

MFA COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ADVISING, CRITIQUES, AND THESIS STRUCTURE FOR 2023-2024

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MFA STUDENTS:

MFA students register for 300 credits (three courses at 100 credits each) per quarter. A total of 1800 credits, or eighteen courses, is required for the degree. MFA students take three courses per quarter in the autumn, winter, and spring quarters. The Humanities Division does not cover tuition for summer courses or for more than three courses per quarter in the regular academic year.

Your course requirements are made up of three components:

1. 900 units of ARTV 40000 (Graduate Studio Project, which includes the critique class)
2. 300 units of MFA Seminar (taken in your first year)
3. 600 units of Electives

TOTAL: 1800 units

Each component is described in detail below.

1. Graduate Studio Project, ARTV 40000 (9 Courses / 900 units)

Students are required to take a total of nine sections (or 900 hours) of ARTV 40000, Graduate Studio Project during their two years in DoVA. This requirement is met through a combination of sections 01 and 02 of ARTV 40000. The different sections are described below.

ARTV 40000 section 01 (aka Studio Hours) 500 units:

ARTV 40000 section 01 is a means for students to receive academic credit for the independent work they do in their studios. There is no formal class for students enrolled in section 01 to attend. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) assigns a pass/fail grade for ARTV 40000 section 01 in consultation with the full faculty, based on participation in individual studio visits and quarter-end critiques, as well as attendance at OPC lectures and other departmental events.

ARTV 40000 section 02 (aka Crit Class) 400 units:

Every autumn and winter quarter, a faculty member teaches ARTV 40000, section 02 (aka “crit class”) as a formal course for all first- and second-year students. ARTV 40000 02 does not meet in the spring quarter. The course is organized as a weekly critique. The faculty person teaching the class invites outside guests and other faculty to attend the critiques as needed. The course also serves as a potential venue for all faculty, students, and staff to gather for discussion and/or larger group critiques, if needed. **In 23-24, Catherine Sullivan will teach the fall section, and Laura Letinsky will teach the winter section.**

The pass/fail grade that students receive for ARTV 40000 02 in the autumn and winter quarter will be determined by their attendance, participation, and performance in the class.

2. MFA seminars, ARTV 39200 and ARTV 39901 (3 Courses / 300 Credit Hours)

Students are required to take the MFA seminar in the autumn, winter, and spring of their first year. **In 2023-24, Jessica Stockholder will teach the autumn seminar, Geof Oppenheimer will teach the winter seminar, and Matthew Jesse Jackson will teach the spring seminar.**

3. ELECTIVES (6 Courses / 600 Credit Hours)

Students are required to take a total of six graduate-level electives numbered 30000 and above. At least three must originate in departments outside of DoVA. Students may take more than three of their electives outside the department if they so choose. Electives can also be fulfilled with Independent Study (ARTV 39700), which is a one-on-one class with an individual member of the faculty. Please contact Alison with any questions about Independent Study or selecting elective courses.

SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Below are two examples of how students might plan their first and second years of the program. Note that these examples only apply to our current first- and second-year students. Next year the options might be slightly different.

Please also note that courses marked with “R” are required, meaning that they must be taken in the quarter indicated.

Students have some flexibility in scheduling their electives, and they also have flexibility in scheduling 40000 01. For instance, in the second year, students will often take two electives in one quarter so that they can have one quarter with all studio hours (see example 2).

EXAMPLE 1

first year of MFA program

autumn	winter	spring
Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Studio Hours-40000 01
MFA seminar-39200 (R)	MFA seminar-39200 (R)	MFA seminar-39901 (R)
elective	elective	elective

second year of MFA program

autumn	winter	spring
Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Studio Hours-40000 01
Studio Hours-40000 01	Studio Hours-40000 01	Studio Hours-40000 01
elective	elective	elective

EXAMPLE 2

first year of MFA program

autumn	winter	spring
Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Studio Hours- 40000 01
MFA seminar-39200 (R)	MFA seminar-39200 (R)	MFA seminar-39901 (R)
elective	elective	elective

second year of MFA program

autumn	winter	spring
Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Crit Class-40000 02 (R)	Studio Hours-40000 01
Studio Hours-40000 01	elective	Studio Hours-40000 01
elective	elective	Studio Hours-40000 01

ADVISING:

Students are required to sign up for an individual studio visit with all in-residence faculty at least twice over the course of the academic year. Students should meet with all of the faculty at least once before the end of the fall quarter.

