

# Art

---

Laurel Jay Carpenter (Department Head)  
 Location: Art Building, Room 104, 903-886-5208  
 Art Web Site (<https://www.tamuc.edu/dept-of-art/>)

Laurel Jay Carpenter, PhD, Graduate Coordinator for Studio Art 903-886-5208 (LaurelJay.Carpenter@tamuc.edu)  
 Veronica Vaughan, Graduate Coordinator for Visual Communication 214-954-3636 (Veronica.Vaughan@tamuc.edu)

The Department of Art inspires and prepares students to excel in the art profession, including the fine and applied arts, art history, and art teaching fields, and also expands the educational experiences of non-majors.

The general objectives of graduate study in art include:

1. the refinement of technical skills in chosen studio areas;
2. the development of a critical understanding of one's own art in its historical, theoretical, and conceptual context; and
3. the mastery of communication skills both in practice and in teaching.

These objectives are achieved through a close working relationship among students and faculty, wherein a student may pursue a course of study designed for his or her particular educational goals.

## Programs of Graduate Work

### Master of Arts in Art w/emphasis in Studio Art

The Master of Arts in Art with an emphasis in Studio Art Option II Non-Thesis is a 30-semester hour program offered on the Commerce campus. Students may pursue the following areas: painting, sculpture, photography, drawing, ceramics, and mixed and multi-media art. Applicants for the degree should already possess the technical skills to work in one or more of these areas, as the graduate program concentrates on conceptual innovation in one's work rather than technical instruction. The MA degree is suitable for students seeking to improve their portfolio, gain educational credentials, or to place themselves in a more competitive position to apply to the MFA program in art. There is no thesis or foreign language requirement for this degree.

### Master of Fine Arts in Art w/emphasis in Visual Communication

The Master of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in Visual Communication serves the practicing professional in this growing field who aspires to greater proficiency in industry-related innovation and problem-solving, business strategies, ideation and marketing, or a career in design education. The MFA is regarded as the terminal degree in the field of Visual Communication. The capstone of the degree is a design-centric research project (ARTS 545-Exhibition Topics and ARTS 548-Exhibition Development) and accompanying exhibition (ARTS 552-MFA Exhibition in Visual Communication) on a topic incorporating business practices, design education and social responsibility. During these final courses within the degree, MFA-VisCom candidates are expected to advance a premise that significantly expands the current boundaries of knowledge and to defend it through a convincing campaign or body of art works. Students who fail to meet the expectations of the program can be suspended from the MFA track. In such cases, it may be possible for the student to complete a Master of Arts with an emphasis in Visual Communication.

### Master of Fine Arts in Art w/emphasis in Studio Art

The MFA program is intended for graduate students both committed to and capable of intensive, advanced study culminating in an individual and self-generated language of expression. It is a rigorous course of study as it leads to the terminal degree in the fine arts. MFA students are initially encouraged to explore a broad range of issues meaningful to their work, while simultaneously refining their technical skills. Their explorations may touch upon individual modes of expression, formal elements, experimentation with media and methods, themes and symbols, and relationships among the visual arts and other disciplines. Subsequent courses direct the student toward more mature and self-critical art, leading ultimately to a sustained and cohesive body of work that forms the Master of Fine Art Exhibition (ARTS 515).

MFA students in the Studio Art emphasis will participate in mid-term and end-of-term critiques. These critiques, together with the periodic evaluations of the student's supervisory committee, determine whether or not the student meets the expectations of the program. Students who fail to pass a critique or fail in other ways to meet the expectations of the program can be suspended from the MFA track. Students must pass a critique for candidacy after their second semester or in the semester of their 30th hour (whichever comes first). The critique for MFA candidacy will include an exhibit supported by a written statement. Students who fail their candidacy may still pursue the Master of Arts in Art with an emphasis in Studio Art.

## Admission

Admission to a graduate program is granted by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the department. Applicants must meet the following requirements for admission in addition to meeting the general university requirements in Art.

