

ART, MFA

The Art Department at the University of Wisconsin–Madison offers a wide selection of areas of study, and the MFA program encourages an interdisciplinary approach to art making.

The graduate program in art currently includes approximately fifty graduate students and thirty-one full-time faculty. The faculty is a distinguished group of professional artists who are active in the research and exhibition of their work and are also devoted teachers. An important strength of the graduate program lies in the breadth and diversity of its faculty. The program continues to grow and provides a wealth of artistic experiences for its students.

AREAS OF STUDY ¹

Printmaking

Relief Printing:

The relief print studio laboratory allows for all forms of conventional relief printmaking and unique prints. Specialized curriculum is offered in traditional woodcut and linocut, and can include research carried out with a CNC router using safe forms of raised surface printing. Graduate research and production will focus on the interdependence of conventional relief printing to monotype, monoprints, and installation. Paper making and book arts is encouraged for the graduate relief print maker. The relief lab is equipped with (2) Takach presses, Press, (1) AWT 5 x 8 ft screen print vacuum press, and (1) Vandercool SP15. The relief studio laboratory is equipped with a large selection of rollers and brayers in a variety of size and durometer hardness.

Screen Printing:

The screen print (serigraphy) studio laboratory allows for all forms of conventional printmaking, varied editions, and unique prints. Specialized curriculum is offered in hand-drawn, painterly, photo, and digital methods of constructing the screen print matrix. Graduate research and screen print production will focus on the full development of concepts and the interdependence of screen printing to 3-Dimensional objects, installation, and graduate interdisciplinary studio practice. The screen print (serigraphy) studio laboratory is equipped with (5) AWT 33 x 48 inch vacuum presses, (1) AWT 5 x 8 ft vacuum press, (1) 51 x 79 inch light exposure unit with vacuum. The studio also provides an oversized washout unit that measures 91 high x 74 wide x 34 deep, (2) light tables for drawing (35 x 54 inches), an Epson 9600 printer for digital films, and a variety of screens, squeegees, and scoop coaters.

Etching/Intaglio:

The etching studio laboratory allows for all major acid etching methods along with other intaglio printmaking methods. Specialized curriculum is offered in the use of historic etching materials and digital working methods. The etching lab houses ferric and Dutch mordants for use with copper. Nitric acid for zinc, steel, and alternative painterly etching techniques is also available. The use of photopolymer intaglio plates and other non-acid techniques is presented. Curriculum includes multiple plate and viscosity color inking along with traditional and alternative grounds and plate construction.

The newly renovated etching studio laboratory has (2) Keuwanee scientific exhaust hoods (one 8-foot and one 6-foot hood); these hoods allow for a various size of etching. There are also (2) 21 x 24 inch vertical etching tanks. We primarily etch with copper plates in Dutch mordant and ferric chloride, but provide nitric acid for experimental techniques such as spit bit aquatint and the use of zinc or steel plates. In the etching lab we have

(2) Charles Brand; bed sizes are 62 x 39 and 52 x 32. There is also a ABL floor model Aquatint Box for plates up to 24 x 36. In addition, we have (5) large hot plates and (3) standing heated inking tables modelled after Crown Point Press studio and (2) light tables for drawing (35 x 54 inches).

Lithography:

Graduate-level lithography practice is founded in individualized studio practice and concept development while utilizing both stone and aluminum plates. Graduate-level lithography is expected to exhibit a high degree of craft and professionalism. All phases of lithography are stressed including direct drawing, image transfer, and photo-litho.

Digital Printmaking:

Courses in digital print-production techniques provide graphics students with the necessary skills to take original art or digital media to printed output. Courses also provide a thorough explanation of the various systems, software, and hardware fundamentals involved in the integration of digital forms with etching, lithography, screen printing, photography, book arts, and graphic design.

DPC Print productions/Digital Printmaking Center lab has (4) large printers: Canon imagePROGRAF PRO-6000, Canon image PROGRAF PRO- 8400, and an Epson 7600; several Mac computers, laser engraver, (1) litho press, (1) etching press, (1) oversized offset litho press (set up for monotypes), (1) Charles Brand, screen stretcher system, and a polymer plate maker.

