



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
ART & ART HISTORY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2024-2025

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# PREFACE

The information provided in this Handbook applies specifically to the 2021-2022 entering class. Requirements for previous classes are outlined in the Handbook in force at the time of their first registration. All students shall retain a copy of the newest version of the Handbook at all times.

The material covered in this Handbook describes the requirements and regulations of the MFA program. Thus, **students are responsible for acknowledging the material in this Handbook and adhering to its procedures and guidelines.** All students will be asked to sign a form (provided at the end of the Handbook) indicating that they have read all of these materials and understand that they are responsible for knowing and complying with all program requirements.

The Department's five areas of concentration may have additional guidelines for students to follow, which should be adhered to in accordance with the Handbook guidelines.

# MFA GRADUATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welcome to the University of Miami! This Handbook is designed to provide an overview of the program requirements for the MFA in Studio Art within the Department of Art & Art History. It describes departmental regulations and program area requirements governing progress toward the MFA degree.

The Department of Art & Art History offers graduate study centered on the intersection between studio art, the humanities, and the liberal arts. The three-year MFA program is specifically designed to provide our students with the skills and mastery needed for personal development and career success in aesthetics, including traditional and conceptual-based practices, as well as teaching studio art at the high school or college level. Alongside a faculty of highly regarded artists and art historians, talented individuals engage in concentrated research in one of five areas:

- \* Ceramics
- \* Digital Imaging-Illustration/Photography
- \* Painting
- \* Printmaking
- \* Sculpture (with a particular focus on Environmental & Social Action)

# PART I: OVERVIEW

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# The Path to Your MFA in Studio Art

There are many steps on the path to your MFA. These include: (1) successfully completing the Department's core courses, (2) successfully completing the Area's core courses, (3) demonstrating continued productivity and artistic growth, (4) successfully completing qualifying procedures, including reaching candidacy and completing a Master's Thesis Document, and (6) completing the MFA Thesis Exhibition and successfully defending the MFA Document at the Thesis Exhibition.

The number of credits required for the MFA in Studio Art is 60, which includes 9 core credits, 9 art history credits, and 6 thesis credits. The program is designed to take three years (i.e., six semesters @ 10 credits per semester for a total of 60 credits). Course specifics are discussed in *Part IV* of this Handbook.

Upon entry into the program, new graduate students are assigned an *MFA Progress Committee* of three, full-time faculty members. This committee is assigned/formed by the principal faculty in the area of the student's concentration in which they were accepted. The Progress Committee meets with him/her/them throughout the semester (typically twice per term, or as determined by the Head of their Progress Committee), until candidacy is awarded. Students can apply for candidacy only after they have completed 30 credits. Once candidacy is awarded, a *Thesis Committee* is selected by the candidate in consultation with, and approval by, his/her/their committee Chair.

The Thesis Committee typically consists of at least three faculty members, one of whom can be an outside faculty member (non-UM individuals can also serve in this capacity, if approved by the Chair of the *Thesis Committee*). The Thesis Committee advises the student on his/her/their preparation for the Thesis Exhibition and is responsible for supervising the candidate in preparing the written Thesis Document, which accompanies the analog exhibition. The Thesis Committee will meet with the student at his/her/their Thesis Exhibition (typically before it opens to the public, but not after the show closes), at which time the student will be asked to orally defend the Thesis work. The student must have each of their committee members sign approval forms for both their Thesis Document and their Thesis Exhibition Defense. Each of these signed forms must be included in the final version of the Thesis Document submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for graduation clearance.

Each MFA Thesis Exhibition is a solo show installed at the Department's Wynwood Gallery, though students can alternatively arrange to install their works at an external location –

such as a professional art space or commercial gallery – that has been arranged by the student and approved by their Thesis Committee.

Graduate students who hold a Teaching Assistantship may be given the opportunity to teach undergraduate art classes during their course of study under the direction of their Head faculty member and/or members of their Progress Committee.

Students who are admitted without a Teaching Assistantship are not obligated to complete weekly work assignments for the department, and cannot teach courses, unless he/she/they already possesses an advanced degree.



