

HISTORY OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

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**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE**

GUIDE TO THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

The purpose of the Master of Arts Program is to provide a course of study for advanced students that will allow them to develop a high degree of professional competence and a broad foundation for further work in the discipline.

Founded in 1969, the M.A. Program is the only graduate degree program in the field at a public university in New England. Enrollment in the two-year Program does not exceed 20 students. With nine full-time faculty members, the Program supports an advantageous student/faculty ratio. We prepare students for doctoral study and provide professional training for many careers, including museum and historical society work, government programs in the arts, the art market, journalism, and teaching at all levels.

Acceptance in the Program

Applicants to the M.A. Program submit an application form, two letters of recommendation, transcripts of academic work, and a writing sample (7-20 pages). A faculty committee evaluates the file, giving priority to the candidate's overall academic background in the humanities, foreign language competency, letters of recommendation, motivation and interest.

The Department seeks to support graduate students financially as fully as possible through appointments as teaching assistantships, grants and fellowship awards, including a Graduate Diversity Fellowship. Teaching positions provide students with a stipend and full tuition credit. Smaller grants are awarded to help defray the cost of tuition for students who are not teaching assistants. All those admitted to the Program are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to determine eligibility for financial aid, including work-study.

Degree Coursework Requirements and Guidelines

- I. Thirty graduate-level credits are required for the M.A. degree.
- II. These credits are to be distributed in the following way:

1. Four graduate seminars (700-level) in the Department, one of which must be the Methods seminar taken in the first year.
2. The remaining classes should be taken with four different Art History faculty members. The four do not include instructors for Methods and the Museum Studies seminar.
3. It is strongly recommended that students take at least three courses in their major field of study and two courses in their minor field (see the section on Examinations for the M.A. Degree below).
4. One course may come from outside History of Art and Architecture with the agreement of the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Director.

III. A full-time course load as defined by the Graduate School is nine credits per semester. The Graduate Program Director (GPD) must approve all proposed courses.

IV. From time to time, students have elected to take additional courses for audit credit, as opposed to full credit. This option is particularly useful in preparing for the Image Exam (described below). Official audits appear on the transcript, but do not count toward the degree requirements stated above. The minimum standard for an audit is regular attendance, with no absences. Permission of the instructor is required, and students should be sure to check with the instructor to determine what constitutes an audit, since requirements may vary from instructor to instructor. Furthermore, while the Graduate School allows for a change from graded credit to audit until the last day of classes, the student must have permission of the instructor for the change and must be passing the course at that point. The last day for graduate students to drop a class (which appears as DR on the transcript) is listed yearly on the academic calendar.

V. While students are encouraged to pursue individualized work, no more than six credits of Independent Study may be counted toward the 30 hours for the degree.

VI. The University allows transfer of up to six credits of graduate work at another institution or six credits completed as a non-degree graduate student on campus (provided that the student registered for the course through the Graduate School). Individual petition to the GPD accomplishes the transfer.

Graduate Student Advising

In the first year of study, during Counseling Week each semester each student consults with the GPD about his or her schedule. The GPD will help students balance their level of preparation and interests with the general requirements and pattern of offerings.

At the end of the first year, graduate students select a faculty advisor in their major field of study. The faculty advisor serves as chair of the student's M.A. Examination committee, discusses coursework, and offers career counseling.

Foreign Language Requirement

For most careers in the history of art and architecture, a knowledge of foreign languages, especially French and German, is extremely important and often a fundamental requirement. Students in the M.A. Program are expected to read in a foreign language in connection with their academic work, especially in seminars.

Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of French, German, or Italian in order to receive the M.A. degree, and they must pass a language examination before becoming eligible to take the M.A. Examination. In special cases, students may petition for recognition of another language that is directly related to research in their field of interest to fulfill the requirement.

The written examination requires translating a selected passage of art-historical writing into English. The passage must be translated in 90 minutes with the use of a dictionary. The GPD administers the examination once at the beginning of each semester. Individual exams will not be given for students who do not pass at the beginning of the semester. All students are required to take the examination during their first semester and subsequently until they have passed it. The faculty considers language proficiency in making awards for Teaching Assistantships.

Students who do not pass the examination at once are required to take for credit or officially audit a language course during their first semester. They must continue to take language courses or other concrete steps toward learning a language, as determined by the GPD, until the requirement is met. In exceptional circumstances graduate-level study of a foreign language may satisfy the requirement.

Examinations for the M.A. Degree

There is no thesis requirement for the M.A. in History of Art and Architecture. Instead, there are two written exams, the Image Exam and the Essay Exam, both of which are offered twice a year, as well as a culminating Oral Exam. Students with incompletes in coursework may not take the Image, Essay, or Oral exam.

