

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

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.A.	Fall only	Jan 15	

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 (<https://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. 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/>).

Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<https://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

Course	Title	Hours
Core courses		
ARTH 686	History and Theory of Museums	3
ARTH 690	Historiography and Methodology of Art History	3
ARTH 693	Graduate Museum Internship	3
ARTH 695	Writing Seminar	3
ARTH 771	Qualifying Paper	3
ARTH 743	Seminar in Art and Representation	3
Art history seminars		
Select two from the following:		6
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	
Museum studies seminars		
Select two from the following:		6
ARTH 681	Museums and Audiences	
ARTH 683	Museum Collections	
ARTH 684	Curating Exhibitions	
ARTH 691	Special Topics in Museum Studies	
Total Hours		30

The minimum total 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.

For more information about the programs of study, visit the department's website (<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

Eric Garberson, Ph.D.
Professor and graduate program director
eggarberson@vcu.edu

Additional contact

arthistory@vcu.edu

Program website: arts.vcu.edu/arthistory (<https://arts.vcu.edu/academics/departments/art-history/>)