

**Master of Fine Arts**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

College of Mass  
Communication and  
Media Arts

Southern Illinois University  
Carbondale

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## Welcome!

All four MCMA graduate programs are college-wide which means you can take advantage of the scholarly, professional and artistic expertise of our faculty in the Department of Cinema and Photography, the School of Journalism and the Department of Radio-Television-Digital Media in developing a program of study that best serves your needs and interests.

This first half of this handbook provides the major policies and guidelines for the larger MCMA graduate program. The second half contains information specific to your particular degree program. If you have any questions about the program, please seek clarification from the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (ADGS), the Graduate Studies Office Manager or your faculty adviser.

## MCMA Graduate Studies Organization

All graduate programs in Mass Communication and Media Arts are the joint responsibility of the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts and the SIU Graduate School. Requirements for entry, assistantship, graduation and every aspect of the degree must be considered in light of the requirements of both entities.

- University wide graduate affairs are administered by the Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the Graduate (Faculty) Council. Related policies and procedures are outlined in the SIU Graduate Catalog which can be found online. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- College graduate studies are directed by the MCMA Graduate Committee and the college graduate faculty and are administered by the ADGS.
- Graduate faculty status is conferred on our MCMA faculty on the basis of scholarly achievement and authorizes faculty to teach graduate courses, serve on graduate student committees and direct theses, research reports and dissertations. The College of Mass Communication and Media Arts is governed by operating papers that outline, among other things, grievance procedures for graduate students. Copies are available in the ADGS's office.

## MCMA Graduate Programs Mission and Descriptions

### **Mission**

The graduate program of MCMA represents a unique blend of the arts, humanities, and social sciences, focusing on the study of communication processes and the responsible production of media, and striving for excellence. We foster fresh and lively endeavors in an intellectual and creative community attuned to global social changes

## **Descriptions**

The PhD, MFA, MA and MS degrees are advanced degrees culminating in the preparation of a dissertation, thesis or a research report. Students are expected to conduct research and/or creative activity to answer important questions, discover new information or insights, show new associations between previously known facts, or to offer innovative and informed perspectives on specific subjects.

### **PhD, Mass Communication and Media Arts**

The doctoral program engages students in the interdisciplinary study of global media. Concepts and methods drawn from various research traditions in the field are compared and contrasted, while specialization in particular areas and approaches is open to students.

### **Master of Fine Arts (MFA)**

The interdisciplinary Master of Fine Arts degree provides substantial advanced study for a limited number of highly talented and motivated individuals. The program emphasizes the artistic and intellectual development of the student and the creation of works in photography, film, video, sound, and new media. We encourage interdisciplinary media arts exploration, though students may opt to focus and refine their skills within one medium. Students study contemporary thought and practice in order to contextualize their work. Available course work in studio production, criticism, theory, history, and combined media studies emphasizes the interwoven character of traditional and contemporary approaches and technologies in the 21st century.

### **Master of Arts (MA)/Media Theory and Research**

This degree offers a broad overview of mass communication and media arts and their processes and effects in the larger social system. Graduates gain both an appreciation of the field's strengths and an understanding of its obstacles in being a force for social development. Areas in which this specialty is used include department-level leadership in the mass media industries, opinion research, commentary, critical theory, and teaching. This degree may lead to doctoral studies.

### **Master of Science (MS)/Professional Media and Media Management Studies**

This degree provides students with an interest in professional media practice and media management with an intellectual background in theory and critique of the communication industries and trains students with varied professional interests to establish careers in these industries. More specifically, this program aims to train intelligent, aware, flexible graduates who will go on to become leaders in the communications industry.

## **Faculty Advisers**

Every graduate student should have a faculty adviser. New graduate students in the MS, MA, MFA and PhD programs will be assigned an initial faculty adviser.

Meet with your adviser as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to contact your adviser when you wish to set up a meeting. These professors are experts in the field and will be able to help you in many ways. This person can guide you with your selection of second and third semester

classes, and help you to adapt to a graduate studies environment if you have related questions or concerns.

After taking courses and meeting more faculty members in your area of study during the first year, you should be ready to select a committee chair no later than your third semester. This faculty member will usually be your primary adviser through the rest of your program. The ADGS is also available for advisory questions. See individual degree committee requirements for more information on this process.

Your adviser is your source of advice about which classes to take, which conferences to attend, how to refine theses, research projects and dissertation topics, and simply how to make it through your program. Though the faculty adviser's job is primarily to help you advance in your studies it may not necessarily remain a one-way relationship. You are expected to conduct yourself in a scholarly, professional manner. This means that you may develop new ideas with your adviser. This may sometimes, though not always, open the possibility of publishing scholarly papers or engaging in creative projects with one another as well as other joint opportunities.

The relationship with your adviser often develops into a long-term professional relationship that lasts long after your days as a Southern Illinois University student are over.

## **Accelerated PhD Admission**

Upon recommendation of the department and approval of the Graduate School, an accelerated entry option is possible in exceptional cases to students who have been admitted to the MA program. To be eligible the student must: 1) either already possess a Master's degree or, 2) complete at least nine hours but no more than 18 hours in the MA degree and 3) have a minimum 3.25 GPA in the MA program with no incomplete or deferred grades. Students may petition the ADGS for the accelerated entry option during the semester in which the student will begin taking the ninth hour of graduate courses, but must petition before earning the 18<sup>th</sup> hour of coursework in the MA program. If approved, the student is enrolled in the MCMA PhD program beginning with the next semester.

***SPECIAL NOTE: Course work completed in a master's degree program cannot be counted toward residency requirements for a doctoral program, per Graduate School policy (see Degree Requirements section of the Graduate Catalog).***

Once the student is admitted to the PhD program, up to 12 credit hours earned in the MA program may be applied to MCMA PhD program requirements, for internal course requirements only but not Graduate School residency. Exceptions to these MCMA rules must be submitted in writing and appealed to the Graduate Committee, which has the final authority to approve or reject the petition. Again, course work to be applied toward residency does not begin until after admission into the doctoral program.

## **Change of Degree Program**

If you request a change of degree after already joining our MCMA graduate program, i.e. you start in the MA program but are approved to change to the PhD program, you should discuss the academic credits and financial implications with the ADGS. Courses taken as a master's student are prohibited from transferring into another level, like the PhD program. See this issue as mentioned in the Accelerated Entry above. Also, any MCMA months of GA support which you already used in the prior degree program will count as being used in the alternate program, i.e. you used 9 months of support as an MA student therefore you have also used 9 months already in the PhD program. Unless you actually complete the prior degree program and then enter the next degree program MCMA and the Graduate School continue counting those months just as you continued on in the program. Months of support do not restart unless you finish the first degree.