I. Timing

The Image exam is given during the beginning of November and the last week of March. Exact dates to be announced. The Essay Exam is given on a subsequent day to be announced in both months. Students may take the Image Exam during their penultimate semester of coursework or later. Students may take the Essay Exam no earlier than the last semester of coursework.

In the case of students who take both exams on the same day, the Committee will evaluate the Image Exam first. If the student passes the Image Exam, then the Committee will evaluate the Essay Exam.

No portion of the Image Exam may be rewritten, but a student may retake the entire Image Exam once. Students who pass the Image Exam but fail the Essay Exam may retake the Essay Exam once. In this circumstance, portions of the Essay Exam may not be rewritten, but the student must retake the entire Essay Exam.

II. The Image Exam

1. 18 Image Identifications (5 minutes each)

Students must identify and write cogently about each image, which has been selected from a list of about 200 works of art in a wide range of fields. The list of works for the following year is made available in February. Students are responsible for finding the images and conducting research about them, whether or not the images were covered in their coursework. Responses to the images must demonstrate knowledge appropriate for a graduate-level exam in individual courses.

2. 5 Unknown Images (15 minutes each)

Students will be shown nine unknown images (one selected by each member of the graduate faculty). They must attribute and write about five of the nine. The unknowns will be given to each student during the Exam as a packet of color reproductions.

III. The Essay Exam

In the first week of the semester during which a student plans to take the Essay Exam, he or she must provide the GPD with a list of coursework to be counted for the degree. At that time, the student will declare a major and minor field of concentration. The student must also select two members from the faculty as an examining committee and must identify one as committee chair. The faculty will appoint a third committee member if there is a tie vote in evaluating the Essay Exam. The members of the committee usually represent the major and minor fields of concentration. An additional faculty member may serve on the committee in the case of a publishable paper (see below).

For the Essay Exam, students must answer two of at least three questions in the major field and one of at least two questions in the minor field. Each essay is one-hour long. The fields are listed below. Other fields may be selected with faculty consent.

- European/American Art before 1750
 - Ancient
 - Medieval
 - Italian Renaissance and Baroque
 - Colonial Latin America

- European/American Art after 1750
 - American Art (Colonial to 1940)
 - European, 1750 to 1914
 - European/American Art, 1880 to the present
 - Architecture in Europe and the United States, 1800 to the present

- Latin American and US Latinx Art
- Black diaspora art and visual culture, 18th-19th centuries
- Non-Western Art
 - Islamic
 - East Asian

Basic Guidelines for MA Essay Exams

1) The questions on the exam are based on the student's graduate work in the major and minor field. As such, the core issues addressed should come from upper-level survey courses the professor offers in the field (especially extra graduate level readings and research), as well as graduate seminars in the field.

2) Once a student has chosen her or his major and minor fields, she or he meets with the professors who will serve on the committee. This would normally be in the Fall of the second year in the program, assuming the student plans to take the Essay Exam in the Spring of the second year. At this meeting, professor and student discuss general issues and themes that might be addressed in the exam but not exact question topics. At this time, the faculty and student may also decide upon some additional bibliography to be covered. This may also include material from classes the student has not taken or only audited, if the professor provides a recent syllabus.

3) The Essay Exam answers should show broad comprehension of both the major and minor fields. This includes artists and works of art, as well as scholarship.

4) On the Essay Exam there will be at least 3 questions in the student's major field and 2 questions in the minor field. (The student answers 2 questions in the major and 1 question in the minor)

IV. Publishable Paper Option

In exceptional cases, students who have carried a research project to a sufficient state of completion may be nominated by a faculty member to submit a publishable paper in place of the written examination in the major field (the student still must answer a question in the minor field). The paper should be developed by the student while enrolled in the University of Massachusetts MA program under the guidance of a faculty member in the department. In most circumstances, the student and faculty member will reach an agreement about this by the first day of classes in the student's second year in the Program. The student will provide the professor with an abstract of the project, which the professor will present for approval to the entire faculty by the second faculty meeting of the semester. A draft of the final paper must be completed and distributed to all exam committee members by the beginning of the term when the student plans to complete degree requirements. The final draft is due to all members of the student's committee at least two weeks before the date of the Essay Exam.

V. The Oral Exam

The Oral Exam is a defense of the Essay Exam and an overview of the student's participation in the program. Once students are notified that they have passed the Essay Exam, they will arrange immediately with their committee to schedule the Oral Exam, which usually takes place about a week after the Essay Exam to meet the Graduate School notification of graduation deadline. The Oral Exam is normally about one hour long. Students will be notified if they passed the entire exam at the end of the Oral.

VI. Grading Standards

Students must achieve a B or better on all portions of the M.A. Examination to pass.

