Boston University College of Fine Arts

Online Master of Arts in Art Education

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Online Master of Arts in Art Education

The Boston University Online Master of Arts in Art Education degree program is designed for busy educators who love making and teaching art and who want to enhance their practice, advance their careers, and change their students’ lives through the power of artistic expression. Students are guided by master teachers with years of experience in the studio and classroom. The online program allows our students to receive the highest caliber education without leaving their families, jobs, and communities. Most students complete the MA degree in 18–24 months.

At the center of our program is the belief that everyone, no matter their artistic ability, age, or economic status, is enriched by art and ought to have the opportunity to see and make it.

Though it is essential, art is not easy to teach. To unlock its power takes teachers who can utilize proven techniques informed by their own studio work. Our graduates revitalize their practice by learning to devise effective unit plans and master the latest techniques based on leading-edge theory and research. Their spoken and written communication is more focused and evidence-based. And because they know how and where to locate the latest research, our graduates stay current throughout their careers.

The program’s emphasis is on teaching but we haven’t forgotten that arts educators are artists. That may sound like a given but we take it seriously. That’s why we created Summer Studios where our students come to Boston for intensive, hands-on, process-oriented instruction within a supportive, intimate environment. At the conclusion of this optional component, students leave refreshed and inspired, their work invigorated. Online faculty and student colleagues become lifelong friends and contacts.

Join us. Let’s get started.

Focuses

The MA in Art Education offers students more elective choice along with two optional faculty-designed focuses, or a self-designed program as described below. This will give students the ability to custom fit a degree tailored to their individual educational goals and professional needs.

**Focus: Arts Education Leader**

Your creative spirit can add an entirely new dimension to educational leadership. The best leaders are creative problem solvers, and have access to a diverse skill-set that enables them to be effective in many roles. Discover how your gift for managing a classroom and developing innovative learning strategies is of great value in building an educational community grounded in the arts. A student who graduates with this focus will be ready to assume an administrative role as a curriculum designer or Fine Arts program director, a professional development organizer, and an advocate for their institution and the value of arts education.

All Core Courses + Required Electives:

- AR670 Advocacy & Policy (4 credits)
- AR680 Insightful and Creative Leadership (4 credits)
- + 2 more electives of your choice

*Choosing this option means there is no studio requirement and that the program is delivered 100% online. You may, however, elect Summer Studios as one of your 2 elective choices.

**Focus: Artist Teacher**

Great art teachers are informed and inspired in their teaching by possessing a strong personal relationship with art. Artist Teachers believe that art holds a valuable place in the fabric of our culture, which is why they take their role as educators so seriously. They feel an obligation to transfer their passion and love for the creative process to the students whose lives they touch. It is this strong belief that encourages many prospective students to seek new methods for instruction and delivery that serve as the impetus for creating a new generation of artists in our world. As a student who graduates with this focus, you’ll be exposed to the educational techniques and the artistic inspiration that will empower you as an educator to encourage more students to begin a relationship with art.

All Core Courses + Required Electives:

- AR870 Summer Studios (4 credits); delivered on campus
- AR690 History of Art Education (4 credits)
- + 2 more electives of your choice

**Focus: Self-Designed Program**

All Core Courses + 4 electives of your choice

“After completing my Undergraduate degree, I felt ready to make art, not teach it. Boston University’s Master of Arts in Art Education program has given me the knowledge and skills I need to be a valuable team member to any teaching program. I also have the confidence and skills to advocate for my program and my community. Thank you so much for helping me take this step.”

Lily Lovins, Milford, Ohio, CFA’15
Curriculum

Core Courses (16 credits, all required)

CFAAR 600 Contemporary Issues in Art Ed. (4 cr)
Examines current trends in practice and theory as well as artists of the past and present who express contemporary personal, social and global concerns in their work. Discussions are focused on how the course content can influence classroom curriculum and instruction. Students conduct library research to find related articles on a topic relative to the course content. Assignments are written, visual, and digital.

CFAAR 620 Curriculum Planning (4 cr)
The study of contemporary techniques for implementation of goals in planning curricula and programs of study for all levels Pre-K-8 and S-12. Instruction includes consideration of scope and sequence in relation to stages of development, and community and individual needs. A substantial terminal written project is required.

CFAAR 890 Masters Research Project (8 cr)
The purpose of the Master’s Research Project is to demonstrate the research, scholarly writing skills and acquired knowledge necessary for the advanced professional degree. This project will provide students with an opportunity to utilize the information gained in graduate study to connect learning and theory to best practice. Students will focus on choosing a topic specifically applied to applied/action research. The final product will include the following components: a review of relevant literature, an appropriate research design, a methodology that defines techniques for data gathering, analysis of findings, conclusions, and developing implications and suggestions for future research, as well as implementation of the results of the study in the classroom.

Electives (16 credits, select 4 courses)

CFAAR 610 Teaching Art to Special Populations (4 cr)
Provides an examination of approaches to the education of children with special needs. Designed to help the art specialist integrate special youngsters into heterogeneous school settings; coursework includes the study of behavior, assessment, linguistic needs, classroom management, and different modes of interdisciplinary and intercultural learning.