## **Transfer Credit and Substitution Policy**

Graduate School policy allows departments to approve the transfer of course work earned at another accredited institution or at SIU subject to the following provisions:

- For master's programs transfer credits from a prior institution, only 15 credits of the student's program may be accepted and those transfer credits cannot count toward the 15 hours of required 500-level courses. Only graded credit of B or higher can transfer. No correspondence or extension courses from other institutions or those used toward the completion of a previous degree will transfer.
- For doctoral programs, the residency requirements of 24 credit hours for admission to candidacy prevent transfer credit. Doctoral students do not receive course credit per se for transfers (the courses do not appear on the transcript, nor is the grade calculated in the GPA.)
- For transfer credit from SIU, only up to 12 graduate credits with grade B or higher, either earned with approval while an undergraduate, a non-declared student, or credit not applied toward another prior degree may be requested for transfer. Both the ADGS in MCMA and the Graduate School Dean must approve all transfer credit.
- Students may apply in writing to the ADGS for acceptance of substitute courses that meet requirements of their program prior to the middle of their first semester (fall or spring) in the program.
- The application must include full documentation: course description, instructor bio or short CV, dates of attendance, course description and syllabus, grade, etc. If the application for graduate course credit transfer meets the rules of the Graduate School (see Graduate Catalog under General Regulations and Procedures, Transfer Credit), it is sent to the MCMA Graduate Committee.

- ❑ The MCMA Graduate Committee rules on acceptance. If a student’s application for course acceptance is approved, the student’s course credit hour requirements toward completion of the degree are reduced accordingly.
- ❑ Graduate courses taken within MCMA prior to acceptance to a program, do not constitute grounds for admittance to an MCMA graduate program. Recommendations for admittance are made by the program admission committee and approved by the MCMA Graduate Committee.
- ❑ The Graduate Committee will review petitions for substitutions at the first or second meeting each semester. Petitions should be brought to the ADGS by the end of the second week of the semester.

## **Registration**

Registration should be done as early as possible since courses get canceled for low enrollment before the semester even begins. If a course does not exist, like an independently supervised course as thesis or independent study, DO NOT just “pick a section” and register. Email the instructor/professor requesting that you wish to take the independent course with them, providing your DawgTag (student ID) number to him/her, and have it added to the Schedule of Classes. Independently supervised courses include Readings, Independent Study, Projects, Thesis, MS Report/Project, Dissertation Hours, and Continuing Enrollment. The instructor or you should contact the ADGS staff to create the course, which takes at least overnight to load into the system. Then they will let the instructor and you know when it is ready for an override to be entered and the student can register.

For any registration error messages:

- ❑ If it says you have a HOLD on your account, click the “View Holds” to get a definition of what type of hold it might be, i.e. Bursar’s, transcripts, immunization records, etc.
- ❑ If another error appears, please take a screenshot of the whole screen and email it to the ADGS office so they can determine the correct override needed. Sometimes it takes more than one type of override to allow you to register for a course so just follow-up with the staff if that happens.

These are time limits to add or drop a course within a semester, so be sure to check the Registrar’s registration calendar online to know those deadlines. See helpful URLs on page 21.

## **Retention and Satisfactory Progress**

### **GPA**

- ❑ In addition to the retention policies of the Graduate School, all MCMA master’s students must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.00 (A=4) and PhD students must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.25 (A=4).

- ❑ Students falling below these requirements will be placed on academic probation and allowed only one academic term to improve their averages to the minimum requirements; failing this, they will be dropped from the graduate program and will not be allowed to re-apply for admission. Please note that the SIU Graduate School allows two semesters on academic probation, but MCMA allows only one semester.
- ❑ Those who receive below a “B” twice in the same core course will also be dropped from the graduate program.
- ❑ No course in which the grade is “D” or lower shall count toward the degree or fulfillment of any requirement, but the grade will be included in the grade point average.
- ❑ In addition, for the PhD degree, students must earn a “B” or higher in all required courses and no more than three hours of “C” work in graduate courses will count toward the degree.

### **INC Grades**

- ❑ Incompletes should only be assigned when, for reasons beyond their control, students engaged in passing work are unable to complete all class assignments. This is left to the discretion of the instructor.
- ❑ MCMA students will not be permitted to hold more than one incomplete except under extraordinary circumstances.
- ❑ Students requiring an incomplete must sign an Incomplete Grade Agreement with their instructor and have it on file with the MCMA Graduate Studies office. Per Graduate School policy, the maximum time period noted to complete the course is within one year from the close of the term in which the course was taken or else the INC will be converted to an F after this time. If the student passes the course, the instructor must submit a Grade Change Card to the MCMA Graduate Studies office well in advance of the time limit. The student is responsible for following up to be sure this procedure is accomplished.
- ❑ Forms for the Incomplete Grade Agreement can be obtained in the MCMA Graduate Studies office.
- ❑ Students who are not in good standing cannot hold assistantships and may be removed from the program.

### **Student Reviews**

- ❑ All students are subject to regular review by the Graduate Committee. Policies and practices vary by degree. See the specific degree information in the second half of the degree handbook for details.

- Students not attaining the minimum standards or those who in any way fail to meet any other requirements or standards set by the faculty will be dropped from the program.
- Any student who cheats or plagiarizes in any course, including thesis/dissertation/research papers, taken while in the MCMA graduate program may be dropped from the program and will not be allowed to re-apply for admission.
- The purpose of reviews is to prevent students from investing extensive time and personal resources pursuing a graduate program where the faculty has serious doubts about the student's progress and ability to complete the degree.

### **Time to Degree Completion**

- Per Graduate School policy, master's students have six years from admission to the program to complete all degree requirements. MCMA faculty expect the MS and MA students to finish in no longer than three years, and MFA students no longer than four years.
- Doctoral students have five years after passing their written comprehensive exams and oral exams, and after being admitted to candidacy by the Graduate School, to complete their degree. MCMA faculty expects PhD students to finish in no longer than seven years.
- Doctoral students have additional deadlines to meet to remain in good standing. Please see the specific degree information in the second half of the degree handbook for details.

### **Program of Study Plan**

- Students must have a program of study plan by working with a faculty adviser to project courses and other requirements through graduation.
- Program of Study Plan Checklist forms are provided in the back of this handbook to guide you through requirements to complete program.
- Changes in thesis or dissertation topics may result in necessary changes in the program of study, including additional course work. A major goal in planning is for the student to have the proper foundation to add to the body of knowledge in the field.

### **Scheduling of Committee Meetings, Proposals, Examinations and Defenses**

- Master's and doctoral committee meetings to hear proposals, oral comprehensive examinations and thesis, research reports, or dissertation defenses will be scheduled between the second and the fourteenth weeks of fall and spring semesters. The Graduate Studies Office will not process paperwork for hearings, examinations or defenses outside of these established time frames. Do not plan on summer proposals or defenses.
- Two weeks prior notification in writing must be provided by the student to the MCMA Graduate Studies office to allow preparation and distribution of public announcements and proposal/defense forms for the faculty committee. This must include the date, time,

location, and committee-approved title of the defense, name of committee chair and committee members.

