ART HISTORY, MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN HISTORICAL STUDIES

Program goal
The mission of the graduate program in art history is to equip students with requisite knowledge, skills and theoretical foundation to embark on successful careers in academia and/or museums.

The M.A. curriculum concentrations provide students with a general background in the research methods and teachings of art history in preparation for careers in museums, collections care or arts organizations. It also prepares students for the more rigorous research demands of the Ph.D., which is the required degree for academic and curatorial careers.

Student learning outcomes
1. Students apply critical and analytical concepts, frameworks and methods.
2. Students contextualize scholarship in relationship to existing art historical/museological knowledge, discourse and/or debate.
3. Students demonstrate ability to translate art historical scholarship written in a language or languages relevant to their research.
4. Students conduct scholarly inquiry that makes a scholarly professional contribution.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs
The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.

Degree candidacy requirements
A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master’s or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student’s graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student’s faculty regarding the student’s academic achievements and the student’s readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements.

Graduation requirements
As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements.

Apply online today. (https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/)

Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry</th>
<th>Deadline dates</th>
<th>Test requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Fall only</td>
<td>Jan 15</td>
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</table>

Special requirements
• Writing sample

Students with a bachelor’s degree in art history or in a related field (e.g., history, anthropology, literary studies, religious studies or philosophy) are invited to apply to VCU Department of Art History graduate programs. Applicants who have completed at least 18 undergraduate semester credit hours in art history are preferred.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/), applicants to the Master of Arts in Art History must meet the following requirements:

1. A statement of purpose, 750-1000 words in length, that briefly recounts applicant's academic background, describes an avenue of inquiry that the applicant expects to explore, notes applicant’s professional goals beyond graduate study and explains why VCU art history is suited to applicant’s interests
2. A research/writing sample that has a clearly articulated thesis statement, identifies and interprets primary and/or secondary sources in support of a well-argued thesis, and offers a coherent, cohesive narrative
3. Three letters of recommendation, at least two of which are from faculty members who can assess the applicant's preparation and promise for graduate work (Some applicants may choose to solicit the third letter from a museum professional who has supervised the applicant's professional work in a museum setting.)
4. Official transcripts from schools where applicant completed course work applied toward the baccalaureate degree
5. A current resume or CV
Applications are reviewed by full-time faculty members who assess an applicant’s overall package of materials, with particular attention to the statement of interest and writing sample.

See the School of the Arts website for specific information regarding the online application process. ([https://www.arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/graduate-applicants/](https://www.arts.vcu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/graduate-applicants/))

### Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements ([http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/)), students must complete 30 credit hours of course work, variously distributed according to curriculum concentration.

### Curriculum requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARTH 683</td>
<td>Museum Collections</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTH 690</td>
<td>Historiography and Methodology of Art History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTH 695</td>
<td>Writing Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTH 771</td>
<td>Qualifying Paper</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTH 743</td>
<td>Seminar in Art and Representation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Core courses</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Art history seminars</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Select five from the following:  
  ARTH 591 | Special Topics in Art History                     |       |
  ARTH 694 | Art History and Pedagogy                          |       |
  ARTH 721 | Seminar in Early Modern Art                       |       |
  ARTH 722 | Seminar in 19th-century Art                        |       |
  ARTH 723 | Seminar in 20th-century Art                        |       |
  ARTH 726 | Seminar in African Art                             |       |
  ARTH 728 | Seminar in Asian Art                               |       |
  ARTH 741 | Seminar in Art and Theory                          |       |
  ARTH 742 | Seminar in Trans-millennial Art and Ideas          |       |
  ARTH 749 | Seminar in Diasporic Art                           |       |
  ARTH 791 | Special Topics in Art History                      |       |
  ARTH 797 | Directed Research Project                          |       |
|          | **Total Hours**                                   | **30** |

1 At least one course must be chosen from among ARTH 721-ARTH 728.

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 30.

Students must earn a minimum grade of B in ARTH 690 in order to enroll in subsequent graduate-level art history courses. Students must also demonstrate an ability to translate art historical scholarship published in a language relevant to their research interests and approved by the departmental graduate committee. The Department of Art History administers language exams, and it offers a course in German for art history.

For more information about the programs of study, visit the department’s website ([https://arts.vcu.edu/academics/departments/art-history/](https://arts.vcu.edu/academics/departments/art-history/)).

### Accelerated opportunities

The department offers opportunities for qualified undergraduate students to earn both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. See the program page in the Undergraduate Bulletin for details.

**Contact**

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(804) 828-2784

**Program website:** arts.vcu.edu/arthistory ([http://arts.vcu.edu/arthistory/](http://arts.vcu.edu/arthistory/))