

University of Waterloo Master of Fine Arts Program Handbook

Updated - February 2024



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Department Contacts

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ASSOCIATE CHAIR, GRADUATE STUDIES

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FINE ARTS FACULTY AND STAFF

You can find information about additional department contacts and faculty research on the Fine Arts Contact Us webpage.

Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. Our active work toward reconciliation takes place across our campuses through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is centralized within the Indigenous Initiatives Office.

Fine Arts AD-EDI Statement

The <u>Department of Fine Arts</u> strongly values anti-racism, decolonization, equity, diversity and inclusion (AD-EDI), and considers our commitment to these values to be an essential part of our community.

We are committed to creating and maintaining inclusive environments that centre the voices and experiences of equity-deserving groups, including, but not limited to Black and Indigenous individuals, people of colour, women-identifying individuals, non-binary, agenda, gender-nonconforming individuals, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, persons with disability, and people from other racialized, marginalized, and under-represented communities.

Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome you to the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Waterloo! We hope that you will find your experience here to be rich and rewarding. This handbook gives a brief overview of some of the most important information you will need as you start out on your MFA journey. It provides information about policies, procedures and opportunities. If you don't easily find an answer to your questions in this document, please contact the Associate Chair, Graduate Studies for Fine Arts (Associate Chair (Graduate)), lois andison, (landison@uwaterloo.ca) and/or the Graduate Program Coordinator for Fine Arts, Sharon Dahmer (sharon.dahmer@uwaterloo.ca). We hope you find this handbook valuable. We continuously revise the handbook to better suit your needs, so please feel free to send edits or additions our way.

History and Reputation of the Program

The University of Waterloo Fine Arts Department Master of Fine Arts program in Studio Arts admitted the first cohort in the Fall of 1993. The MFA program encourages students to pursue their strengths as an artist to develop a professional practice. It demands professional standards in both commitment and awareness of contemporary issues and theory. The aim of a university MFA program is to produce successful professional artists, and the University of Waterloo has many unique features that help us achieve this goal.

GETTING STARTED

Graduate Student Expectations

All graduate students are expected to perform their duties and fulfil their obligations. These include but are not limited to:

- Being courteous and respectful to peers, faculty, and department staff.
- Responding to any emails promptly during normal workday hours: reply within 2 business days for regular email & one business day as a teaching assistant.
- Checking your office mailbox regularly (in ECH 1208).
- Checking-in periodically with your Committee via email or in-person.
- Attending department events (Orientation, Speaker Series, Grad Student Conference, etc.) unless there is a conflict with a class or TA duties.
- Attending MFA monthly meetings.
- Residing in the Kitchener-Waterloo area during their period of active enrolment and making regular use of their studios. *Remote Fine Arts classes and TA positions are not available.*
- Notifying your Committee, the instructors of any courses you are taking, and the
 instructors of any courses for which you are a TA if you will be travelling away from campus
 for more than one week (for example, to present at a conference).

Orientation

Faculty and department-specific events are offered in early September. Check your email for details on these events. As a new student, you will receive information and access to <u>Waterloo Grad Ready</u> – a virtual program and space to support you as you begin your graduate program. Grad Ready offers opportunities to build connections with students, faculty, and staff; resources to help you transition to graduate life; and workshops to support your ongoing graduate experience.

WatIAM Student Account

As an incoming student, the <u>WatIAM account</u> is created during the application process. This username and password gives you access to all UWaterloo applications, such as email, computer network and wireless internet access, LEARN, and <u>Quest</u> (information system for student registration, financial aid, and personal information).

Email

All students will be set up with their UWaterloo email account at the time of application. All program related messages will be sent to your *UWaterloo email account only*. If students would prefer to use another account, you will need to setup your UWaterloo account to forward.

Student Card (WatCard)

Visit the <u>WatCard Office</u> (located in <u>The Centre</u>, first floor of Ira Needles Hall) prior to the beginning of term to pick up your student card. The WatCard is your one card to access many facilities and services both on and off campus. You will use it daily for food purchases, photocopying, Physical Activities Complex access, libraries, Grand River Transit bus use, and computer labs. You can also apply for your <u>WatCard online</u>.

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

University of Waterloo Graduate Students are members of the <u>Graduate Student Association</u> and are encouraged to contact them for information regarding related services and events, including Health Plan, GRT/ION pass, and community groups and events. Information on the UPASS, how it works and possible refunds can be found here – <u>GRT Bus Pass/GSAUW</u>.

Studio Space

Each student is provided studio space in our building, East Campus Hall (ECH). Each student receives their own studio space but all of the studios are together in a larger space to encourage a sense of community. MFA students have 24-hour access to the MFA studios except when the University is officially closed (e.g., December holiday break or inclement weather). Access to the MFA studios is via a combination code and these codes are changed at the end of each term.

Studio Move-in and Move-out

Incoming students will work with the Associate Chair (Graduate) and Manager – Media and Studios in August of each year to allocate studio space and begin moving in. To accommodate the August move-in, outgoing students must by moved out by July 1. If you need to park to off load or pack up, there is 30-minute parking at the side of the building by the UWAG doors.

Use of Studios and Materials

All of the studios in ECH, including the MFA studios, are shared and students may use these spaces and equipment as needed. All MFA students are expected to adhere to the University of Waterloo <u>health and safety guidelines</u> (Policy 34) and procedures and processes throughout their entire enrolment in the MFA program.

All Fine Arts department members, including MFA students, are required to complete the following online training modules before commencing their art practices:

- Employee Safety Orientation (SO1001)
- WHMIS 2015 (SO2017)
- Workplace Violence Awareness (SO1081)
- Accessibility Training module
- Supervisor Orientation Online (SO1100)

• Fine Arts Health and Safety Orientation

An additional list of hazard specific training, depending on what kind of work students plan to do, also includes:

- <u>Electrical Awareness (SO2033)</u> for any student working with electronics or electricity in their work/ studios
- <u>Silica Awareness (SO2037)</u> for any student working with ceramic glazes, plaster, concrete or other stone dusts
- <u>Chemical Waste Segregation (SO2070)</u> for any student that generates hazardous/ chemical waste as a part of their studio practice.