Contact the departmental Graduate Coordinator for these requirements. The graduate degrees in art are individually designed to meet the unique educational, personal and professional needs of the student.

- Admission Requirements (<https://www.tamuc.edu/programs/studio-art-ma/#Admission>)

## Degree Requirements

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree with an art major or comparable experience, nine semester hours of art history and a minimum grade point average of 'B' in all undergraduate studio art courses.

In addition to the requirements of the Graduate School, applicants for the MFA degree will submit an application to the Department of Art that includes a portfolio, a statement of intent, transcripts of all previous college-level work, and one letter of recommendation. Copies of transcripts are acceptable if the originals are on file at the Graduate School. All of these materials are important in considering an applicant's suitability for graduate study, but the portfolio is of paramount importance because it represents the extent of a student's education in art. Care should be taken in the selection and photographing of works for the portfolio (CD portfolio is acceptable). It is the Department's preference that the portfolio be posted online and that the link to the portfolio be provided to the appropriate graduate coordinator.

Successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam is required of all students.

**Note:** Individual departments may reserve the right to dismiss from their programs students who, in their judgment, would not meet the professional expectations of the field for which they are training.

Art MA with an emphasis in Studio Art (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/art/art-ma-with-an-emphasis-in-studio-art/>)

Art MFA with an emphasis in Visual Communication (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/art/art-mfa-emphasis-visual-communication/>)

Art MFA with an emphasis in Studio Art (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/art/art-mfa-emphasis-studio-art/>)

### ART 589 - Independent Study

Hours: 1-8

Independent Study - Hours: One to four Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites Consent of department head. Note May be repeated when the topic varies.

### ARTH 508 - The Hist of Adv & Consumerism

Hours: 3

History of Advertising and Consumerism - Three semester hours. This course is designed to give a broad overview of the nature of a consumerist society and how it drives and is driven by advertising. Lectures will explore the types and causes of consumerism, commodities consumed by the public, and the promise of the "good life." Advertising's impact will be discussed from the aspect of target markets and positioning of goods and services, and the pros and cons of consumerism.

### ARTS 502 - Design Teaching Methods

Hours: 3

Three semester hours Pedagogy Classroom. Understanding the classroom through teaching method exploration, role-play, and curriculum development. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 541, ARTS 542.

### ARTS 503 - Graduate Seminar

Hours: 3

Graduate Seminar primarily emphasizes research, readings, and writing as a means of understanding historical and contemporary trends in the visual arts and how a student's work fits within them. Continuing to learn about studio practices and the art profession, students will work to refine their own artist statement, continue to digitally document their work, and maintain updated websites. Note: Students may repeat this course, up to a maximum of twelve hours.

### ARTS 506 - Design Teaching Environment

Hours: 3

Three semester hours Pedagogy Campus. This course will deal with job-seeking skills and the creation and application of Vita materials needed as well as tenure, grant writing, committees and academic life through lecture, discussion, mock interviews, and outside panel feedback. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 541, ARTS 542.

### ARTS 507 - History of Graphic Design

Hours: 3

This course focuses on the evolution of Graphic Design from the invention of writing and alphabets to the computer revolution. Topics include: Medieval manuscripts, the origins of printing and typography, the Arts and Crafts movement, Victorian & Art Nouveau Graphics, the influence of Modern Art on design and visual identity and conceptual imagery. Prerequisites: Admission into the graduate program leading to the MFA in Art with Emphasis in Visual Communication or permission of the instructor.

**ARTS 508 - History of Advertising and Consumerism**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to give a broad overview of the nature of a consumerist society and how it drives and is driven by advertising. Lectures will explore the types and causes of consumerism, commodities consumed by the public, and the promise of the "good life." Advertising's impact will be discussed from the aspect of target markets and positioning of goods and services, and the pros and cons of consumerism. Prerequisites: Admission into the graduate program leading to the MFA in Art with Emphasis in Visual Communication or permission of the instructor.

