

## **BFA DEGREE PROJECT GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS**

During the last semester of the senior year students are required to enroll in the BFA Degree Project (Art 401) for 6 credits and the Integrated Experience course (Art 402) for 3 credits.

### **Choosing a Committee**

All senior BFA Studio Art majors must select two full-time faculty members to direct their thesis project **prior to pre-registration**. Choose one person to chair the committee and the second to serve as a member. A faculty member from another college in the Five Colleges may serve as a third committee person. It is not only your RESPONSIBILITY but also your RIGHT to SELECT the membership of your thesis committee. You are encouraged to choose faculty who you believe will best assist you with the successful completion of your degree project. You are not obligated to have a faculty member from your discipline on your committee. It is important to note, however, that faculty participate on thesis committees as a matter of choice and not obligation. You should determine which member of your committee you would like to serve as the chair. The faculty member in question will need to agree, as she/he will understandably have more responsibility for the thesis project than the remaining members of the committee.

### **Exhibition and Thesis Project**

It is **not** required that you have an exhibition in connection with the final presentation of the Degree Project, however, it is **highly** recommended. If you are going to exhibit your work you are advised and encouraged to arrange well in advance of your thesis semester a location to exhibit at one of the campus galleries or other public context:

### **List of On-Campus Galleries**

Student Union Gallery  
Augusta Savage Gallery  
Hampden Gallery  
Incubator at Hampden

Your thesis project should contain enough work to fill the space you are exhibiting in. There is no precise number of pieces required, however, the work should be adequate to display your technical ability and thesis ideas clearly and justify the number of credits you registered for. Visualize the appearance of your exhibition often, including the method of presentation.

### **Submitting a Project Proposal**

1. Download the [Title Page](#) and type in your name and the names of your committee members, and have your committee sign. Please be sure to type in the year of your thesis project underneath "Amherst, Massachusetts".
2. Create a proposal for your thesis project, attach it to the title page and submit it to your committee members. Upon approval they will sign the title page. Your proposal should include:
  - A statement of intent that clearly articulates what the thesis work will consist of.
  - A description of media and methods that you will employ in completing your work.
  - A brief description of how you are situating your project in relationship to historical and contemporary art practices.
3. Return the title page signed by your committee, along with your proposal, to SAB 218. See sample signature page attached.

## **Minimum Hours and Meeting Times with Committee Members**

Once the committee is formed, it is your responsibility to arrange for the requisite number of meetings with all members. You are required to have at least 7 meetings with your committee as part of your course work for Art 401. The meeting times should be equally spread across the entire semester. Individual faculty members may request more hours and meeting times.

Download the [Meeting Schedule](#) for your committee members to sign and date each time you meet with them. This is required and is your responsibility to maintain. The BFA Thesis Committee Signature Chart must be turned in after the oral examination, along with completed thesis book and documentation, to SAB 218.

## **Thesis Paper**

Writing is an integral part of contemporary studio practice. The thesis paper affords an opportunity to write about your work, exploring and situating its art-historical, theoretical, and personal sources and precedents; its form and process; its motivation and its interpretation. Your paper should be submitted in draft form to committee members well in advance of the final weeks of the semester so that they can provide you with feedback. The finished paper, (hard copy), should then be given to your committee members **one week** before the date of your oral examination. Print out **two** copies of the thesis paper title sheet to bring with you to the oral defense. Make sure all of the information on this sheet is correct, including the spelling of your thesis committee member's names and the title of your thesis.

The paper should be approximately ten pages in length, double-spaced and must include the following:

- An Introduction
- Sources and precedents to be included in the main body of the text (you can insert images into this section).
- Conclusion
- Technical Information
- Self-Evaluation
- Bibliography

## **Oral Examination**

Mid way through the semester **you should schedule the date and time of your orals with your committee members.** During the oral examination (approximately 45 minutes in length) you will be asked to "defend" your thesis project and paper by addressing the central ideas and sources of inspiration that motivated the project. There should be a **clear correspondence between the work and your words.** If the project work and thesis paper are approved (in terms of form and content), you can obtain approval signatures from the committee members on the title page. In some cases there is additional work to be done on the paper and this is not identified until the oral examination. The second member of your committee might defer to the chair to oversee these changes, in which case you can acquire the second member's signature on the title page. The chair will sign off on the project when the agreed upon changes are made.

**The Completed Degree Project book must contain the following, to be submitted to SAB 218 by the last day of Final Exams:**

- Title page signed by both your committee members, with correct year, and discipline.
- Thesis Paper
- Exhibition information (include location and dates)

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- Photograph of the BFA candidate working on the project
- Signed BFA Thesis Committee Meeting Schedule
- Documentation of all works associated with the project\*.

## **\*Guidelines for the Documentation of your Creative Works**

Include a list of your work as a Word document with the following:

- Name of the file
- Dimensions
- Date of work
- Medium
- Title
- Thumbnail sized image 150-200 pixels wide

### **Still Works / Images:**

JPEGS sized at a minimum of 1000 and a maximum of 2000 pixels wide, maximum 4 megabytes.  
Each piece must be numbered (corresponding to the order of viewing).

### **Time Based Works:**

QuickTime, DVD, or Link to Vimeo or other on-line source

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**A Degree Project Presented for the Partial Fulfillment of the  
Degree of BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS in  
(type your discipline)**

**By  
(type your name)**

**DEPARTMENT OF ART  
College of Humanities and Fine Arts  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Massachusetts  
(type the year of thesis)**

**Advisors:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Name typed) – Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Name typed) – Co-Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Shona Macdonald  
Chair, Department of Art**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Robin Mandel  
Undergraduate Program Director: Studio Art**