Other training modules may be required for some individuals as determined by the Fine Arts Health and Safety Coordinator and/or Fine Arts MFA Faculty supervisors on a case by case basis. Woodshop training for MFAs will be scheduled during the fall term of their first year.

Safety

Injuries that occur in your studio or in the building (ECH) also fall under UWaterloo's Health and Safety protocols. If you have an injury while in ECH you must report the injury to the Health & Safety Coordinator <u>Adam Glover</u>. If Adam is away, please contact <u>Rick Nixon</u> (also a Health & Safety Coordinator). They will have you fill out an *Incident and Investigation Form* that documents details including the date, time, location, what you were doing that led to the injury, and where you received treatment (all found on the first page). The remaining sections will be filled in by the Coordinator.

Please note that if you have an injury while on your Shantz Internship, you must contact both the Associate Chair (Graduate) and the Health & Safety Coordinator for guidance and fill out the *Incident and Investigation Form*.

Special Requests

Projects and use of resources that are more involved and/or outside of regular business hours will require a written proposal submitted to the Manager – Media and Studios (Adam Glover). This request must include a detailed proposal including a timeline, project outcomes, intended use of the equipment, required technical assistance, and proposed material usage. The proposal must be submitted at least two weeks before the intended start date of the project.

Any student who does not adhere to training compliances, policies, procedures and guidelines for all studios will be subject to loss of privileges.

Digital Lab

The digital lab is supervised by the Digital Media Technician (Timothy Walker). Access to the digital lab is during posted monitored times or by appointment. Access in the absence of the Technician is not available unless there are special circumstances and you have received permission directly from the Digital Lab Technician.

Storage

Fine Arts does not provide additional storage beyond the assigned MFA studio spaces.

Keys for Teaching

Keys are assigned to each student while teaching FINE 150. The key is for studio spaces, the lecture halls and podiums. Students must not share the key with anyone, must return it at the end of the term, and must not pass it along to the next set of instructors.

Shipping / Deliveries

MFA students can have materials shipped directly to the department. The address to use is:

Fine Arts, University of Waterloo

Attention: (YOUR NAME)

East Campus Hall (ECH)

200 University Avenue West

Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1

The street address of ECH is different from the mailing address:

Fine Arts, University of Waterloo

East Campus Hall (ECH)

263 Phillip Street

Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3W8

Fine Arts is not able to pay for delivery fees for postage on your behalf for shipping outside of the campus.

Printing and Copying

The MFA Studios have a shared printer and scanner. Toner and paper are supplied by the department. If you have copying needs outside of the equipment provided, there is a <u>WPrint Self Serve Kiosk</u> and Xerox located outside of the tool crib (ECH 1226). This copier charges a fee for service via WatCard. Printing for FINE 150 <u>ONLY</u> is available on the department Xerox machine located in ECH 1208.

Exhibition Spaces

The Department has two gallery spaces: University of Waterloo Art Gallery (<u>UWAG</u>) and <u>The Artery</u>. The MFA program and UWAG have a unique relationship whereby Ivan Jurakic (UWAG's Gallery Director and Curator) works with MFA candidates towards the presentation of their thesis. This involves preparing gallery proposals and having studio visits with Ivan. Students will also work with the Curator to develop their exhibitions, coordinate their installations and electronic promotional material, provide assistance from the preparatory crew, and assist with facilitating catering for the exhibition openings. UWAG is a 3000-square foot space with one large and one smaller gallery space, accommodating a wide range of exhibition possibilities.

Visual Resource Centre

The Visual Resources Centre (VRC) functions as a reference area and study or meeting space for students and faculty. This space houses resources for research including books, DVDs and images, all of which can be borrowed by MFA students. The space contains a book collection of over 2500 items, over 2000 DVDs, and an image library of over 46,000 digital images. The images in the database come from a variety of sources including scanned slides and books, purchased images and, more recently, online images licensed under creative commons for educational use. Students are encouraged to meet Jean Stevenson, the <u>Visual Resources Curator</u>, prior to their first term.

Awards Ceremony

Each March, Fine Arts celebrates the academic achievements of graduate and undergraduate students. The awards ceremony takes in the afternoon and all graduate students are encouraged to attend. The Sylvia Knight Award in Fines Arts is given out at this time. This award has been established by family and friends in memory of Sylvia Knight, a graduate of the University of Waterloo, who specialized in Fine Arts and was a long-time supporter of the Department of Fine Arts. It will be awarded annually to a graduate student in the Master of Fine Arts program who has maintained at least a B+ (77-79%) average, and who has demonstrated excellence in studio work. The selection will be made by the Graduate Committee of the Department of Fine Arts each year.

Visiting Artists Speaker Series and Critiques

The Department hosts a program of Visiting Artists, Curators, Critics and Scholars talks as well as workshops and panels. This may include co-sponsored talks with an outside community institution or organization (e.g. <u>KWAG</u> or <u>CAFKA</u>). The faculty member responsible for the Visiting Artists programming will contact the Associate Chair (Graduate) to inform them of the planned activities for the term. These talks are meant to benefit both the undergraduate and graduate student body. The speaker may be invited by the Associate Chair (Graduate) to meet with the

graduate students to provide fresh perspectives for graduate students through one-on-one studio critiques.

FUNDING AND FEES

Funding

Students are expected to be aware of all funding aspects involved over the course of their program. It is also understood that the Faculty of Arts and Department of Fine Arts cannot be responsible for any financial shortcomings.

Guaranteed funding for the MFA program is a combination of Teaching Assistantships, Sessional Teaching (FINE 150) and Scholarships. MFA students are encouraged in Term 1 to apply for both the <u>SSHRC</u> and <u>Ontario Graduate Scholarship</u>. Applying for this is the responsibility of the student, however the faculty will support students' efforts by writing letters of recommendation and reviewing proposals. It is important to note that if a student receives a SSHRC or OGS, these funds will replace the scholarship portion of the student's guaranteed funding. <u>A sample funding</u> breakdown is in Appendix 1.

