

Policies

Policies & Guidelines

Academic Honors and Awards

Several awards are made each year to graduate art students who are selected by the faculty. These awards and grants include the following:

- Fine Arts Work Center Award (*MFA-VA*)
- Graduate School of Art Production Grant (*MFA-VA*)
- John T. Milliken Foreign Travel Graduate Award (*MFA-IVC, MFA-VA*)
- The Rose O'Neill Award for Distinction in Illustration (*MFA-IVC*)
- The Walt Reed Award for Excellence in Writing on Visual Culture (*MFA-IVC*)
- Summer Project Support Grant (*MFA-VA*)
- Thesis Research and Production Grant (*MFA-IVC, MFA-VA*)

Academic Integrity

Students and members of the faculty of the university have an obligation to uphold the highest standards of scholarship. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. When the student has violated the integrity of the academic community, an instructor may recommend that the student be brought before the Committee on Academic Integrity.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Students must maintain a minimum grade-point average of 2.70 (B-) or better. Failure to do so places the student on academic probation and may result in dismissal from the program. A grade of B- in studio places the student on academic probation. A second grade of B- in studio results in dismissal from the program. A grade of C+ or below in studio results in immediate dismissal from the program. Work completed with a grade of C+ or below in other course work does not count toward degree requirements.

Probation serves as a warning that, unless the quality of work improves, the student may be subject to dismissal. Students dismissed for academic deficiency will not be eligible for readmission.

In support of the student, the Sam Fox School Registrar's Office will work with the student to develop a plan for success. In order to succeed, the student must understand the causes of their current situation, identify what needs to change, and implement and review the plan.

While the Graduate School of Art desires to give all students the opportunity to prove themselves, it is not in the best interest of either the student or the school to permit students to continue indefinitely in educational programs in which they are not producing satisfactory results.

A student who wishes to appeal their suspension must present a written appeal within 48 hours of receiving notification stating the reason(s) why they believe their situation should be reconsidered. This statement must be sent as outlined in the notice of suspension. In this statement, the student must explain why the unsatisfactory academic performance occurred and, if they are allowed to return, what they would do differently.

The student must then attend an appeal hearing. The student's academic record, written appeal, and any other factors the student may wish to discuss are considered by a faculty committee. After the appeal hearing, the student is informed of the committee's decision within 48 hours. Actions may include academic probation, a required leave of absence for one or two semesters, suspension, or dismissal from the program. Should the student wish to appeal, a written request must be sent within 48 hours of receiving the committee's decision to the director of the student's academic division. If appealing the director's decision, the dean of the Sam Fox School makes the final determination.

If the appeal is successful, the student is placed on Special Academic Probation and allowed to enroll in classes. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student's programs of study will be closed and their classes dropped for the following semester. Suspended students may apply for re-enrollment at a future time, although there is no guarantee that they will be allowed to return.

Attendance

Regular attendance at all classes and studio meetings is expected. The instructor of each course is allowed to decide how many absences a student may have and still pass the course. Instructors are expected to give reasonable consideration to unavoidable absences and to the feasibility of making up work that has been missed. Students are expected to explain to their faculty the reasons for any absences and to discuss with them the possibility of making up missed assignments.

Candidacy

Admission to candidacy for the MFA degree is contingent upon passing a review at the end of the first year of study. A student who fails to achieve degree candidacy prior to the beginning of the second year of residence may be advised to withdraw from the program. If the student is denied admission to candidacy twice, they will be dismissed.

The thesis requirement for the MFA degree comprises an exhibition of work; a defense of the work and written documentation; and approval of both by the Graduate Committee.

Enrollment Status

Definitions of *full-time study*, *half-time study*, and so on are based on federal regulations. Enrollment status impacts eligibility for campus services as well as Washington University's reporting obligations. Alignment with policies in financial aid, international student services, student health insurance, VA benefits, and athletics is critical.

Washington University's definition for full-time graduate study is at least 9 credit-bearing units (semester hours) per term. Units taken under the audit grade option do not factor into enrollment status calculations, so they cannot count toward the 9 units required for full-time enrollment.

Grievance Procedures

The dynamic and creative studio culture at the heart of the Sam Fox School strives to be safe and inclusive for all members of our community. Our faculty, staff, and students join together in their commitment to creating learning environments of mutuality and respect. When concerns or disagreements arise about conduct, grading, or other matters in the Colleges of Art and Architecture, policies exist for pursuing proper resolution.