- Defense of a thesis, research report or dissertation will be scheduled no later than one week prior to the last date the Graduate School will accept completed work for graduation that semester. Find deadlines by going to Graduate School website. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- Faculty are on 9-month contracts, therefore they will not be expected to write exam questions, read exam answers, read theses or research reports, final creative projects or dissertation proposals when they are not on the University payroll (summers). In addition, faculty are not allowed to work with you during their own sabbaticals or leaves. In some cases, this will prevent scheduling of exams, proposals, and defenses, so student must plan well in advance of the term they plan to defend and carefully coordinate their time schedule with their committee chairs and other members.
- Students are responsible for coordinating meeting schedules with their committee members.
- Proposals, theses, research reports and dissertations must be submitted to committee members at least two weeks in advance of meetings.
- Proposals and defenses must be public. NOTE: If using Skype or the like to allow a remote committee member to participate in a defense, you must schedule it early enough to allow the original paperwork to be mailed to that member and back to the ADGS office. The Graduate School will only accept original signatures on the final defense forms! Coordination and cost for all of the mailing is the responsibility of the student.

### **Continuing Enrollment / 601**

- Graduate students who complete their course work and the maximum number of credits required for thesis, research reports or dissertation must enroll in MCMA 601, Continuing Enrollment, each semester until the completion of their degree programs.
- Exceptions to the continuing enrollment rule are allowed only for students who are required to be away from SIU full-time by the United States or the State of Illinois government. This is a MCMA college policy, not Graduate School.

## **General Program Information**

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Students are responsible for knowing degree requirements and enrolling in courses that will enable them to complete their degree programs.

- ❑ Students are responsible for letting the ADGS office know when their contact information changes. This is necessary so students can receive important and required information from the office.
- ❑ Students are responsible for knowing Graduate School regulations. For information, consult both the general and specific degree requirements contained in the Graduate School Catalog, which can be found online. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- ❑ Additional requirements and procedures are addressed in this publication. Further clarification may be obtained from the ADGS.

### **Student Conduct**

- ❑ The SIU Student Conduct Code found in the Graduate Catalog governs graduate students.
- ❑ SIU is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but also to the development of ethical and responsible people. The University seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and policies governing individual conduct that encourage independence and maturity.
- ❑ By accepting membership in this University, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, intellectual honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change. All rights and responsibilities exercised within this academic environment shall be compatible with these principles.
- ❑ The stressful situations experienced in graduate school occasionally result in personal friction between students. In most cases, these incidents can and should be worked out between students on the basis of common courtesy, mutual respect and common sense. Individual incidents or trends that cannot be resolved at the student level or which are serious violations of civil or student codes should be documented in writing and reported to the appropriate civil or university authority. Formal complaints regarding violations of the student code should be filed with the coordinator of Student Judicial Affairs. In addition, the ADGS should be informed in person and in writing of those incidents that cannot be resolved at the student level and of any actions taken.

### **Leave of Absence**

All MCMA graduate students shall be enrolled continuously while they are students at the University. If a student stops paying tuition for MCMA 601, s/he will be dropped from the program except for extraordinary circumstances such as mandatory military obligations. Other scenarios will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Internships will not be considered for leave of absence. NOTE: Leaves of absence do not stop the time-to-degree limits as stated in the Graduate School catalog.

### **Funded Travel Policy: Conference Presentations, Publications and Exhibitions**

Graduate students are encouraged to prepare and submit research papers/creative works to the various professional organizations, journals and exhibition/screening venues serving the communications and media arts disciplines.

- ❑ Upon being invited or accepted as a participant for conference presentation, journal publication, exhibition or screening, students should submit a *Request for Travel Support* form to the MCMA Graduate Studies office at least 30 days prior to travel. It is available on the Graduate Professional Student Council's (GPSC) webpage. See helpful URLs on page 21. You must attach the Call for Papers specific to the part you are attending, along with your email or letter notifying you of acceptance. This information is also used to update accomplishments of the College as well as to budget for future travel.
- ❑ Most funding on campus requires that you be a full-time registered student – in particular, OSPA and GPSC. This does not include 601 Continuing Enrollment. So summer conference travel may decrease your funding unless you are also fully enrolled.
- ❑ Students are responsible for their own travel and lodging arrangements, subject to State of Illinois restrictions. You are responsible for reading the Regulations and Policies before you travel. See helpful URLs on page 21. Think like a state accounting auditor in keeping track of receipts and reporting expenses!
- ❑ With advance permission, absence from classes and from graduate assistantship responsibilities are typically authorized; but students must coordinate such absences with faculty or supervisors.
- ❑ Students must complete travel funding request forms as far in advance as possible and a minimum of 30 days prior to travel. Except for GPSC funding, you will NOT receive reimbursement if you fill out these forms after you attend the event. If you plan to attend more than one conference, you need to ask for funding for each one.
- ❑ Upon return from travel, and within 10-30 days of the expenses being incurred, attendees must complete a Travel Expense Voucher form. The Graduate Studies Office Manager can assist you with completing this form. You are to provide her/him with required original expense receipts, including electronic ones, to obtain reimbursement. These must be itemized versions.
- ❑ Funding sources include the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts Dean's Office, the Graduate School/OSPA, and GPSC. Female students may also check online with University Women's Professional Advancement (UWPA) for additional travel funds. GPSC and UWPA usually only fund once a year. Funding amounts from the Dean's office and ORDA vary depending upon resources at the time you apply. OSPA will provide funds only one time during an academic year.
- ❑ Funding for student travel is limited and most will not cover the total cost of conference attendance. Students should be prepared to cover expenses above those covered by the University.

## **Application for Graduation**

- Commencement ceremonies are held at the end of each fall and spring semester. There is no summer ceremony but if the student plans to graduate in summer, they can contact the Graduate Studies Office Manager and Graduate School to participate in the spring commencement ceremony.
- Degree candidates must apply for graduation with the Graduate School no later than the end of the second week of the fall/spring semester or first week of summer session in which the student plans to graduate.
- While summer master's graduates can choose to walk in the May ceremony or the December ceremony, MFAs can walk but cannot be "hooded" until they have officially completed and been cleared for graduation by the Graduate School. NOTE: PhDs can only participate the semester after they have been cleared for graduation. Always check the Graduate School website for official deadlines for the semester you plan on graduating. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- Official deadlines and graduation application forms are available on the Graduate School's website. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- A graduation fee is required of all persons receiving degrees. This fee does not cover the costs for rental of cap, gown or hood or the cost of invitations. These items may be ordered through the University Book Store.
- Deadlines for final approved copies of dissertations/theses/research reports and oral defense forms are found on the Graduate School website. Typically these are 4-5 weeks prior to commencement during fall and spring semesters and 3-4 weeks prior to the end of summer semester.
- Attendance at commencement is not compulsory; students who wish to graduate in absentia must notify the Graduate School in advance.

## **Theses, Research Projects and Dissertation Submission Guidelines**

Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of Dissertations, Theses, and Research Papers are published by the Graduate School and available on their website. See helpful URLs on page 21.

### **Style**

- The MCMA graduate programs have adopted both the APA, Chicago and MLA Styles for you to choose from one.
- Legal research papers should normally be prepared in accordance with "The Bluebook" published by the Harvard School of Law. Students preparing legal research for thesis or

dissertation requirements should check current policies with their committee chair and the Graduate School.

- Whichever type of bibliographic style is selected must be applied consistently throughout the document.