Teaching Assistantships

TA assignments will be administered at the beginning of each term. Students will be emailed a document listing courses that require TAs. Students will submit a request for a teaching assignment based on the requirements submitted by the instructor. You are encouraged to review and familiarize yourself with Policy 30 – Employment of Graduate Student Teaching Assistants.

The Graduate Teaching Assistant Agreement and the Graduate TA Letter of Appointment which are associated with the employment portion of the TA-ship will be provided by the Graduate Coordinator. Students will review and fill out these documents together with the course instructor and *submit both by the second week of each academic term*. Students can expect to receive an evaluation from the course instructor at the end of term and they can also provide their own feedback on the assessment.

Payroll and Workday

New incoming students hired as Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants are required to complete an onboarding process through Workday, the University of Waterloo's HR system. Below are the steps to complete the onboarding process:

1. Once you are hired into Workday (by Sharon Dahmer), you will receive an email to claim/confirm your WatIAM system identity from watiam@uwaterloo.ca.

- Using your WatIAM, log in to Workday to complete the onboarding items in your inbox.
 View the <u>Workday User Guides</u> (New Employees > Onboarding) for step-by-step instructions.
- 3. You will need to enter your personal information, tax forms, SIN number, and banking information in order to be paid through direct deposit.

All students are paid on the last Friday of every month. Keep in mind that for a few months each year the last Friday extends the payroll period by one week (i.e., the last Friday of August is the 25th and the last Friday of September is the 29th – this means a difference of five weeks rather than four between pay dates).

It is very important to check your Inbox in Workday frequently to ensure that a message is not being missed.

Tuition Payment / Fees Arrangement

Student Financial Services will post your tuition fees on <u>Quest</u> approximately one month prior to the beginning of each term.

Payment/fee arrangements can be made through an online banking payment, by certified cheque, through payroll deduction (with a Promissory Note) for Teaching Assistant (TA)/Research Assistant (RA) earnings, and from scholarship/bursary payments.

Shortly after the tuition fees are posted on <u>Quest</u>, the Graduate Coordinator will email students a <u>Promissory Note</u> if they are receiving a TA or RA. You can use this Promissory Note to promise your finances towards tuition and achieve <u>Fees Arranged</u> status. By completing this Promissory Note, the university will take four equal deductions of your pay for the term.

Ensure that you upload your promissory note on time to avoid being charged late fees.

For more information about tuition fees, fee arrangements, promissory note, and payment deadlines refer to the Student Financial Services website, or email Sharon Dahmer.

Communal Fees

Fine Arts collects a communal fee from all MFA students when they are enrolled in their undergraduate elective(s). These fees cover the cost of communal materials and consumables during the course.

THE MFA PROGRAM

Objectives

The objective of the Master of Fine Arts Studio program is to foster an environment of focused research and experimentation within which students excel in their chosen area of artistic specializations. This focus is extremely important as the MFA is normally considered a terminal degree for practice-based research. The aim of the program is to lead students to a mastery of both materials and conceptual skills, guaranteeing a high level of professional competence in the visual arts – first as practitioners and second, as educators. The candidate's work in the first year should be exploratory.

To achieve these goals, the program encompasses two distinct activities:

- The active, engaged and rigorous development of the artist's practice-based research afforded within an academic environment along with the development of the more public skills required of a working artist; and
- the training and experience required for teaching at the post-secondary level.

Both activities require research, critical analysis, written and verbal communication, organization, and interpersonal skills. Graduates are expected to develop a complete professional command of their chosen medium/media as well as a thorough grounding in relevant art history and an understanding of contemporary theory and critical issues.

Pedagogical Development

In concert with their professional growth, University of Waterloo MFA students also develop their pedagogical skills. In two of their terms, MFA students are normally given paid Teaching Assistantships with faculty members or sessional instructors in classroom situations. This experience introduces students to formal classroom teaching. By assisting an individual instructor in an undergraduate course, teaching assistants gain experience in devising and presenting studio assignments, critiquing in-progress and completed assignments, and learning methodologies for evaluation and grading. In either their second or fourth term, graduate students gain further experience through teaching an introductory studio-based course taught to non-majors. This course is <u>FINE 150</u>.

Pedagogy Elective (FINE 696)

First-year MFA students will enroll in FINE 696 (Pedagogy in Fine Arts). This professional practice course looks at art school from a pedagogical perspective. It examines some of the practicalities of teaching a studio-based course (e.g. developing a course syllabus and assignments), as well as

historical and theoretical underpinnings. This course prepares students for teaching FINE 150 and counts as one of the required electives.

Academic Integrity

All students in the program are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity. When the commission of an offence is determined, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accordance with <u>Policy #71 (Student Discipline</u>). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the <u>Office of Academic Integrity</u>.

If you need help in learning what constitutes an academic offence or how to avoid offences, ask your course instructor or Graduate Chair for guidance. Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Petitions and Grievances.

Graduate Academic Integrity Module (Graduate AIM)

The purpose of the Graduate AIM is to give all new graduate students the same, basic understanding of academic integrity at UWaterloo. This aggregation of information and resources will help students transition from the expectations of other institutions to the standards of academic integrity at the University of Waterloo. The <u>Graduate Academic Integrity Module (Graduate AIM)</u> is an online course, managed by the Office of Academic Integrity, which students can access through <u>LEARN</u>.

The Graduate AIM is comprised of a tutorial and a quiz. The tutorial has three primary sections:

- 1. Crediting Your Sources plagiarism, citing properly
- 2. Collaborating with Others inappropriate collaboration, intellectual property, patents
- 3. Acting with Honesty cheating, fabrication, falsification

The quiz requires students to apply the concepts they read about in the tutorial material. Students must receive a mark of at least 75% on the quiz in order to pass the Graduate AIM. They are allowed to retake the quiz if necessary. Students have eight weeks from the beginning of the term to successfully complete the quiz.

