



December 12, 2017

Dear Vice-Provost Smith,

Attached to this letter is an outline and justification for proposed changes to the Department of Art's MFA credit requirements. These changes to independent study requirements have no impact on required curricular coursework for the MFA degree and do not negatively impact any compliance with NASAD guidelines. The proposed changes will allow greater flexibility for our students, provide them with more research time, and bring our MFA minimum credit requirement to graduate in line with other MFA programs at peer institutions. The changes have been drafted by the Department's Graduate Studies Committee, approved by the faculty and Department Chair.

Attached you will find:

- Program introduction
- Description and justification of proposed changes
- Draft of new MFA Checklist with changes.
- Copy of existing MFA Checklist for comparison.

Sincerely,

George Rush
Associate Professor of Art
Chair, Graduate Studies
Department of Art
The Ohio State University

The Department of Art is proposing two changes in credit requirements for its MFA degree. The proposed changes to independent study requirements have no impact on required curricular coursework for the MFA degree. These changes do not negatively impact any compliance with NASAD guidelines.

Introduction: Department of Art MFA

The Department of Art MFA degree is a three-year program, or a minimum of six semesters, designed to support a concentrated effort in a student's visual art research. The degree is recognized as the terminal degree for college teaching.

The major requirements to earn the MFA degree include:

- satisfactory completion of five formal reviews plus a final master's examination/oral exam
- participation in three group exhibitions, including a MFA Thesis Exhibition
- completion of a written thesis.

Students are accepted into the program within one of seven visual arts disciplines: Art and Technology, Ceramics, Glass, Painting and Drawing, Photography, Printmaking, and Sculpture. Individually these are referred to as a student's Major Area. Typically, a Major Area advisor guides each student through their MFA studies, including a completion of the exhibition and written thesis requirements.

The core research in the MFA program is independent studio work (art making). University credit for research is earned through **Studio Credit Hours** and Group Critiques. There are two types of Studio Credit Hours: **Major Area Studio Hours** and **Elective Studio Hours**. Major Area Studio Hours are taken with faculty and affiliated faculty within the student's Major Area. Elective Studio Hours are taken with faculty from outside a student's Major Area but within the Department of Art. The MFA program also requires additional coursework from within as well as from outside the Department; these requirements – clearly outlined on the included checklist – will not be affected by our proposed changes below.

Proposed Curricular Changes

1. Reducing the minimum credit hours for graduation.

Currently Required:

72 credit hours (minimum)

Proposed Requirement:

66 credit hours (minimum).

Justification for reduction:

- This reduction brings our MFA program in line with other peer programs (i.e. University of Texas, Austin; University of Wisconsin, Madison; and Virginia Commonwealth University each require 60 credit hours). It more closely matches requirements of other OSU MFA programs (i.e. Dance 60, Theater 69).
- Reducing total credit hour requirements will provide students more studio research time. Currently, in order to earn enough credit hours to graduate, students in our MFA program must register for extra independent studio hours with faculty, which often places excessive demands on both the students' and the faculty's time and energy.
- Most students take more than the minimum required credit hours. Maximum credit hours (94) will remain unchanged.
- Reducing credit hour requirements from 72 to 66 will provide needed research time for students completing their MFA exhibition and written thesis work in order to graduate in their third year.

2. Reducing and reorganizing Studio Credit Hours.

Current Studio Credit Hours required: 40 (minimum)-52 (maximum) -
-23 required minimum Major Area studio credit hours
-12 required minimum Elective Studio credit hours (outside the Major Area)
-5 Studio credit hours earned through Major Area group critiques.

Proposed Studio Credit Hour requirement: 34 (minimum)-52 (maximum)
-9 minimum Major Area studio credit hours
-9 minimum Elective Studio credit hours (outside the Major Area)
-**NEW**: 11 minimum-29 maximum "Flex Studio credit hours" from either within or outside the Major Area within the Department of Art.
-5 Studio credit hours earned through group critiques (**unchanged**).

Justification for changes

- Reflects the increased interdisciplinary nature of contemporary art practices. Department of Art areas were created when the division between materials-based disciplines was more apparent and important. Students now seek and need opportunities to work with faculty from a broad range of disciplinary backgrounds.