**ARTS 511 - The History of American Typography**

Hours: 3

This survey course will establish a foundation of typography's rich history. Historical global influences provide the basis for understanding the evolution of typography in America as the tool and underpinning of the graphic design industry. The examination will follow the birth of Modern Typography to present-day applications. Prerequisites: Admission into the graduate program leading to the MFA in Art with Emphasis in Visual Communication, or permission of the instructor.

**ARTS 515 - Master of Fine Art Exhibition in Studio Art**

Hours: 3-6

Upon the approval of the major advisor and admission to candidacy for the MFA degree, students will mount an exhibition that demonstrates a unified theme and is supported by a written statement and visual documentation. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 518 - Thesis**

Hours: 3-6

For students in the M.F.A. program: experimentation with a central, individually derived visual focus, culminating in an exhibition with accompanying written statement and slide documentation (five slides of works and the written statement to be submitted with the creative thesis). The M.F.A. Creative Thesis may be completed and presented only during a regular term of study. For students in the M.A. program: research on a selected art topic culminating in a written thesis.

**ARTS 519 - First Year Studio Problems**

Hours: 4

This course focuses on individual problems and experimentation in the selected area of studio emphasis. The student enrolled in this course will explore individual problems and experimentation in selected areas of study leading to either a body of work with a central focus or a varied body of work with a consistent high quality. Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve semester hours overall. Permission of Instructor required. Students enrolled in MA or MFA programs only.

**ARTS 524 - 1st Year Studio Prob 2nd Area**

Hours: 4

First Year Studio Problems Second Area - Four Semester Hours This course focuses on individual problems and experimentation in the student's second studio area. For students in MA or MFA program: topic or media may vary each term. Note Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve hours overall. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 525 - Studio Hours I**

Hours: 3-12

This course focuses on unique student-driven solutions to artistic problems. Normally taken after the successful completion of 18 semester hours of graduate study, Studio Hours I allows students to work independently, albeit under the supervision of an instructor or an advisory committee. Students enrolled in this course will be expected both to participate and exhibit in the Graduate Reviews. Topics, media and objectives may vary each term.

Note: Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve hours overall. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 526 - Studio Hours II**

Hours: 3-12

Normally taken after the completion of 30 semester hours of graduate work, this course allows students to pursue advanced projects under the broad supervision of an instructor or advisory committee. Students enrolled in this course will be expected both to participate and exhibit in the Graduate Reviews. Topics, media and objectives may vary each term. Note: Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve hours overall. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 527 - Advanced Studio Problems**

Hours: 4

Advanced Studio Problems - Four Semester Hours (6 Lab) This course focuses on individual problems and experimentation in the selected area of studio emphasis. The student enrolled in this course will explore individual problems and experimentation in selected areas of study leading to either a body of work with a central focus or a varied body of work with a consistent high quality. Students may register for up to eight concurrent semester hours in a given term, with a maximum of twelve semester hours overall. Permission of Instructor Required, Students enrolled in MA or MFA Programs only.

**ARTS 528 - Studio Project**

Hours: 3-4

This course functions to re-focus each student's independent studio practice, in order to demonstrate a deepening commitment and responsibility to creative expression, as linked to individual curiosity, self-organization, and contextual positioning. Students prepare presentations of works-in-progress, towards assembling and editing their work for the MFA capstone exhibition. Students share their methods and methodological findings—what they have learned in decoding the social, cultural, political, historic and psychological imprints and how they employ the subject matter, form, and content of their ongoing practice in relation to these contexts. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 530 - Pedagogy in the Arts**

Hours: 3-4

Students work with members of the graduate faculty to consider and implement various methods and approaches to teaching in the field of visual arts. In practice and theory, students will focus on teaching methods in their chosen area of concentration, but will also engage in broader examinations of pedagogical strategies. Assignments will include teaching by critiques, developing a teaching philosophy, and effective classroom and studio practices. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 531 - History of Photography**

Hours: 3

An examination of the scientific and aesthetic history of photography from its origins to the present. Emphasis is placed on early processes, the pioneers of photography, photography as a visual art and developments in modern photography. Media, trends, and the work of photographers are analyzed. This class will develop reading, writing, and appropriate analytic and critical thinking skills appropriate for graduate work. Crosslisted with: ART 333.

