

Art Practice

The two-year Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Program supports 12 graduate students per year and strives to graduate working artists who will continue to demonstrate significant artistic, critical and cultural impacts across a wide array of disciplines. Incoming MFA students are expected to already be deeply engaged in their creative practice and possess technical proficiency in their chosen media. Graduate coursework and independent study are designed to help students develop a critical understanding of their creative work in the multiple contexts of specific localities and global contemporary art. Our graduate students are encouraged to take university-wide and cross-disciplinary courses linked to their research interests, studying and collaborating with faculty and graduate students in areas as diverse as Geography, Environmental Sciences, Classics, Art History, Disability Studies, Philosophy, Cognitive Science, Interactive Design, Rhetoric, Film Studies, and Comparative Literature.

The Program helps students develop a working relationship to audiences by facilitating the exposure of graduate student work through museums and galleries, public art, online, publications, and through other forms of engagement and dissemination. Peer-to-peer discussion and critique form the heart of Berkeley's MFA Program. Students respond to their peers' work and learn to think, speak, and write critically about art's functions and possibilities. A Visiting Artist Lecture Series (<https://art.berkeley.edu/lecture-series/>), along with studio visits, offers graduate students the chance to connect with internationally-known artists. Students also have opportunities to teach, and they are mentored and closely supported by a faculty member. Exhibitions in the first and second years of study require students to maintain a rigorous pace of creative research and establish a professional art practice. The final thesis exhibition, completed after the second year of study, is held at the Berkeley Art Museum.

Admission to the University

Applying for Graduate Admission

Thank you for considering UC Berkeley for graduate study! UC Berkeley offers more than 120 graduate programs representing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The Graduate Division hosts a complete list (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/choosing-your-program/list/>) of graduate academic programs, departments, degrees offered, and application deadlines can be found on the Graduate Division website.

Prospective students must submit an online application to be considered for admission, in addition to any supplemental materials specific to the program for which they are applying. The online application and steps to take to apply can be found on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/>).

Admission Requirements

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale; and

3. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field.

For a list of requirements to complete your graduate application, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions Requirements page (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/>). It is also important to check with the program or department of interest, as they may have additional requirements specific to their program of study and degree. Department contact information can be found here (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2024-25/graduate/degree-programs/>).

Where to apply?

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Curriculum

Unit requirements to complete the program: 64 units in two years

ART 294	Seminar for M.F.A. Students (Students enroll in this class every semester)	16
ART 218	Seminar: Theory and Criticism (Students enroll in this class twice, every fall semester)	8
ART 290	Independent Study (First year)	4
ART 295	Independent Study for M.F.A. Students (Second year)	8-12

Electives appropriate to the student's course of study are chosen in conjunction with their advising faculty

Two upper division electives, commonly studio courses	6-8
One visual cultures elective, commonly a theory course	3-4

Students will enroll in ART 290 and ART 295 independent study multiple times in their first and second years, respectively. Independent study units cover studio work in collaboration with faculty mentors, and preparation for the MFA show. Scheduling of independent study units in each semester is dependent on the student's greater academic plan.

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ART 218 Seminar: Theory and Criticism 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

Weekly meetings will provide a forum for the discussion of issues related to assigned readings in the fields of esthetics, theory and art criticism.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 229 NEW MEDIA METHODS 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2014

In this methods course we will study key languages of new media innovation, ranging from flow charts to scripting languages and circuit diagrams. Our study method involves the creation and application of sensing devices in an urban context, and engages students in establishing chains of references which connect ground truth to data, data to information, information to people, people to actions, and actions to policies. Taking into account technical, political, cultural and literacy questions we seek to connect our data production work with information needs of

underserved communities in the Bay Area region.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 290 Independent Study 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2022

Individual projects by first-year graduate students with one assigned instructor.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 294 Seminar for M.F.A. Students 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Studio work emphasizing various aspects of form. Group criticism.

Intended especially for M.F.A. candidates.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Admission to the M.F.A. program

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 295 Independent Study for M.F.A. Students 4 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

Special study for MFA students under the guidance of MFA Committee members as well as other faculty.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Admission to the M.F.A. program

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0-0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 298 Directed Group Study 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

Directed group study for MFA students in specialized topics, group research, and/or interdisciplinary work.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 299 Supervised Independent Study for Graduate Students 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020

Special projects by MFA students undertaken with a specific faculty member.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor, graduate adviser, and Department Chair

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0-0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ART 301 The Teaching of Art: Practice 1 Unit

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Spring 2024

MFA course utilizing aspects of pedagogical and andragogical teaching, the interactive lecture, collaborative learning, simulations, and brainstorming-freewriting, this semester-long seminar will focus on these various integrative teaching approaches, to facilitate communication in the diverse and wide-ranging arena which is fine arts today. Discussion of course aims, instructional methods, grading standards, and special problems in the teaching of art practice.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1 hour of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Practice of Art/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.