

Savannah College of Art and Design

Graduate Review for Candidacy Guidelines
Animation

Revised May 2024

Graduate candidacy

At the approximate midpoint of each graduate student's course of study, the student must pass a faculty review for candidacy. To be reviewed, the student must have met all requirements for the program up to that point with a grade-point average of at least 3.0 in the major.

In the candidacy review, a faculty committee assesses the student's complete body of work, as well as the student's readiness to continue in the program and succeed in the field upon graduation. Reviews are structured according to the discipline and degree program, assessing evidence of the student's knowledge and literature of the discipline; mastery of research and design methodologies; and technical, conceptual, and aesthetic proficiencies. Academic performance, as demonstrated by individual course grades, also serves as an indication of the student's readiness to proceed to candidacy. Students who experience academic difficulty should consult with their department chair or graduate coordinator. Additional guidelines for the candidacy review can be found on the [graduate advising website in MySCAD.](#)

Students who do not pass the review for candidacy during their initial attempt may request a second review. Any student who does not pass the second review may not be allowed to continue in the program.

<https://www.scad.edu/about/scad-glance/disclosures-and-policies/compliance-and-policies/graduate-candidacy>

- The midpoint of the program is generally defined as 45 earned credits for MFA, MBI, and M.Arch, and 15-20 earned credits for MA students. The earned credits do not include any credits from assigned, 500-level intensives. These guidelines will provide additional details about review eligibility for the department.
- All intensives must be completed before a student participates in a review for candidacy.

The graduate coordinator is the best point of contact for any questions about candidacy review.

Graduate coordinator contacts for your department can be found [HERE](#) (click on the department name).

Animation
Review for Candidacy Guidelines
Revised May 2024

Timeline and Scheduling

- Candidates are eligible to take the review for candidacy after completing either 15 hours (for M.A.) or 45 hours (for M.F.A.) of credits.
- Candidates must have a minimum overall and major GPA of 3.0.
- M.F.A. students must be enrolled in or have successfully completed ANIM 753: Thesis Exploration and Research prior to taking their 45-hour review.
- It is the responsibility of the student to determine if they have met the requirements for a review for candidacy and should sign up following the campus-specific procedures.
- Graduate reviews will take place on Fridays of week 9 in fall, winter and spring quarters only.
- Students who have signed up for the review will receive an email the week of the review informing them of the time and location (or Zoom Link) for the review.
- SCADnow students must participate in virtual synchronous reviews, as detailed by the graduate coordinator.
- SCADnow and Savannah students should plan to attend the week 5 virtual information sessions, outlined below.
- Atlanta students will receive Review for Candidacy preparation session timings in the Graduate Newsletter issued in the first week of Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters.

Preparation

- Students should prepare to present for 20 minutes, with an additional five minutes allocated for questions.
- Work should be presented from Power Point, Keynote, or similar platform. Files must not be presented individually from folders. Presentations from source files (such as Maya) are not permitted. For a content guide to work, see Section C below.
- Students should verify that all presented materials run correctly in the assigned room. This should be done the day before the review.
- Students should prepare to present a process/sketch book, boards or collection of design treatments in support of all presented projects.
- M.A. students should prepare a written statement of intent outlining artistic intention, with reference to career goals, for the remainder of their studies.
- M.F.A. students should prepare a thesis proposal outlining their area of academic investigation and provide justification of how it will support their thesis project.
- Savannah and SCADnow students will participate in info sessions with graduate coordinators in week 5 of fall, winter, and spring quarters. All information will be shared at these sessions. Sessions will be Zoomed and recorded. Students will be informed about these meetings several weeks in advance.

- Atlanta students will receive Review for Candidacy preparation session timings in the Graduate Newsletter issued in the first week of Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters.

Procedure and Format of the Review for Candidacy

Day of the review for candidacy

- Students should arrive at least 15 minutes early, and be prepared to present at the assigned time.
- Students should wait outside the assigned presentation room until asked to enter.
- At the beginning of the review, students will be asked to complete a form.
- A student must bring a current SCAD Degree Planner (formerly SCAD PRO) audit to his/her review. Students should print the audit using MySCAD (Student Workspace > Graduate Advising > SCAD Degree Planner) and bring it to the review along with the student's other review materials.
- Students will spend 20 minutes presenting their work to a committee of three faculty members, criteria specific to the program is detailed below.
- While there is no required dress for the review, students need to dress in a professional manner. Students should treat the review as if it were a job interview.
- Students who are tardy or fail to show up for the review will automatically fail.