**ARTS 532 - Gender, Art, and Popular Culture**

Hours: 3

Through the careful study of artworks and popular culture, students will be engaged in an extended, historically-based examination of issues concerning gender. In this course, we will pay particular attention to societal constructions of gender, exploring the way that art, television, film, graphic novels and other media shape the way that we understand what it means to be "male" and "female." Students will read challenging, sophisticated and seminal texts while demonstrating their command of such texts in short responses and online discussions. At the end of the course, the student should not only have a better understanding of gender, but should be able to evaluate its place in society while gaining the tools to be able to better explain gender to others.

**ARTS 533 - Public Art**

Hours: 3

Through the careful study of artworks and art historical texts, students will be engaged in an extended, historically-based examination of the development of contemporary public art across the United States and abroad. Students will read seminal and important works that have shaped public art history and project the construction of a piece of public art on the campus of Texas A&M—Commerce. Students will also research public art organizations and spaces to consider various opportunities to pursue public projects. The course will culminate in each student's proposal for a public piece of art, following existing submission guidelines.

**ARTS 534 - Exhibition Development**

Hours: 3

Facilitated by the Gallery Director within the Art Department, this course offers students the opportunity to work first-hand in a gallery space, writing professional-quality exhibition proposals and catalog/wall text, as well as writing and designing public relations/promotional materials. Students will also gain insight into behind-the-scenes functions of an art museum/gallery, and how to best communicate with these professionals. Considering the specifics of the University Galleries and their degree requirements, students will refine their formal MFA capstone exhibition proposals, resolving any issues of preparation, installation, permissions. Students will submit their Candidacy Application during this course, requesting faculty approval for advancing toward the final exhibition. The exhibition schedule will also be arranged. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 539 - History of Contemporary Art**

Hours: 3

This course considers criticism, theory, styles, processes and other issues relevant to an understanding of art since 1960. Crosslisted with: ART 404.

**ARTS 540 - Creative Methodology**

Hours: 3

Experimenting with both proven and experimental creative methodologies in a team based environment. An overview of innovative collaborative creative thinking processes. Pushing beyond one's knowledge base through innovative role-play in self-problem solving techniques.

**ARTS 541 - Design Education, Theory & Practice**

Hours: 3

Research and analysis through group discussion of design education theory, philosophy and methods. Examination and creation of teaching tools, assignments, and evaluation rubrics. Pre-requisites: ARTS 540.

**ARTS 542 - Design Writing**

Hours: 3

Students will focus on design writing through reading, discussion and writing to develop an informed opinion on contemporary design issues. The class will read current and relevant articles, essays and books on design disciplines, design pedagogy and teaching today's design student. These readings will inform required written responses and discussions. Reading, researching, analyzing and writing will provide a deeper understanding of design topics and an awareness of how writing is used within the discipline of graphic design.

**ARTS 543 - Cross-Cultural Communication**

Hours: 3

This course teaches advanced oral and written presentation skills within the context of a multicultural audience. Students will examine the forces at work in today's global marketplace and fine-tune their ability to bridge the cultural divide in order to connect with audiences whose history, customs, and beliefs they do not share. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 541, and ARTS 542.

