

# **School of Visual Arts Graduate Handbook**

This handbook serves as a guide for all MFA candidates in the School of Visual Arts. Additional information can be found in the College of Fine Arts graduate bulletin.

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Boston University, College of Fine Arts  
School of Visual Arts  
855 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 552  
Boston, MA 02215

School of Visual Arts: 617/353-3371  
College of Fine Arts Office of the Dean: 617/353-3350  
College of Fine Arts Financial Aid Office: 617/353-8780

## **I. Administration**

### *A. College of Fine Arts*

The College of Fine Arts (CFA) comprises three schools: Visual Arts, Music, and Theatre Arts. Each year, the College of Fine Arts has hundreds of concerts, plays, and exhibitions that are open to the public.

The Office of the Dean is located on the second floor of the CFA building in room 230. Student records are maintained in this office.

#### **Dean's Office Staff:**

Walt Meissner; Dean *ad interim*  
Patricia Mitro; Assistant Dean for Enrollment Services  
John Amend; Assistant Dean of Finance and Administration  
Shaw Hubbard, Operations Manager  
Mark Krone; Manager of Graduate Admissions  
Paula Fiumara; Payroll Coordinator  
Daniel MacLeod; Financial Aid Officer  
Andrew Ryan; Manager of Student Records  
Alyssa Baker; Manager of Student Services  
Meredith Cooper, Assistant Director of Online Programs  
Larissa Lavrov, Senior Admissions Coordinator  
Stephen Lau; Associate Systems Administrator  
Michael Mercurio; Assistant to the Dean  
Emily Liberis, Senior Staff Assistant

### *B. School of Visual Arts*

The Visual Arts office is located on the fifth floor of the CFA building, in room 552. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 9a.m.-5p.m.

#### **School of Visual Arts Staff:**

Lynne Allen; Director  
Jeannette Guillemin; Assistant Director  
Logen Zimmerman; Fiscal Coordinator

Emily Wade; Librarian  
Michael Greenblatt; Technical Associate  
Alana Silva; Administrative Coordinator  
Lynne Cooney; Exhibitions Coordinator

*C. Boston University Art Gallery*

The Boston University Art Gallery is located on the first floor of the CFA building.

**Boston University Art Gallery Staff:**

Marc Mitchell; Director *ad interim*

## **II. Academic Policies and Procedures**

### *A. Forms*

All academic forms are located in the Office of the Dean (room 230).

#### **Petition Form**

Petitions must be presented for any of the following:

1. To change a program of study from requirements listed in the CFA graduate bulletin.
2. To transfer credits from another academic institution.
3. Course substitution for required classes.
4. For any other reason deemed necessary by a student's faculty advisor.

#### **Withdrawal/Leave of Absence Form**

Students must register for each semester (not counting summer terms) until completion of all degree requirements. Upon written petition to the School of Visual Arts, students may be allowed up to two semesters of leaves of absence, taken in either separate or consecutive semesters. Only in exceptional cases, such as substantiated illness, maternity or paternity leave, or military service, will the School grant leaves of absence beyond two semesters. All requests for leaves of absence must be submitted prior to the semester in which the leave is intended to begin. If the leave is granted, the student must submit an official Leave of Absence Form signed by the School's Director to the Manager of Student Records in the Office of the Dean. The period of authorized leave of absence is counted as part of the time allowed for completion of the degree. All requests for Withdrawals must be submitted in the same manner and prior to the set semester

deadline. Students should refer to the Withdrawal Tuition Refund Schedule at <http://www.bu.edu/reg/withdraw.htm>. The mere absence from classes does not reduce a student's financial obligation nor guarantee that a final grade will not be posted.

### **Graduation Application**

This form is to be completed prior to the final semester before a student anticipates graduating. It is then submitted to the Manager of Students Records in the Office of the Dean for approval. The Manager of Student Records will check to see that all degree requirements have been met.

### **WebReg Form**

In order to receive an academic advising code, which is needed to access Registration options on the Student Link, students must obtain their advisor's signature on this form.

### **Class Adjustment Form**

Students use this form to add or drop classes in the following circumstances: To add a class when a class is full or to drop a class when dropping after the last day to add classes. This form requires the class instructor's signature. Students may process all other adding and dropping needs on their own via the Student Link.

### *B. Transfer and Acceptance of Credit*

Requests for transfer of credit for courses taken prior to matriculation in the current degree program must be submitted in the form of a petition to the Visual Arts office. The statute of limitations for transferable credits is five years prior to matriculation in the current degree program. A maximum of 8 transfer credits is permissible in the MFA degree programs after the Director of the School of Visual Arts approves a petition signed by the student's advisor. Courses requested for transfer credit must be taken at the graduate level and not have been previously applied toward graduate or undergraduate degree credit. Courses must be equivalent in subject and in content to courses offered at Boston University. Students must petition in advance in order to receive credit for work taken at another institution while they are enrolled in a graduate degree program at Boston University.