Graphic Design and Typography

The courses in graphic design emphasize the process of visual communication of ideas and information, with attention to aesthetic considerations, techniques, and methods. Course work in letterpress and computer typesetting introduce historical and visual aspects of formal typography and serve to facilitate experimentation with the communicative properties of type. Practical study in this area involves the design and production of books, broadsides, brochures, and posters; the development and application of logotypes and design formats; and utilizing the facilities of letterpress, computer technologies, and graphic reproduction techniques. In addition, a focus on book structures and artists' books is provided.

Photography

The photography area is situated within a rigorous multidisciplinary art program at one of the world's leading research institutions. Graduate students are able to conduct their advanced research strictly in photography or in combination with other disciplines offered within the Art Department. The low student-to-teacher ratio allows for a supportive atmosphere for individual artist development. Graduate students are given a personal studio with access to a private graduate darkroom for black & white and alternative processes. The general photography facilities include the following: darkroom, digital print lab, computer and lab w/scanning equipment, lighting studio, mat cutting and dry mounting room.

Books, Letterpress, and Paper Making

Book arts is equipped with (2) Vandercooks, (1) proofing press, (2) Reliance Book Presses, (1) hot foil stamp, an expansive assortment of type, and photopolymer plate making equipment. Book arts and typography curriculum is supported by the Kohler Art Library's Artist Book teaching collection and is also supported by the Annual Bernstein Book Arts Lecture, an annual visiting artist series. The UW–Madison Silver Buckle Press Collection is now housed at Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum in Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

The courses in paper making are concerned with understanding the inherent materials used in the paper making processes as applied to

traditional sheet forming and as they relate to other contemporary concepts in book arts, sculpture, and drawing. The paper mill is equipped to make large and medium paper and is currently housed in the Art Lofts.

Drawing and Painting

Courses in painting emphasizes conceptual, formal, and material logic in the development of an individualized studio practice. This course of study promotes an understanding of contemporary and historical painting and drawing practice as well as the theoretical premises pertinent to furthering the student's intellectual and creative development.

Within the multidisciplinary department, the student is encouraged to access the broad variety of available facilities, equipment, and faculty fundamental to their continued artistic growth and specialization. Graduate students are provided with a private studio space.

Sculpture

The sculpture area offers a balance between techniques and concepts. Various forms of expression from object making, installation, and time-based media are encouraged. Issues of professional practice within the traditional art venues as well as in the larger public domain are addressed. Students are encouraged to develop their individual voice as artists, be part of a constructive community, and prepare to be creative citizens. Facilities are available for most of the processes needed to produce sculpture: welding (including MIG and TIG), a foundry with a large alpine sculpture kiln for foundry molds and two gas melt furnaces, forging facilities, and shops for mixed media construction, digital fabrication, casting and paint.

Woodworking and Furniture Design

The wood/furniture area explores the technical and conceptual possibilities of woodworking and furniture design. The curriculum is project-based and teaches a full range of skills from design development through drawing and model building, as well as hand and machine-based construction skills. Graduate students receive a work space in one of two private bench rooms attached to the machine room and have 24-hour access to the studio facility. The graduate program stresses advanced visual research and is highly flexible. Graduate students produce both functional and nonfunctional work that represents a wide spectrum of aesthetic perspectives. The context of a very large and diverse research university allows for effective support and mentoring of varied and wide-ranging approaches to art making. Experimentation and collaboration with other areas of the Art Department and the larger university are actively encouraged.

The wood/furniture facilities offer a state-of-the-art laboratory for working with wood. However, the program promotes and endorses a far-reaching exploration of traditional and cutting-edge materials as well as newer digitally driven approaches to design and fabrication. Graduate studio research includes extensive one-on-one interaction with faculty from all areas of the Art Department. Additional feedback is provided through group critiques by faculty, fellow students, guest critics, and visiting artists.