# Description of Graduate Student Responsibilities

## I. Coursework

1. Students must receive a grade of B- or higher in all required courses to remain in *good standing* in the program. If a student receives a grade of “C+” or lower in any core course, that course must be repeated. Students who fail to repeat the course with a grade of B- or higher may be dismissed from the program.
2. Students must also maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher across all courses.
3. The specific course requirements for each program may be found in *Part II*.
4. If students fail to meet the minimum standard in their coursework, this is grounds for dismissal from the program and Graduate School.
5. If a student must repeat a course where the grade was C+ or lower (considered a failing grade in our program), here is the University policy:

“A student may appeal to repeat a course in which a failing grade was earned, but the repetition of the course will not eliminate the previous grade from the record and the student is responsible for tuition and other costs related to the repeated course. A course may be repeated only once unless written authorization is provided by the Program Director, Dean of the School and Dean of the Graduate School, and requires program approval. Students must complete a Course Retake Appeal form no later than the readmission deadline per the Academic Calendar for the requested retake term. All grades are included in the computation of the quality point average. If a course in which an unsatisfactory grade (as determined by the program advisor) [*C+ or lower*] was earned is repeated and the repeat grade is a “C-” or higher, the number of credit hours required for graduation will be increased by the number of credit hours repeated.”

<https://bulletin.miami.edu/graduate-student-handbook-online-students/repeating-courses/>

## II. Artwork/Studio Practice

1. All graduate students are expected to be actively involved in research (i.e., creating and producing artworks/adhering to professional studio practices) under the supervision of a faculty mentor.
2. Students who receive **two consecutive** “Needs Improvements” on their bi-semester MFA Progress Reports (see *Appendix B*) for their Academic Artwork/Studio Practice will automatically be placed on Academic Probation and will be dismissed from the program if they receive a third consecutive “Needs Improvements.”

## III. Teaching

1. Students will be expected to teach a minimum of two undergraduate classes and receive satisfactory evaluations from their students and their faculty supervisor(s).

2. Typically, students teach two entire undergraduate courses during their second year in residence; however, many students also teach a course in the Fall semester of their third year.
3. Teaching assignments are made based upon need and availability of courses.
4. A faculty-teaching supervisor is assigned to each student (typically their primary mentor). Students should first shadow the supervisor in his/her class(es), and then meet with their mentor(s) before the teaching semester, in order to go over their course syllabus, textbooks and reading materials, material lists, audiovisual aids, and helpful tips for teaching.
5. Students are evaluated by faculty (typically the faculty-teaching supervisor) and given constructive feedback. Typically, the faculty-teaching supervisor visits the student's class once in the first seven weeks, and again at the end of the semester, though this may vary.
6. Graduate students who receive very low or poor undergraduate teaching evaluations (below a 3.0 average) will be dismissed from teaching additional courses during their residency in the program. As such, all subsequent TA hours/duties will be performed in the area's labs/studios.

#### IV. Teaching Assistantship Duties

1. If you hold a Teaching Assistantship, the Department requires that 15 hours per week be devoted to completing TA duties within the student's designated area of concentration/study. If a student is teaching a course, this equates to 9 TA hours per week, leaving 6 TA hours per week for lab/studio/area work.
2. During Work Week (the week preceding the first week of classes for both the Fall & Spring semesters), graduate students may be asked to work more than 15 hours per week in order to "bank" their hours for the semester. This practice ensures that their stipends are not reduced in their December paychecks, given that students are not asked to work over Winter Break.
3. Once classes begin, students are not permitted to cumulatively work more than 60 hours per month. Working less than 15 hours per week may result in the student receiving a Warning from a faculty supervisor. That having been said, students can arrange with their Studio Manager(s) to work more hours one week, and less another, in order to ensure that their cumulative hours are met for each month.
4. Students are typically provided with a list of general tasks to perform throughout the semester in their designated area; however, students may also be asked to perform *ad hoc* tasks as part of their weekly TA Duties at the discretion of their supervisor(s) (see *page 11*).
5. Students who receive **three consecutive** "Needs Improvements" on their bi-semester MFA Progress Reports (see *Appendix B*) for their TA Duties will lose their stipends entirely. Loss of the stipend does not, however, necessarily mean that the student will be dismissed from the program, nor does the loss of the stipend equate to the loss of their tuition waiver.

# Important Contact Information

## Faculty and Personnel for the Graduate Program

Many individuals contribute to make the Department and MFA program run smoothly. Below is a list of important individuals within the Department and its two Divisions: Art History & Studio Art. If you have a question or an issue, please consult this list, or ask your mentor. Contact information is provided for all faculty on the following webpage: <https://art.as.miami.edu/about/faculty-and-staff/faculty/index.html>.