Library Resources

The entire ninth floor of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library is devoted to art, architecture, and photography. Special collections include the East Asian Collection and Near East Collection on the 21st floor and the East Asian Reference Collection on the 22nd floor. The Library's art holdings are strong, comprising over 80,000 volumes. The libraries at Amherst College, Mount Holyoke, and especially Smith complement the University's holdings, and delivery of books not available at the University is expedited through Five College Delivery. Graduate students have access to these libraries, as well as other major art libraries in New England, such as the Clark Art Institute Library in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

Since the University is part of a large Boston-based consortium of Massachusetts schools, students have ready access through interlibrary loan to great numbers of books in addition to the almost six million titles on the Amherst campus and the millions more accessible electronically. The University Interlibrary Loan Service obtains materials very quickly from sources all over the country.

Resources in the Five Colleges Consortium

Students may take courses in art history or a related field at Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges and count those courses as equivalent to 600-level courses at the University, provided that the courses are above the introductory level and that the instructor verifies completion of graduate work in writing. The Five College system makes available an unusual breadth of course offerings and areas of specialization. Graduate students are required to consult with the GPD before registering for Five College courses.

Opportunities for Foreign Study

The University supports a number of foreign exchange programs in which graduate students may participate. Particularly suitable because of strong course offerings in art history and related areas are the summer programs at Oxford and the academic-year exchange available through the Freiburg/Baden-Württemberg Program. The latter allows graduate study in art history at reasonable cost at the universities of Freiburg, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, and Tübingen. Many other

opportunities are available through the International Programs Office on campus. Students who expect to complete the M.A. Program in two years should *not* consider study abroad.

Museum Studies and Internships

The Department is committed to offering students special opportunities in museum-related areas. Many of our graduates have successfully pursued museum work after finishing the degree. A graduate seminar in Museum Studies is offered regularly and takes full advantage of the rich and varied collections in New England. The University often has internship arrangements with the University Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as the museums at Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges. The Michele & Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts and George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum in Springfield, the Worcester Art Museum, and the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford also provide valuable internship possibilities. Graduate students have completed internships at Historic Deerfield and other area historic sites, and have won positions in competitive summer internship programs at major museums in Boston, New York, and Washington.

Departmental funding is available for graduate students pursuing both unpaid and paid internships during the school year and especially in the summer months. The monies come from the departmental funds and from the Graduate School. They are administered by the Graduate Program Director. Interested students should submit a description of the internship, an explanation of how it will benefit the student, and an overall budget with a specific request for funds.

The University Museum of Contemporary Art (UMCA) houses a permanent collection that is especially strong in 20th- and 21st-century works on paper. The Museum mounts a number of significant exhibitions during the year, often focusing on site-specific works by visiting artists. M.A. candidates regularly curate their own exhibitions at UMCA.

Both professionally-staffed and student-run galleries on campus also provide opportunities for students interested in producing exhibitions. From time to time, campus galleries offer internships that carry a stipend and tuition waiver.

Teaching Assistantships and Fellowships

Department faculty members firmly believe that an essential part of study at the M.A. level is learning how to communicate art-historical concepts effectively to the next generation. To that end, Teaching Assistantships involve undergraduate instruction, especially at the introductory level, and maintenance of regularly scheduled office hours. In most courses graduate Teaching Assistants contribute primarily as graders (in Art-Hist 115, 118, 324, and 343), while in the year-long survey (Art-Hist 100 and 110) they both grade and lead weekly discussion sections. All graduate students are expected to master the use of digital technologies for their own coursework and teaching responsibilities. The faculty's commitment to educating the public beyond the walls of academe is evident in their involvement in exhibition and museum work, reviewing and

contributing to major survey textbooks, and developing educational software using the University's Online Web-based Learning (OWL) system.

9 Assistantships are available to graduate students each semester. Assistantships usually involve 15-20 hours of work per week and carry a stipend plus full tuition waiver and coverage of the curriculum fee and most of the University health fee.

Teaching Assistants are normally assigned to the following courses:

- Art-Hist 100 and 110, the two-semester survey: 3-4 TAs lead two 50-minute discussion sections per week and grade written work; time commitment is 20 hours per week
- Art-Hist 115, Introduction to the Visual Arts: 3-4 TAs grade written work; time commitment is 20 hours per week
- Art-Hist 118, History of Architecture and the Built Environment: 3-4 TAs grade written work; time commitment is 20 hours per week
- Art-Hist 324, Modern Art: 1-2 TAs grade written work; time commitment is 15 hours per week
- Art-Hist 343, 20th-Century Architecture: 1-2 TAs grade written work; time commitment is 15 hours per week

Additional courses may require TAs.

Beyond the Department, Teaching Assistantships are often available in the University Writing Program, the foreign language programs, and administrative offices at the University.

The general duties of Teaching Assistants are specified before the beginning of the academic year at the orientation session organized by the Graduate School; each TA should receive a copy of the Center's *Handbook for New Instructors*. In regular meetings throughout each semester, Department faculty will review specific duties related to individual courses.

