

From: noreply@wsu.edu
To: [curriculum.submit](#)
Subject: 612019 Fine Arts Requirements Revise - Revise or Drop Graduate Plan
Date: Sunday, September 27, 2020 6:29:12 PM
Attachments: [2020.09.27.18.26.27.90.FormData.html](#)
[2020.09.27.18.26.26.80.currentCatalogFile MFA Redux team edits 2.docx](#)

Squeak Meisel has submitted a request for a major curricular change. His/her email address is: squeak.meisel@wsu.edu.

Requested change: Revise or Drop Graduate Plan

Degree: MFA

Title: Thesis

Requested Effective Date: Fall 2021

Revise plan requirement: Yes

Dean: Swindell, Samantha - Assoc Dean - CAS,

Chair: Meisel, Squeak – Chair – Fine Arts,

Catalog Subcommittee
Approval Date

AAC, PHSC, or GSC
Approval Date

Faculty Senate
Approval Date

From: [Swindell, Samantha](#)
To: [curriculum.submit](#); [Meisel, Squeak](#)
Subject: RE: 612019 Fine Arts Requirements Revise - Revise or Drop Graduate Plan
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 11:41:13 AM

1. I approve this proposal in its current form.

From: curriculum.submit@wsu.edu <curriculum.submit@wsu.edu>
Sent: Sunday, September 27, 2020 6:26 PM
To: Meisel, Squeak <squeak.meisel@wsu.edu>
Cc: Swindell, Samantha <:sswindell@wsu.edu>
Subject: 612019 Fine Arts Requirements Revise - Revise or Drop Graduate Plan

Meisel, Squeak – Chair – Fine Arts,

Swindell, Samantha - Assoc Dean - CAS,

Squeak Meisel has submitted a request for a major curricular change.

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Both Chair and Dean approval is required to complete the submission process. Please indicate that you have reviewed the proposal by highlighting one of the statements below and **reply all** to this email. (curriculum.submit@wsu.edu.) [Details of major change requested can be found in the attached supplemental documentation]

1. I approve this proposal in its current form.
2. I approve this proposal with revisions. Revisions are attached.
3. I do not approve this proposal. Please return to submitter.

If you do not respond within one week, you will be sent a reminder email. If no response is received within three weeks of the submission date, the proposal will be returned to the submitter.

MFA Redux

moving to a 3-year program

Enhanced College justification

For context we have been enrolling MFA's in 15-17 credits a semester to get them through in two years to reach a 60-credit degree. This plan would reduce most of their load to the minimum of 10 credits per semester with room to explore outside of the discipline and provide greater focus on creative research, which is the primary purpose of the program. This plan could also facilitate an increase in the number of paying graduate students or INTO students as the curriculum would be simplified and less taxing on faculty labor. We also expect quality will increase with the increased dwell time in the program. A shift to a 3-year program will impact the number of hours a faculty member participates in what we call tutorial hours, meaning: this change to a 3-year program is about a 7% reduction overall and paves the way for further undergraduate curricular reform at a later date. For the graduate student, this change reduces the number of hours they are required to enroll in per semester by approximately 30%, allowing them more time in their studios and making connections across the University to conduct creative research. The central moments of evaluation will remain individual tutorials, critical practices FA 555, FA 500 or 598 (depending on the semester), as well as annual exhibitions that serve as benchmarks for graduate student progress and performance. The critical practices course FA 555 would now change from a 9-credit course to 6 credits a semester. We would also reorient it in the schedule moving this course to 4-5:30 rather than 1-4PM. Every graduate student who is obligated to attend this 3-hour course twice a week would now be available for TA duties T-TH afternoons. An added benefit would be that all TA's could attend classes and shadow professors teaching between 8am and 4pm. This would improve TA training for teaching. This shift in the schedule and credits allows graduate students more time in their studio and a slightly reduced critique load. Studio production would continue to be measured largely through FA 700 (we treat this as one on one tutorial), FA 500-level tutorial credits and then via their thesis committee selected at the beginning of their second year. This plan also increases our annually required FA 500 Art History course from 2 to 3 credits. This change more accurately represents the labor associated with this course as well as its centrality to theory in the curriculum and its impact on the graduate students studio process. Efforts in this course are well above the guidelines for a 3 credit course. The reduction of credit for this studio time in the FA 555 (moving from 9 to 6 credits) course reflect the desire to balance the values of course work and its impact on their creative practice. FA 500 is taught by three rotating faculty researching varied approaches to contemporary art. This prepares students to participate in the contemporary art world where artistic practice is increasingly interdisciplinary. Working across disciplines means knowledge of the field of art (art history and theory) and its relationships to other fields. In this action we are also recognizing formally that the graduate seminar is one of the primary means for the Department to fulfill the Graduate SLOs, specifically item numbers 3, 4, 6 and 7 yet it is designated as a two-credit course. Students enrolled in FA 500 frequently equate their working hours based on numeric credits, two credit hours of FA 500 compared to graduate credits in critical practices and tutorial hours during the fall semester minimizes their effort put forth to the course. FA 500 becomes a low in priority. We would like to remedy this by increasing the course to 3 credit hours.