## **ETD**

- ❖ Electronic submission of written Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) is required via ProQuest ETD. These would be for our MA, MFA or PhD students. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- ❖ Electronic submission of written Research Paper/Project is required via OpenSIUC. This would be for our MS in PMMM students. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- ❖ Information on formatting and submission of your paper can be found on the Graduate School website. Remember that within the Graduate School's restrictions, MCMA uses either APA, Chicago or MLA Styles formatting. Note that there are format check deadlines. See helpful URLs on page 21.
- Thesis and dissertation titles should be limited to 240 characters.
- For inclusion of any moving image or sound projects in your online upload, see the following:
  - Theses/dissertations use ProQuest. On the Graduate School's Guidelines page, click Publishing Guidelines => Online Submission: Frequently Asked Questions. Then under Submission and Technical Support Questions, click "How can I include related files (sound clips, ....)."
  - Research papers use OpenSIUC. On the Graduate School's Guidelines page, under the Charts, Tables, Figures heading near the bottom of the list, it refers you to follow instructions provided once you log into OpenSIUC.
- There are no fees for publishing master's theses or dissertations with UMI/Proquest. There is a library fee. An optional copyright service is available, also for an additional fee.
- ❖ Submit ETDs only after the paper has been reviewed and approved by your committee, the ADGS and the Graduate School.

## **Hardbound Copies**

- Upon final acceptance, graduate students are responsible for checking with their committee members to see if they want bound copies (on standard paper) of the student's final dissertation, thesis, or research paper. This is at the student's costs. Our college itself does not require a copy since it can be found online once submitted.
- The SIU University Bookstore can arrange for binding of the completed dissertation, thesis or research papers for a fee. Use the following binding guidelines:

- Research Reports do not require a traditional hardbound binding. They can be submitted in a binder with a left side fastener. Verify with your committee what they prefer.
- Theses, in the College of MCMA, are bound in a red cover with gold lettering, including a disc of media production when appropriate.
- Dissertations, in the College of MCMA, are bound in a black cover with gold lettering.
- Doctoral students are also required to submit the Survey Form of Earned Doctorates at the time the dissertation is submitted.

### **Human Subjects Research Requirements**

- Before the start of any research involving human subjects, including administering questionnaires, conducting interviews, or accessing confidential databases, you must submit an application to and receive approval by the SIU Human Subjects Committee which is an institutional review board. This information is found on the Graduate School webpage.

### **Copyright**

- Compliance with copyright law is imperative. Information on copyright issues is available from the following web sites: AAP Questions and Answers on Copyright for the Campus Community UMI Copyright Law and Graduate Research. ProQuest offers a copyrighting service for a fee.

## **Tips to Thrive Rather than Merely Survive**

- Work closely with a faculty adviser.
- Find fellow graduate students nearing the end of their program; ask how they did it.
- Enter competitions.
- Write a grant proposal.
- Write and submit conference papers and papers for publication or submit professional or creative work for exhibition/screening/broadcast.
- Attend conferences even if you're not presenting to meet and network with people.
- Participate meaningfully in seminar classes.
- Meet all deadlines.
- Be proactive about your program of study; ask questions, especially in advance of any problems.
- Attend college lectures/events.
- Read the weekly MCMA listserv emails as you are responsible for knowing this information.

## **MCMA Graduate Student Academic Grievance Process**

Staff of the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts, as faculty and administrators, are assigned the fundamental academic responsibilities of determining academic curriculum and evaluating student achievement. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to,

determination of reasonable standards of performance, assignment of grades, and establishment of retention policies within the Graduate Programs of the College.

Any CMCMA graduate student who disagrees with a particular application of such academic responsibilities and wishes redress may grieve a matter by the procedure outlined below. A graduate student who is not a major within any of the MCMA Graduate programs, but is enrolled in any course offered by the College or is otherwise governed by a policy of the College, may also grieve a matter by this procedure. The student's major unit will be notified of all action and can be requested or may petition to submit additional information. Access to these grievance procedures is restricted to students who were officially enrolled at the time when the incident that has resulted in the filing of a grievance occurred.

Before filing a grievance, the student should discuss the matter with the individual responsible for the decision being questioned and with the ADGS. An attempt should be made to resolve the matter informally.

If the issue is not resolved at that level, the student may appeal to the next higher level. The Graduate School should not be asked to rule on any grievance until prior channels are exhausted.

Nothing set forth in the following procedures should be construed to diminish an instructor's academic freedom, which encompasses the right of the instructor to determine a student's grade. This fundamental right shall not be abridged unless it has been determined after a thorough review of the evidence through these procedures that the instructor has acted in an arbitrary manner. Thus a student wishing to contest a grade assigned by an instructor must bring evidence of one or more of the following:

1. The assignment of a grade was made on some basis other than the student's performance in the course.
2. The assignment of a grade was made by resorting to more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in the course.
3. The assignment of a grade was made by substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.

## **Student Grievance Procedure**

### **Filing a Grievance**

A graduate student desiring a hearing before a grievance committee must submit a written request to the ADGS no later than 30 calendar days after the beginning of the semester following the incident in question, excluding summer term. A student may request an extension of the deadline in writing by petitioning the ADGS.

The request for a hearing must state the following:

1. Name of the grievant.
2. Program in which the grievant is enrolled.
3. Name of the grievant's major adviser.

4. Name and title of the person(s) against whom the grievance is being filed.
5. Current address and phone number of the grievant.
6. Statement of the grievance including descriptions of the incident(s) involved, date(s) of occurrence, what remedy is being sought, as well as any supporting documents.

### **Action on Grievance**

Upon receiving a written request for a hearing regarding an academic grievance, the ADGS shall send the respondent a copy of the grievance. The grievant will provide the ADGS with a written response within a reasonable time as stipulated by the ADGS. The ADGS shall then convene and forward the grievance and response to the Graduate Student Grievance Committee of the college.

The ADGS shall notify the parties of the identity of the individuals who have been selected to serve on the grievance committee. The participation of any committee member may be challenged for cause. If the ADGS determines that the challenge is valid, she/he shall name a substitute.

The ADGS shall request of both parties copies of any documents and a list of witnesses they wish to introduce. These should be submitted without delay. The committee chair shall convene a hearing within 20 days of receipt of the substantiating documents. These documents shall be available to both parties at least five days prior to the hearing.

The committee shall conduct the hearing according to the hearing procedures as outlined in Item B (The Procedure) below.

In the absence of compelling circumstance, the committee shall make its recommendation on the grievance to the ADGS within 10 working days after the conclusion of the hearing.

The ADGS shall advise the parties of their right to appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. Hearings of appeals will not be automatically granted. Dissatisfaction with the decision shall not be sufficient grounds for appeal. The appellant must demonstrate that the decision at the program level was in error.

#### **A. The Committee**

The MCMA Graduate Grievance Committee consists of one representative of each of the academic units currently on the Graduate Committee not including the ADGS. The normally ex-officio student representative on the Graduate Committee becomes a voting member of the grievance committee. The assembled committee will select a chair. The Committee exists only when convened by the ADGS or the Dean of the College.