### Chair, Directors & Staff:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Division</b>
Nathan Timpano	Department Chair	All/Art History
Ivan Albreht	Director of Graduate Studies	All/Studio
Kyle Trowbridge	Director of Undergraduate Studies	All/Studio
Robert Wright	Sr. Business Officer/Manager	All
Milly Cardoso	Gallery Director & Manager	All
Devin Caserta	Facilities Manager & Preparator	All
Roger Marin	IT Support Analyst/Specialist	All

### Program Coordinators:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Division</b>
Carlos Aguirre	Digital Imaging-Illustration	Studio
Ivan Albreht	Ceramics	Studio
Brian Curtis	Painting & Drawing	Studio
Lise Drost	Printmaking	Studio
Billie Lynn	Sculpture	Studio
Karen Mathews	Art History	Art History
Claudio Nolasco	E-media & Photography	Studio

### Studio Managers/TA Supervisors:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Division</b>
Tricia Cooke	Sculpture	Studio
Jenna Efrein	Glass	Studio
Jeff Larson	Digital Imaging-Illustration/ E-media & Photography	Studio
Gerardo Olhovich	Painting & Drawing	Studio
Carlos Prado	Ceramics	Studio
Lani Shapton	Printmaking	Studio

# Departmental Support for Graduate Students

## 1. Faculty Mentors

Upon entry into the MFA program, each incoming graduate student is assigned a faculty mentor. This person will be an important resource throughout the student's course of study, and will also serve as the student's direct supervisor. Typically, faculty mentors are Tenured or Tenure-Track professors.

## 2. Academic Advising & Mentoring

The student's main academic advisor is the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), though their faculty mentor may also serve as an additional academic advisor. The DGS outlines the overall requirements of the degree and ensures that students are completing the necessary requirements for the MFA program. The DGS is responsible for approving the student's schedule each semester and signing all necessary registration forms (though the faculty mentor can also sign in place of the DGS, as long as the DGS is sent a copy of the student's registration form). The DGS additionally meets with each student to ensure that adequate progress is being made through the program.

As stated above, most students enter the program with an assigned faculty mentor. The faculty mentor supervises the student's research/studio/art activities. The student and their faculty mentor also monitor the student's progress toward completion of degree requirements. In the rare event that the student has not been assigned a regular faculty mentor by the time of registration for the first semester, the DGS will function as the interim mentor. The student should consult regularly with the DGS and their faculty mentor and update them of their progress in the degree program.

Although students are advised by the DGS each semester regarding curriculum, faculty mentors should be aware of all aspects of the students' training and coursework. Mentors should meet with students regularly to see that academic efforts are coordinated with area and departmental deadlines and requirements. Students have responsibilities in addition to their research, and mentors should work with their students to make the process proceed smoothly.

The bi-semester MFA Progress Reports (see *Appendix B*) provide important feedback to the student. These forms are completed twice a semester by the student's mentor and members of the student's MFA Progress Committee during the midterm and final reviews.

In the rare case that a student's faculty mentor/Chairperson changes from one semester to the next (and prior to candidacy), please see *PART V* for procedures. When the student is admitted to candidacy, the Chairperson of the Thesis Committee automatically

becomes the student's faculty mentor. This individual may be different from the Chairperson of the student's MFA Progress Committee. *If this is the case, then PART V procedures do NOT need to be followed.* In the equally rare case of Co-Chairs, the student must designate in their file which Co-Chair will assume primary responsibility for academic advising.

While the Department's system of academic advising has been designed to forestall the occurrence of any bottlenecks in the student's progress through their degree program, it should be realized that it is ultimately the student who bears the final responsibility for completing the program successfully. The faculty mentor, having had experience with the procedures and policies of the Department and of the Graduate School, can advise the student as to the wisdom and propriety of their plans. However, this should not be seen as a substitute for the student being independently aware of the Department, their program area, and University regulations governing graduate study.

If unforeseen situations arise – such as a mentor leaving the University, or a conflict develops – the Department Chair and faculty in the student's area of concentration will facilitate the identification of an appropriate replacement mentor for the student.

### 3. Intellectual Development

The Department attempts to foster an environment for intellectual growth of its graduate students. Students frequently gain this experience through regular one-on-one meetings with their mentor and other graduate students. Students are expected to attend all of their classes, as well as departmental colloquia and visiting artist lectures unless a scheduling conflict prevents attendance. By the end of their training, students should be able to conceptualize and develop their own research studies and artistic practices.