During the review

15-hour review for candidacy

- Students will present between four to eight fully-developed projects completed since starting the M.A. program at SCAD. These projects must demonstrate a consistent and cohesive body of work that demonstrates preparation for the student's stated artistic direction and career goals. No work from conditional or intensive courses should be presented.
- Students should be prepared to answer questions about their career objectives and preparedness.
- All students must present a list of software intended to produce the project and a nine-week production schedule, with nine specific checkpoints and delineated midterm goals to demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed time in which to complete the project.
- Animation-focused students should prepare a Final Project Proposal including the length of the project, any animatics or video reference as well as any character rigs and backgrounds intended to be used to produce the project
- Modeling-focused students should produce mood boards, a prop list, photo reference, prop or character turn-around sheets, concept art, block outs of proposed environments and/or props and/or characters
- Final projects are one-term exercises that demonstrate skill mastery. They are not intended to be long-form animated films as one might make for an MFA thesis.

45-hour review for candidacy

- Student should present evidence of work that demonstrate readiness to address production demands of the proposed Thesis Visual Component. No work from intensive courses should be presented.
- Students will present an animatic which may also include any completed tests of their thesis project.
- Students will be asked to contextualize their thesis project in relation to their academic research, production goals and wider career goals.
- Students will outline a proposed thesis timeline and suggest thesis committee members and defend choices.
- Students will be asked what, if any, external resources will or may be required (e.g. in talent, modeling, lighting/texturing, rigging, animation, rendering, sound, etc.).
- Students will be asked to discuss their creative objectives for their remaining coursework.

Criteria for Evaluation

15-hour review for candidacy

The 15-hour review is a 20-minute presentation and question session that serves the purpose of qualifying the skills, knowledge and creative drive of students preparing to enter the animation field. Students need to have a very specific focus for the final project, which should be articulated along with career goals. Students should expect to be evaluated on the strength of their verbal and visual presentation; the consistency, cohesion and professional finish of the project work and their evidential commitment to achieving personal goals to achieve their stated career objective.

45-hour review for candidacy

The 45-hour review is a 20-minute presentation and question session that serves the dual purpose of qualifying the skills, knowledge and creative preparedness of students to undertake thesis production and to articulate reasoning in academic research addressing the thesis topic. Students should expect to be evaluated on the strength of the verbal and visual presentation, the potential for synthesis of academic research and production goals and the degree to which the work prepared supports those intentions and evidential creative and artistic commitment.

After the Review for Candidacy

- At the end of the presentation and questions, students will be asked to leave the room so that the committee can consult privately.
- When asked back into the review room, the faculty committee will inform the student if they have passed or failed the review and explain the results.
- If the committee feels that the student doesn't present a body of work that is at the level of the SCAD Animation Graduate program, the committee will offer suggestions as to what classes should be taken to help improve skills.
- Students will receive a copy of the results from their animation graduate coordinator.
- M.A. students who have not taken or passed their 15-hour review will be unable to register for SANM 748, School of Animation and Motion M.A. Final Project.

- M.F.A. students who have not taken or passed their 45-hour review will be unable to register for ANIM 790, Animation M.F.A. Thesis.
- Students who do not pass the review the first time may reapply for review as soon as the following quarter. Students are responsible for deciding if they wish to enroll in appropriate elective courses to create new work. Students should not reschedule their review for candidacy without seeking follow-up advice from the graduate coordinator.
- The department cannot guarantee that students will pass any subsequent retake of a failed review. Students who fail a review twice will not be allowed to continue in the program. If there are further questions about the review for candidacy process, students should speak with their animation graduate coordinator.

Appendix / Frequently Asked Questions

This following contains a list of frequently asked questions and answers about the 15-hour M.A. and the 45-hour M.F.A. review for candidacy. If there are further questions about any review process, students should not hesitate to contact your animation graduate coordinator.

Why do I have to take the review?

- The reviews are designed to guide students in their academic career and to help prepare them for professional careers.

When should I expect my review to be held?

- Reviews are held on Fridays of week 9 in fall, winter, and spring quarters only.

As a Savannah campus student, where do I sign up for my review?

- You must contact your graduate coordinator in Savannah.
- MFA Students must register by 5PM on the Friday of Week 7 of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters.
- MA Students must register by 5pm on the Friday of Week 4 of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters.

As an Atlanta campus student, where do I sign up for my review?

- The sign-up sheet is included as a link in the graduate newsletter issued to all active Atlanta graduate student e-mail addresses in the first week of fall, winter and spring quarters.
- Students must register by 5PM on the Friday preceding the review date to be included on the schedule.

As a SCADnow student, where do I sign up for my review?

- You must contact your graduate coordinator in Savannah.
- MFA Students must register by 5PM on the Friday of Week 7 of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters.

- MA Students must register by 5pm on the Friday of Week 4 of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters.

Which review do I take?

There are two different reviews:

15-hour M.A. review for candidacy

This review is a requirement for M.A. students. The review helps to determine if they are performing to the required level in their program. Passing the review for candidacy is a requirement for enrolling in SANM 748, School of Animation and Motion M.A. Final Project, and for graduation.

