

The University of Kansas Department of Visual Art
MFA Handbook

Department of Visual Art

The University of Kansas
Department of Visual Art
Chalmers Hall
1467 Jayhawk Boulevard, Room 300
Lawrence, KS 66045-3102
USA

785-864-4042

art.ku.edu/

visualart@ku.edu

Department Chair

Marshall Maude
Associate Professor of Art
maude@ku.edu

This MFA Handbook is a guide to the policies, procedures and requirements of the Department of Visual Art at the University of Kansas. For additional information or clarification, students should consult with faculty and staff of the Department of Visual Art. A new edition of this handbook is updated every academic year, and available online at art.ku.edu/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The MFA Program

MFA Program Organization
Visual Art Staff
Visual Art Faculty
University Offices

Department Policies & Procedures

Admission
Funding
Studio Assignments
Course Registration
Adding/Dropping Courses
Grading
Advising
Academic Integrity & Misconduct
Good Standing
Grievance Procedure
Petitions

Graduate Teaching Assistantship

Expectations
New GTA Orientation
GTA Mentorship
Instructional Support Hours

MFA Degree Requirements

Required Courses
MFA Degree Requirements
Sample Degree Program Plan
MFA Reviews
MFA Thesis

University Policies

Admission
English Proficiency Requirements
Enrollment
Graduate Credit
Transfer Credit
Reduced Credit Hour Degree
Count Toward Degree
Credit/No Credit
Probation & Dismissal
Grading Policy
Time Limits
Leave Of Absence
Oral Exams
Graduation Requirements

THE MFA PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION

Our graduate program provides continuous critical exchange with faculty through tutorials, seminars, teaching and professional development courses, assistantships opportunities, lectures, and a wide range of studio experiences. The program is flexible and supportive of each student's creative pursuits. Students may choose to explore their medium in a traditional context or in an interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary approach. The Department of Visual Art offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Fine Arts degree in studio art. Concentrations include ceramics, drawing and painting, expanded media, metalsmithing and jewelry, printmaking, sculpture, and textiles and fibers. The MFA, a terminal degree, is typically the pathway to teaching in higher education and studio practice. Our MFA program is three years long because we believe that the third year provides beneficial time for our students to mature as artists and educators. The University of Kansas is a member of the [National Association of Schools of Art and Design](#). The entrance and graduation requirements in this catalog conform to the published guidelines of those organizations.

OBJECTIVES

- To attract and retain outstanding student studio artists in ceramic, drawing/painting, expanded media, metalsmithing/jewelry, printmaking, sculpture, and textiles/fibers.
- To maintain a balanced enrollment in the various areas that is compatible with undergraduate enrollment and available faculty in order to provide broad based, high quality, specialized studio instruction.
- To develop studio skills to the highest possible degree while providing additional options in critical theory and art history.
- To provide program flexibility to allow for individual development toward career goals.
- To provide adequate private studio space and necessary related permanent equipment to help students meet goals.
- To expedite the student's progress towards a degree through effective teaching, advising and administrative procedures.

MFA PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Sarah Gross, Director of Graduate Studies The director of graduate studies is a faculty member from within the visual art department who serves as a coordinator for all graduate related business and a guide for student trajectory in the MFA program. Duties include oversight of recruitment, admission, orientation, advising, oral exams, and thesis paper completion. The graduate director organizes and schedules annual reviews of students and works in consultation with the department's Graduate Advisory Committee and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Contact: sarahgross@ku.edu

Katie Williams, Graduate Program Coordinator

This full-time staff member provides support to graduate students in the Visual Art Department during their time at the University of Kansas, including the admissions process, regular enrollment, petitions, the comprehensive/final exam process, and graduation.

Contact kfwilliams@ku.edu

GRADUATE FACULTY

All tenure track faculty are listed as graduate faculty. The Director of Graduate Studies can appoint graduate faculty status to qualified non-tenure track faculty after consultation with the Chair.

GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The committee is responsible for advising, assisting and making recommendations to the Director of Graduate Studies on all aspects of the graduate program including curriculum. The committee consists of the Director of Graduate Studies (ex-officio, chair) as well as three members from the studio areas in the department, appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

REVIEW COMMITTEES

Each appointed committee is responsible for all reviews of a specific year's graduate class (1st and 2nd year reviews and any re-reviews). The committees include one faculty member from each of the studio areas of the department. The Chair in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies appoint them. If a new committee member is replaced for any reason, the new committee member is considered a permanent replacement. The Director of Graduate Studies serves as the ex-officio chair of this committee and is responsible for scheduling, convening, overseeing all reviews, and review write-ups.

THESIS COMMITTEES

The thesis committee is chosen by the student and must consist of at least three faculty members, generally who are all members of the Department of Visual Art faculty, with their explicit agreement. An alternate or additional member outside of the Department of Visual Art can be chosen, when appropriate, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. More info about Thesis Committee selection is detailed in section under [MFA Thesis](#).