ACADEMIC / PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Coursework

Each student must complete the following required coursework:

- Self-directed individual Studio MFA courses in Terms 1, 2 and 3 (the sequential course flow is laid out on the following page). The work produced in the Studio courses are graded by department faculty in Term 1, and then by individual MFA committees thereafter.
- 4 Graduate Seminars, in Terms 1, 2, 4 and 5.
- 3 elective courses, in Terms 1, 2 and 4. One of the elective courses Year One students can take is FINE 696 (Pedagogy in Fine Arts). The remaining two can be undergraduate courses from Fine Arts or another department at the 200-level or above. These courses must be selected with the approval of the course instructor and in consultation with the Associate Chair (Graduate). See details below.

Course descriptions can be found online at: <u>FINE MFA Course Descriptions.</u>

Electives

MFA students must complete three half-credit (0.5) elective courses as part of their degree requirements. FINE 696 (Pedagogy in Fine Arts) counts as one of the three. For the remaining two electives, one may be taken at the undergraduate level. Students can choose from the Fine Arts course offerings, or from other departments within the university. If the latter option is chosen, the course must be approved before registration for appropriateness and relevance by the course instructor and the Associate Chair (Graduate). Similarly, a student can choose to take a course from another institution with the same approval. In all cases where a student chooses an elective from outside UW Fine Arts, they must provide the Associate Chair (Graduate) with a full course description and a letter from the instructor confirming that the course will be taken by the MFA student at the graduate level. Please note: Students can take no more than one elective under an undergraduate number for the courses that count toward their MFA degree. However, undergraduate courses taken as an elective can be assigned a graduate level course number (FINE 694 or FINE 695). For further information, contact the Associate Chair (Graduate).

Milestones

Students must also pass a series of milestone critiques during the program. This includes participation in full-day group critiques at the end of the fall and winter semesters, with Fine Arts faculty and an invited guest (established artist, critic and/or curator). These critiques give students a chance to exhibit their work and present it orally in a professional setting.

Term 5 culminates in the thesis exhibition and defense that includes an outside examiner. The thesis exhibition and defense must be highly professional, according to gallery/museum level standards in terms of preparation and installation.

In addition to the above milestones, MFA students hold regular meetings with their committees, consisting of two full-time faculty. At any time, MFA students are also welcome to seek input from faculty who are not on their committees.

Required Courses

The specific course requirements are outlined below. The Department may add other requirements if it feels that an otherwise well-qualified student needs upgrading in particular areas (e.g. Art History). MFA students normally complete their requirements in five consecutive terms, beginning in the fall (September).

Note: It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are properly enrolled in the required courses before each semester begins.

Term One (Fall)

FINE 690 Graduate Studio

Individual studio work supervised by all faculty; final critique and marking at the end of term to be held in conjunction with an installation in The Artery. All faculty members will participate in the grading of the work.

FINE 680 Issues in Contemporary Art 1

Seminar involving presentations, readings, critiques and research papers.

Elective

To be chosen in consultation with the Associate Chair (Graduate).

Pedagogy in Fine Arts Elective (FINE 696)

First year MFA Students may enroll in FINE 696 (Pedagogy in Fine Arts). This professional practice course looks at art school from a pedagogical perspective. It examines some of the practicalities of teaching a studio-based course (developing a course syllabus and assignments), as well as historical and theoretical underpinnings. This course prepares students for teaching FINE 150 (Appreciation and Expression) and counts as one of the required electives.

Term Two (Winter)

FINE 691 Graduate Studio 2

Continued development of studio work with regular meetings with the student's committee members. A full faculty critique with an external artist will be held at the end of the term.

FINE 681 Issues in Contemporary Art 2

Continuation of FINE 680

Graduate seminar including presentations, critiques, readings and research paper.

Elective

Chosen in consultation with Associate Chair (Graduate).

Term Three (Spring)

FINE 692 Graduate Summer Studio

The Shantz International Research Scholarship comprises the first half of this term (May-June). This involves six weeks at approximately thirty hours a week, working with a professional artist as described in the Keith and Wyn Shantz Scholarship section of the handbook. The second half of this term (July-August) is continued development of independent studio work. Evaluation of this work will take place in conjunction with an exhibition of this work in early September in The Artery.

Term Four (Fall)

Milestone. Fine 699: Graduate Thesis Exhibition

Studio work under supervision of committee, directed towards the Thesis Exhibition and the support paper.

FINE 682 Graduate Senior Seminar 1

Presentations, critiques, readings and continued development of the support paper.

Elective

Chosen in consultation with Associate Chair (Graduate). Note that students may have already completed their electives by Term 4 so will not need to enroll in any further.

<u>Term Five (Winter)</u>

Milestone. Fine 699: Graduate Thesis Exhibition

Studio work under supervision of Committee directed toward Thesis Exhibition and the support paper.

FINE 683 Graduate Senior Seminar 2

Presentations, critiques, readings and completion the support paper.

All graduate courses are evaluated by percentages. In addition, the Fine Arts faculty and the Committees assess progress, offering advice and critiques during the term.

End of Term Critiques

End of term critiques take place in The Artery Gallery. The critique involves all faculty members and an invited guest. The Associate Chair polls the faculty for suggestions – it could be an artist, a curator, an art historian, etc. In the fall, the critique is a daylong event involving 1st and 2nd year students. In the winter term, it is only for the first-year cohort because the second-year cohort is working on preparing their thesis exhibitions. For all of the critiques students share the gallery with a turnover of work that happens at midday.

Permission Numbers

All MFA courses will require a permission number uniquely assigned to each individual student. These permission numbers will be sent by the Graduate Coordinator (Sharon Dahmer) prior to the beginning of each term. Students will log into Quest, choose the course and enter the number provided.