45-hour M.F.A. review for candidacy

This review is a requirement for M.F.A. students. The review helps to determine if the student is performing to the required level in their program and if they are prepared to embark on their M.F.A. thesis. M.F.A. candidates must have completed at least 45 hours of course work and/or be enrolled in ANIM 753 Thesis Exploration and Research and have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in their major. Passing the review for candidacy is a requirement for enrolling in ANIM 790 Animation M.F.A. Thesis and for graduation.

When am I ready to take the 15-hour M.A. review for candidacy?

- You have completed 15 hours of the required course work.
- Note that the intensive courses ANIM 501, ANIM 504, ANIM 505, and VSFX 501 do *not* count toward the 15 hours.
- You have major and overall GPAs of 3.0 or higher.
- You must contact your graduate coordinator in Savannah.

When am I ready to take the 45-hour M.F.A. review for candidacy?

- You have completed 45 hours of required course work.
- Note that the intensive courses ANIM 501, ANIM 504, ANIM 505, and VSFX 501 do *not* count toward the 45 hours.
- You have major and overall GPAs of 3.0 or higher.
- You have a clear direction and focus for the development of your visual and written components including a clear thesis statement.
- You *must* be currently enrolled in or have taken ANIM 753: Thesis Exploration and Research.

Will I be notified when I need to take the review?

- No, the onus is on the student, in discussion with the animation graduate coordinator or faculty adviser, to determine the soonest possible review date.

Must I take the review once I have met the qualification criteria?

- Failure to take your 15- or 45-hour review as soon as you are qualified may make you ineligible to register for required or desired courses the following quarter.
- If you are qualified to take the 15- or 45-hour review, you can opt to wait another quarter or two if you feel you are not ready for the review. However, you must be aware that your continuation in the program is dependent on passing the review. You will not be able to sign up for your animation M.A. portfolio or animation M.F.A. thesis courses respectively.
- You should meet with your graduate coordinator to discuss your options before you decide not to take a review.

What should I wear to my review?

- While there is no required dress for the review, students are encouraged to dress in a professional manner. Students should treat the review as if it were a job interview.

What am I supposed to present at the review?

- See the “Preparation” section of this document for a detailed list of presentation expectations.
- It is strongly advised that you meet with the animation graduate coordinator at the start of the quarter during which you plan to take your graduate review.
- Savannah and SCADnow students will participate in info sessions with graduate coordinators in week 5 of fall, winter, and spring quarters. All information will be shared at these sessions.

How long does the review process take?

- Students will have no more than 20 minutes to present their work to the review committee followed by an opportunity to answer questions. At the end of the presentation they will be asked to temporarily leave the room for faculty deliberations.
- For online reviews the review process takes a week after the submission of the materials.

When do I find out if I have passed the review?

- At the end of the review the review committee will tell students if they have passed or failed.
- Students will be able to obtain a copy of the results in writing after the review.
- For online reviews students will be able to obtain a copy of the results in writing a week after the review.

What happens if I do not pass my first review attempt?

- If students fail their first attempt at their review will have another opportunity to take it again. Students should take note of the faculty comments that are given during the review and take the necessary steps to be successful the following time. Students will also receive a written copy of the faculty comments.
- The students’ committees may also recommend specific courses to help improve the level of work. Students are not required to take the courses recommended. However, the suggestions are made to support the student and should be considered.

What happens if I do not pass the review the second time?

- If students fail the review a second time they will not be allowed to continue in the program.

I have done well in all my classes but I still did not pass the review, why?

- A rubric used by evaluating committee members is available through your department's graduate coordinator. It is advisable to review the criteria on this rubric with your coordinator to help determine if you are prepared to present.
- The review committee looks for development of your work over time.
- The committee is not limiting its evaluation to your course work.
- You are required to demonstrate through your work a depth of thought, concept and analysis and a level of reflection appropriate to a graduate level.
- The committee looks for a clear and concise review of your body of work.
- Technical proficiency, as evidenced by individual course grades, is not the criteria alone for passing the review.

How can I better prepare for my review?

- Carefully review the "Preparation" section of this document.
- Students should schedule a time to meet their animation faculty adviser and the animation graduate coordinator before the review for feedback on what they are choosing to present at the review.
- Students should verify that all materials that form part of the presentation run correctly in the assigned room. This should be checked the day before the review because reviews may run all day from early morning.

Which faculty members will be on the review committee (Savannah, Atlanta, SCADnow)?

- Every animation faculty member will participate in a review committee on a rotating basis.
- Even if committees are assigned prior to the review, there may be last minute changes.

How do I get a copy of my SCAD Degree Planner (formerly SCAD PRO) audit?

- A current SCAD Degree Planner audit is found in MySCAD (Student Workspace-Graduate Advising- SCAD Degree Planner).