GRADUATE ARTS ASSOCIATION (GAA)

We organize to support one another as Graduate Visual Art Students at The University of Kansas. We meet to discuss any issues we are facing during our time in the program. We also meet to strengthen our artwork through additional programming which includes travel to see exhibitions, hiring visiting artists, and attending workshops. We organize to curate and host exhibitions of our work throughout the local Lawrence community and potential wider audiences. We generate sales through at least one sale of artwork a year, resulting in funding for future programming feeding our development as emerging contemporary artists.

VISUAL ART STAFF

HoYin Cho

**Resource Labs Coordinator
VAST Lab & Common Shop**
Chalmers Hall, Rooms 215-21
785-864-5747 hoyincho@ku.edu

Jill Ensley

Administrative Assistant
Chalmers Hall, Room 300
visualartadmin@ku.edu

Joe Meinecke

**Lab/Studio Coordinator
Ceramics and Sculpture**
Chalmers Hall
785-864-8204 joseph-meinecke@ku.edu

Cotter Mitchell

Common Shop Coordinator
Chalmers Hall
785-864-5650 seaotter@ku.edu

Tia Raybern

Technician Assistant
Chalmers Hall
785-864-4042

Erick Morales Scholz

**Lab Coordinator and Lecturer
Metal-smithing, Printmaking & Textiles**
e.mscholz@ku.edu

Sarah Thomas

Administrative Associate
Chalmers Hall, Room 300
785-864-2951 sarah.t@ku.edu

Jamie Winslow

Undergraduate Academic Advisor
j535b771@ku.edu

Katie Williams

Graduate Program Coordinator
Chalmers Hall, Room 300
785-864-1986 kfwilliams@ku.edu

VISUAL ART FACULTY

FULL-TIME & VISITING

Norman Akers

Associate Professor, Painting
Chalmers Hall, Room 506
785-864-2957 normanakers2@ku.edu

Shawn Bitters

Associate Professor, Printmaking
Chalmers Hall, Room 212B
785-864-5391 bitters@ku.edu

Sunyoung Cheong

Assistant Professor, Metals/Jewelry
Chalmers Hall, Room 355
sunyoungcheong@ku.edu

Eric Conrad

Assistant Professor, Textiles
Chalmers Hall
ericconrad@ku.edu

Poppy DeltaDawn
Assistant Professor, Textiles
Chalmers Hall
pdeltadawn@ku.edu

Rashawn Griffin
Assistant Professor, Sculpture
Chalmers Hall
rgriff4@ku.edu

Sarah Gross
Director of Graduate Studies
Associate Professor, Ceramics
Chalmers Hall
785-864-1092 sarahgross@ku.edu

Steve Gurysh
Associate Professor, Sculpture
Chalmers Hall, Room 103B
stevegurysh@ku.edu

Jon Havener
Professor, Metals/Jewelry
Chalmers Hall, Room 342
785-864-4042 jhavener@ku.edu

Luke Jordan
Lecturer / Academic Program Associate
Chalmers Hall
785-864-4708 lukej@ku.edu

Mary Anne Jordan
Professor, Textiles
Chalmers Hall, Room 520A
785-864-3919 majordan@ku.edu

Michael Krueger
Professor, Painting/Drawing
Chalmers Hall, Room 212F
785-864-3695 michaelk@ku.edu

Liz Langdon
Associate Teaching Professor, Art Education
Chalmers Hall
lizlangdon@ku.edu

Diane Lee
Assistant Professor, Art Education
Chalmers Hall
jydianelee@ku.edu

Marshall Maude
Department Chair
Associate Professor, Ceramics
Chalmers Hall, Room 110A
maude@ku.edu

Michael McCaffrey
Assistant Professor, Painting
Chalmers Hall
mcaffrey@ku.edu

Yoonmi Nam
Professor, Printmaking
Chalmers Hall, Room 212A
785-864-5504 yunmi@ku.edu

Benjamin Rosenthal
Associate Professor, Expanded Media
Chalmers Hall, Room 508
785-864-4110 benjamin.rosenthal@ku.edu

Maria Velasco
Professor, Expanded Media
Chalmers Hall, Room 515
785-864-5527 mvelasco@ku.edu

Gina Westergard
Associate Professor, Metals/Jewelry
Chalmers Hall, Room 341
785-864-1711 ginaw@ku.edu

UNIVERSITY OFFICES

The Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Coordinator is your first stop for any questions related to graduate study or requirements. If you would like to research an issue in advance of speaking with your department or if you still have questions, the following offices can provide assistance:

[College Office of Graduate Affairs \(COGA\)](#)

COGA oversees graduate affairs and administers University policy for programs within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The COGA website contains comprehensive information on requirements and processes pertaining to graduate education at KU. Most common questions can be answered with the information provided there, including questions regarding enrollment changes or forms, University policies regarding exams and committee requirements, and University graduation requirements. The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences' Master's Hooding Ceremony is coordinated by COGA.

COGA reviews all [student petitions](#) of University and College policy, issuing decisions on behalf of the College or referring as required to a faculty committee and/or the Office of Graduate Studies. The more common student petitions relate to Enrollment, Leave of Absence, and Time Limit Extensions.