Students needing to enroll in an elective at either the graduate (FINE 694 or 695) or the undergraduate level (FINE 2XX or 3XX) MUST let the Graduate Coordinator know. Enrollment to the course will require either another permission number or a drop/add form. To minimize confusion, speak with the Graduate Coordinator.

Pedagogy Elective and Teaching Certificate

Each MFA student has the option of completing a teaching portfolio while in the program. This option gives the students the opportunity to gain experience that will be an asset when applying for teaching positions at the post-secondary level. If they choose this option, their third Pedagogy elective will be Fine 696 (Pedagogy in Fine Arts). This course is designed to help the student prepare to teach <u>FINE 150</u>, a course for non-majors that the student will teach in either Term 2 or 4. What is taught in Fine 696 is up to the faculty member who is teaching the course but generally students can expect: designing a syllabus for FINE 150; an information session with someone from the <u>Centre for Teaching Excellence</u> (CTE); micro teaching sessions; writing a teaching philosophy, an EDI statement, etc. Pedagogical theory will be covered through readings, presentations and seminar discussions as part of the course.

In combination with the students' practical teaching assignments, they can use their classroom work towards a <u>Certificate in University Teaching</u> from CTE. Under this voluntary program (which is additional to the MFA program courses and milestones), students receive feedback from

qualified teacher trainers. Graduate students are encouraged to take advantage of this unique opportunity to develop their pedagogical skills, especially if they plan to teach at the post-secondary level.

Teaching FINE 150

FINE 150 is offered in multiple sections in the fall and winter terms. These studio courses consist of two 2.5 hours classes per week and the enrolment cap is 25. The classes are typically scheduled in the evening from 6:30-8:50 pm. Undergraduate students wishing to enroll in FINE 150 after their schedules are finalized must speak directly to the <u>Undergraduate Coordinator and Advisor</u>; instructors are not authorized to approve enrolment directly. Course kits are ordered by the Manager – Media and Studios prior the start of the teaching term and students enrolled in FINE 150 purchase the kit in the tool crib via credit or debit. Discussion about contents of the course kit should happen in consultation with the Manager – Media and Studios.

KEITH AND WIN SHANTZ INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

How It Works / What Can You Expect

The most distinctive feature of our graduate program is the <u>Keith and Win Shantz International</u> <u>Research Scholarship</u> which is funded by a generous donation from Win Shantz, a prominent Waterloo supporter of the arts. The Shantz program is taken in Term 3 (Spring). This award is contingent on receiving an internship placement and allocated funds are expected to be applied to this professional practice experience.

This opportunity enables MFA students to travel and work with artists from anywhere in the world. Similar to an internship, they observe a professional artist at work, and learn how they handle a variety of situations. Students also gain first-hand knowledge of recent developments in contemporary art, making connections that will help them in their later careers. Each student prepares a list of suggested artists in term two. The Associate Chair (Graduate) contacts and works with both the artist and student to confirm the visit. **Students are not to initiate preliminary contact with potential artists.** These study placements last a minimum of four to a maximum of six weeks. During the time of the scholarship and associated travel, students are expected to document their experiences as source material for a presentation they will make in the fall term to members from the Fine Arts department and other units of the university. Please note: Students are reminded that when traveling abroad they are representatives of the University of Waterloo.

Shantz Funds

The Shantz Funds (currently \$9850) are over and above the student's guaranteed funding and/or OGS or SSHRC scholarships. The University is not able to release funds before May 1 of each year and students are therefore cautioned from planning to leave prior to this date.

Before Departure

There are two steps that students must complete prior to departure. Step 1 is with the Safety Office and Step 2 is with Waterloo International. Permission to travel will not be approved until both steps are complete. Please familiarize yourself with the relevant forms.

Step 1:

Please familiarize yourself with the Safety Office guidelines as they apply to <u>Student Unpaid Work</u>. The information addresses insurance coverage and requirements for students, mentors and staff placement coordinators at the University.

The student must fill out and sign the <u>Student Declaration</u> form which speaks to insurance coverage while on unpaid placement.

The Associate Chair (Graduate), in consultation with the Graduate Advisor (Sharon Dahmer) and Manager – Media and Studios (Adam Glover) will connect with the Artist about the remaining forms:

- Letter to Placement Employers (includes WSIB/Chubb coverage confirmation)
- Pre-placement Due Diligence Checklist
- Safety Orientation Checklist

Step 2:

<u>Safety Abroad</u>. Students first need to complete the Approval to Travel Abroad and submit it to Sharon Dahmer for further signatures. Students will then be given access to the <u>Travel Abroad / Predeparture Training</u>.

GRADUATE COMMITTEES AND COMPLETION

Graduate Committees

In Term 1, MFA students are evaluated by the collective members of the Fine Arts faculty, giving both students and faculty an opportunity to introduce their interests and viewpoints. Group critiques are scheduled during the term for this purpose, and we encourage students to arrange to arrange studio visits with individual faculty members. After Term 1, students will be assigned an appropriate studio committee (co-supervisors) comprised of two faculty members. These two supervisors will supervise and evaluate the progress of the student's studio work commencing in the winter term (Term 2) until the completion of the student's program (unless otherwise interrupted by faculty sabbaticals/leaves). Committees should meet a minimum of three times in Terms 2, 4 and 5. Generally the meetings last an hour and both supervisors are present. In Term 3, the committee meets with the student before and after their Shantz internship; these meetings serve to prepare the student for the upcoming experience, and to allow the student to share details of the internship with their committee on their return. Both supervisors will be part of the student's Thesis Examining Committee, along with the Associate Chair (Graduate), who serves as Chair of the Defense, and an External Examiner who is an acknowledged expert in the field.

Responsibilities of the Committee

The committee assigned to each student is responsible for providing appropriate critical feedback, support, and guidance towards the creation of a body of work for the MFA thesis exhibition and support paper. Both need to conform to a standard deemed appropriate by the program as set out by the department, the Faculty of Arts and the university. As each student

has the potential to develop very different work with different research interests, the committee seeks to find an approach appropriate to each student's ambitions.