#### **B. The Procedure**

The academic grievance procedure for MCMA graduate students proceeds as follows. Acceptable resolution at any one of the following steps precludes the necessity of

proceeding further. If agreement cannot be reached at a given step, both parties to the grievance have the right to initiate the next step.

1. Discussion between the student(s) and faculty/staff members(s) involved.
2. Discussion among the student(s), faculty/staff members(s) and the ADGS.
3. Discussion among the student(s), faculty/staff members(s) and the Dean if the grievance is against the ADGS.
4. Hearing by the Graduate Grievance Committee as outlined below
  - a. The principal parties to the grievance shall have the right to be accompanied by an adviser of their choice. The advisers may speak on behalf of their clients only with the approval of the committee.
  - b. All hearings shall be open unless either of the parties requests that the hearings be closed. If the hearing is closed, only the parties, their adviser, and the committee shall be present during the taking of evidence. Witnesses for either party shall be present only while giving testimony if the hearing is closed.
  - c. All hearings shall be tape-recorded. The tape recording will be deposited in the office of the ADGS at the conclusion of the hearing.
  - d. Each party may call witnesses to present evidence. Each party shall have the right to examine any witness called by the opposing party. If a witness is unable to appear the committee may allow written statements. If the presence of a witness is required to ensure fairness to all parties, the hearing may be continued until such witness is physically able to attend the hearing.
  - e. The committee will decide all matters, procedural and substantive, by simple majority vote.
  - f. Each party may make an opening and a closing statement.
  - g. Decisions by the panel will be based on a preponderance of the evidence.
  - h. If both parties agree to abide by the Committee's recommended resolution, the procedure ends.
  - i. If one party refuses to abide by the Committee's recommended resolution, the Grievance may be appealed to the Grievance Committee of the Graduate School.
5. If, on procedural grounds, the grievant feels that an injustice was committed, an appeal of process may be made to the Dean of the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts.
  - a. If procedures are found lacking, the Grievance Committee reconsiders the case.
  - b. If procedures are found acceptable, the recommended resolution stands.

### **C. Related Information**

1. The ADGS initiates and keeps a file of all information involved in any grievance. If

the grievance is against the ADGS, the Dean initiates and keeps the file. Parties to the grievance have free access to this file and may place notes of addition or clarification in this file.

2. Both parties to the grievance must produce all appropriate evidence for the grievance file at the initiation of the grievance and as necessary when requested by the ADGS, the Grievance Committee, or the Dean of the College at the various steps.
3. This procedure is based on consultation. In matters of grading, the right to change a grade resides solely with the individual faculty member. The intent of this procedure is to ensure that students and faculty of the Department receive proper consultation and consideration in a grievance.
4. Students have access to all approved University grievance procedures should resolution at the college level be unacceptable.

## MCMA Graduate Faculty Profiles

The graduate faculty, consisting of members of the School of Journalism and the departments of Cinema and Photography, and Radio-Television-Digital Media, offer graduate work leading to the Master of Arts degree, Master of Science Degree, Master of Fine Arts degree, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree, all in Mass Communication and Media Arts.

*The faculty information is organized to read: Name, faculty rank, degree held, degree granting institute, year degree granted, year of joining SIU faculty, and teaching area.*

### Cinema and Photography

**Aguayo, Angela**, Associate Professor, PhD, University of Texas, Austin, 2005; 2008.

Documentary theory and social change, critical/cultural studies, video production.

**Bursell, Cade**, Associate Professor, MFA, San Francisco State University, 2002; 2003. Cinema production, queer cinema, experimental cinema.

**Chase, Jennida**, Assistant Professor, MFA, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2009; 2014.

Theory and production of digital and traditional filmmaking, video and sound art, performance, public intervention and collaboration.

**Kapur, Jyotsna**, Professor and Chair, PhD, Northwestern University, 1998; 1998. Feminist and Marxist analysis of media, globalization, children's film and consumer culture, documentary and ethnographic film, the German and Japanese new wave and Indian cinema.

**Martinez, Antonio**, Associate Professor, MFA, East Carolina University, 2005; 2006. Digital imaging, alternative printing processes, multimedia installation, class and racial identity.

**Metz, Walter**, Professor, PhD, University of Texas at Austin, 1996; 2009. Film studies, contemporary American cinema, the Cold War, the 1950s, adaptation studies, intertextuality, film historiography.

**Overturf, Daniel**, Professor, MFA, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1983; 1990. Photography.

**Rowley, R. William**, Associate Professor, MFA, University of Iowa, 1974; 2000.

Foundational digital and analog film production and post-production techniques, experimental filmmaking, observational documentary, intermedia arts.

**Spahr, Robert**, Associate Professor, M.F.A, Parsons School of Design, 1991; 2009.

Computational art using generative and procedural processes, genetic algorithms, time-based media and live art.

**Leigh, Michele**, Assistant Professor, PhD, University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts, 2008; 2010. Russian and East European cinema; silent cinema; independent cinema; female industrial practice; animation; film history and theory, independent cinema, and film festivals.

**Tudor, Deborah**, Interim Dean and Associate Professor, PhD, Northwestern University, 1992; 2006. Culture and technology, popular cinema and political cultures.

**Vratil, Dru**, Associate Professor, MFA, University of Iowa, 1998; 2001. Screenwriting; currently on leave of absence.

**Zhou, Hong**, Associate Professor, MFA, York University, Toronto Canada, 2000; 2008. Film and video production, cinematography, Chinese cinema, Surrealist cinema.

## Journalism

**Babcock, William A.**, Professor, PhD, Southern Illinois University, 1979; 2008. Media ethics, public policy reporting.

**Dolan, Mark**, Associate Professor, MA, Syracuse University, 1995; 2008. Visual and interactive communication, photojournalism.

**Freivogel, William**, Professor, J.D., Washington University 2001; 2006. Journalism, media law, public affairs & policy.

**Frith, Katherine**, Emeritus Professor, Ed.D. University of Massachusetts, 1985; 2008. International advertising, copywriting, advertising and society.

**Han, Dong**, Assistant Professor, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011; 2012. Intellectual property and media, media history and political economy, international communication, communication technology.

**Karan, Kavita**, Professor, PhD, London School of Economics, University of London, 1997; 2009. Political communication, advertising and market research, international communication, media and children, health communication.

**McClurg, Scott**, Professor, PhD, Washington University, 2000; 2001. Political communication, social network analysis, public opinion, interpersonal communication.

**Veenstra, Aaron**, Acting Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Associate Professor, PhD, University of Wisconsin, 2009; 2009. New media and political communication, political blogs, cognitive effects of news construction.

## Radio-Television-Digital Media

**Brooten, Lisa**, Associate Professor, PhD, Ohio University, 2003; 2002. Media and globalization, gender, alternative media, social movements, political communication, interpretive/critical research methods, ethnography.

**David Burns**, Associate Professor, MFA, Parsons School of Design, 2001; 2005. 3D computer animation; media arts theory; technology, culture, and society; memory and post-memory.

**Hochheimer, John**, Emeritus Professor, PhD, Stanford University, 1986; 2006. Community radio, global media, media studies pedagogy, media history, spirituality and education, and popular music. Dr. Hochheimer is currently on leave.