COGA is a resource if you have questions about petitions or graduation requirements that your department is unable to answer. Refer to the COGA website for current staff contact information.

Office of Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies is the office of the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies. The Executive Council of Graduate Studies sets policies and regulations governing graduate study and offers various programs for graduate students throughout the year. While COGA should be your first stop for any questions your department or graduate program coordinator cannot answer, you may be referred to Graduate Studies for certain matters, especially for questions about [GTA appointments and policies](#).

Graduate Admissions

Contact Graduate Admissions for questions regarding, KU Online Application for Graduate Study, the Slate admissions portal, English proficiency requirements, and official transcripts.

Office of the Registrar (OUR)

Contact OUR for questions related to enrollment when your department, graduate program coordinator, and COGA cannot answer. Questions may relate to tuition, the Academic Calendar, and fee petitions.

Financial Aid

Contact Financial Aid for questions related to the disbursement of scholarships, loans, and FAFSA. Students receiving fellowships through the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences or the Office of Graduate Studies should contact those offices first.

International Support Services (ISS)

Contact ISS for questions related to international students, including enrollment requirements, international student insurance, obtaining a social security card, I-20 questions, and any issue related to student visas. While other offices on campus such as the AEC, Human Resources, or the Registrar may also handle related matters, because the students' legal status in the country may be affected, it is recommended that students contact ISS first.

Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is a University office dedicated to assisting instructors, including GTAs, to develop effective instructional techniques. The expert staff of CTE can introduce instructors to the pedagogical technology available at the University and help instructors develop new approaches to teaching. CTE specialists work with instructors individually, and also offer a diverse array of workshops and

discussions. They also can guide instructors to useful scholarly literature on the subject of college teaching and learning.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMISSION

To be admitted into the MFA program, students must have undergraduate backgrounds judged by the graduate faculty to be appropriate preparation for graduate study in visual art. A strong preference exists for applicants whose undergraduate backgrounds are in visual art.

Departmental faculty selection and review committees evaluate each applicant's transcripts, portfolios, and letters of recommendation to determine their qualifications for admission. The committees expect applicants to have a B.F.A. or B.A. degree or equivalent experience. The department encourages full-time enrollment in the M.F.A. program.

Application deadline: February 1 (or the next business day if Feb 1 falls on a weekend) – The department only admits for the Fall semester.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. A [graduate application](#) completed online through Graduate Studies' website.
2. A paid application fee:

Domestic Applications: \$65.00

International Applications: \$85.00

3. Three letters of recommendation from former or current instructors and/or those able to recommend you on the basis of professional experience. Provide names and email addresses for each recommender on your application. Once submitted your recommender will receive instructions to upload their recommendation letter. Applicants should communicate with their recommenders to ensure the department receives their letter. The applicant must assume responsibility for ensuring all letters are received by the February 1st deadline. However, letters can be accepted after application submission.
4. Provide an [official](#) copy of their transcript from all colleges and universities attended. The transcript must bear an official signature from the institution. Upload a copy of each transcript to the online application. If admitted, applicants will need to also send an official copy of all transcripts to Graduate Admissions:

Graduate Admissions

University of Kansas, KU Visitor Center

1502 Iowa St.

Lawrence, KS 66045

graduateadm@ku.edu

5. Include a concise 1–2-page double-spaced statement of purpose stating the objectives you hope to achieve through graduate study. Please specify your preferred area of study: Ceramics, Drawing/Painting, Expanded Media, Metalsmithing/Jewelry, Printmaking, Sculpture or Textiles/Fibers.
6. Resume or C.V. including relevant professional art related details, education, exhibitions, workshops, curatorial projects, art reviews, collections, awards, or residencies. Please list information that you feel will assist the review committee in evaluating your application materials.
7. Applicants must upload 15 to 20 images of their artwork via Slate. Instructions regarding image size and formatting are listed on the Slate website. Each image must have the title, dimensions, medium and date to be considered complete.

Interactive or time-based works (a reel of excerpts with intertitles) can be also submitted to Slate. Examples should not exceed 5 minutes in duration and can be combined with an image-based portfolio.

8. Non-native English speakers must demonstrate proof of English proficiency before gaining admission to a graduate program. More information can be found on the [Graduate Studies English Proficiency Policy webpage](#).
9. International applicants should also review the [International Admission requirements](#) to ensure they meet all requirements to apply to the University of Kansas.

FUNDING

Graduate students are sent an offer letter during the admissions process which outlines the scope of funding provided by the Department of Visual Art. Graduate students typically receive funding through Scholarship and Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). Graduate students are also eligible for numerous annual scholarships given to exemplary students at all levels of study in the Department of Visual Art. Students in the MFA program are eligible for and often receive grant funding from multiple agencies both on and off campus for complex projects, travel, and study abroad experiences.

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS FUNDING (SOTA)

Student Travel Fund^[SEP]

The University of Kansas School of the Arts provides travel funds to support the professional development of its students and to increase the visibility of its academic programs.