Ceramics

The ceramics area emphasizes a relationship between the field of ceramics and contemporary approaches to art making, theory, and criticism. The area offers a diverse approach to materials and processes, emphasizing work that is both technically proficient and conceptually diverse. Through advanced study, students will gain an understanding of the technical concerns involved in ceramic production such as clay and glaze calculation and mold making, while simultaneously developing the critical and historical skills necessary to apply those processes to finished works.

The ceramics studio offers a wide assortment of equipment including a fully stocked supply of raw materials for clay and glaze mixing, digital scales and test kilns, electric wheels, extruders, slab rollers, an industrial spray booth, slip casting equipment, and a variety of both updraft gas and computer-controlled electric kilns. Graduate students receive private studio space, and are strongly encouraged to experiment and collaborate with other areas of the Art Department and university. Graduate-level research includes extensive one-on-one interaction with faculty from all areas of the department, with additional feedback provided through group critiques by faculty, fellow students, guest critics, and visiting artists.

Glass

The UW-Madison Glass Lab has a storied history as the first collegiate glass program in the nation. Sixty-plus years later, UW-Madison students continue to innovate with glass, glass processes, and glass-based thinking. Through conceptual inquiry and rigorous technical instruction, the Glass Lab fosters an approach of thinking through material to generate meaning. We look to an expansive definition of glass that speaks to a broader understanding of the material in contemporary practice. Our facilities include a hot shop, cold shop, kiln room, frameworking station, and neon lab. Graduate students have access to private studio spaces, scholarship opportunities for intensive summer workshops, and a healthy roster of glass-specific visiting artists. The UW-Madison Glass Lab prides itself on being a strong community that serves to strengthen each individual's studio practice.

Metals

The metals area at UW-Madison has a long and distinguished history. The area is designed to challenge students to learn about the making of art through the specific materials, techniques, history, and cultural significance of the metalsmithing and jewelry fields. Technical proficiency is encouraged in the service of deep, socially significant investigation and research. Analytical and critical thinking, historical responsibility, and theoretical awareness are explored in a seminar setting with metals faculty. Visiting artists offer lectures, demonstrations, and individual critiques with grad students that round out this rigorous and comprehensive area.

The metals studios occupy six rooms on the seventh floor of the Mosse Humanities Building. With approximately 4,500 square feet of instructional and studio space, these well-equipped facilities include acetylene, ox/acetylene and propane torches, annealing booths, centrifugal and vacuum casting equipment, enameling kilns and enamels, flexible shafts machines at every work station, a large selection of anvils, hammers and stakes for raising, forming and forging, hydraulic die forming, a gas forge, electroforming, manual and electric rolling mills, sand blaster, band and jig saws, lathes, milling machines and drill presses, a dedicated polishing room, spray etchers, sheet metal working equipment, mold making equipment, and a full compliment of hand tools. The resource center includes a computer, digital projector, photo equipment, and metals library.

4-D

Courses in non-static forms include video and performance art. Students have access to media facilities throughout the university and are encouraged to participate in classes in non-static forms and to experiment with new media. Courses stress methods of exhibition, documentation, and distribution that are unique to the non-static media. Both individual and collaborative projects are possible, and frequent opportunities are available for students to exhibit or perform.

Digital Media

The Digital Media area provides classes and faculty which allow graduate students to expand their use of digital media tools in the context of their own fine art practice. Classes offered cover a wide range of digital forms

including digital imaging, web authoring, video and audio manipulation, 2-D animation, and 3-D modeling and animation. All classes provide a balance of technical information on the relevant media and coverage of the historical and conceptual implications of their use in a fine art context. Classes are constantly being updated as digital media tools evolve. Students are encouraged to consider digital tools as part of an integrated art practice that is concept and content driven rather than media specific. As well as supporting students whose art work is presented in digital formats, the Digital Media area provides opportunities for artists working in all media to incorporate new methodologies into their practice. In the department and campus wide, both Mac- and PC-based facilities are available with specialized facilities provided for 3-D and 2-D animation, video editing, digital fabrication, and large-format 2-D printing.

1

These tracks are internal to the program and represent different pathways a student can follow to earn this degree. Track names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.