Grade Dispute Policy

The Sam Fox School aims to provide each student with a fair assessment of their academic work and studio. Students have the right to dispute their overall course grade (not individual assignments) if they believe that grade does not accurately reflect the quality of their work. A grade dispute must be submitted to the faculty member who assigned the grade within 30 days of receipt of the grade. The Sam Fox School stresses that every effort to resolve such a dispute should be made by the faculty and student involved. A student's eligibility for advancement in sequential course work requires timely resolution of the grade dispute. If the student is a graduation candidate, the dispute process must comply with the Intent to Graduate submission deadlines set forth by the Office of the University Registrar or else the degree conferral will be delayed by one semester or until resolved.

In general, the dispute process will occur and be resolved as follows:

1. The student presents their question about the grade in writing to the faculty member and clearly states the reasons for questioning the grade.
2. The faculty member and the student review the grading procedures as stated in the syllabus and discuss the determining factors of the student's grade.
3. If the case is not resolved between the student and the faculty member, the student may put forth their complaint in writing with supporting evidence to the chair of the academic program, with a copy given to the faculty member involved with the dispute. The student should provide all of the course syllabus and materials relevant to the assigned grade within two weeks of the complaint. If a conflict of interest exists between the student and the chair (e.g., the chair is teaching the course), the case will be referred to another chair in the Sam Fox School or to the director of the College.
4. The chair of the academic program will review the materials. The chair will resolve the dispute by working with the faculty member and the student to arrive at a determination.

Integrity and Ethical Conduct

Washington University and Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts are committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct and consider these to be integral to their mission of the promotion of learning. To maintain these standards, the university relies on each community member's ethical behavior, honesty, integrity, and good judgment. Each community member should demonstrate respect for the rights of others, and each community member is accountable for their own actions.

Washington University policies state that members of the university community can expect to be free from discrimination and harassment. Students, faculty, staff, and outside organizations working on campus are required to abide by specific policies prohibiting harassment, which are posted on the Compliance and Policies page of the university's website.

Should a situation arise in which a member of our community believes they have cause to file a grievance, there are two categories of grievance to consider: academic and non-academic. Academic grievances can either be when a student challenges a course grade or when a fellow student or faculty member feels a matter of academic integrity is at issue.

Student grievances filed to challenge a grade that the student feels has been given incorrectly must follow the procedures outlined in the Grade Dispute Policy above.

Academic integrity grievances are made when a faculty member or fellow student feels a student has compromised the environment of honesty and ethics in the school. Academic integrity infractions follow the procedures laid out in the Sam Fox School and University policies and are managed in the Sam Fox School by the Academic Integrity Officer. Please refer to Washington University's Academic Integrity Statement for additional information.

Non-Academic Concerns

If a member of our academic community feels that the ethical and safe environment of the classroom has been compromised, for whatever reason, they may seek guidance through the school's Faculty-Student Mediator. Students may also consult Washington University's Grievance Policy and Procedures for Allegations by Undergraduate Students Against Faculty. In addition, University Resources available for support include the following:

- Title IX (for issues related to discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence)
- Mental health concerns (Habif Health and Wellness Center)
- Drug and alcohol concerns (Habif Health and Wellness Center)
- Immediate physical/mental health concerns (Washington University Police Department)
- Center for Diversity & Inclusion (for issues related to bias, prejudice, or discrimination)

Intent to Graduate

Students are responsible for filing an Intent to Graduate form in order to have the degree conferred. The Intent to Graduate is available online through WebSTAC. No degree will be awarded if this form has not been filed by the appropriate deadlines. Students who do not complete their degree requirements by their intended graduation date must re-file for the next graduation date.

Leave of Absence

Graduate students in the Sam Fox School may request a voluntary leave of absence for up to one year (or two semesters) when individual professional, medical, or personal circumstances warrant it. Petitions are reviewed and approved by the student's program chair/director. Any requests extending beyond one year will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Students must submit a written request for a leave of absence **no later** than three weeks prior to the start of the upcoming semester. There is no guarantee that requests received after the deadline will be reviewed.

In the case of a medical leave of absence (MLOA), a medical recommendation is required from the Habib Health and Wellness Center before a student will be permitted to take an MLOA and before returning from an MLOA. Additional policy information, MLOA request forms, and MLOA reinstatement forms are available on the MLOA page of the Student Affairs website.

International students requesting a leave of absence must contact their Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS) advisor to discuss how the leave might affect their visa status.

Students returning from a leave of absence must submit a request for reinstatement by April 15 for fall and by November 15 for spring. Withdrawn students requesting readmission must submit a written request and an updated portfolio by the same deadlines.

If a student decides to take a leave of absence without first having received approval, they will be considered withdrawn from Washington University. If a withdrawn student wishes to return within one year, they must submit an official request for readmission to the appropriate program chair/director. Students who are withdrawn from the university for longer than one year must submit an updated portfolio to be reconsidered for admission.