Arts Research Project Grants^[SEP]

The Arts Research Project Grants provide support for original, independent creative and scholarly research by students in the School of the Arts.

GRADUATE STUDIES FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate Studies offers [funding opportunities](#) in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to the College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA). Some of the available funding includes:

Summer Research Scholarship: Graduate Studies provides funding to assist graduate students with conducting their thesis and dissertation research projects during the summer session. This funding is to support students who do not hold KU employment during the summer. This scholarship is not intended to be used for recruiting new students to KU.

Graduate Student Travel Fund: the Graduate Student Travel Fund provides support for graduate students traveling to conferences and/or professional meetings at which they are presenting their research or creative works. Professional development conferences, workshops, and opportunities that the student demonstrates are related to their field of study or research project are also eligible for funding. Award amounts vary, with a maximum award of \$750. Graduate students are eligible to receive one (1) award during the academic year, with priority given to those who have not been funded previously.

STUDIO ASSIGNMENTS

Each MFA student is guaranteed an on-campus studio to conduct their research and studio practice. All studio assignments are decided by the Director of Graduate Studies and are to be assigned by the beginning of each Fall semester. All studio requests by continuing students (request to stay or change studios) must be submitted by the end of the Spring semester. While the Director of Graduate Studies will attempt to honor each student's request, priority is based on seniority (i.e., the year the student is in the program) with the third-year grads having the highest priority. First year students are assigned studios based on availability. There have been cases where area faculty or thesis committee chairs have made a request for a specific space to meet the student's needs. No student may move, reassign, or utilize a studio without prior permission by the Director of Graduate Studies. All graduating 3rd Year students must vacate their studio by June 15th. All incoming 1st Year students may move into their studios starting August 1st.

COURSE REGISTRATION

MFA students typically enroll in 9 to 12 credit hours per semester. Students are responsible for scheduling enrollment advising appointments with their faculty advisor/committee chair or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) during the continuing student enrollment period for the subsequent semester. The student then reaches out to the faculty members they would like to take studio hours with to request approval to enroll in their sections of directed study or graduate studio. The Graduate Program Coordinator can issue permission numbers for these classes. **A sample degree program plan and enrollment schedule can be found at the end of this handbook.**^[1]_{SEP}

ADDING/DROPPING COURSES

All changes to a student's course schedule can be made through Enroll & Pay (www.sa.ku.edu) To find out more detailed information about adding and/or dropping a class visit the Office of the University Registrar [Schedule Changes webpage](#)

GRADING

A grade of C or higher must be achieved for a course to count toward a graduate degree in the Visual Art MFA Program; however, only grades A or B are normally taken as indications that a graduate student has done satisfactory work in the courses in which they received them. ***Students should carefully review the University's grading policy found under Grading in the University Policies and Degree Requirements section of this document.**

ADVISING

Graduate students can take studio hours with any of the Department's faculty members. Faculty work with a range of students regardless of discipline or material interests. Students select their own thesis committees during the Spring semester of their 2nd year. The thesis committee includes the committee chair which should be the student's main faculty advisor.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & MISCONDUCT

The Visual Art Department considers academic integrity essential to our work, and we expect students to adhere to its principles in conducting research. This means that students acknowledge the sources they use in their academic work and cite them fully and correctly; not acknowledging a source constitutes plagiarism. Students should consult with faculty well before due dates if they are not sure how to handle a source.

Academic integrity also means that work on examinations and assignments must be carried out by authorized means. Students are subject to sanctions by the University for Academic Misconduct if they violate these principles. Definitions are provided in the [University Senate Rules and Regulations](#).

GOOD STANDING

To be considered in "good standing" with the Visual Art Department and the University, graduate students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 (or B average) and make timely progress toward meeting their degree requirements.

For additional information on good standing as well as probation and dismissal procedures for those students that do not meet the requirements for good standing, see the [University Policies and Degree Requirements](#) section of this document.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The Visual Art Department advises that students try to resolve issues, e.g., matters concerning grades, directly with the instructor who administered the course. If a grievance arises that cannot be resolved directly with the appropriate party, or if the student does not feel comfortable attempting to resolve the issue with the department chair, the student should follow the department's official grievance procedures. These procedures have been approved by the University and may be found by following this link: [Department of Visual Art Grievance Procedures](#).

PETITIONS

If a graduate student has a compelling reason to seek exemption from a program requirement or University policy, they may submit a petition to the department Graduate Studies Committee. If a petition should need College or Graduate Studies approval, the student should consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator to ensure the petition is necessary and that all appropriate documentation is collected to submit the petition. The Graduate Program Coordinator will then submit the petition to the College Office of Graduate Affairs who will approve or reject the petition or elevate to the appropriate committee.

In cases where the petition relates to a department requirement rather than a university policy, the graduate faculty will issue a final decision. In cases where the policy or requirement being petitioned is a university policy, the graduate faculty will decide whether to support the student's petition or not.