Students should limit their meetings with each faculty person to a maximum of two per quarter. Please check the MFA orientation on Canvas to see which of the faculty are in residence and for instructions on how to sign up for appointments.

It is the student's responsibility to sign up for meetings in a timely manner. Faculty members are not obligated to create additional appointments if their schedule is full.

QUARTERLY CRITIQUES:

Please see the department calendar for the dates of these critiques.

Autumn:

The department will hold an end-of-summer critique **for second year students** early in the autumn quarter; **all MFA (first and second year) students are required to attend**. All faculty will attend, as schedules allow. For this critique, all faculty and students will travel together in one large group to visit and discuss the installed work.

The department will hold a quarter-end critique **for first year students** at the end of autumn quarter; **all MFA (first and second year) students are required to attend**. All faculty will attend, as schedules allow. For this critique, small groups of faculty and students will visit each artist in their installation space.

Students will also present their work throughout the quarter in the critique class (ARTV 40000 02).

Winter:

The department will hold a quarter-end critique **for second year students** at the end of the winter quarter; **all MFA (first and second year) students are required to attend**. All of the faculty will attend, as schedules allow. For this critique, small groups of faculty and students will visit each artist in their installation space.

Students will also present their work throughout the quarter in the critique class (ARTV 40000 02). Accepted and waitlisted applicants to the MFA program will be invited to attend this critique.

Spring:

Second year students will be reviewed at their group thesis exhibitions; all faculty members will attend, as schedules allow. Only the faculty and the student being reviewed will be present at these reviews.

The department will also hold a quarter-end critique **for first year students** at the end of spring quarter; **all MFA (first and second year) students are required to attend**. All faculty will also attend, as schedules allow. For this critique, all faculty and students will travel together in one large group to visit and discuss the installed work.

THE OPEN PRACTICE COMMITTEE:

Events organized by the Open Practice Committee are part of the MFA curriculum. The OPC coordinator will make every effort to program as many events on Monday evenings as possible; MFA students should keep that evening clear so that they can attend these required events.

MFA students are required to sign up for at least two studio visits per quarter with visiting artists brought in by the OPC. Students should also schedule at least one studio visit per year with the OPC coordinator.

Students should feel free to be in touch with the OPC coordinator to discuss their ideas for visiting artists. Students are also encouraged to participate in Cluster Talks, the department's student-run visiting artist program.

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND FACULTY CONTACTS:

Students are encouraged to bring their questions and concerns to Alison LaTendresse or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who can refer them to the appropriate faculty member as needed. In 2023-2024, the DGS is Laura Letinsky. Students may also bring concerns to the department's Point Person for Diversity and Inclusion. In 2023-2024, Catherine Sullivan and Alison LaTendresse share this role. Students are also free to ask academic and advising questions of any of the faculty.

TEACHING FELLOWS in the VISUAL ARTS:

Students will have an opportunity to apply for a Teaching Fellowship in the spring of their second year. **To qualify, students must have been a TA for at least six courses in the Department of Visual Arts.** Academic performance, citizenship within the department, and performance as a TA will be considered along with the strength of the application when awarding the teaching fellowships.

MFA ABSTRACT AND COMMITTEES (SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS ONLY):

The DGS will create two-person faculty committees (taking student requests into account). Each of these committees will work with two or three second year MFA students.

The MFA Abstract should be a 1000-word abstract of the student's project and work. It should be clear, concise, and written for a general audience. The following should be taken into account:

1. Include references to three major influences on your work. These influences might be historical events, things in the world, or work coming from other disciplines.
2. Trace the arc of your work over time letting us know how your work has come to be what it is now.
3. Describe the physical and visual character of your work, that is, its formal structure.
4. How do you believe that your work generates meaning for those who experience it? How does the formal character of the work intersect its meaning?
5. How do you see your work placed in the flow of art history? Do you feel that you need to carve out something new in that history, expand on what's already been done, or do very well something that is already well articulated by others?

This list of five subjects need not be addressed in order, and your response to these questions may be woven together.

A meeting schedule will be established by each committee toward the end of the autumn quarter. It is recommended that committees meet once a quarter. **The students provide the entire group (students and faculty) with their writings one week in advance of meeting times.**

The final version of the paper is due to Alison on the Monday of the 4th week of spring quarter (April 8, 2024). The final version will be distributed to all faculty in advance of the final review.

In consultation with their committee, students may also pursue an optional second MFA paper/writing project, the contours of which are open. The second paper would not replace the 1000-word abstract; it would be an additional piece of writing developed and directed by the student.

The final thesis will be posted on DoVA's wiki.