In Term 5, there are two important tasks taken on by the committee: taking charge of supervising the content of the Support Paper and coming to a decision if the student is ready to move forward with their defense at the end of Term 5. While the Support Paper is developed during the Graduate Seminars in Terms 4 and 5, as of the beginning of Term 5 the committee takes more responsibility for supervising the content of the document. As the committee is most familiar with the work of their student and responsible for taking the student towards the successful defense of the thesis exhibition, it is appropriate that they are involved in the completion of this document. Thus, the committee, along with the seminar leader, must read drafts and provide a collective consensus as to the content of the paper. It is up to the two supervisors to determine the best process for equity when reviewing the thesis drafts. Either supervisors take turns doing first review of the document, or both supervisors read the same draft at the same time.

The committee must come to a decision, at a date set by the Associate Chair (Graduate) (normally the end of January of Term 5), as to whether the student is ready to move forward to install and defend their work. This decision is based on the progress of both the studio work and the support paper to a level with which the committee can feel fully confident that the student will pass the defense. If the committee feels the student is ready to defend, they will inform the Associate Chair (Graduate) who will then proceed with the process of organizing the defense. If the committee feels the student is not ready to defend, there are a number of options. The best option is that the student will defend at a date in the Spring term of the same year. Again, the decision of the committee is an important one as they must assure the readiness of the work to pass the rigorous standard expected by the Department of Fine Arts and the university.

Details of the MFA Thesis

The Master of Fine Arts Program is directed towards the successful completion of the Graduate Thesis, which is comprised of three equally important and interrelated components:

- The Graduate Thesis Exhibition
- The Thesis Support paper
- The Oral Thesis Defense

It is expected that students will complete their thesis requirements and be prepared to defend in their fifth consecutive term (Winter). Depending on the defense date, this may or may not make it possible to graduate at Spring Convocation. Likewise, if a student must make minor or major revisions after their defense, it is unlikely the student will graduate at the Spring

Convocation. Typically, a Fall Convocation is more likely and this has no academic or financial repercussions on the student.

Thesis Exhibition

The Graduate Thesis Exhibition represents the sum of the student's achievements in studio practice. It should be a cohesive body of work that conveys a deep involvement with, and understanding of, the technical, theoretical and aesthetic issues pertinent to the thesis. Examiners also pay close attention to how the student has responded to the exigencies of the exhibition space.

Students have the opportunity to exhibit their MFA thesis work in the <u>University of Waterloo Gallery (UWAG)</u> in a solo exhibition in Gallery One, or Gallery Two and/or in combination with The Artery, The Airstream, or the Flex Studio. This includes curatorial consultation, installation assistance, and a shared Akimbo posting. Meetings are conducted with the UWAG curator <u>Ivan Jurakic</u> in the fall and winter term prior to the defense and the curator sends out a call for proposals asking each candidate to submit a formal proposal for their thesis exhibition.

Students may make other arrangements for their Thesis Exhibition venue. This option must occur well in advance of the examination deadline date and in consultation with their committee and the Associate Chair (Graduate). Any alternate exhibition venues must be confirmed with the committee before the beginning of Term 5. Students take all responsibility for confirmation and use of any alternate thesis exhibition space. Students are responsible for all costs associated with the production and installation/strike, as well as the opening/closing reception. This includes transportation, rental of specialized equipment, signage, publicity, refreshments and gallery coverage during visiting hours. Students are similarly responsible for ensuring that the physical space is maintained and returned to its original condition.

Thesis Support Paper

The Thesis Exhibition is accompanied by a thesis support paper which is an illustrated, written document that is expected to be an insightful and scholarly sound explication of the visual work in the Thesis Exhibition. The problems associated with the relationship between written and visual language are thoroughly understood by the faculty and expert examiners of the Thesis Exhibition. The support paper is accordingly seen as the student's perspective on the technical, historical, conceptual and theoretical aspects of the development of their work during the program. The support paper is supervised by the faculty responsible for the series of graduate seminar courses and the student's committee. The faculty member is also responsible for the graduate seminar will provide constructive feedback relating to the grammar, sentence structure, flow, content and general editing of your written statement. Your committee will also

provide assistance in these areas. You must provide your committee and the faculty responsible for the graduate seminar with copies of your support paper at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline for your external examiner. You must also have approval from your committee members before the paper is sent to the external examiner (by the Associate Chair (Graduate)).

Thesis Examiners expect to read evidence of an appropriate acknowledgement of the historical precedents of the candidate's work, and an understanding of relevant theoretical issues in a document that is formally well-structured and grammatically correct with all secondary sources properly documented in footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. These must be in accordance with the <u>standards and regulations</u> set out by the GSPA. Students should thoroughly familiarize themselves with UW thesis regulations and <u>formatting</u> provided by the GSPA.

The thesis support paper has a list of required content. How and in what order these are addressed is discussed between the student, committee and seminar instructor.

Required Content:

Length: 3,000 minimum to 6,500 words maximum.

Abstract based on the support paper that follows. The abstract functions as a preface to the text.

Body of Support paper

Analysis of the work in visual terms (what does it look like and why, why those materials, why those titles, etc.).

- 1. Process of how the work is constructed and why.
- 2. Theoretical influences that serve as points of departure (not explanation or interpretation).
- 3. Conceptual underpinnings of the work (What is the nature of the enquiry? What are the theoretical paradigms?)
- 4. The works' relation to contemporary art practice/contemporary culture.
- 5. Appropriate formatting and style according to the GSPA (see links above).

Intention to Graduate

Prior to the defense date (approximately one month), you will need to submit your <u>intention to graduate</u> through the GSPA. Students planning to finish in April must submit in March and students planning to finish in May must submit on May 1.