**Kreider, Wago**, Associate Professor, MFA, Rutgers University, 2006; 2007. Independent filmmaking, broadcast television production, media studies.

**Lawrence, Novotny**, Associate Professor and Interim Chair, PhD, University of Kansas, 2004; 2005. African American representations in film and television, Japanese animation, Hindi cinema, film history, genre theory.

**Lewison, Sarah**, Associate Professor, MFA, University of California San Diego, 2007; 2007. Video, social movements, environmental media, installation, live art and performance.

**Meehan, Eileen**, Emeritus Professor, PhD University of Illinois, 1983; 2007. Political economy of the media, cultural studies, mass communications history, critical communications research

**Motyl, Howard**, Associate Professor, MFA, Northwestern 1990; 2007. Media production and screenwriting, narrative, gay representation.

**Needham, Jay**, Professor, MFA, California Institute of the Arts, 1989; 2003. Video, film, digital audio production, and electro-acoustic music.

**Padovani, Cinzia**, Associate Professor, PhD, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1999; 2005. Historical approaches to political economy, public service broadcasting, international communication, social movements and the media.

**Perkins-Buzo, John Reid**, Assistant Professor, MFA, Northwestern University, 2004; 2014. Digital arts, animation, games, and mobile technologies. Exploring the boundaries where film, animation and computer games meet.

**Podber, Jake**, Associate Professor, PhD, Ohio University, 2001; 2002. Media studies, oral history, cultural studies, Appalachian studies, media history.

**Thompson, Jan**, Professor, M.G.S., Roosevelt University, 1988; 2000. Video documentary production, music composition, production and performance.

## Helpful URLs for MCMA Graduate Students

*Rev. as of 8/15/17*

MCMA Graduate Programs -- [mcma.siu.edu/academics/graduate/](http://mcma.siu.edu/academics/graduate/)

MCMA Student Handbooks – these are the current academic year’s books  
[http://mcma.siu.edu/academics/graduate/handbooks\\_resources.html](http://mcma.siu.edu/academics/graduate/handbooks_resources.html)

Graduate School -- <http://gradschool.siu.edu/>

Guidelines and Information for Thesis, Dissertation, and Research Papers from Graduate School  
<http://gradschool.siu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation-researchpaper/>

Travel Funding from GPSC (Graduate Professional Student Council)  
<http://gpsc.rso.siu.edu/files/2014/07/FORM-INSTRUCTIONS.pdf>

Travel Regulations and Information from Accounting Services  
<http://as.siu.edu/travel/>

Human Subjects Research – OSPA (Office of Sponsored Projects Administration)  
<http://www.ospa.siu.edu/compliance/human-subjects/>

Graduation Application form  
<http://gradschool.siu.edu/current-students/graduation.php>

Registrar’s Office <http://registrar.siu.edu/calendars/registration17fa.php>

Research Papers should be submitted through OpenSIUC  
[http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs\\_rp/author\\_guidelines.html](http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs_rp/author_guidelines.html)

Thesis and Dissertations should be submitted through ProQuest ETD  
<http://etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school?siteID=48>

# MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The interdisciplinary Master of Fine Arts degree provides substantial advanced study for a limited number of highly talented and motivated individuals. The program emphasizes the artistic and intellectual development of the student and the creation of fine arts works in photography, film, video, sound, and new media. We encourage interdisciplinary media arts exploration, though students may opt to focus and refine their skills within one medium. Students study contemporary thought and practice in order to contextualize their work. Available course work in studio production, criticism, theory, history, and combined media studies emphasizes the interwoven character of traditional and contemporary approaches and technologies in the 21st century.

Degree requirements are 60 semester hours, including 51 hours at the 500-level. Up to 9 of the 60 hours may be replaced with 400-level courses that are relevant to the student's specific interests. The program generally takes three years to complete and must be completed in no more than four years.

Additional course work can be pursued through the School of Art and Design, the Department of Communication Studies and other humanities departments at SIUC. A distinguished faculty of artists and scholars, excellent facilities, and a variety of curricular offerings allow students to individually tailor their programs of study.

## Credit Requirements

The minimum 60 credit degree requires 27 credits of common requirements constituting a core 27 credits of electives, and a 6 (preferably taken as 3+3, or 6 at once) credit Final Creative Project/Thesis. Students may not request substitutions for core courses.

### Core (28 credits)

MCMA 557-6 (3, 3) MFA Studio Arts Practice  
MCMA 558-9 (3, 3, 3) MFA Studio Critique\*  
MCMA 550-3 History of Media Arts and Culture  
MCMA 551-3 Theory of Media Arts  
MCMA 531-3 Critical Research Methods in Media Arts and Culture  
MCMA 552-3 Topics in the History and Theory of Media Arts

### Thesis

MCMA 599-6 (3, 3) Thesis

### Electives (27 credits)\*

Select 27 credits to create an emphasis area that will help to ultimately support your thesis project. Graduate level media arts studio and studies courses will be offered each semester. Other studio art courses are offered through the School of Art and Design. Courses in performance are offered through the Department of Communication Studies. Creative Writing courses are offered

through the English Department. A variety of applicable studies courses are offered throughout departments in the College of Liberal Arts. No more than 9 credits can be taken at the 400-level. There are no exceptions to this rule.

### **Suggested Course Sequence**

The schedule below leaves 9 hrs of electives remaining, assuming all other electives are 3 credit hours each. If you deviate from the suggested sequence below, be aware of course prerequisites and course rotations/future course schedules, as all courses will not be offered every semester. If you choose to take more than three (3) courses in one semester, you should do it early as we currently offer few to no summer courses, so plan accordingly.

Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
MCMA 557	MCMA 557	MCMA 558	MCMA 558	MCMA 558	MCMA 599 (3)
MCMA 550	MCMA 551	MCMA 531	MCMA 552	MCMA 599 (3)	Electives*
Electives	Electives	Electives	Electives	Electives	

\*Students often take MCMA 548 MFA Projects course hours with their committee chair before their last semester to work on the thesis as well.

### **MFA Graduate Reviews and Defenses**

A faculty review committee will meet with each MFA graduate student at the end of the first year of study. At this meeting the student will have an opportunity to present and discuss his or her work with the faculty. This is a holistic review. Faculty evaluate students on how well they are synthesizing concepts and practices from their coursework, and how the student is surpassing the work submitted in their admissions portfolio (i.e. exploring new forms, developing new approaches to work, and developing a more nuanced self-critique).

In this review, students should be able to:

- Identify appropriate artistic and conceptual influences on their work.
- Prepare a statement to use in the review that situates their work in relation to contemporary and historical practices.
- Discuss the themes and concepts that are emerging in their artistic work and research.
- Demonstrate an appropriate work ethic for graduate level study by commitment to projects, timely performance, creative initiative, and application of high standards to the work.

The MFA faculty in attendance will determine whether the student passes, receives a pass with reservations, or fails the review. For students who receive a pass with reservations, you will be given a guideline of projects and readings that will help you remedy areas in which you need improvement. If you received failure, the faculty will provide an explanation of deficiencies in terms of academic or artistic performance. Any student who fails the end of first-year review will be dropped from the program. Those who receive a pass with reservations will be assigned

a faculty mentor to work with over the summer. This mentor will set a schedule of meetings, and may assign any readings or projects that s/he deems necessary to help the student succeed.