**ARTS 545 - Exhibition Topic**

Hours: 3

Exploration and development of thesis topic pilots through research, abstracts, ideation, creative process and feasibility analysis. This course is designed to provide students with enlightenment, direction, feedback and focus as they embark on the thesis discovery process. This class will function primarily as a think-tank dedicated to defining, examining, discussing and furthering the ideas that you bring to the table—or wall. Each person will develop three viable, worthwhile abstracts to be reviewed by a outside guest panel resulting in feedback that will help validate your final thesis direction. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 541, ARTS 542, and ARTS 543.

**ARTS 546 - Design Studio Processes**

Hours: 3

The Design Studio Processes class invites VisCom Graduate students to explore and create alternative visual language solutions within the context of design-centric problem solving. This course approaches problem solving from a hands-on making perspective. Students are challenged to utilize non-digital methods and techniques to boil down and encapsulate a design problems' essence and power in the form of call-to-action communications that address the basic point-of-difference premise of the issue.

**ARTS 547 - Design Teaching Mentorship**

Hours: 1-3

Pedagogy in-classroom undergraduate training experience. This course focuses on in-classroom observation and experience through shadowing faculty members and applying classroom assignments to gain knowledge in teaching higher-education. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 541, ARTS 542.

**ARTS 548 - Project Design & Implementation**

Hours: 6

Study and development of a design-centric solution, which includes research development, presentation, testing, and implementation.

**ARTS 549 - User-centered Design Experience**

Hours: 3

An introduction to the understanding, development and implementation of user-centered design thinking and problem solving. Emphasis will be placed on user personas, ethnography and other observational approaches, along with rapid prototyping methods towards building insights into product and service development.

**ARTS 550 - Ideation, Process and Product**

Hours: 3

This 16 week course will be centered around innovation focused on creating value through ethnography, research, ideation and strategy in a marketing frameset. Students will explore radical ways of design thinking to create new business models or harness compelling value for products or services that do not currently exist in the marketplace. Projects will be collaborative and centered around the application of innovation through segmenting, brand positioning, target marketing, and the 4Ps (Product, Pricing, Promotion and Place).

**ARTS 551 - Creative Promotion and Innovation**

Hours: 3

This 16-week course will empower students to take their innovations and marketing plans to the next level and implement them into a viable and fundable enterprise. Students will create a prototype to be presented as a proof-of-concept with a compelling presentation to an angel investor. In addition students will be introduced to issues related to the patent process and angel investment process as it relates to their innovations.

**ARTS 552 - Advanced Techniques for Design Centric Presentation**

Hours: 3

Upon the approval of the Exhibition Topics Panel, students pursuing the MFA degree will mount a culminating exhibition that demonstrates the design-and-build phases of visual communication and includes design-centric strategy, design schematics, overall space planning, budget, invitation, marketing, presentation, and final construction. The exhibition will be supported by a research paper addressing the format of the exhibition and its underlying content.

**ARTS 553 - Pedagogy Research**

Hours: 3

Pedagogy Research will investigate new strategies for teaching to assist student learning. Discover new knowledge, experiences, and approaches to support the highest quality solutions for student-centered, enhanced learning experiences. How we find ways by which learning can be made more effective and attract and hold our student's attention. Prerequisites: ARTS 540, ARTS 595.

**ARTS 585 - Research Methods & Procedures**

Hours: 3

This course refines academic research methods and applications relating to the preparation of the proposal for the thesis exhibition. The creation of design-centric research narratives will be explored and implemented. Generally, this class will include individual student thesis committee meetings over the summer. Prerequisites: ARTS 595, ARTS 545.

**ARTS 589 - Independent Study**

Hours: 1-4

Independent Study - Hours: One to four Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites Consent of department head. Note May be repeated when the topic varies.

**ARTS 595 - Research Literature & Techniques**

Hours: 3

This class prepares the student for writing their exhibition statements and proposals, through a thorough examination of writing, research practices, and exposure to important theoretical issues and significant texts in the field. Permission of instructor required.

**ARTS 597 - Special Topics**

Hours: 1-4

Organized Class. Note: May be graded on a satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) basis. May be repeated when topics vary.