Thesis Defense

A Thesis Defense is an oral examination that takes place in the Thesis exhibition space, before an Examining Committee comprised of your committee, the Associate Chair (Graduate) and an External Examiner. The candidate's two committee members and the External Examiner vote on the outcome of the candidate's defense at its conclusion, while the Associate Chair (Graduate) acts as a non-voting Chair. If the Associate Chair (Graduate) happens to also be a committee member of an MFA candidate, another Fine Arts faculty member is appointed. The External Examiner is an appropriate expert from the field who will vote on the candidate's defense; the recommendations that they make will be taken into consideration and overseen by committee.

Once the student and the committee have determined who the External Examiner will be, the Associate Chair (Graduate) is responsible for communicating with the External. This involves inviting the external, determining a date for the defense (done in collaboration with the student and the committee, etc. In order to meet the defense regulations, each MFA candidate must send an electronic copy of their Thesis Support Paper, along with supporting images (if relevant) to the Associate Chair (Graduate) two weeks prior to the defense date.

Defense Structure:

The work in the exhibition is considered the thesis that is being defended; the paper is a supporting component of that thesis work.

- 1. The external will be given adequate time to view the work in person before the defense begins.
- 2. The student will briefly introduce the Thesis Exhibition. This should include some reference to the most relevant topics discussed in the support paper.
- 3. The external examiner will respond to the candidate in terms of the Thesis Exhibition, the support paper and the verbal presentation of the work.
- 4. A discussion by the committee of the same areas.
- 5. A discussion amongst the committee (student, external, and faculty) until each member feels that their questions have been clarified.
- 6. The student will be asked to leave the room while the committee discusses the outcome of the defense.
- 7. There are 4 possible outcomes from the defense:
 - Pass Thesis Exhibition and support paper with no revisions.
 - Pass Thesis Exhibition or support paper with minor revisions to one or both.
 - Pass Thesis Exhibition or support papers with major revisions to one or both.
 - Fail due to irresolvable inadequacies in either the Thesis Exhibition or support paper.

When the committee is able to come to a unanimous decision about the status of the defense, deadlines for revisions will be set if necessary. The student will then be asked to return and is provided with the defense outcome by the Chair. The defense will adjourn at this point.

Following approval of the support paper (including any required revisions outlined), the student will upload the document to UWSpace. Students should familiarize themselves with the thesis submission process. UWSpace will review the document for formatting and, in some cases, grammatical errors — this process is usually 3-5 business days. If revisions are required, you will receive a notification to make the corrections and resubmit. When the support document is approved as submitted, students must forward a copy of that email to Sharon Dahmer.

Convocation

Convocation occurs each June and October. Graduating MFA students are encouraged to attend convocation to celebrate their achievements.

PROGRAM REGULATIONS

The Department of Fine Arts (and all other graduate programs) must follow all regulations of the University of Waterloo's Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) Office. These are outlined in the Graduate Studies Calendar which is available through the GSPA as well as the GSPA Home Page. Departments are free to set more stringent regulations; however, once such regulations have been approved and published, the GSPA requires that the Department adhere to them.

Academic Standing

MFA students must maintain a minimum average of 75% in each of their courses for the duration of the program. An average of 75% or higher in each respective course is considered good academic standing. A lesser grade in any course at any time may result in the student being asked to withdraw from the program.

Professional Standing

To be granted all of the benefits of the program, MFA students must be in good professional standing. Accordingly, students are evaluated on qualities such as punctuality, attendance and participation in scheduled classes, their ability to meet deadlines, respect for their peers, instructors and the physical plant, and general professionalism.

Policy 71 (Academic Offences)

All students must familiarize themselves with the provisions of <u>Policy 71 - Student Discipline</u>. It sets out a listing of academic offences and penalties. Fine Arts takes this policy very seriously. For graduate plagiarism rules and regulations please visit and familiarize yourself the content in <u>The Framework for the Assessment of Graduate Plagiarism</u>.

Note on avoidance of academic offences: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy 71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy 71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar. If you need help in learning how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask the Associate Chair.

Academic offences include the violation of safety standards and plagiarism. Plagiarism is "the act of presenting the ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one's own...the properly acknowledged use of sources is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without complete and unambiguous acknowledgement, however, is an offence under this policy." (Policy 71, University of Waterloo).

Students are also encouraged to read the following description, which is included on all Fine Arts syllabi:

Information on Plagiarism Detection – Visual and Aural

Pine Arts, Plagiarism & Copyright: The offence of plagiarism as defined by Policy 71 - Student Discipline includes visual and aural plagiarism of works of art (drawings, photographs, graphics, video, sound, ideas, etc. conceived/made by other artists). The rules of conduct that apply to text-based work at the University of Waterloo also apply to work completed for studio-based assignments and research. There are two issues to consider with visual and aural plagiarism: ethics, i.e. expectations related to academic integrity as outlined in Policy 71; and copyright infringement, for which you could also be legally liable. Plagiarism and copyright infringement occur when you create an artwork that is substantially similar to the original source. For example, making a drawing in pencil based on a photograph that you find in a magazine may constitute plagiarism and be an infringement of copyright.

Please take note of the following points:

- All work submitted for evaluation must be your own. If submitted work is determined not to be your own, the Academic Discipline Procedure of Policy 71 will be invoked.
- If you use any visual or aural material, such as images from the internet, magazines, books, websites of other artists, or from any source that can be cited, you must acknowledge/cite those references. Failure to do so will be deemed a violation of academic integrity and possibly an infringement of copyright and the Academic Discipline Procedure of Policy 71 will be invoked.
- If you are using visual or aural material that you have not made yourself, you must make an appointment with the <u>Visual Resources Curator</u> to discuss the steps for using 'found' or 'appropriated' material.
- Any original images used as the basis for any work you create whether manipulated digitally or manually, or otherwise incorporated or appropriated for your work – must be properly cited, and must accompany your final work at the time of submission or evaluation.

A note on copyright free and Creative Commons: Resources are available in the public domain that are identified as copyright free or that fall under licenses from Creative Commons. Public

domain is a term used for works that are not protected by copyright law. If an image is in the public domain then you are allowed to use it – to copy it, to manipulate it and to distribute it. Works identified as Creative Commons allow varying degrees of use. In this case, the authors decide how you can use their images.