### **For transfer credit, students must submit the following:**

1. A photocopy of the transcript from the institution where the course was taken.

2. A photocopy of the course description from the bulletin or printout of the course description from the website of the institution where the course was taken. This description must demonstrate that the course was at the graduate level.

### *C. Grading Policies*

All courses taken for graduate degree credit must be passed with a grade of B- or higher. All courses taken as prerequisite requirements must be passed with a grade of B or higher.

In order to receive a grade of I (incomplete) for a course, graduate students must apply for this grade during the semester in which the course is taken. An Incomplete Form must be obtained from the Office of the Dean and be presented for signature to the instructor of the course. An incomplete grade is not automatic and is given only at the discretion of the instructor of the course. The instructor may establish a deadline (not to exceed one semester) by which time all remaining work must be submitted in order to receive credit. A Change of Grade Form, signed by the instructor of the course, must be submitted to the Manager of Student Records in the Office of the Dean to change an incomplete grade to a letter grade once the student has completed required work.

All grade changes for Directed Study and/or any other course(s) in which the student has received a grade of I (incomplete) must be submitted by the appropriate faculty. The Manager of Student Records must verify successful completion and the grades for any courses in progress.

A grade of J may be given at the end of the first semester in courses that continue for a full year. J grades are also given in the case of students working on terminal projects that encompass more than one semester. A letter grade is not given until the end of the semester in which the project has been completed. This grade serves as the grade for the entire year.

### *D. Withdrawal from Classes*

Students may withdraw from classes at any time before the specified deadlines given in the College of Fine Arts academic calendar. Withdrawals must have the approval of the class instructor and the student's advisor. A Class Adjustment Form must be filled out and turned in to either the Office of the Dean or the Office of the University Registrar.

Normally, students are allowed to withdraw from courses without receiving a W grade at any time before the semester is 30% complete. After this,

and until the completion of 50% of the semester, students may not withdraw without receiving a W grade. Students are not allowed to withdraw from classes after mid-semester.

#### *E. Full-time and Part-time Enrollment*

Full-time tuition for all Boston University graduate students is usually based on 12 semester hours of credits for each term. However, MFA students are charged on a per-credit basis (see section IV-B for these rates) because the College of Fine Arts considers that three courses each semester, equaling 7-9 credit hours, constitute a certified full-time load of study. The Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Design programs require students to be certified as full-time (under CFA standards) for two academic years. The MFA in Art Education may be pursued on a part-time (CFA standards) basis. Students in the Studio Teaching program take 10 credits during each of their first three semesters and 12 during their fourth. They are charged on a part-time basis for each of these semesters.

### **III. Advisement and Academic Requirements**

#### *A. Registration Procedures*

Registration for the following semester normally occurs during the 12th week of classes. Early registration is strongly advised since some prerequisite courses and required courses tend to fill quickly. Early registration also assures students a place in class and enables the faculty to determine approximate class size. Students registering late will be charged a late fee.

#### *B. Advisement*

Upon entering the School of Visual Arts, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. This is normally the chair of the department in which the degree or diploma is to be taken. Students are urged to keep in close communication with their faculty advisors in all matters pertaining to program planning. All formal requests, petitions, thesis projects, request for leaves and extensions, and other forms must carry the signature of the student's advisor, whether or not the advisor approves of the action requested. The advisors of the following areas are listed below:

Graphic Design: Alston Purvis  
Painting: John Walker  
Art Education: Judith Simpson  
Studio Teaching: Judith Simpson

*C. Thesis and Thesis Exhibition*

**Painting and Sculpture:** Students majoring in Painting or Sculpture must produce a significant body of work both in quantity and quality. From this, the faculty will select a number of pieces that will be presented as part of a group exhibition. The exhibit, held in the spring, will meet the requirement of a thesis exhibition for those students who are represented in the exhibit. Students who do not meet the faculty's standards for the thesis exhibition will not be allowed to exhibit and will not be awarded the degree until they have completed the thesis exhibition requirement.

**Graphic Design:** Students must produce a written proposal and a visual project suitable for exhibition. The proposal and project are carried out under the supervision of an advisor, the School's Director, and the Graphic Design faculty. Students who plan to graduate in a given year must submit the proposal in a timely manner so that any adjustments to the proposal may be made and approvals obtained in time to complete the project by the exhibition date. An approved proposal and the exhibition of the project in a group show held in the spring will meet the requirement of a thesis project for the Graphic Design MFA candidate.

**Art Education:** Students must complete a substantive written thesis that will demonstrate their ability to do significant research in the field of art education. The candidate must enroll in CFA AR961 and AR962 (Directed Study in Art Education) and must be enrolled during the development of the thesis. A thesis proposal is written under the supervision of an advisor. The proposal is reviewed and approved by an advisor, the School's Director, and the Art Education faculty. The final thesis is submitted in three copies, one to the Art Education faculty and two to the Mugar Memorial Library.