If the faculty agrees to support the petition, they submit it to the College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) along with supporting materials as required. The petition form specifies the supporting materials needed for

each type of petition. COGA's [petitions webpage](#) provides additional information related to submitting petitions. Additional information regarding common University petitions, such as leave of absence, enrollment requirements, and time limit extensions may be found in the [University Policies & Degree Requirements](#) section of this document.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP (GTA)

A Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) is an instructor of record for an undergraduate level course in the Department of Visual Art. This is a paid position which typically is awarded to 2nd and 3rd year MFA candidates in good standing. This position is intended to be a component of an MFA candidate's financial aid package while providing graduate students with valuable teaching experience within the Department of Visual Art. **University resources for GTAs can be found online through the KU Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE).**

EXPECTATIONS

As an instructor in the Visual Art Department, we expect the following in order to facilitate positive, professional role models in the classroom. A key strategy for facilitating this success is to always act professionally. Our expectations include:

1. That you limit your work outside of your teaching responsibilities. If you find that you must work outside the assistantship, please bear in mind that the Department's teaching and class schedules take priority over outside work hours.
2. That you promote Academic Integrity in your teaching. Under no circumstances should you provide your students with specific items for upcoming written and oral exams and/or answers to exam questions. All exams must be administered to all students in class at times specified in the course syllabus. You should report suspicions of Academic Misconduct in your classes to your faculty supervisor immediately.
3. That you arrive at least five minutes early before your class begins to set up your materials and to be available to answer questions.
4. That you maintain a list of at least 2 instructors whom you can call in an emergency to cover your class and submit their names to the Visual Art main office. Emergencies include personal illness, car accident, family emergency, car doesn't start, etc. Call these people to request that they cover your class and notify your faculty supervisor by email.

5. That you hold two regularly scheduled office hours per week, preferably split up so that you are available at least two days a week. These hours should be posted on your office door and submitted to the Visual Art main office.
6. That you grade assignments within a reasonable period. We suggest that, barring some unusual life circumstance, most assignments be graded within one week of their due date. Your Blackboard Grade Center should be maintained accordingly.
7. That you check your email on a regular basis (at least once each weekday) and respond to students and your faculty supervisor within one business day.
8. That you contribute to the professional appearance of your classrooms, studio spaces, and office. Please be respectful of your students and officemates with respect to clutter, eating/drinking, and personal items.
9. That you report equipment problems in your office and studio spaces as soon as possible.
10. That you talk to your faculty supervisor or the Department's scheduling officer when you have a concern about anything related to your position.

NEW GTA ORIENTATION

All new GTAs must complete a mandatory New GTA Orientation. Offered by the KU Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), this series of training modules and conference style meetups provide critical info on university policies, best practices of teaching, creating inclusive learning environments and other essential info before beginning your role as a GTA. If you have any questions, e-mail CTE at kcolyott@ku.edu or cte@ku.edu, or visit cte.ku.edu.

Teaching MENTORSHIP

Required for all incoming graduate students, this mentorship plan is designed to prepare first year graduate students for teaching in their second year of the MFA program. Running a classroom, demonstrating techniques, communicating with individual students, project design, critiques, and grading will be emphasized through studio meetings and direct observation of faculty in the classroom. Guidelines for faculty and graduate students are as follows:

Graduate student will take a one-credit directed study with a Visual Art faculty member in either fall or spring semester of first year, ideally the semester the faculty member is teaching an Intro level class the student hopes to teach the following year as a GTA.

Graduate students will shadow a faculty member for one semester of an intro level class, attending all class meetings. (It may not be necessary to stay for the entire class period, as agreed upon with faculty member).

- At the beginning of term faculty members will discuss curriculum and core requirements for course and provide graduate student with all course documents. This will help graduate students prepare their own future course for the department.
- Shadowing may consist of observing, participating in projects, or assisting undergraduates, but graduate student is not a TA and should not be expected to fulfill this role.
- Graduate student may lead a maximum of one project/demonstration with undergraduate students during semester (optional, as agreed upon), however faculty member must be present (if faculty member is traveling other arrangements for covering class must be made)

- Graduate students will create a course calendar at the end of term to use as GTA, and syllabus if they plan to adjust course syllabus provided by faculty member. These new course documents will be discussed with faculty members and submitted to the DGS.
- This one-credit directed study should be taken in addition to two one-credit grad studio or directed study courses that will focus on studio practice.
- All efforts will be made to distribute mentorship across faculty to ensure equitable teaching loads.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT HOURS

Due to the complex physical requirements of safely running studio art labs and the increased contact hours in studio art classes, graduate students in the Department of Visual Art receive full time Graduate Teaching Assistantships which consist of teaching a 3-credit hour class and completing the associated Instructional Support Hours. GTAs in the art department are required to do 7 Instructional Support Hours per week. This may consist of:

- Monitoring or staffing labs for open studio hours (Photo, EXM Lab, Sculpture, VAST Lab, etc.)
- Safely managing materials, tools, and equipment
- Tours (Fridays at 11:30, sign up 24 hours in advance)
- Area-specific workflow (Loading and firing kilns in Ceramics)