Helpful Links:

- 1. CARFAC (Canadian Artists Representation) CARFAC's website
- Wikimedia Commons and Flickr have databases of digital files that are available for use.
 However, you need to check the conditions of use:
 Wikimedia Commons Website; Flickr Creative Commons' Website

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy 70 - Student Petition and Grievances.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Campus Wellness

<u>Campus Wellness</u> services are available to all students who may require mental or physical health aid. Do familiarize yourself with the complete list of services offered through Campus Wellness.

Counselling Services

<u>Counselling Services</u> is located on the second floor of the Needles Hall expansion. For assistance, or to book an appointment, please call 519-888-4096. Walk-in appointments are available.

If urgent assistance is needed, you can contact Good2Talk at 1-866-925-5454.

The Centre

<u>The Centre</u> is a go-to place for a number of student administrative needs. Students can order official documents, drop off forms, change their personal information, receive financial advice, get answers to a wide range of miscellaneous questions, and so much more!

AccessAbility Services

Should you require an academic accommodation for a course or graduate milestone (e.g., thesis, research area assignment), please apply to register with <u>AccessAbility Services</u>. Students can register for services and accommodations provided through AccessAbility Services by using their online system.

Some of the Student Services offered include:

- Adaptive technology
- Alternate format texts
- Campus orientation assistance
- Learning strategists
- Student access van

Occupational Health

If you have a disability or medical condition (permanent, temporary) that is impacting your ability to perform your work duties as a Teaching or Research Assistant (e.g., turning in graded assignments on time), please contact <u>Occupational Health</u> as soon as possible to discuss the need for a workplace accommodation. You are also asked to inform the instructor, as soon as possible that you are working with <u>Occupational Health</u> to determine the need for a workplace. You are under no obligation to share personal, medical information with instructors or supervisors, and

instructors or supervisors are not the ones who decide on the significance of personal, medical matters. Occupational Health exists to assist and ensure relevant confidentiality.

Libraries

There are two main libraries on the campus: <u>Dana Porter (DP)</u> and the <u>Davis Centre (DC)</u>. The DP library is the main library for FINE students. If you have any questions or need information, you may contact the Fine Arts Liaison Librarian – <u>Stephanie Mutch</u>.

GRADVenture

<u>GRADventure</u> is a central hub of professional development resources designed specifically for graduate students at the University of Waterloo. It is offered by GSPA, in collaboration with campus partners. (source: GradVenture). Students are encouraged to regularly check the GradVenture website, or to follow them on Twitter (@GRADventure_UW) for information on upcoming events, workshops, and opportunities to get involved.

Writing and Communication Centre

The <u>Writing and Communication Centre</u> offers <u>graduate-specific programing</u>. For quick questions or check-ins, you can visit the Writing and Communication Centre for <u>drop-in appointments</u>.

Other resources offered, include:

- Individual writing appointments
- Workshops
- Grad Writing Café
- Dissertation Boot Camp
- Rock your Thesis: Get Ready to Write
- Speak like a Scholar
- Online resources
- Waterloo Writes

Housing

<u>Graduate Housing</u> offers a variety of different services to meet the needs of grad students, ensuring that residence is the right fit for everyone. Information for on and <u>off-campus housing</u> is also available.

Waterloo Region

If you are new to the area, here are some resources and community groups that may be of interest:

- Explore Waterloo Region
- Explore Downtown Kitchener
- The Working Centre
- Spectrum Waterloo Region
- The Healing of the 7 Generations Community

That's a wrap! As always, never hesitate to reach out to any member of the department; we are here to help! If we have missed anything in this handbook, let us know

APPENDIX 1 – FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Funding Breakdown for MFA students

Each MFA student is guaranteed \$30,000 in funding for the entire 5 terms of their program. This funding is a combination of Teaching Assistantships, Sessional Instruction and Scholarships.

Per the offer letter, the breakdown is as follows: \$18,000 in Year 1 (Fall, Winter and Spring) \$12,000 in Year 2 (Fall and Winter) PLUS – \$9850 in Spring term for the Shantz Research Internship

MFA Student teaching FINE 150 in Winter term 2

TERM 1 - FALL Teaching Assistantship - \$6,426 + \$437.04 (4% vacation pay)	\$6,683.04
TERM 2 - WINTER Sessional Instructor – \$8,910 + \$356.40 (4% vacation pay)	\$9,266.40
TERM 3 - SPRING Scholarship Shantz Internship Total Funding for Spring - Term 3	\$2,050 \$9,850 \$11,900
TOTAL FUNDING IN YEAR 1	\$27,850
TERM 4 - FALL Teaching Assistantship - \$6,246 + \$437.04 (4% vacation pay)	\$6,683.04
TERM 5 - WINTER Scholarship	\$5,316.96
TOTAL FUNDING IN YEAR 2	\$12,000
TOTAL FUNDING FOR 5 TERMS	\$39,850

^{*}NOTE: this breakdown does not include Tri-Council scholarships, President's Scholarship or Entrance Scholarships. If a student receives one of these scholarships, the guaranteed funding scholarship will be REPLACED by the scholarship.

MFA Student teaching FINE 150 in Fall term 4

TERM 1 - FALL Teaching Assistantship - \$6,246 + \$437.04 (4% vacation pay)	\$6,683.04
TERM 2 - WINTER Teaching Assistantship - \$6,246 + \$437.04 (4% vacation pay)	\$6,683.04
TERM 3 - SPRING Scholarship Shantz Internship Total Funding for Spring term 3	\$4,633.92 \$9,850 \$14,484
TOTAL FUNDING IN YEAR 1	\$27,850
TERM 4 - FALL Sessional Instructor – \$8,910 + \$356.40 (4% vacation pay)	\$9,266.40
TERM 5 - WINTER Scholarship	\$2,733
TOTAL FUNDING IN YEAR 2	\$12,000
TOTAL FUNDING FOR 5 TERMS	\$39,850