Students who are on a leave of absence for medical, mental health, academic, family, personal or any other reason are not eligible to participate in a registered student group, hold a student group leadership position, or attend/plan a student group sponsored event as a representative of said student group. Depending on the type of leave and any corresponding policy restrictions, students on a leave of absence may or may not be able to attend campus-wide events as a guest of a current Washington University student.

Retention of Student Work

The Graduate School of Art reserves the right to hold work(s) for exhibition purposes and holds reproduction rights of any work(s) executed in fulfillment of course requirements.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

The minimum GPA requirements needed to maintain eligibility for Satisfactory Academic Progress are dictated by the specific program of study. In each case, per the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 668.34(a)(4)(ii), the federal student aid program requires a minimum of a C average to maintain eligibility for aid, but an individual degree or certificate program may have a higher minimum GPA for federal Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students in Graduate School of Art programs are required to maintain a minimum 2.70 semester and cumulative GPA and to obtain grades of B- or better in all courses.

Students are expected to proceed at a pace that enables them to finish the degree within the appropriate time limit. For MFA students, this is usually four semesters. Students have a maximum of three calendar years from the date of first registration to complete the degree. Delays in a two-year completion must be approved by the program chair.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to comply with the rules and regulations of the University. See the University Student Conduct Code and the Graduate School of Art Academic Integrity Policy for more information. Additional information is available in the Graduate Student Handbook distributed at orientation.

Transfer Credit

The Graduate School of Art does not award transfer credit at the graduate level.

Units and Grades

The *unit* is the amount of credit given for one hour of lecture or up to three hours of studio work per week for one semester.

Pluses and minuses are used. Each grade earned for a course taken for credit receives a specified number of grade points, and these points are affected by plus and minus grades as well. Symbols used for both options have the following meanings:

Credit	Meaning	Degree Credit	Grade Points Per Unit
A+	superior	yes	4.0
A	superior	yes	4.0
A-	superior	yes	3.7
B+	good	yes	3.3
B	good	yes	3.0
B-	passing	yes	2.7
C+	unsatisfactory	no	2.3

C	unsatisfactory	no	2.0
C-	unsatisfactory	no	1.7
D+	unsatisfactory	no	1.3
D	unsatisfactory	no	1.0
D-	unsatisfactory	no	0.7
F	failing	no	0.0
I	course work incomplete*	no	--
N	no grade reported	no	--
P#	pass (pass/fail option)	yes	--
F#	fail (pass/fail option)	no	--
L	successful audit	no	--
Z	unsuccessful audit	no	--
W	withdraw	--	--

* This grade signifies that the student has not completed part of the work for a semester but has satisfactorily completed the rest of the work. A student must remove a grade of I as discussed in "Incomplete Grades" below.

Minimum Grade Requirement

A grade of B- in any required course places the student on academic probation. A second grade of B- in any required course results in dismissal from the program. A grade of C+ or below in any required course results in immediate dismissal from the program. Work completed with a grade of C+ or below in elective course work does not count toward degree requirements. Refer to the Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy (p.) for further details.

Minimum Grade Point Average

MFA students are required to have a minimum grade-point average of 2.7 to graduate. Refer to the Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy (p.) for further details.

Pass/Fail Option

Pass/fail is only allowed for the Workshops course required for the MFA in Visual Art program. All other courses for either MFA degree program must be taken for credit.

Incomplete Grades

Students who, following the last day for withdrawal from courses, experience medical or personal problems that make satisfactory completion of course work unlikely may request a grade of I (incomplete). Students in this situation must take the following steps:

1. Contact the instructor before the final review, critique or exam to discuss the request.
2. If the instructor consents, complete an Incomplete Grade Petition signed by both the instructor and the student.
3. Return the signed petition to the Sam Fox School Registrar's Office for final approval.

The instructor is under no obligation to award a grade of I (incomplete).

The grade of I (incomplete) must be removed no later than the last day of classes of the next full semester. Upon failure to make up an incomplete grade within the next semester, the student will automatically receive an F in the course unless explicitly excused by the director of the school. An F grade that is so received may not be changed. Students will not be allowed to continue in courses that require prerequisites if the prerequisite has a grade of I (incomplete). A student who carries more than 9 units of with grades of I (incomplete) may be declared ineligible to re-enroll.

F grades for a semester may be changed only through the last day of classes of the following semester and then only in extraordinary circumstances. The director will approve no changes of F grades after this time.

Repeating a Course

When a student retakes a course, both enrollments will show on the transcript. If the second grade is equivalent to or better than the first, the first grade will be administratively changed to R to indicate the re-enrollment. If the second grade is lower, both grades will remain on the transcript, with degree credit allowed for only one of the enrollments. This policy only applies to courses taken at Washington University.