Classroom West (CESS): The first and second floors have dedicated private and shared spaces.

Galleries

The University Galleries at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi include the Weil Gallery located on campus in the Center for Arts and an upcoming location in Downtown Corpus Christi. The Weil is a traditional gallery space used for the exhibition of work by TAMUCC graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and visiting artists from the local, national, and international contexts. Exhibitions held at this venue serve the immediate TAMUCC campus as well as the greater Corpus Christi community and beyond.
This space also provides an important pedagogical component of the fine arts curriculum at TAMUCC. Qualifying MFA candidates are offered opportunities for part-time employment with the University Galleries as part of their degree program and gain valuable experience as Graduate Gallery Assistants. The Graduate Gallery Assistant is selected through a formal interview process with the Galleries Director and Galleries Manager. This position fulfills requirements for a Graduate Assistantship. Gallery Assistants are not to exceed (20) hours of work per week.

Duties include, but are not limited to, exhibition installations, supervision of undergraduate staff, and overseeing of general gallery maintenance. This provides TAMUCC MFA candidates with valuable professional experience in the field of gallery practice and museum standards.

The galleries are supported by University Facilities, are outfitted with current equipment and hardware, and are staffed by TAMUCC faculty and students.

**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 in the Center for Arts and CESS be performed safely. Proper use of tools and materials is critical to your safety and others. In addition, graduate students must set a responsible example for undergraduate students 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.

Graduate students must know how to use a tool or material safely before using it. Questions about safe use of tools should be directed to the supervisor(s) of the studios to which they belong or the Building Supervisor.

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 brought into a studio should be accompanied by approval of the studio area faculty or Center for Arts Building Supervisor.
- When hazardous materials are purchased for use in the Center for Arts, a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) must be obtained 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 may not be stored in student lockers.
- Sweeping many materials used in ceramics and sculpture creates airborne hazards. Whenever possible, graduate students must use wet cleanup techniques to minimize these hazards.
- Graduate students will need access to materials and tools in areas other than their concentration. They 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.

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 Mentors 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, faculty, 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.

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 online through their S.A.I.L. account by the posted deadline. Graduation deadlines and pricing are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Graduation application 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.
FACULTY

Meg Aubrey, Assistant Professor  
BFA, Rhode Island School of Design; MFA, Savannah College of Art and Design.

Leticia Bajuyo, Associate Professor  
BFA, University of Notre Dame; MFA, University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

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, Assistant Professor  
BA, University of Cairo; MA, MFA, Rhode Island School of Design.

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

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

Richard James, Assistant Professor  
BFA, University of Tennessee-Martin; MFA, University of Kansas.

Louis Katz, Professor  
BFA, Kansas City Art Institute; MFA, Montana State University.

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

Ryan O’Malley, Associate 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.

Laura Petican, Ph.D., Associate Professor  
BA University of Western Ontario; MA University of Western Ontario; Ph.D. Jacobs University (Bremen, Germany).

Greg Reuter, Professor Emeritus  
BFA, California College of Arts and Crafts; MFA, University of Hawaii.

Lars Roeder, Visiting Assistant Professor  
BS, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; MFA, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

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