MAJOR IN ART, B.A.

Throughout history, art has been a fundamental language of the human spirit. Visual arts express human experience through an ever-widening range of media and materials, some of which include: oils, acrylics, pastels, charcoal, clay, plaster, steel, bronze, wood, copper, litho stones, and digital media. Visual artists create abstract works and images of objects, people, nature, topography, and events. The Department of Art and Art History offers several options of study. The B.F.A. (Bachelor of Fine Arts) degree with studio concentrations in Drawing, Electronic Arts, Fibers, Graphic Design, Metalsmithing, Painting, Photo Image Making, Pottery, Printmaking, and Sculpture; and the B.F.A. degree with a concentration in Art Education. The B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) degree with concentrations in Integrated Visual Studies and Art History are all professional degrees, leading to related art careers.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate:

- Fundamental knowledge and mastery of media and processes necessary to communicate meaning in a work of art.
- Ability to communicate clearly about their own art and the art of others.
- Knowledge about contemporary art and motivation to view and discuss current local, regional, and national exhibitions. Students well versed on contemporary art would:
  - regularly read reviews of exhibitions in local and national newspapers;
  - regularly read art periodicals;
  - attend multiple exhibitions; and
  - be knowledgeable about contemporary artists in their discipline (i.e., nationally known painters, sculptors, etc.).

Potential Occupations

Art graduates possess a number of transferable communication, analytical, and critical thinking skills appropriate for work in traditional business as well as positions in academia and roles as freelance artists, graphic designers, art educators, art historians, studio fine artists and as “creatives” in government and industry. Many employers appreciate art majors for their multiple skills and their ability to adapt to a variety of tasks and work environments. Participation in internships, cooperative education, and service learning opportunities is highly recommended to enhance practical training and development. Graduates who go on for advanced studies can attain more responsible positions with the possibility of rising to top professional levels.

Depending on student interests, the electives taken, or the concentration selected, available career choices include, but are not limited to: art appraiser, art director, art therapist, exhibit designer, art critic, jeweler, gallery director, graphic design artist, free lance artist, sculptor, woodworker, welder, foundry worker, studio photographer, technical illustrator, painter, textile designer, weaver, art educator, art historian, art curator, art librarian, art museum educator, web page designer, photo lab technician, art restorer, and master printer.

The B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) in Art is a liberal arts degree with two concentrations: Art History and Integrated Visual Studies. The Art History concentration seeks to develop students’ critical and analytical skills and ability to comprehend global visual arts within social, historical, cultural, and aesthetic frameworks. Students learn about the visual and material culture of societies from around the world, reflecting the global turn in the discipline. Traditional courses in Western art history are balanced against courses in the Arts of Africa, Native American Art, the Arts of the Ancient and Colonial Americas, and Pacific Art. Because of the comparative nature of Art History, students in the concentration are required to complete courses in a second field, a foreign language, and the philosophy of aesthetics. A capstone seminar introduces students to the fundamental toolbox of methodological approaches taken by professional art historians.

The Integrated Visual Studies concentration is an ideal program for students to develop skills as makers and thinkers. By making work and interpreting images from visual art, photography, film, television, and commercial imagery, students learn to analyze visual communication from a variety of aesthetic, theoretical, scientific, economic, sociological and historical viewpoints. Students take a relatively equal ratio of studio and academic classes that foster critical awareness of how society is reflected and produced through visual means in the twenty-first century. Visual Studies students have the curricular flexibility to pursue other academic interests and extracurricular activities with greater intensity, as well as to pursue explorations in the theoretical and technical aspects of art making within a studio practice.

Both concentrations begin their study with the foundation program. Freshmen study foundation courses in form and observation, color and composition, materials and space, and global art history.

Student Learning Outcomes

Art History students will demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the tools and techniques of art historical research and scholarship.
- Communication skills, original thinking, art historical interpretation, and research skills in written form, resulting in a lengthy work of original scholarship.
- Communication skills, original thinking, art historical interpretation, and research skills in oral form.
- Demonstrate general knowledge of the monuments and principal artists of all major art periods of the past, including a broad understanding of the art of the twentieth century and acquaintance with the art history of non-Western cultures.
- Adequate mastery of a foreign language to support research through the reading of primary source materials.
- Functional knowledge of the creative process.

Integrated Visual Studies students will demonstrate:

- Communication skills in written and oral form with precision, cogency, and rhetorical force.
- The ability to explain and defend creative/research effectively and rationally; advocating for their world view.
- Skills of invention and innovation—developing things and ideas that never existed before.