Instructional Support Hours are overseen by department area coordinators:

- Joe Meinecke: Ceramics, Sculpture
- Erick Morales Scholz: Printmaking, Metalsmithing, Textiles
- Cooper Siegel: Expanded Media, Painting & Drawing

Degree Requirements Visual Art MFA

Required Courses

Required Courses (60)	Credit Hours
Seminar	12
Concentration	23
Studio or general electives	6
Graduate-level academic electives	9
Thesis	10

MFA Degree Requirements

The graduate program consists of 60 semester hours of graduate credit, including thesis exhibition, in courses approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the graduate student's thesis committee. A student may concentrate in one or more specializations. When the student has completed 2 semesters, the faculty selection and review committee reviews the student's work. The Director of Graduate Studies gives the student a written assessment of progress, signed by the committee. At the end of the third semester, the same committee conducts a thesis review that determines whether the student is prepared to begin thesis work, needs additional coursework, or is to be dropped from the program.

Upon approval by the review committee, the candidate begins work toward the thesis. Students not receiving approval may continue to work toward the next review unless denied by the committee. A student who is approved for thesis work may enroll in ART 950: Thesis in Visual Art. Before thesis enrollment, the student selects a graduate thesis committee consisting of 3 members of the graduate faculty. The committee advises the student, conducts regularly scheduled reviews of the work, and determines whether the requirements for the thesis have been completed. The Director of Graduate Studies must approve the membership of the graduate thesis committee.

The final departmental requirements include:

- A thesis exhibition of the student's work
- An oral examination
- A thesis folio of the exhibition.

The thesis folio includes a statement written by the candidate concerning the work and a visual record of the exhibition. The department reserves the option of selecting and retaining one example of each graduate students work. Upon enrolling, the student automatically accepts these requirements and conditions.

SAMPLE MFA PROGRAM PLAN

<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Fall (12 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 877: Graduate Seminar (3) • ART 801 & 802: Directed Study III & IV in studio area (6 – enroll in 801 & 802 if splitting hours between multiple instructors) • ART 906: Graduate Studio in elective studio area (3 - can be split between multiple sections) 	<p>Spring (12 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 877: Graduate Seminar (3) • ART 801 & 802: Directed Study III & IV in studio area (6 – enroll in 801 & 802 if splitting hours between multiple instructors) • Academic Course (3)
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Fall (12 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 877: Graduate Seminar (3) • ART 802 & 803: Directed Study IV & V in studio area (6 – enroll in 802 & 803 if splitting hours between multiple instructors) • Academic Course (3) 	<p>Spring (11 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 877: Graduate Seminar (3) • ART 802 & 803: Directed Study IV & V in studio area (5 – enroll in 802 & 803 if splitting hours between multiple instructors) • Academic Course (3)
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Fall (7 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 950: Thesis (4 – can be split between multiple sections) • ART 906: Graduate Studio in elective studio area (3 – can be split between multiple sections) 	<p>Spring (6 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ART 950: Thesis (6 – can be split between multiple sections)

MFA Reviews

Throughout your MFA candidacy you are required to participate in two formal reviews of your research and studio practice prior to beginning your thesis work in your final year of study: a First-Year Review taking

place at the end of the Spring semester of your first year, a Second Year Review taking place at the end of the Fall semester of your 2nd year.

At the reviews, students are expected to present their creative work and be prepared to introduce and discuss their research, concerns, intent, and progress. Your presentations must be submitted to the review committee chair in advance of the review date. This presentation should be 15 minutes (no more, no less). The committee will then ask you questions for 30 minutes.

First Year Review

The presentation should include the work you have created since attending the program, addressing thoughtful graduate level research that demonstrates an understanding of the history, influences, theory, and contemporary directions of the student's field of research, as well as an articulation of technique and materials, and clear evidence of experimentation. Students must demonstrate the ability to articulate conceptual ideas regarding the work and describe ideas for further research.

Second Year Review

The 2nd Year Review places a greater emphasis on your development and preparation for your final Thesis-year of study. The general expectation is that you are now prepared to embark on a more rigorously focused and culminating exhibition of your work, you can demonstrate significant development in the work (technically, conceptually, formally) beyond the first-year review and addresses suggestions made from the first-year review. Students should also be able to independently generate their own ideas that lead to a premise for the thesis and articulate these ideas with clarity. Students should demonstrate an understanding of the overarching ideas and concerns present in their practice that guides the decisions and work being produced.

Review Process and Criteria

The review committee will determine if the student is making satisfactory progress in the program. After all reviews have concluded, the committee will make determinations as to status (Pass, Fail or Re-Review) and will inform all candidates of their status later that day.

Passing implies satisfactory progress and will be permitted to continue the program.

Re-review implies that the work is unsatisfactory to pass the review and the student will be given time to make improvements, a first-year re-review will be scheduled at the beginning of the following semester, a second-year review will be scheduled at the end of the following semester. The student will be advised to consider the Review Committee's recommendations outlined in the written overview as a guide for developing work to be presented at the re-review. If a student fails the re-review, the department can recommend that the student take additional course work or is to be dropped from the program.

