

# **School of Visual Arts Undergraduate Handbook**

This handbook serves as a guide for all BFA candidates in the School of Visual Arts. Additional information can be found in the Undergraduate Programs 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: 617/353-3350

## **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 CFA 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.

#### **Office of the Dean Staff:**

Walt Meissner; Dean *ad interim*  
Patricia Mitro; Assistant Dean for Enrollment Services  
Samantha Collins; Manager of Student Records  
Mark Krone; Manager of Graduate Admissions  
Matthew Enderwick; Financial Administrator  
Emily Burt; Financial Aid Officer  
Amy Barrett; Office Manager  
Stephen Lau; Associate Systems Administrator

### *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:**

Judith Simpson; Director  
Jeannette Guillemin; Assistant Director  
Jessica Day; Fiscal Coordinator  
Melinda Horsey; Librarian  
Douglas Shaw Elder; Technical Associate  
Logen Zimmerman; Student Affairs 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:**

Stacey McCarroll; Director and Curator

Rebekah Lamb; Assistant Director

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

### *A. Forms*

All academic forms are located in the Office of the Dean.

#### **Petition Form**

Petitions must be presented for any of the following:

1. To change a program from the requirements listed in the Undergraduate Programs 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 University Service Center, located in the basement of 881 Commonwealth Avenue. 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 Student Records in the Office of the Dean for approval and is accompanied by a degree requirement check.

**Declaration of Minor Form**

This is to be completed in consultation with a student's minor advisor in CAS, COM, or SMG and submitted to the CFA Manager of Student Records. After courses are completed, students must also submit a Program Change Form to officially declare their minor.

**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.

**Overload Form**

Used when a student wishes to take more than 18 credits during their sophomore and junior years. On rare occasions, freshmen are allowed to overload with special approval. Seniors are automatically allowed to take up to 20 credits without approval.

**Program Change Form**

Used to declare minors or change majors.

**Incomplete Form**

Used to outline a course completion plan when end-of-semester coursework is incomplete.

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

In order to count for credit, transfer courses may not have been previously applied toward another degree. These courses must be equivalent in subject and 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 at Boston University.

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

1. A photocopy of the course description from the bulletin or a course description from the website of the institution where the course will be taken, along with a completed petition form.
2. After course completion, an official transcript must be sent to the attention of the Manager of Student Records in the Office of the Dean.

*C. Grading Policies*

**Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete grade (I) is not automatic and is given only at the discretion of the instructor of the course. Students qualify for this grade only after providing evidence of illness or another acceptable reason for absences and must agree upon a date of completion for coursework, which may not exceed one semester. A Change of Grade Form must be signed by the instructor of the course and submitted to the Manager of Student Records in the Office of the Dean in order to change an incomplete grade to a letter grade once the student has completed required work.

**J Grades**

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. Dean's Lists*

Students are awarded Dean's List and Dean's List of Special Distinction honors at the end of each semester, based on the following criteria:

##### **Dean's List**

Grade point average between 3.40 and 3.74 in a semester with at least 12 taken credits taken and no I or J grades received.

##### **Dean's List of Special Distinction**

Grade point average of 3.75 or above in a semester with at least 12 credits taken and no I or J grades received.

Note: Students receiving J grades in the first half of a yearlong course can be added to the Dean's Lists retroactively once the final grade for the year is given.

#### *F. Attendance*

Unless specific permission for absence is arranged with the instructor, students must attend class to receive credit for a course. The instructor may refuse to give a passing grade to a student whose unexcused absences are, in the judgment of the instructor, excessive. Absences exceeding 1/4 of the total class hours in a given semester are considered excessive in all School of Visual Arts studio courses. Individual courses, at the discretion of the instructor, may require even more complete attendance. A student whose absences are considered excessive shall receive a grade of F unless he/she qualifies for a grade of I (incomplete). Within the first week of classes, each instructor shall announce the attendance policy of his/her course and what will be, in his/her judgment, excessive absences for the course.

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

#### *A. Registration Procedures*

Registration for the coming semester normally occurs during the 12th week of classes. All students are required to register for courses at that time. Since some prerequisite courses and required courses tend to fill quickly, early registration assures a student a place in a class and enables the faculty to determine approximate class size.

## *B. Advisement*

Upon entering the School of Visual Arts, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students are urged to keep in close communication with their faculty advisors in all matters pertaining to program planning and advisement. Students must meet with their advisor to pre-register classes for the following semester. All formal requests, petitions, 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:**

Core Program: Drawing teacher

Graphic Design: Alston Purvis

Painting: Dana Clancy (juniors' advisor); Hugh  
O'Donnell (seniors' advisor)

Art Education: Judith Simpson

Sculpture: Batu Siharulidze

Visual Arts General Advising: Jeannette Guillemain

## *C. Curriculum*

### **Foundation Program**

In their first two years of core curriculum, students take foundation courses in drawing, painting, and sculpture. In addition to nine hours of drawing, six hours of painting, and six hours of sculpture each week, students take one liberal arts elective and one art history course. All freshmen are required to take an English placement test. Based on the results of the test, most freshmen will take at least one English course requirement.