## **A Narrative of the Thesis Process**

### **Thesis Committee**

By the end of the third week of the third semester in residence:

- each MFA student will be required to select a committee chair and by the end of this semester, a thesis (final creative project) committee consisting of a minimum of three (3) graduate faculty members.
- By this time the student should have begun to identify a general area of interest and choose committee members who can help guide and challenge the student through the thesis process. The chair of an MFA thesis committee must be an MCMA faculty member holding the MFA degree or holding the PhD degree with a record of creative activity in peer-reviewed venues. One additional member must be an MCMA graduate faculty member.
- Student responsibilities: The student is responsible for contacting each member of the committee and requesting that person's participation. The student will then send email to the MCMA Graduate Studies Office Manager with the names of those members indicating which one is the committee chairperson. If you include an external committee member from another SIU college or another university, please include from which department they are faculty, and if off-campus then also include from what university. Off-campus faculty must have additional pre-approval from the Graduate School to serve on the committee. A Graduate Faculty Committee Approval Form is then submitted to the Graduate School for approval. The student, in consultation with the thesis committee, develops a plan of study, considering the requirements of the Graduate School, the degree program and the goals of the student.

### **Thesis Proposal Defense**

By the end of the second year of study and when the committee chair is satisfied with the proposal, the MFA student provides copies to all members of the committee for review and the student organizes a date for defense of the proposal. **Do not plan summer proposal defenses.** The proposal is open to the public.

Student Responsibilities: The student is responsible for copying and delivering the proposal and for coordinating the date and time, and reserving the location of the proposal defense. The student is responsible for informing the Graduate Studies Office of the date, time, location and chair-approved title of the defense in writing a minimum of two (2) weeks ahead of time so the announcement and defense forms can be prepared.

Proposal Format: The presentation should involve a clear statement of what the thesis project will entail, including the conceptual, theoretical and philosophical underpinnings and relationship to appropriate contemporary practice. The proposal should also include a timeline for completion of the thesis. The student's thesis committee will make a determination whether the student passes, receives a conditional pass or fails the review. Those who pass will be admitted into MFA candidacy. Those who are given a conditional pass will be re-reviewed by the end of the second week of the following fall semester when the student's thesis Committee

will determine if the student is admitted into MFA candidacy or fails. Those who have not remedied deficiencies will be dropped from the program. Those who receive a conditional pass at the end of the second year thesis project proposal and are later successfully admitted into MFA candidacy should expect a delayed graduation date with no extended financial support from the college.

### **Graduation Application**

The graduation application is found on the Graduate School's website. See helpful URLs on page 21. It should be filed with the Graduate School no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the term in which you wish to graduate. It will help to give a copy to the Graduate Studies Office Manager so they can verify that you have met all degree requirements except for your final defense and paper submission. If a student finishes all requirements by the time of the ceremony, MFA graduates can be hooded by their committee chair. If, however, the student has not but will soon meet all requirements they may walk but CANNOT be hooded. Therefore, it is recommended by our college to not walk until you can be officially hooded, as it is an honor and a great experience for your family and friends in attendance to witness.

Graduation Ceremonies are held in May and December each year.

### **Thesis**

The theses hours (6) include the culmination of the creative work generated for the thesis exhibition/screening and a contextualizing paper.

1. Exhibition/Screening

In the third year of residence, each student should be focused on intensive independent artistic work, culminating in the MFA thesis. The exact nature of the thesis will be determined in a collaborative process between the student and the committee, with the committee chair supervising the thesis process. All MFA theses must be exhibited/screened publicly. Students are responsible for finding and securing an appropriate venue for the exhibition/screening in consultation with their thesis committees. The exhibition/screening must be held in conjunction with the Oral Exam (see Item 3 below).

2. Thesis Document

A written paper should contextualize the creative component of the thesis work in relation to appropriate contemporary theory and arts practice. The final draft of the paper should be given to all committee members at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam. Please consult the Graduate School website for details about electronic theses formatting and submission guidelines including media formats that can be embedded to document the creative project component of the thesis. See helpful URLs on page 21.

### 3. Oral Exam

At the time of the thesis exhibition/screening, an oral examination by your thesis committee will be scheduled on the same day or within two (2) days of the thesis exhibition or the opening of a thesis screening. It is preferable to do this on the same day, as both events are public and it is easier to schedule all committee members for one event rather than two. You will be expected to make a presentation on the project and then to answer questions from committee members and other attendees. The written component of the thesis can serve as a foundation for your presentation. Oral exams must be open to the public. It is your responsibility to schedule the exam in consultation with your committee, and to notify the Graduate Studies Office Manager of the date, time, location and chair-approved title of the defense in writing a minimum of two (2) weeks ahead of time so the announcement and defense forms can be prepared.

### **After Acceptance of the Thesis**

Students must comply with Graduate School requirements for submission of the finished thesis. Review the Graduate School's Guidelines for the Preparation of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations, available on the Graduate School's website. See helpful URLs on page 21.

Deadlines for submitting completed theses vary slightly from year to year, so please watch for the MCMA Graduate Student Listserv emails which will publicize the due dates.

Students who have completed their course work and the minimum number of credits required for dissertation must enroll in MCMA 601 Continuing Enrollment under their chair's section each regular fall or spring semester until they complete the degree.

Upon acceptance of the thesis, members of the committee sign the thesis defense form and return it to the Graduate Studies Office for signature by the ADGS and forwarded to the Graduate School. The Graduate School reviews the completed thesis and ensures its compliance with submission guidelines. Final acceptance and electronic submission of the thesis to the Graduate School's ProQuest site completes the process. See helpful URLs on page 21.

Graduate students are responsible for checking with their committee members and chair to see if they want to have provided to them more permanent bound copies (standard paper) of the student's final thesis, at the student's cost. If hardcover bound, they should be done in a red cover with gold lettering. The SIUC University Book Store can arrange for binding of the completed thesis for a fee.

Assuming that the student has applied for graduation during the second week of that semester and all other degree requirements have been met, MFA graduates will be "hooded" at the ceremony. However, if they have not met all requirements they are permitted to walk early BUT cannot be hooded until all requirements are met. If the student has completed all requirements and will get hooded, the student should invite their chair to hood them.

## MFA Time Line

**SPECIAL NOTE in all degree programs:** For any comprehensive exams, proposal defenses, thesis/dissertation/research paper defenses, you should contact your faculty during the regular semester (not summer) before you plan the event. Do not count on faculty to be here in summer.