### 4. Internship Opportunities

The Department offers graduate credit for approved internships at local museums, galleries, and institutions. If a student is interested in gaining art history credit for completing an academic internship, they must first consult with their faculty mentor(s), as well as the Program Coordinator for Art History. In order to receive 3 credits, students must complete at least 120 hours of work over a minimum of 5 weeks.

### 5. Student Performance & Feedback

In addition to serving as an advisor to the student, the faculty mentor serves to inform the rest of the faculty as to the student's progress in the MFA program. During the midterm, and at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, all faculty associated with the student's area of concentration meet to evaluate all students enrolled in their respective programs. Across these meetings, each student's academic record is examined,

including: evaluations of research/studio activities and practices; undergraduate teaching (if applicable); and TA duties.

The Department reserves the right to require additional coursework, research, or practica when necessary or desirable for a particular student. Such courses of action are rare, but should be expected for students on departmental probation, students who have failed portions of their qualifying/candidacy procedures, or whose work is otherwise judged unsatisfactory by a majority of their program faculty or area faculty, in consultation with the Department Chair.

Mentors and the Department take factors other than satisfactory grades into consideration when determining qualifications for the advanced MFA degree. An adequate GPA does not in-and-of-itself ensure continuance in the degree program. The Department keeps records of deferred and plus and minus grades, complete and incomplete courses, incomplete or poor TA duties, as well as written evaluations by instructors and mentors. These factors, along with other skills, aptitude, and record of professional behavior, are considered by the Department in determining satisfactory progress and in decisions to permit students to continue in the MFA degree program.

## 6. Financial & Insurance Matters

All full-time graduate students can either obtain or waive UM health insurance (approx. \$3,930/year), or alternatively opt into subsidized UM health insurance (students pay approx. \$789/year; paid during the first semester). Opting into the subsidized health insurance is strongly encouraged unless the student has an independent health plan, or remains on a family plan.

It is the student's responsibly to check with the DGS and the Graduate School about important deadlines regarding health insurance. Students **MUST** complete forms to either waive the insurance (usually due in **July**) or accept the subsidy (usually due in **October**). If they fail to do so, the University will automatically enroll graduate students into full-term UM health insurance policies, and students will have to pay these fees before they are allowed to register for classes.

International students must additionally provide supplemental financial documents in order to obtain a student visa through the Department and the ISSS office at UM. Failure to provide financial documents will likely delay or negate the visa application process.

Finally, graduate students are free to seek-out other forms of financial aid (i.e., student loans, grants, scholarships), though any external awards are the student's responsibility alone, and not that of the Department.

**STUDENTS SHOULD ALSO CHECK *PART V* OF THE HANDBOOK FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND PROCEDURES FOR DOCUMENTING COMPLAINTS, AS WELL AS RETENTION, REMEDIATION, AND TERMINATION ISSUES.**

# PART II: CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

All departmental curriculum requirements for the MFA degree, including specialized courses for each of the five areas of concentration, can be found via the following hyperlink, which connects to the University Academic Bulletin: <https://bulletin.miami.edu/graduate-academic-programs/arts-sciences/art-art-history/studio-art-mfa/>

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Graduate Seminars		
ART 604	Seminar in Studio Art	3
ART 699	Exhibition Preparation	3
ARH 698	Seminar in Contemporary Art	3
Additional Requirements		
Choose 3 from the following:		9
ARH 605	Problems in Art History	
ARH 606	Problems in Art History	
ARH 607	Museum Studies Seminar	
ARH 610	Arts Administration Internship	
ARH 660	Seminar in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Art	
Studio Concentration Courses		24
Studio and/or Other (non-Departmental) Graduate Electives		12
ART 810	Master's Thesis	6
Total Credit Hours		60

# Studio Concentration Options\*

## Painting

Code	Title	Credit Hours
ART 641	Graduate Painting I	1-6
ART 642	Graduate Painting II	1-6
ART 643	Graduate Painting III	1-6
ART 644	Graduate Painting IV	1-6
ART 645	Graduate Painting V	1-6
ART 646	Advanced Painting VIII	1-6

## Printmaking

Code	Title	Credit Hours
ART 651	Intaglio/Relief	1-6
ART 652	Lithography	1-6
ART 653	Silkscreen	1-6
ART 654	Topics in Printmaking	1-6
ART 655	Topics in Printmaking	1-6