**Studio Teaching:** Students must complete a written curriculum project that will demonstrate their ability to organize a sequence of learning appropriate to a given age level in the area of teaching art. Students must be enrolled in CFA AR865 (Art Curriculum Planning)

during the semester in which the project is submitted. The final draft of the project is submitted to the Art Education faculty.

#### *D. Graduation Procedures*

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degrees are officially conferred three times a year, in January, May, and September. All students must obtain, from the Office of the Dean by the date specified in the semester calendar, an application to graduate.

Prior to applying to graduate, students should review their records with their advisors to make sure that all requirements for graduation have been met. The College of Fine Arts Manager of Student Records will conduct a review of each student's record. In cases where graduation deadlines have passed, the Manager of Student Records will furnish the student with a letter certifying the completion of degree requirements provided the student has completed necessary procedures.

### **IV. Graduate Financial Assistance**

The College of Fine Arts Financial Aid Office is located in the Office of the Dean and provides services in the areas of financial aid counseling, scholarship and assistantship processing, and outside scholarship referral. Federal Work Study is granted through this office. Emergency assistance may also be available. The School of Visual Arts makes every effort to award financial aid to outstanding students. Students should also research available government and private sources of scholarship aid at local libraries and on the Internet. Boston University participates in the Stafford/Ford Direct Lending program and applications are available and processed through the Office of Financial Assistance. The College of Fine Arts Financial Aid Officer, Emily Burt, can be reached through (617) 353-3350.

#### *A. Awards*

Eligible College of Fine Arts students completing the last semester of their graduate or undergraduate programs may compete for the Esther B. and Albert S. Kahn Career Entry Fund Award for the Arts. This grant provides funds for talented students to launch them in their careers in the arts. Between four and five one-year grants of \$10,000 to \$12,500 each (determined by the available income from the endowment fund managed by Boston University) are awarded each year to graduates of the College of Fine Arts, including students in Painting, Graphic Design, and

Sculpture. Dean's Scholar Awards and Visual Arts Performance Scholarships are also awarded yearly to eligible students. For more information about these and other awards, contact the College of Fine Arts Financial Aid Officer.

#### B. Academic Fees

Part-time Rates (For students registered for less than 12 credits)

Tuition (per credit hour)	\$985.00
Tuition (per credit for evening Art Education courses)	\$493.00
Registration Fee (per semester)	\$40.00

### V. Libraries

**The Visual Arts Library** is a reading room located adjacent to the Visual Arts office on the fifth floor of the College of Fine Arts building. Books do not circulate, but Boston University professors and School of Visual Arts graduate assistants and student teachers may check out slides. The Library is open Monday - Friday, 9a.m - 5p.m., with occasional evening hours. Hours are subject to change.

**The Mugar Memorial Library** is located at 771 Commonwealth Avenue. Current periodicals are located in the basement. The main catalogue, which indexes all volumes housed in the Library, is located on the first floor. The Circulation Desk is near the side elevator on the first floor. The Music Library, which includes scores, records, tapes, listening facilities, and other music materials, is located on the second floor. Students may check out books for four weeks with the option to renew twice, unless those materials have been called for reserve. The reserve area is located near the Circulation Desk. Reserve books may be borrowed for two hours, overnight, or for three days, depending upon the loan rule. The Library Reference Desk and reference materials are also located on the first floor. Personnel who are available to assist students in locating appropriate references, resources and in developing certain research strategies staff the desk. The Photocopy Office is located on the first floor, opposite the Circulation Desk. The African Studies Library is located on the sixth floor. The Mugar Memorial Library is a member of the Boston Library Consortium and provides access to the holdings of many other research collections in the area. For the Library's hours, call 617/353-3708.

**The Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center** is the rare book and manuscript repository for Boston University. Located on the fifth floor of

Mugar Memorial Library, it is open Monday through Friday, 9a.m. - 5p.m., for researchers interested in its non-circulating materials. The rare book vault houses over 100,000 volumes spanning from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. Manuscript holdings include the personal archives of over 1,700 public figures from the fields of literature, journalism, theatre, film, music, politics, and diplomacy. Also, there are large manuscript collections of military history, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franz Liszt. Exhibits of these materials are displayed throughout the Gotlieb Center and the Mugar Memorial Library.

**The Art History Visual Resources Collection** is in room 306 of the College of Arts and Sciences building, located at 725 Commonwealth Avenue. It has an extensive collection of slides of artwork dating from prehistoric times to the present day. Students may borrow slides for school presentations and related projects only. For more information, call 617/353-1447.

## **VI. Office of Information Technology (IT)**

The students and faculty of Boston University have access to a wide variety of computing resources for communication, coursework, instruction, and research. The Office of Information Technology provides general access facilities for the entire University community including linking it to the Internet, training facilities, the Personal Computing Support Center, and a sophisticated scientific computing and visualization laboratory. Direct any questions regarding computing services to the Office of Information Technology. The main office is located at 111 Cummington Street and is open Monday through Friday, 9a.m. - 5p.m.; for more information, call 617/353-2780.