### **Choosing a Major**

In the second semester of the sophomore year, students take introductory courses selected from two of the four majors: Graphic Design, Painting, Sculpture, and Art Education. These course selections allow students to explore major possibilities. In addition, second semester sophomores take a studio elective, either printmaking or photography. Students declare their major upon registration for the fall semester of their junior year.

### **5-Year Program (BFA/MFA)**

In order to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in any of the Visual Arts majors, it is required that students complete the two year foundation program, their required major courses, as well as eight liberal arts electives. Undergraduate students that major in

Sculpture, Graphic Design, or Painting that are also interested in state licensure to teach art in public schools may combine an undergraduate studio degree program with the Master of Fine Arts in Studio Teaching. The Studio Teaching program includes all Massachusetts licensure requirements. Combining the BFA and MFA degree programs may be accomplished in five years by taking liberal arts elective requirements during summer sessions. Summer courses need advanced approval by submitting a Petition Form and course description to the Visual Arts office.

*D. The Boston University Collaborative Degree Program (BUCOP)*

Students have the option to simultaneously pursue two undergraduate degrees at Boston University through BUCOP. Visual Arts students interested in BUCOP should plan a 5-6 year course of study due to the demands of the Visual Arts curriculum. If interested in BUCOP, students should meet with their faculty advisor and contact the BUCOP office, located in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). A Program Change Form would also need to be completed and signed by an advisor.

*E. Minors*

Minors are offered in many academic areas in other Boston University Schools and Colleges. If interested in pursuing a minor, students should contact the school or college of interest for their specific minor requirements. A Program Change Form would also need to be completed and signed by an advisor.

*F. Graduation Procedures*

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) 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 filling out an application to graduate, students should review their records with an advisor to make sure that all requirements have been met. The College of Fine Arts Manager of Student Records will conduct a review of each student's transcript prior to the date of graduation. In cases where the 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.

**Grades**

All course grades must be submitted prior to a student's graduation. 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. Students will not be allowed to graduate with any incompletes.

**Credits**

All undergraduates must complete at least 132 credits of coursework in order to meet the BFA degree requirements. Please see School of Visual Arts curriculum sheets for specific programmatic requirements.

**Graduation With Latin Honors**

Among graduating seniors in each school and college, five percent will be awarded degrees summa cum laude, ten percent degrees magna cum laude, and fifteen percent cum laude. "Break points," which are the grade point averages (GPA) corresponding to each of these categories, will be determined for each graduating class in each school and college at the end of the seventh (penultimate) semester by applying these percentile ranges to the list of eligible graduates arranged in order of GPA. Students falling in the designated percentile ranges on the basis of their GPA after seven semesters will be certified for degrees with the corresponding Latin honors. Students who, by virtue of strong academic performances during their final semester, advance their GPAs beyond a breakpoint will be awarded degrees with the correspondingly higher Latin honor. Students whose academic performance during the final semester causes their GPAs to fall below a break point will retain the Latin honors as originally determined after seven semesters. In no case will students be awarded Latin honors for grade point averages below 3.0.

**IV. Academic Actions***A. Academic Standing*

Only one-tenth of credits applied toward the undergraduate degree in the College of Fine Arts may be D grades. Grades of F do not count toward any degree requirements. A student ceases to be in good academic standing if his or her scholastic record at the end of a semester shows one or more of the following conditions:

1. A semester's grade point average of 1.7 or below automatically places an undergraduate student on academic probation. A semester's grade point average between 1.7 and 2.0 may lead to academic probation following faculty review.
2. A cumulative grade point average below 2.0 will place an undergraduate student on academic probation.
3. D grades or below in more than twenty percent of any semester's credits may place a student on academic probation.
4. F and I grades combined for more than twenty percent of any semester's grades may place a student on academic probation.
5. Normally, students will be dismissed from the College of Fine Arts after a semester's probation. In cases of exceptionally poor performance, however, this practice may be waived at the recommendation of the School faculty and/or Director.
6. A student ceases to be in good academic standing when placed on academic probation and is ineligible for student organization offices or intercollegiate athletics until good standing is reestablished.
7. Withdrawals from courses in which instructors have reported an unsatisfactory level of work may subject a student to academic action.

#### *B. Academic Probation*

A student that has been given the privilege of continuing work while on academic probation is expected to improve his or her scholastic record sufficiently enough that this probation is removed by the end of the semester. Failure to accomplish that or to make significant progress toward such an accomplishment may be cause for expulsion. No student who has been on probation for two consecutive semesters may register for courses without approval from his or her School Director. All actions concerning academic standing, grading, probation and expulsion may be appealed to the School Director. A final appeal may be made to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts.

## 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 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 the Mugar Memorial Library, it is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.- 5 p.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 century. 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 visual arts slides of artwork 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.