## Sculpture

Code	Title	Credit Hours
ART 671	Graduate Sculpture I	1-6
ART 672	Graduate Sculpture II	1-6
ART 673	Graduate Sculpture III	1-6
ART 674	Graduate Sculpture IV	1-6
ART 675	Graduate Sculpture V	1-6
ART 676	Graduate Sculpture VI	1-6



## Ceramics

Code	Title	Credit Hours
ART 682	Contemporary Ceramic Art I	1-6
ART 683	Contemporary Ceramic Art II	1-6
ART 684	Contemporary Ceramics Art III	1-6
ART 685	Contemporary Ceramics Art IV	1-6
ART 686	Contemporary Ceramic Art V	1-6
ART 687	Contemporary Ceramic Art VI	1-6
ART 688	Independent Study in Ceramics/Glass	1-6
ART 689	Directed Research and Projects in Ceramics/Glass	3

## Digital Imaging-Illustration/Photography

Code	Title	Credit Hours
ART 630	Graduate Digital Photography I	1-6
ART 631	Graduate Digital Photography II	1-6
ART 632	Graduate Independent Study in Photography	1-6
ART 633	Graduate Digital Photography III	1-6
ART 663	Portfolio/Business Design	3
ART 664	Special Projects/Multimedia/Portfolio	1-6
ART 665	Graphic Design	3
ART 666	Multimedia	3
ART 667	Experimental Illustration for Print and Interactive Media	3

\*Course sequencing is a guideline, but not necessarily a requirement to move through the program and/or one's area of concentration. An individual student may engage in alternative course sequencing from their peers at the request of their Progress Committee and/or Thesis Committee.

# PART III: PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

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# Master's Thesis Requirements

## 1. Overview

As previously stated, there are many steps that a student must complete in order to receive the MFA degree. These include: (1) successfully completing the Department's core courses (with good grades and a 3.0 GPA), (2) successfully completing the Area's core courses, (3) demonstrating continued productivity and artistic growth, (4) successfully completing qualifying procedures, including reaching candidacy and completing a Master's Thesis Document, and (6) completing the MFA Thesis Exhibition and successfully defending the MFA Document at the Thesis Exhibition.

To apply for candidacy, the students must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 credits in the program. In consultation with their faculty mentor and/or *MFA Progress Committee*, the student should then arrange with their Supervisory Committee to hold their candidacy review no later than the final critique in the Fall semester of their third year.

If the student successfully defends his/her/their work during the candidacy review, then they must complete the Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Master of Fine Arts Degree (see *Appendix C*) with their committee members and mentor. Failure to complete and submit the completed Application to the DGS will jeopardize the student's candidacy within the program, and may keep them from defending on-time.

## 2. Steps for Completing the Thesis Document & Exhibition

Please see the Guidelines for Preparing the MFA Document (see *Appendix D*). Students will not be cleared for graduation by the DGS until all official, signed Thesis forms have been received by the Department.

# Residency & Deferrals

## 1. Residency Requirement

Graduate students in Studio Art must be in-residence for the duration of the MFA program. Students requesting an exception to this policy for a semester must receive permission from their mentor, their DGS, and the Department Chair. Otherwise, an unpaid deferral or leave (medical or otherwise) will be recommended for a semester or a year, but not longer.

## 2. Part-Time Status

Graduate study within the Department has been designed for full-time students. Teaching Assistants must attend full time and be on campus throughout the course of their study, unless they have been approved for a deferral or leave (see below). Those admitted as part-time graduate students may enroll if they are either paying tuition, or are on tuition remission. Studio spaces for part-time students will depend on availability.

## 3. Deferrals or Leaves

On occasion, students have been allowed to take a one-semester, non-medical leave of absence so that upon their return they may complete their course of study on a full-time basis. Year-long leaves have recently been approved as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, though year-long leaves are not common. An unpaid leave means that the student will not receive his/her/their stipend during the leave period.

The procedure for requesting part-time status, or a leave of absence, is as follows:

1. The student should discuss the need for a change from full-time status with their faculty supervisor and the DGS.
2. If it is determined that a leave of absence would be beneficial, the student should write a letter stating their request, including the reasons for making the request, to the DGS. The DGS should receive the request no later than two weeks prior to the desired change in status between semesters. This means at least two weeks prior to registration for the next semester.
3. The DGS will then contact the Graduate School and initiate the official paperwork necessary to defer the student and/or place them on unpaid leave.