- The Department as a whole is rethinking the effectiveness of its current curricular structure of seven, materials-based areas of study, and is working towards reorganizing into fewer, multidisciplinary areas. The proposed MFA Studio credit reorganization anticipates this change.
- Creates more flexibility for students working in areas with a single faculty member. Two areas (glass and printmaking) each currently have one faculty only, making it difficult for MFA students in these areas to complete their required Major Studio Hours. Over the past two years the Graduate Studies Committee has already made allowances for students in this situation needing to shift credits from Major Studio to Elective Studio Hours. The proposed more flexible and open structure will allow students to select faculty without petition.
- Slightly reducing Studio Credit hours is the most logical way to remove 6 credit hours from the MFA requirements. The Department of Art strongly supports our students' engagement with the rich scholarly resources of the University as a whole. Therefore, if we lower the overall MFA credit requirement, it makes most sense to remove them from Studio Studies.
- Provides more research time for both students and faculty. It may seem that fewer required Studio Credit Hours might mean students would do less work. We think the opposite will be the case, because students often take Studio Credit hours only to fulfill overall MFA credit requirements, thus creating extra work for faculty as well as taking time away from the student's focus.
- Allows more flexibility for both "depth" and "breadth". The proposed new Flex Hours, allow students wishing to continue working closely within a single area of specialization to do so.

A note about check sheets and information on the Department website: Over the last three years the Department has had several administrative personnel changes, resulting in some discrepancies between these two platforms. Our new Graduate Coordinator (hopefully hired soon) will fix this in coordination with the Department Chair and Graduate Studies Committee.

Appendix B MFA Checklist

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ART --- 3 YEAR M.F.A.
GRADUATE CREDIT CHECKLIST **72 CREDITS HOURS REQUIRED**

STUDENT NAME: _____

MAJOR AREA: _____

FACULTY ADVISOR: _____

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS: _____

Studio Studies (40-52 CREDITS)	MAJOR AREA STUDIO HOURS	23 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year
		up to 6 CREDITS of Area Courses or Directed Study						
		ART 669X/779X/889X in major studio area						
		1 Art and Tech						
		2 Ceramics						
		3 Glass						
		4 Painting & Drawing						
		5 Photography						
		6 Printmaking						
		7 Sculpture						
		Note: X = Area Designation						
	ELECTIVE STUDIO HOURS	12 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year
		21 CREDITS MAXIMUM						
		ART 669X/779X/889X or studio courses, <u>outside</u> of your major area in Art or other studio-based environments or with Affiliated Faculty and others approved by your advisor. ASC 6750 is included in this section. 6008 Area Independent						

UNIVERSITY STUDIES (12-24 CREDITS; MAXIMUM OF 6 CREDITS/SEMESTER)	MFA COMMON STUDIES (15-18 CREDITS)	5 CREDITS	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year	
			1 per semester required except 6th semester; ART 689X in your major studio area	ART 689X		1		AU	1
				ART 689X		1		SP	1
				ART 689X		1		AU	2
				ART 689X		1		SP	2
				ART 689X		1		AU	3
		12 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year	
			Includes Interdisciplinary, Teaching, Writing, and Topic Based Seminars	ART 6018	Interdisciplinary	3		AU	1
				ART 6108	Teaching	3		SP	1
				ART 7208	Writing	3		SP	2
				ART 7108		3		AU	
				ART 7108					
				ART 7108					
				ART 7108					
		ART 7108							
		3 CREDITS MINIMUM 8 CREDITS MAXIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year	
			2-5 per semester recommended in 3rd Year	ART 7999.01	Thesis Advising	1		AU	3
				ART 7999.02	Thesis Exhibition	1		SP	3
				ART 7999.03	Thesis Writing	1		SP	3
		3 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year	
			HISTORY OF ART 4000 and above with G designation	HIST OF ART					
		3 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year	
Academic courses or specialized study numbered 4000 and above <u>within</u> the Arts and Humanities (excluding Art Department Courses)									

	OUTSIDE THE Visual & Performing Arts	3 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year
		Academic courses or specialized study numbered 4000 and above with G designation in departments <u>outside</u> the division of the arts.						
	OTHER ELECTIVES	3 CREDITS MINIMUM	Course #	Description	Cr.	Grade	Sem	Year
		Academic coursework in any one of the above three categories						