CFAAR 690 History of Art Education (4 cr)
This course is intended to enrich art educators’ understanding of the origins and on-going development of Visual Arts education in the United States. It will acquaint students with the rich history of their field through discussion, research, and writing a historical paper. Beginning with the emergence of art education through an early apprenticeship model and progressing through the centuries to a Contemporary understanding of what Visual Art Education means and is, grounds the content of this course.

CFAAR 670 Advocacy & Policy (4 cr)
This course is intended to address policy issues and advocacy strategies for leaders in the arts. Local, State, and National Arts Education policies and advocacy programs will be addressed. Students will research agencies, partners, and other organizations beyond the schools that serve as sources for advocacy and often influence policy. Students in this course should develop the knowledge and expertise in understanding needs for change and developing plans for advocacy.

CFAAR 680 Insightful and Creative Leadership (4 cr)
This course is designed to acquaint and prepare in-service art teachers with the basic skills and organizational strategies of leadership and management that are needed to serve within school systems and arts educational organizations. Our goal is to prepare in-service art teachers for insightful and strategic leadership within arts educational settings and to be effective agents of change along with being effective teachers and researchers. The course is grounded in theory as well as practice and brings together a community of art educators who will come together ‘virtually’ through collaborative exercises as well as through opportunities to work with their own school leadership teams. This course will also bring in guest speakers, exemplary practitioners, researchers, and policy makers from academia, public schools, and school districts, charter schools and education management organizations, private and independent schools, business, and other organizations to share their experience, research, and insights about effective leadership practices.

CFAAR 870 Summer Studios (4 cr)
Week-long residency during which morning and afternoon studio sessions will be attended in addition to trips to museums and evening seminars and discussions. Students will be required to keep a verbal/visual journal-sketchbook and to complete a continued studio assignment prior to the session is complete. After students return home, they are required to create lesson plans tying what they’ve learned in their studio coursework to their own classrooms.

Summer Studios

Students attend a unique, immersive nine-day Summer Studio course in which they choose two studio electives to focus on. During the week, students participate in a group project and social events. At the end of the week, there is a formal presentation of student work followed by a critique by faculty and peers. At Summer Studios, students build bonds with their fellow artist-teachers and faculty, laying the foundation for a strong professional network of art educators that will remain intact long after the session is complete. After students return home, they are required to create lesson plans tying what they’ve learned in their studio coursework to their own classrooms.

“This program has helped me grow not only as an educator, but as an artist as well. It has taught me that the term ‘artist-teacher’ is the best way to describe my philosophy towards my career and what I want to give back to the field.”

Jaimie Michelle Bass, Flanders, NJ, CFA’16
Faculty Highlight
As one of the nation’s premier research universities, Boston University believes that all students benefit by learning from dedicated teachers who are actively engaged in original research. Our faculty members are practicing professional artists, accomplished authors, and educators who are leaders in the field of art education. Read about the head of the program below:

Rébecca Bourgault
Chair of Art Education

An art educator and visual artist, Rebecca Bourgault received her doctoral degree in 2011 from the Art & Art Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. Other degrees include an MFA in sculpture from the University of Calgary and a BFA from Concordia University in Montréal. She has taught art education at Montserrat College of Art, Beverly, MA, Teachers College, New York, and Brooklyn College/CUNY. She has also taught sculpture and drawing at the Alberta College of Art & Design, Mount Royal College, and the University of Calgary before coming to New York in 2007. Her installation work has been exhibited nationally in Canada. She has attended art residencies in Québec and the Yukon, studied community engagement in Rio de Janeiro and curated community art exhibitions in New York. Her education research has been presented at NAEA conferences and published for print and electronic scholarly sources. Current research interests include socially engaged art, more specifically with intergenerational and older adult communities, cultural studies, critical ethnography, oral history, and documentary work, as these inform the discipline of art education and education through the arts.

"This program has stretched my thinking in ways I could never have imagined before I started here. The instructors and facilitators in this program have helped me explore my own practices, and find ways to use what I’ve learned to guide my students. It has empowered me as a teacher and a leader. I’ve learned new ways to advocate for the importance of arts education both in and out of the classroom. It has also given me new ways to collaborate with colleagues, students, parents, and the community to create solutions that work where I work."

Trenia D. Scism, San Tan Valley, AZ, CFA’15

Admission Requirements
Applications for the online Master of Arts in Art Education are accepted six times per year. Applicants will be reviewed for admission based upon the following criteria:

Professional portfolio including:
• Completion of the College of Fine Arts Graduate Online Application
• Submission of official transcripts of all schools attended
• Two professional letters of recommendation
• Résumé
• Personal statement indicating the applicant’s purpose in pursuing graduate work, including career objectives
• Artistic portfolio submitted digitally including:
  • Samples of your artwork (roughly 10 works, representing a focused exploration of your own work in any medium.)
  • Samples of your students’ artwork (5–10 works)

Qualities of a Competitive Applicant:
• Completion of a bachelor’s degree in Studio Art or Art Education from a regionally accredited college or university
• Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
• Current or recent classroom teaching experience
• International students applying to the Master’s program must have a TOEFL (iBT) that meets or exceeds the minimum requirement of 84. Our most competitive applicants will present a composite score of at least 90-100 and scores of 20 or higher on each subsection.

Please refer to the online application for instructions on how to submit application materials.