4. Students who are placed on leave must then apply for readmission, in order to have their status and stipend reinstated. The DGS will assist them with these procedures.
5. If a year-long leave is requested by an incoming student (i.e., an as-of-yet, non-matriculated student), the student will remain accepted, but will need to reapply for a Teaching Assistantship, as financial aid is not guaranteed.

# PART IV: PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

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# Departmental Policies, Practices & Guidelines

## 1. Mission Statement

The Department offers graduate study centered on the intersection between studio art, the humanities, and the liberal arts. The three-year MFA program is specifically designed to provide our students with the skills and mastery needed for personal development and career success in traditional and conceptual-based practices, as well as teaching studio art at the high school or college level. Alongside a faculty of highly regarded artists and art historians, talented individuals engage in concentrated research areas in the fine arts.

## 2. Student Rights & Responsibilities

All University of Miami students are subject to the policies and procedures defined in the Graduate Student Handbook, available here:

<https://www.grad.miami.edu/assets/pdf/graduate-student-handbook-2020-2021.pdf>.

Please also consult the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, available here:

[https://doso.studentaffairs.miami.edu/assets/pdf/policies/student\\_rights\\_and\\_responsibilities\\_handbook.pdf](https://doso.studentaffairs.miami.edu/assets/pdf/policies/student_rights_and_responsibilities_handbook.pdf).

## 3. Faculty Mentor/Committee Rights & Responsibilities

All faculty mentors and committee members have the responsibility to guide each student in their respective area/program in accordance with the University's best practices, as well as the Department's Mission Statement.

All faculty mentors also possess the right to dismiss students from their area/program, and may also advise dismissing a student from the MFA degree program altogether (see *PART V*). In such instances, the faculty member must first consult the DGS and the Department Chair, who will then consult the Graduate School, Student Affairs, and Faculty Affairs.

## 4. Graduate Student Honor Code

For issues pertaining to academic misconduct or dishonesty, graduate students should refer to the Graduate Student Honor Code, found here:

[https://www.grad.miami.edu/assets/pdf/graduate\\_student\\_honor\\_code.pdf](https://www.grad.miami.edu/assets/pdf/graduate_student_honor_code.pdf).

## 5. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional use of someone else's words (e.g., direct quotes), thoughts (e.g., paraphrased quotes), ideas (e.g., artworks), or internet materials in your own writings/presentations as if you had come up with them on your own. Plagiarism is the theft of intellectual property and is not unlike stealing from a commercial business. Another issue to consider is when students present the same paper as original work for two different art history courses, with two different professors.

Although the University of Miami has established strict policies against plagiarism by students there are currently no web-based courses on plagiarism available. The Department will therefore assess all MFA Thesis Documents for potential plagiarism. If a student is found to have definitively and knowingly plagiarized all, or portions of, his/her/their MFA Thesis Document, they will be dismissed from the program without earning their MFA degree.

## 6. Disability/Impairment Issues

If you have an issue that affects your ability to complete your responsibilities, even temporarily (e.g., health, psychological, family, or personal reasons), please understand that it is your responsibility to let those who supervise you know about your status. Personal problems do not excuse you from conducting yourself in a professional manner (e.g., conducting oneself professionally in the Department; turning in work in a timely manner; meeting with mentors and committee members on time; showing up for class, meetings, and reviews on time; etc.).

Faculty and studio supervisors are willing to make reasonable accommodations if they are consulted in advance. If you are extensively differently abled (e.g., learning disability; a physical or mental health condition) that may affect your academic, studio, or artistic performance, you should consult with the Office of Disabilities Services. Reasonable accommodations can be made if a disability is documented, but this needs to be done before a problem occurs, not after. The faculty are all caring, empathetic individuals, and protocols and procedures must be followed to ensure equity across the program.

The Office of Disabilities Services is a subdivision of the University of Miami Camner Center for Academic Resources. The contact information is as follows:

Whitten University Center, Suite 2400, Telephone: 305-284-2800  
Hours: 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

## 7. Guidance for Pregnant and Parenting Students

The University of Miami is committed to creating a culture of belonging for all students,



including those who are pregnant and parenting. If a student becomes pregnant, they *should disclose their status to the DGS*, who will make sure they will not be exposed to any harmful substances/hazardous materials during the course of their study. A document providing guidance for pregnant and parenting students at UM is posted on the University's Title IX website at the following hyperlink:

[https://titleix.miami.edu/assets/pdf/documents/pregnant-and-parenting-students\\_guidance.pdf](https://titleix.miami.edu/assets/pdf/documents/pregnant-and-parenting-students_guidance.pdf).