Department policy is that graduate assistantships are awarded to students making satisfactory progress towards the degree. Students who do not pass the language exam in the first year, who fail to complete work for an incomplete grade within the following semester, or whose GPA falls below 3.7 may not be awarded Teaching Assistantships or may have earlier offers of Teaching Assistantships revoked.

There may be opportunities for current students or recent graduates to teach their own courses during the summer terms through Continuing Education.

Students who are not awarded Assistantships receive small grants offered by the College of Humanities and Fine Arts as well as the Department in order to help defray the costs of tuition.

Graduate Diversity Fellowship

The MA Program in the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst offers a two-year Diversity Fellowship to support students from historically underrepresented groups in the history of art and architecture. The purpose of the fellowship is to support an M.A. candidate who seeks to pursue an academic or professional career in art history, but faces significant historical or economic barriers to further graduate study.

The Diversity Fellowship comes with a very comprehensive and fully-funded financial package covering the entirety of the fellow's two years in the program. This appointment provides full tuition fee coverage, a 20-hour/week position as a teaching assistant with an annual stipend of at least \$23,050, and a summer living allowance. The fellowship will also cover all the enrollment fees and health insurance costs. The fellow will be eligible for professional development funds to help support an internship, coursework, travel, or a research project during the summer. The department will provide the fellow with mentoring as well as academic and professional support throughout their time in the program.

Applicants who wish to be considered for a Diversity Fellowship should indicate this while applying to the program in their personal statement, and provide a brief reasoning.

Review of Work Standards

The entire faculty reviews and evaluates the work of all graduate students on an ongoing basis throughout each semester.

A grade of B- or below on any assignment is considered unsatisfactory; a grade of B- or below in a course will not be counted toward the degree.

The grade of INC, or incomplete, is given when a student has failed to complete all assigned work satisfactorily by the end of the semester. This grade is given in limited circumstances and only for compelling reasons, either personal or academic. Once the grade of INC is given, the student's top academic priority is to complete the work involved. Students with three or more incompletes may not register for additional courses and may not take any portion of the M.A. Examinations until all the incompletes are given letter grades and erased from the record.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the M.A. Program have gone on to careers in many fields. Some have completed advanced degrees in art conservation or the doctorate in art history before working in museums or teaching at the university level. A great number work in a variety of positions in museums in this country and abroad. Others have undertaken secondary and college teaching. Our graduates

also have become art editors, art librarians, image collection curators, art dealers, and advocates of government programs.

Job opportunities are posted regularly, and members of the faculty make a special effort to inform students about appropriate positions and give them suitable recommendations. Our *Newsletter*, published annually, gives a good idea of the jobs and careers in which our graduate alumni have excelled over the years. The Department sponsors lectures by alumni and other scholars and professionals, who are happy to talk with current students about their career experiences.

Funding from departmental funds and the Graduate School is also available for various forms of professional development, such as attending conferences, traveling abroad, and studying additional foreign languages. The department may offer financial aid to currently enrolled graduate students in order to cover some expenses incurred in the PhD program application process. Interested students should submit a budget itemizing the specific request for funds to the Graduate Program Director.

Research Possibilities

The Graduate School reserves funding for research travel and the presentation of papers for graduate students whose applications are supported by their faculty. The Department also makes awards from two funds, supported by alumni donations, named for two deceased alumni: the Maura Donohue fund for research travel, and the Stephen Keye Fund for conference travel.

Graduate Student Life

While the primary efforts of graduate students focus on academic activities, the Department, University, and Five College community provide enormous opportunities for social and cultural enrichment. The University's extensive programs are available to all students at reduced cost. The Department's social events vary from receptions following guest lectures to our potluck dinners held at the beginning and end of the academic year. The Graduate Student Senate supports a wide variety of programs and activities for graduate students. More information can be found in the Graduate School Bulletin.

Other Resources

The Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst publishes the Graduate Student Handbook. It is an invaluable guide regarding the policies and procedures of the University Graduate School, containing key information regarding such topics as which forms to file, statutes of limitations, committee formation, deadlines, and timelines. It is provided to all students confirming admission to the University's graduate programs.

Teaching Assistants are members of the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO), a union which publishes its own guide for members.

The Graduate School also organizes an annual orientation every fall, which provides the opportunity to meet key administrators, senior TAs, and faculty to gain important skills and a sense of membership within the larger University community of scholars.

How to Reach Us

A wide variety of information about the University, College, and Department—its faculty, courses, and resources—is available online at the Department’s website:

<https://www.umass.edu/arthistory>

The Department can be reached directly by phone at 413-545-3595, Monday through Friday between 8:45 and 4:45.

Professor Gülru Çakmak, Graduate Program Director, can be reached at gcakmak@umass.edu

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL AT:

<https://www.umass.edu/graduate/programs/history-art-architecture>