We are actively considering other benefits to the grads and access to our branch campus faculty once these changes are solidified. Additionally, this plan also helps us align more closely with disciplinary expectations of numbers of credits a student must complete for an MFA. The current two-year program creates problems for easily fulfilling credit hours, and a three-year plan would rectify this as well.

These changes strengthen the department by:

- Reduce faculty workload.
- Extend time in the program for graduate students to:
 - Explore a variety a media while achieving greater mastery
 - Develop research projects with greater depth
 - Network with faculty outside the unit
 - Take electives outside the unit
 - Spend greater time on professional development
- Enable the department to focus on revamping undergraduate curriculum.
- Provide more opportunities and time for students to compensate for initial shortcomings in their work or commitment to their work. Failure and risk taking in practice is central to creative research. Without this room to breathe every credit matters and failure can mean the end of a student's investigation. We need room for this.
- Allow students to enroll in undergraduate art history courses which would help to remediate any deficits in fundamental knowledge and provide opportunities to further develop specific interests, further strengthening students' creative practices while utilizing existing faculty efforts.

Potential negative impacts:

- Students will have less one-on-one tutorials with faculty.
- Annual cohorts admitted to the program will need to be slightly smaller to stay within our allocated temporary budget for recruiting. 6-7 students per class will likely be reduced to 4-5 per class.

Strategic impact:

This plan has great potential to facilitate a reduced load for faculty instruction, improve graduate led instruction, and enable broader curriculum reforms such as blending professional development courses to cover both graduate and undergraduate students. Thereby, freeing up one faculty to complete additional duties on the undergraduate side of things. As mentioned

above it also provides a greater opportunity for bridgebuilding between other units and investigation of useful courses already offered outside of the department. Without adequate room in the MFA student's schedule, creative research is often neglected or carried out in a hasty manner. In this model they would be allowed to enroll in at least one elective during their three years. and would have the opportunity to explore even further if they wished in other semesters. This plan also allows for community engaged projects that could have more time to develop. Recent grads have expressed a strong interest in these types of activities and within the 2-year time span of the current program students simply are unable to nurture relationships quickly enough.

Impact on other units:

The only impact we can foresee on other units is there will be an increased possibility for MFA's mixing with students from other disciplines. We see this as another potential advantage.

General justification (university)

This is a revision to the Department of Fine Arts degree plan for the MFA terminal degree. Changes here reflect a move to a three-year program. This change has been under discussion for many years within the department. In the face of COVID, challenges relating to the timeframe of the program have been accentuated for existing MFA's who will likely delay graduation this year. **This transition to a three-year timeframe which is already happening organically for some students presents a unique opportunity to begin building in this direction.** Over the years faculty have observed that as assessment measures are increased and brought into alignment with the university, graduate students are having less and less time for development of their work.

The necessity of creating stronger benchmarks and clearer definition of expectation have to some degree worked in concert to align the program with disciplinary expectation, increase rigor and get closer to the exact number of credits required for the degree. (60 credits total with 53 graded). This move to a 3-year program will remedy slippage in the student's allocation of time to make work (the most important component to an artist's development) and allow for interdisciplinary elective work to be completed by grads should they desire. We have found this especially helpful in building bridges for graduate students to have mentorship outside the department in specific areas of interest. Art is always about something, and the work of our graduate students frequently intersect with work by WSU scholars in a number of disciplines. Key examples include queer theory, racial justice, and the environment. Allowing graduate

students more time to connect with specialists in particular areas helps individual students deepen their investigations, and assists the department with verifying the quality of a student's individual research. Changes that will be necessary are highlighted below and constitute a major curriculum change:

In summary changes include:

- An increase of credits allocated to FA 500 to 3 credits. (This is more than warranted given the amount of research students must put into this class. No change to course meeting times will be necessary.)
- A decrease in credits allocated to FA 555 from 9 to 6. (This will require a shortening of this course in contact hours. We will also pilot moving this class time to the evening in order to facilitate that all TA's may attend courses they are assigned to further bolster teaching mentorship.)
- We will extend the program to three years to allow deeper engagement with creative search in order to better inform the student's thesis project. Benchmark reviews will predominately stay the same for now with a first semester review, first-year show and an added second-year show. **This will also greatly expand the timeline for thesis committee work with the grads allowing 2 years with the committee as opposed to 5 months.**
- An allowance of electives on top of existing coursework should the grad desire to do so.
- FA 700 will increase to 8 credits with this addition.
- A reduction of credits allows for grads to take courses outside the department as electives each semester. This is not currently possible with grads enrolling in 15-17 credits a semester.
- Each class of grads will be reduced to 4-5 maintaining our 12 person program with room to add INTO graduate students as needed.

Degree Description:

The MFA program at Washington State University is a ~~two-year~~ three-year interdisciplinary program where students may focus in, but are not limited to, ceramics, drawing, digital media, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture. Emphasis is placed on personal and conceptual artistic development in light of contemporary art practices. Graduates meet with faculty for one-on-one studio discussions. First year students have a progress review at the end of their first semester and an exhibition in the departmental gallery at the end of their first and second years. In the ~~and the second~~ third year the program culminates in a thesis exhibition held in the Museum of Art. A final oral examination and a thesis document are also required. The degree requires ~~57~~ 53 graded credit hours and ~~5~~ 8 credit hours of thesis work (FA 700) totaling ~~62~~ 61 credits.

OVERVIEW

The MFA program at Washington State University is a ~~two~~ three-year program that encourages an interdisciplinary approach to making and thinking. In order to attain an MFA and to be in alignment with disciplinary MFA requirements, graduate students must complete a minimum of 60-credits, 53 credits must be designated as graded. You will be advised each semester by the Graduate Adviser as to the course numbers to sign up for. Entry to the program happens each fall.

The curriculum for this degree includes:

An art history/theory seminar for ~~2~~ 3 credits (FA 500) each fall semester and a practical seminar for 2 credits (FA 598) in the spring of the first year. Students are assigned ~~15~~ 10 in all but

their final semester, ~~14~~ 9 of those credits are designated as “graded” credits, one credit of pass/fail coursework (FA 700) will also be assigned. In the ~~fourth~~ second semester students must take FA 700 for 2 credits and In the final semester students are required to take 2 credits of FA 700 and ~~15~~ 11 graded credits. This will total ~~57~~ 53 graded credits and ~~5~~ 8 credits of FA 700 equaling ~~62~~ 61 total credits

~~During both years~~ Each year, students meet regularly with a range of faculty members from all disciplines for group and individual critiques. Visiting Artist and Scholars also meet with graduate students three or four times a semester. At the end of the second semester, MFA students participate in a first year review show and a mid-term exhibit in their 4th semester. The thesis exhibit takes place during April of the ~~second~~ third year and is held at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Fine Art WSU or another suitable display space.

Students are assigned private studios and have 24-hour access to the art building, which located near the center of campus. There are many facilities and resources for your use within the department, if you do not have hours with a particular area be sure to check in with area coordinators. if you desire to use a facility, there may be a lab fee associated and or an orientation to use of equipment.

COURSEWORK

The following table outlines the course sequence in our program, along with the program objectives that they address and the specific content domains. For the program to maintain its qualifications within the scope of College Art Association guidelines, the program is required to demonstrate coverage of these content domains.

- FA 500, Graduate Art History, ~~2~~ 3 credits (every fall)
- FA 555, Critical Practices, ~~9~~ 6 credits (each semester)

Each semester faculty rotate.

- FA 598, Graduate Seminar, 2 credits (~~third~~ second semester)
- FA 500 level, Tutorial Hours, 3 credits (each semester) ~~6 credits (final semester)~~

This course is designed for one on one meetings surrounding your art practice with individual faculty. Meetings should be scheduled with assigned faculty ASAP.