## 8. Personal Problems

Examples of personal problems include, but are not limited to: substance abuse; maladaptive social behaviors; untreated mental or physical health issues; and dishonesty in dealing with peers, supervisors, clients, or others. Depending on the severity of the problem, a student may be asked to consult with Graduate School administrators about their *good standing* in the Graduate School.

Any accusation of bullying, dishonesty, or maladaptive and threatening social behaviors within the Department should be brought to the immediate attention of the Department Chair.

## 9. Non-Discrimination Policy

The Department endorses the University of Miami's policy on non-discrimination, as described on its website. The core of the policy statement reads as follows:

"It is the policy of the University of Miami that no person within the jurisdiction thereof shall, on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination or harassment (including all forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence) under any program or activity of the University, regardless of whether such program or activity occurs on-campus or off-campus."

Any accusation of discrimination within the Department should be brought to the immediate attention of the Department Chair and/or the DGS.

## 10. Sexual Harassment Policy

The Department will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse on the part of its faculty, staff, or students. The Department also endorses the University's policy on sexual harassment. Full disclosure of the University of Miami's policies on sexual harassment can be found on the University website. The core of the policy is provided here:

“The University of Miami is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of discrimination including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the University’s Sexual Harassment Policy. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal abuse of a sexual nature including graphic commentaries about an individual’s body, sexually degrading remarks used to describe an individual, or unwelcome propositions and physical advances of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also includes the threat of insinuation that sexual submission or the lack thereof will be used as a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting or interfering with an individual’s salary, academic standing, or other conditions of employment, educational, or career development. It is the policy of the University to promote a cooperative work and learning environment in which mutual respect exists for all University students, faculty members, and employees. Sexual harassment is inconsistent with this objective and contrary to the University’s policy.”

All graduate students, faculty, and staff in the Department are required to attend a Sexual Harassment Workshop during their first few weeks at the University. This especially applies to graduate students who teach undergraduate courses during their residency in the program.

## 11. Diversity & Equity

The Department is strongly committed to promoting diversity and equity. Faculty and administrators recognize that there are many aspects of diversity, including differences among dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, socioeconomic status, age, geography, national origin, and physical ability. We also recognize that any given individual may identify along more than one of these dimensions.

# PART V: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

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# Procedures for Documenting Complaints

## 1. Grievance Procedures

Graduate students have multiple avenues available for handling complaints or concerns that may arise. Students have the option of consulting any faculty member of their choosing, their faculty mentor, the DGS, and/or the Department Chair. The Department also has a faculty Ombudsperson (currently the DGS), who can hear complaints and concerns and help to resolve differences.

Students are encouraged to discuss concerns using any of the above options as a sounding board, and to gain advice or guidance. If a student wishes to pursue a change based on the presenting concern, the following steps should be used:

Step 1: The student should first attempt to resolve the concern with the faculty member, mentor, or supervisor, if possible. The student is encouraged to discuss the concern and attempt to find a resolution.

Step 2: If Step 1 is not successful, the student should then present the concern to the DGS. If a student presents a concern to a faculty member prior to Step 1, they will be encouraged to discuss the concern with the DGS and the faculty member in question (as a group).

Step 3: Mediation between the student and faculty member, mentor, or supervisor may be necessary. At this stage, the Department Chair and the DGS are involved in the mediation. This results in a mediation agreement, which the student and faculty member, mentor, or supervisor both formally sign and agree to follow.

Step 4: If the mediation agreement is not followed, the student must inform the Department Chair and DGS. If mediation is not successful, the student and faculty mentor will be aided in making the appropriate changes.

If a problem cannot be resolved at the Department level, the next step is to present complaints to the Dean of Students and Dean of the Graduate School. The webpage for the Dean of Students contains more information on University procedures for complaints and concerns. The page also has a link to the Handbook on Students Rights and Responsibilities (also provided on *page 23*).

## 2. Procedures for Documenting Complaints

After appropriate discussions with the Department Chair, DGS, faculty mentor, and/or supervisors have occurred, but have not resolved the issue, it may be the case that a student wishes to file a formal complaint (e.g., to request reinstatement in the MFA program after a dismissal). In such cases, the procedures for due process are as follows.