1. **End of first year review:** Your first year courses will help you to prepare for the review.
2. **Develop a general area of interest:** A number of core courses and electives should be completed within the first three (3) semesters. These will help you to begin to identify a general direction and area of interest. MFA project and other courses should be used to explore topics of interest to help the student begin to focus in on a thesis subject.
3. **Select a Thesis Committee:** You should consider your developing area of interest when selecting a chair and other members of the committee.
4. **Form:** Provide your committee members' names in writing to the Graduate Studies Office Manager to prepare the *Graduate Faculty Committee Approval* form by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester of residency. This form is signed by the ADGS then sent to Graduate School for approval.
5. **Develop your proposal:** Work with your committee chair to develop your proposal. Your other committee members should act as a resource for your proposal development. The proposal should involve a clear statement of what the thesis project will entail.
6. **Defend your proposal:** In consultation with your committee choose a date and place to defend your proposal and notify the Graduate Studies Office not less than two (2) weeks prior with the date, time, location and chair-approved title of the thesis proposal. The defense must be open to the public. The defense should be held prior to the last two weeks of class. Do not plan summer proposal defenses. DO NOT begin production on your thesis until your committee has approved the proposal.
7. **Form:** Once the committee has approved the project proposal, each committee member must sign a *MFA Proposal Defense* form, provided to the chair by the Graduate Studies Office.
8. **Human Subjects:** Typically creative projects do not require Human Subjects approval. If necessary or when in doubt, make sure your research is cleared through Human Subjects. You must secure the current form packet and to find what materials are needed to approve your thesis. See helpful URLs on page 21.
9. **Thesis:** Work with your chair and committee throughout the whole process. The written papers accompanying the creative work are typically 15-25 pages, and serve to contextualize the creative work. *The final draft of the paper should be given to all committee members at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam.* Documentation of the creative project is embedded into the electronic thesis document. See helpful URLs on page 21.

**10. Apply for graduation:** The deadline is usually the end of the second week of the semester you plan on graduating. Check with the Graduate School website for official deadlines. See helpful URLs on page 21. NOTE: MFAs can choose to “walk” in the ceremony early but cannot be “hooded” at the ceremony, until all requirements for their degree are met and cleared by the Graduate School. This is different than either the master’s or doctoral student policy so do not get confused.

So if you want to be officially hooded as an MFA graduate then wait until you are fully finished before attending the ceremony. The student should invite their chair to hood them.

**11. Make revisions:** The written component nearly always requires some degree of revision. Your committee may require revisions in your creative work as well. Members of the committee will specify these.

**12. Review the Formatting Guidelines for Theses from the Graduate School.** Each year the Graduate School publishes strict format guidelines for the electronic submission of papers. See helpful URLs on page 21. Papers may be in either APA, Chicago or MLA style and should include embedded media that documents the creative project portion of the thesis.

**13. Thesis Exhibition/Screening:** The thesis requires a public showing of a body of work. The exhibition will vary with each project, but typical venues/formats include: gallery exhibition, public screening, public performance, site-specific installation, etc. Note that an oral examination by your thesis committee will be scheduled on the same day or within two (2) days of the thesis exhibition or the opening of a thesis screening. It is preferable to do this on the same day, as both events are public and it is easier to schedule all committee members for one event rather than two. The student is responsible for reserving a location for the exhibition, for creating publicity material to generate an audience (the Graduate Studies Office will post your general announcement), and for informing the Graduate Studies Office of the date, time, location and chair-approved title of the thesis exhibition so a formal announcement can be created.

**14. Oral Examination:** This is scheduled on the same day or within two (2) days of the thesis exhibition or the opening of a thesis screening. It is preferable to do this on the same day, as both events are public and it is easier to schedule all committee members for one event rather than two. includes a formal presentation of the work by you and the final questioning on your thesis show by your committee. The defense must be open to the public. The defense should be held the same day, but no later than a week within, the opening of its related exhibition or screening. It should be no less than a week before the Graduate School’s deadline for final paper submission. See helpful URLs on page 21. Otherwise, prior to the last two weeks of class if you are not planning on finishing in time for that term’s graduation ceremony. Do not expect to have your oral examination during the summer. The student is responsible for reserving the gallery or appropriate venue for the defense and for informing, in writing, the Graduate Studies Office of the date, time, location and chair-approved title of the thesis show so a formal announcement can be created and posted.

**15. Forms:** After the student has successfully passed the oral review, the revisions for the written statement are complete, and the committee has approved the thesis, the committee members must sign and promptly return to the Graduate Studies Office the following forms that are provided to your committee chair by the ADGS office:

- Oral Defense Form*
- Thesis Approval*
- Thesis Project Assessment Forms*

**16. Submit an electronic copy of thesis to Graduate School:** All work must be complete at least five weeks prior to the end of the semester if you plan to participate in the graduation ceremony. This includes all revisions and the submission of the final electronic copy of your paper to the Graduate School's ProQuest site. Check the Graduate School website for the official deadline for that semester. See helpful URLs on page 21.

Upon final acceptance, graduate students are responsible for checking with their committee members and chair to see if they want to have provided to them more permanent bound copies (standard paper) of the student's final thesis, at the student's cost. Note the binding colors for MCMA theses are a red cover with gold lettering.

**17. Preparations for the graduation ceremony:** MFA graduates are can be hooded at the ceremony if they have completed all the degree requirements. You need to invite your chair to be the person to hood you. Unlike, PhDs but similar to master's students, you may choose to walk in an earlier ceremony before completing all of the requirements **HOWEVER** you cannot be hooded until you have met all requirements! Therefore, the college recommends that you walk in the ceremony in which you can also receive the hood as it is an honor.

**18. Celebrate!**

**MCMA MFA Requirements**

**Program of Study Checklist**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

DawgTag# \_\_\_\_\_

Semester/Year Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Degree Requirement: 60 Hours*

**I. FOUNDATION COURSES (all of the following)**

**Hours/Sem/Year/Grade**

MCMA 531 Critical Research Methods in Media Arts and Culture	3	___/___/___
MCMA 550 History of Media Arts and Culture	3	___/___/___
MCMA 551 Theory of Media Arts	3	___/___/___
MCMA 552 Seminar: Topics in the History and Theory of Media Arts	3	___/___/___
MCMA 557 Studio Art Practice	3	___/___/___
	3	___/___/___
MCMA 558 Studio Art Critique	3	___/___/___
	3	___/___/___
	3	___/___/___

**II. ELECTIVES/EMPHASIS (minimum of 27 credits)**

Select 27 credits from either inside or outside of the college. No more than 9 credits can be taken at the 400 level. MFA Projects cannot be repeated with the same professor.

<b>Number</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Hours/Sem/Year/Grade</b>
_____	_____	___/___/___/___
_____	_____	___/___/___/___
_____	_____	___/___/___/___
_____	_____	___/___/___/___
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**III. Thesis (6 credits, preferably taken 3+3)**

**Hours / Sem / Year**

MCMA 599 Thesis

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

MCMA 599 Thesis

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Graduation Checklist:**

Committee Approval Form (3<sup>rd</sup> semester)\_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Faculty Committee Project Approval Form\_\_\_\_\_

Project Proposal Approval Form\_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Application Form\_\_\_\_\_

Oral Approval Form\_\_\_\_\_

Research Paper Approval Form\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Thesis Show\_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Information:**

Chair\_\_\_\_\_

Member\_\_\_\_\_

Member\_\_\_\_\_

Member\_\_\_\_\_

**Adviser Name**\_\_\_\_\_