

Art, Practice of

The Department of Art offers a two-year program of study leading to the Master of Fine Art (MFA) degree in the practice of art.

Our two-year Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Program strives to graduate artists who demonstrate an original vision in their approach to form and content and whose work will have a significant artistic and cultural impact. Incoming MFA students are expected to be already deeply engaged in their creative process and to possess technical proficiency in their chosen media. The MFA Program supports 14 graduate students per year. Graduate coursework and independent study are designed to help students develop a critical understanding of their creative work in the context of Arts, Humanities, and Sciences. A feature unique to Berkeley's MFA Program is the requirement that our graduate students take courses from the broader university community. Our students study and collaborate with faculty and graduate students in areas as diverse as Geography, Environmental Sciences, Classics, Art History, Disability Studies, Philosophy, Cognitive Science, Interactive Design, Rhetoric, Film Studies, and Comparative Literature. Art Practice faculty are highly interdisciplinary in their work and can enable close connections between MFA students and colleagues in other fields across campus.

The Program seeks to help students develop a keen sense of their audience and to consider how they will reach, or even create, that audience for their work. We facilitate the exposure of graduate student work to a broader audience, whether that be in museums, galleries, public places, or a venue uniquely suited to the artist's creative format. A Visiting Artist Lecture Series and visiting artist studio visits offer graduate students the chance to make contact with internationally-known artists and to receive feedback on their work from these visitors.

Peer-to-peer discussion and critique forms the heart of Berkeley's MFA Program. Students are expected to make their own work, respond to their classmates' work, and learn to speak and write thoughtfully about both. Students have the opportunity to teach in the second year, mentored and closely supported by a faculty member. Exhibitions in the first and second year of study demand that students maintain a rigorous pace of creative research and establish a professional art practice. The final thesis exhibition, completed after the second year of study, is held at the Berkeley Art Museum.

Admission to the University

Uniform minimum requirements for admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A minimum grade-point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g. Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, 230 on the computer-based test, 90 on the iBT test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and

4. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

Applicants who already hold a graduate degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees as evidence of broad research training, not as vocational training certificates; therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to take up new subject matter on a serious level without undertaking a graduate program, unless the fields are completely dissimilar.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may only apply to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Any applicant who was previously registered at Berkeley as a graduate student, no matter how briefly, must apply for readmission, not admission, even if the new application is to a different program.

Required documents for admissions applications

1. **Transcripts:** Upload unofficial transcripts with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcripts of all college-level work will be required **if admitted**. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) you have attended. Request a current transcript from every post-secondary school that you have attended, including community colleges, summer sessions, and extension programs. If you have attended Berkeley, upload unofficial transcript with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcript with evidence of degree conferral **will not** be required if admitted.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants can request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This requirement applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and

most European countries. However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a U.S. university may submit an official transcript from the U.S. university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement: 1) courses in English as a Second Language, 2) courses conducted in a language other than English, 3) courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and 4) courses of a non-academic nature. If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests.

Curriculum

ART 218	Seminar: Theory and Criticism	4
ART 218	Seminar: Theory and Criticism	4
ART 290	Independent Study (listed twice: two semesters required, for a total of 8 units)	4
ART 290	Independent Study (listed twice: two semesters required, for a total of 8 units)	4
ART 294	Seminar for M.F.A. Students	4
ART 295	Independent Study for M.F.A. Students (listed twice: two semesters required, for a total of 20 units)	4-12
ART 295	Independent Study for M.F.A. Students (listed twice: two semesters required, for a total of 20 units)	4-12
ART 301	The Teaching of Art: Practice	1
Two Electives		2

Practice of Art

ART 218 Seminar: Theory and Criticism 4 Units
Weekly meetings will provide a forum for the discussion of issues related to assigned readings in the fields of esthetics, theory and art criticism.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 229 NEW MEDIA METHODS 3 Units

In this methods course we will study key languages of new media innovation, ranging from flow charts to scripting languages and circuit diagrams. Our study method involves the creation and application of sensing devices in an urban context, and engages students in establishing chains of references which connect ground truth to data, data to information, information to people, people to actions, and actions to policies. Taking into account technical, political, cultural and literacy questions we seek to connect our data production work with information needs of underserved communities in the Bay Area region.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 290 Independent Study 4 Units

Individual projects by first-year graduate students with one assigned instructor.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 294 Seminar for M.F.A. Students 4 Units

Studio work emphasizing various aspects of form. Group criticism. Intended especially for M.F.A. candidates.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Admission to the M.F.A. program

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 295 Independent Study for M.F.A. Students 4 - 12 Units
M.F.A. candidates, special study--M.F.A. Committee members as well as other faculty.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Admission to the M.F.A. program

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 298 Directed Group Study 4 Units
Directed group study in special problems, group research, and/or interdisciplinary topics.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 299 Supervised Independent Study for Graduate Students 1 - 4 Units
Special projects by graduate students undertaken with a specific member of the faculty.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor, graduate adviser, and Department Chair

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 301 The Teaching of Art: Practice 1 Unit

Utilizing aspects of pedagogical and andragogical teaching, the interactive lecture, collaborative learning, simulations, and brainstorming-freewriting, this semester-long seminar will focus on these various integrative teaching approaches, to facilitate communication in the diverse and wide-ranging arena which is fine arts today. Discussion of course aims, instructional methods, grading standards, and special problems in the teaching of art practice.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1 hour of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.