- FA 700, Master's Research, 1 credit- ~~three~~ four semesters, 2 credits in the second semester as well as the final semester

This course is usually assigned to your tutorial faculty or a branch campus faculty and used as tutorials. In your final semester it is assigned to your thesis committee chair.

BENCHMARKS

- First Semester Review, studio review by all faculty, end of first semester
- First Year Exhibition (second semester)
- 2nd year Exhibition (fourth semester)

Students are reviewed by committee appointed by graduate coordinator and subsequently evaluated by all faculty.

- Thesis exhibition: Final examination of artwork shown in the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA).
- Thesis oral examinations: conducted within the JSMA with thesis committee as scheduled with graduate school.
- Thesis paper, document articulating in written form about work shown in thesis exhibition. Reviewed by Thesis Committee.

SEMESTER PLANS/SAMPLE PROGRAM

1	2	3	4	5	6
FA 500, 2-3 cr (Art History)	FA 598, 2 cr (Grad Seminar)	FA 500, 2-3 cr (Art History)	FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)	FA 500, 2-3 cr (Art History)	FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)
FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)	FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)	FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)	FA 500 level, 3 cr (Tutorials)	FA 555, 9 6 cr (Critical Practices)	FA 500 level, 3 cr (Tutorials)
FA 500 level, 3 cr (Tutorials)	FA 700, 1 2 cr (Masters Thesis)	FA 500 level, 3 cr (Tutorials)	FA 700, 2 1 cr (Masters Thesis)	FA 700, 2 1 cr (Masters Thesis)	FA 700, 2 cr (Masters Thesis)
FA 700, 1 cr (Masters Thesis)		FA 700, 1 cr (Masters Thesis)			

Summary Table		
Graded Credits	Courses	Total Credits Required
	FA 500 Art History	9
	FA 555 Critical Practices	36
	FA 598 Seminar	2
	FA 5XX Tutorials	6
	Electives	
S/U Credits		
	FA 700	8

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students graduating with the MFA in Fine Arts will have developed:

1. An ability to solve open-ended problems/challenges of artistic expression.
2. An ability to analyze the working methods of artists and the results of their efforts in a diverse and disciplined way.
3. An ability to communicate effectively through their artistic practice. Students will be aware of and engaged in a thorough way with art history, critical theory and visual culture in a way that considers a broad cultural awareness considering both local and/or global issues in order to make critical judgments about contemporary art while gaining a deeper understanding of their own personal values.
4. An in-depth understanding of the visual arts, art history, critical theory and visual culture, sufficient to prepare them to move into a professional career in the arts, including essential concepts and theories of studio production in a variety of disciplines, with a sophistication and refinement specific to a major field.
5. An ability to take risks in experimentation. This could mean breaking from usual habits. Trying new materials and methodologies in confirming the direction of their work.
6. A clear and thorough understanding of their personal practice. Each candidate should be able to demonstrate a strong commitment investing time and resources to generating continual development and inquiry. This includes both working in the studio and researching artists and theory of art-making.
7. Students will Communicate effectively in both written and oral form. Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of context, audience, purpose, and the presented artwork.
- Use appropriate and relevant content to develop and present ideas
- Demonstrate consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas
- Demonstrate delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable

Assessment/ANNUAL REVIEW

All graduate programs must complete an annual review of each graduate student. During each spring semester, the Graduate Coordinator for Fine Arts will give written and oral notification to each graduate student of their performance. For graduating students, this review will take place in conjunction with the final oral examination in their oral examination. After appropriate faculty have been consulted, the annual evaluation of those students considered deficient must be placed in the student's official file. If an annual review for a student is less than satisfactory, a written copy of that review should be forwarded to the Graduate School. The Graduate Coordinator will collect the following information:

1. Course evaluations
2. Course grade distributions in the form of GPA
3. Faculty narratives on student response to questions relating to SLOs
4. Faculty narratives on individual students progress as teaching assistants

The Graduate Coordinator will then organize an annual meeting of Fine Arts faculty who will discuss the data listed above. In this meeting faculty will evaluate the data to determine whether the expected results have been realized. The outcome of this meeting will be a report (written by the graduate coordinator) listing the results of the faculty assessment. Specific improvements will be suggested by this group and these and the actions taken will be recorded in an archival document. In the following year, the effect of these changes will be noted. This report will be reviewed annually by the Fine Arts Curriculum committee graduate faculty for further recommendations about improvements to the program.