Failure implies that the student has made little to no effort participating in their graduate level studies. This results in dismissal from the program.

After the completion of each review, MFA candidates will be provided with a written overview consisting of comments and recommendations made by the committee. The Director of Graduate Studies will schedule and attend all reviews and be responsible for maintaining notes and preparing the written overview.

MFA THESIS

The Department of Visual Art thesis consists of a professional-level thesis exhibition (or equivalent dissemination strategy), an oral defense of the thesis work, and is accompanied by a written thesis statement that includes documentation of the thesis exhibition. The entire thesis is produced and developed under the supervision of a Thesis Committee. Graduate students begin their formal thesis coursework in the last two semesters of their expected residency in the program.

THESIS COMMITTEES

The thesis committee is chosen by the student and must consist of at least three faculty members, generally who are all members of the Department of Visual Art faculty, with their explicit agreement. An alternate or additional member outside of the Department of Visual Art can be chosen, when appropriate, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. When selecting the thesis committee, students are advised that faculty outside of the Department of Visual Art may be difficult to obtain for regular meetings given competing responsibilities and schedules in the larger institution. Students are encouraged to select a range of faculty members they have worked with who are challenging and whom they feel will be most helpful in the development of their thesis project/body of work. While students are not required to select faculty from specific areas, it is recommended that students select at least one faculty member from their field of study/expertise.

The student will designate one of the committee members as thesis committee chair (in agreement with the faculty member). The chair of the student's thesis committee will provide oversight of the student's thesis project progress, and report to the Director of Graduate Studies any issues concerning the thesis work. The chair will be the primary point person for editing the student's thesis statement and will request edits from committee members pertaining to the thesis paper. It is recommended that the chair of their thesis committee be in the student's field of study. The chair will be a full-time member of the Department of Visual Art faculty. It is customary for thesis students to enroll in thesis hours with the thesis committee chair and enroll in additional studio hours with other members of their thesis committee. However, the committee chair and members of the committee may determine alternate distributions of hours in consultation with the student.

Once the thesis committee is chosen and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. No changes can be made to the committee membership without the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. It is the committee's responsibility to monitor the progress of the student's Thesis work and can require additional time to complete all Thesis work by deferring the Exhibition date (or graduation) if acceptable progress has not been made.

Thesis committees are normally expected to meet a minimum of three times a semester (customarily, once a month), but may meet more often at the discretion of the committee. Students have access to all of their

committee members on an as need basis and are expected to be proactive in seeking out faculty members for assistance and/or feedback.

It is the student's responsibility to coordinate with faculty and schedule thesis committee meetings. It is highly suggested the student meet with the thesis committee at the end of the fourth semester.

THE THESIS EXHIBITION

The Thesis Exhibition (or equivalent) is the core element of the Department of Visual Art Thesis—the culmination of a professional-level body of work or major project, serving as the entry point into the field of art. Thesis Exhibitions normally take place in the Art & Design Gallery and are scheduled by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students whose creative research exists outside of the framework of the gallery or traditional dissemination strategies may “exhibit” in alternative exhibition spaces /contexts with the approval of the Thesis Committee and Director of Graduate Studies. Examples of alternative “exhibitions” or venues may include, but are not limited to, Thesis Performance(s), Site-Specific installations/projects, virtual projects, community-based projects, guerilla interventions, etc. In the case of alternate “exhibition” strategies, students are expected to secure appropriate venues or locations well in advance of the date of exhibition—in some cases prior to beginning the formal thesis process. Committee members must also have feasible access to the work.

The work presented in the Thesis Exhibition should reflect the development students have made over the entire graduate experience—blending conceptual, formal, and technical skillsets to establish a comprehensive artistic perspective that guides the artist's practice. As a professional-level exhibition, Theses also serve as a contribution to the contemporary field of research for new directions, perspectives and methodologies and as such reflect the potential of the artist at the onset of their professional career. Strong theses demonstrate an awareness of contemporary circumstances and historical trajectories—contributing to the larger body of knowledge in meaningful ways. Students are encouraged to push themselves to the boundaries of their limitations, to take risks, and to consider all facets of the work from conception to presentation.

THE ORAL EXAMINATION

The Oral Examination is conducted during the Thesis Exhibition (or in cases of equivalents, at an agreed upon time/place) and scheduled by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies and Thesis Committee will conduct the Oral Examination. During this exam students should expect questions about their work, its development, presentation, and the larger practice of the artist. If the committee determines the exhibition is non-passable, a new date for a revised exhibition will be set and a re-review by the same committee scheduled.