ANIMATION

Review for Candidacy. M.A. 15 Hour. Evaluation Sheet

Candidate Name:		SCAD ID:	
SCAD E-mail:	@student.scad.edu	Phone:	

Review Location:	SCADnow	SAVANNAH	Date:	/ /
Review Attempt:	FIRST	SECOND	Result:	PASS FAIL

Faculty Panel:		
(print signature)		

Criterion	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Average (C)	Needs Improvement (D)
1. Content and concepts as they relate to the body of work.	Content and concepts are articulated in a manner that is insightful and perceptive. Panel understanding of candidate's direction is enhanced by ~.	Content and concepts are articulated in a manner that is clear. Panel understanding of candidate's direction is supported by ~.	Content and concepts are articulated in a manner that is somewhat inconsistent. Panel understanding of candidate's direction is only partially revealed by ~.	Content and concepts are not articulated clearly or not in evidence.
2. Aesthetic choices.	Aesthetic choices enhance the appropriateness to the context of the work. Choices enhance a cohesive focused idea or concept.	Aesthetic choices support the appropriateness to the context of the work. Choices support a cohesive focused idea or concept.	Aesthetic choices are somewhat inconsistent to the defense of relevance and appropriateness to the context of the work. Choices supporting a cohesive focused idea or concept are inconsistent.	Aesthetic choices are underdeveloped with no defense of relevance and appropriateness to the context of the work. Choices made do not support a cohesive focused idea or concept.
3. Technical achievement and skill.	Context of work enhanced by high level of technical achievement and skill. Outstanding Level of technical proficiency.	Context of work supported by a competent level of technical achievement and skill. Level of technical proficiency is evident and appropriate as it relates to the body of work.	Context of work somewhat inconsistently supported by technical achievement and skill. Level of technical proficiency is inconsistent.	Context of work not supported by ~. Level of technical proficiency is weak or unsatisfactory.
4. Evidence of creative methodology (sketchbooks and other support work).	Body of student work shows outstanding evidence of on-going development of fundamental artistic skills involving sketching and drawing, visualization and concept research and development.	Body of student work supported by evidence of on-going development of fundamental artistic skills involving sketching and drawing, visualization and concept research and development.	Evidence supporting creative methodologies involving sketching and drawing, visualization and concept research and development; is somehow inconsistent to articulated direction.	Evidence supporting creative methodologies involving sketching and drawing, visualization and concept research and development; is weak or unsatisfactory.

Comments (continued):

Completed and signed review sheets should be sent to registrar@scad.edu

ANIMATION MFA 45-HOUR REVIEW FOR CANDIDACY

Student Name				SCAD ID		
SCAD E-Mail				Phone		
Review Location	Atlanta	SCADnow	Savannah	Date		
Review Attempt	First	Second		Result	Pass	Fail

Faculty Panel	Signature

Notes from Faculty Panel

Scoring Table				
Blind Scoring Values from Panel Members	Research & Synthesis	Aesthetic Choices & Artistic Prin.	Skill & Technical Expertise	Preparedness & Presentation
Section Averages:	/20	/20	/20	/20
Total Score:	/80	(48 or higher required for pass)		

Completed and signed review sheets should be sent to registrar@scad.edu

ANIMATION MFA 45-HOUR REVIEW FOR CANDIDACY RUBRIC

A/5	B/4	C/3	D/2	F/1
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Research and Synthesis

Candidate articulates in an insightful and perceptive manner content and concepts relevant to the field of animation.

Candidate correlates extensive research with the development of the creative and technical aspects of their Visual Component.

A persuasive or informational Thesis Statement expresses a clear rationale supporting the development of the Visual Component.

An abstract delineates the scope of proposed research for the thesis topic and its relevance to the field of animation.

Aesthetic Choices and Artistic Principles

Visual Component elements exhibit a well-designed, intentional, and cohesive personal aesthetic.

Submitted work reflects extensive creative and aesthetic exploration and experimentation.

Concept design materials such as character sheets, style frames, mood boards, and proof of concept demonstrate potential for professional-looking, festival-level work.

Animatic is effectively timed, complete, and demonstrates effective consideration of viewpoint and screen design.

Skill and Technical Expertise

Production work exhibits professionally marketable skills.

Demo Reel and presented work demonstrate sufficient skill for the student to undertake their proposed role(s) in the creation of the Visual Component.

Evidence of past collaborative output or other production material overlaps with thesis production goals.

Plans for collaboration are included for required production components that fall outside student's area of expertise or provided work demonstrates no need for collaboration.

Preparedness and Presentation

Student provided evidence of tentative Thesis Committee membership.

Student provided a comprehensive production schedule that aligns with remaining course planning and scheduling.

Student offered a well-organized and clear visual presentation.

Student communicated their creative, research, and technical decisions in a comprehensive and concise verbal presentation.