1. The student should write a letter to their Area Head and Department Chair making the formal request and explaining the case. For TA Duty complaints (e.g., why an individual's stipend should be reinstated) the student should write this letter to the Department Chair.
2. The request will then be reviewed by the Department's Advisory Group (i.e., the Department Chair, the DGS, the faculty mentor, and one additional faculty member outside of the student's Area).
3. The Advisory Group will present the formal complaint and make a recommendation to be made to the entire faculty.
4. The recommendations of the Advisory Group will then be discussed and voted on by the full Department (PT/FT/TT faculty).
5. If the complaint is dismissed by the Department, or if the decision is not to the satisfaction of the student, the student can file a formal complaint with the Graduate School (the link to the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) can be found on *page 23*).

## 3. Remediation

The following steps should be followed if remediation is found to be the best course of action in resolving a complaint:

1. Via meetings with the designated faculty (as noted above), and/or with the student's mentor, and/or the DGS, a remediation plan is developed if the problem is considered remediable. When a concern is raised about a student by a supervisor, or during the semester evaluations, our practice is to clearly describe the concern, linking it to measurable or observable behaviors (e.g., competencies indicated on the [MFA Progress Reports](#)). For example, concerns have been raised about students' professional skills, such as the use of specialized equipment or supervising undergraduate students in workshop/studio spaces.
2. Our emphasis on observable behaviors/competencies, together with independent evaluators, increases the likelihood that the student will accept feedback and understand how remediation efforts are operationalized. In addition, our practice is to involve the student in a dialogue about the nature of the observed problems, so

that the student has an opportunity to offer an opinion about what is causing the problem and make suggestions regarding its resolution. Following a student-faculty meeting to discuss concerns and remediation plans, the student is asked to prepare a summary of the conversation, which is then reviewed and approved by the participating faculty and placed in the student's Department file.

3. Remediation plans are linked to the conceptualization of the problem and require specific goals for the student. Plans also specify a period of follow-up, a timeline for re-evaluation, and consequences for failure to correct the problem. Examples of our remediation efforts include the following: (1) supplementary practicum with augmented supervision in the case of a competency deficit; (2) counseling to address poor stress management skills that interfered with a student's progress; and (3) a leave of absence (with encouragement for therapy) to resolve personal issues that impede performance for students whose problems are believed to be personal in nature (e.g., family problems, psychiatric illness, substance use, etc.).

#### 4. Removal from the Graduate Program

After appropriate remediations with the Dean of the Graduate School, the Department Chair, the DGS, the faculty mentor, and/or supervisors have occurred, but have not resolved the issue, the student will be dismissed from the program.

The student can appeal the dismissal with the Dean of the Graduate School, though the appeal process does not guarantee re-entry into the Department or University.

*Appendix A*

**DEPARTMENT OF ART & ART HISTORY  
Student Handbook Agreement Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Handbook, and by signing below, understand that I am responsible for/bound to the policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines described within.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

*Appendix B*

**DEPARTMENT OF ART & ART HISTORY**  
**Metal & Wood Shop Equipment Training Certificate**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have successfully completed training on \_\_\_\_\_, and by signing below, understand that I am responsible for properly operating and maintaining said equipment without faculty supervision.

I also understand that I am not permitted to use any other equipment unsupervised in the shops, labs, or studios for which I have not been properly trained on, *and* do not possess a signed **Equipment Training Certificate** for.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Faculty Mentor Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Studio Supervisor Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*



Appendix C

Department of Art & Art History, University of Miami

**MFA Progress Report**

Once completed, please send a copy of the signed form to the student and the DGS (for the student's file).

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Midterm/Final (circle) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee names and signatures (please print name next to signature):**

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Members: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student made satisfactory progress toward the MFA degree requirement leading up to & during this review:**

Academic/Studio Progress:       Yes       Defer (student must submit work prior to the next review)\*       No (1st: warning; 2nd: probation; 3rd: dismissal)

Teaching or TA Observation:       Yes       Defer (student will be given feedback on improvements that need to be made prior to the next review)       No (1st: student may not teach the following semester; 2nd: no teaching)

TA Duties & Hours:       Yes       Defer (student will be given feedback and/or make up missing hours/duties prior to the next review)       No (1st: warning; 2nd: probation; 3rd: no funding)

**Comments** (please attach an additional sheet, if necessary. \*Any “defers” require another review form; any “no” ratings must be explained below, on the back of this form, or on an additional sheet, if space does not allow):

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_