THE WRITTEN THESIS

The written thesis is a formal document that articulates the ideas and issues present in the thesis work, locates the work as part of the historical and contemporary field, outlines the process of the thesis development, and documents the resulting project/exhibition visually or audio-visually. Written thesis statements vary widely in length and format depending on the research strategies of the individual students. Customarily the Chair of the Thesis Committee works with the student on developing a draft of the thesis statement prior to review by the full committee, but methods of working on the thesis statement vary and are determined by both the student and the committee. Final written thesis statements must be complete, submitted, and approved by the committee by the Graduate College deadline for students to graduate on time. All 3rd year graduate students must submit their final written thesis document, signed title page, signed

acceptance page and all supplemental items to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator by 5:00pm CST on the Monday of the last week of classes. The students' thesis committee may direct a timeline prior to the department deadline for review of the written thesis materials.

Written Thesis Document – The completed written thesis, meeting appropriate formatting requirements and submitted for upload to KUScholarWorks.

Thesis Title Page* – Document that is signed by the Chair and remaining Thesis Committee members approving completion of the written thesis document.

Thesis Acceptance Page* – Document that is signed by the Chair of the Thesis Committee accepting final edits recommended by the committee.

*Signed versions of this document should be submitted separately from the final draft of the Written Thesis Document.

Student Thesis Resources:

[Master's Degree Checklist \(College Graduation Requirements\)](#)

[KU Writing Center](#)

[ETD Formatting Requirements \(Graduate Studies\)](#)

[KUScholarworks \(Searchable database of MFA theses\)](#)

GRADUATE HONORS

MFA candidates may graduate with *Graduate Honors*, a distinction conferred with their MFA degree. This distinction is awarded by the Director of Graduate Studies by recommendation from the Thesis Committee. The criteria for nomination are as follows:

1. The overall quality of the student throughout the program will be considered. There must be strong evidence of exceptional progress of creative research. The student must possess a history of willingness to investigate and question what they are doing.
2. The student must be articulate about their research and work process throughout the entire relationship of working with the Thesis Committee. The student must have developed the ability to respond constructively to criticism and suggestions from the committee.
3. The Thesis Committee should see strong evidence of the student's professional activities including an active exhibition record.
4. The student must have made significant contributions to the program throughout the three years including a willingness to engage in the program through their discipline, seminar, GTA, and service activities. The student shall make significant contributions to the program with a willingness to engage and guide other students.
5. The student must have developed an independent voice, going beyond recommendations of the committee, and have demonstrated the ability to make exceptional choices in their creative process.
6. The Thesis Committee must see strong evidence of the student's dedication to further development of their work after graduation. The committee should have confidence that the student's research will investigate directions that will continue to make significant contributions to the field.
7. The Thesis Committee must see professional quality of the thesis exhibition in addition to excellence in the body of work.

8. A letter from the Director of Graduate Studies will notify students who receive “Honors” after the student has submitted their written thesis and completed their exhibition.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate Studies and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, both hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

Admission

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are three ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.

- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU [Applied English Center](#) (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate Studies' [Spoken English Competency page](#).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)
- [Graduate Credit](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students in the College, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While units within the College may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full time enrollment it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Student not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must pay a fee to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current [Academic Calendar](#).**

You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on [Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript](#).

Your graduate program coordinator is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The Office of Graduate Studies [policy](#) on Graduate Credit defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Count Toward Degree Form](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#) (on Reduced Hour Master's Degree)

Credit/No Credit

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC [online request](#) form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU [Academic Calendar](#). Please keep in mind, short courses may have [alternate dates](#).

The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making [satisfactory progress](#) toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative GPA dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, probation occurs automatically and is reflected on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Additionally, the College has set a 2.5 minimum GPA for students to be eligible for a semester of academic probation. In cases where a student's GPA drops below the minimum of 2.5, the student is considered ineligible for academic probation and will be dismissed by the College. Students are strongly advised to review the [College-specific policy on probation and dismissal](#) for more information about the 2.5 threshold for dismissal.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to;

- Lack of progress on the thesis or dissertation
- Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams),
- Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
- An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation
- Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the [Good Academic Standing policy](#) for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Probation and Dismissal \(CLAS\)](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate Studies' [Grading policy](#) governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in [Article II](#) of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of Graduate Studies.

Students should also carefully review the [College-specific grading information, in particular the section on the SP/LP/NP grading scale for thesis & dissertation hours and the impacts of receiving a LP \(limited progress\) or NP \(no progress\)](#). [Students should](#) also consult their adviser and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Additional information pertaining to graduate grading can be found on COGA's pages for [Retroactive Withdrawal](#), [Incomplete Grades](#), and [Graduate GPA](#). The Registrar's Office's also offers information on the [Credit/No Credit](#) option.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Probation and Dismissal \(CLAS\)](#)

Time limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the link above and in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree

completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that the College's Mentoring Agreement is required for doctoral students who are within 2 years of exhausting their maximum time to degree. See the [College Graduate Regulations](#) or talk to your graduate program coordinator for more information.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams](#) (on exam expiration and recertification)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time To Degree Information](#)
- [Graduate Degree Completion Agreement](#) (PDF)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while "stopping the clock" on their time to degree.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department's internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student's need for a leave of absence; however, the only document that the College requires for the petition is the Leave of Absence form, linked below.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU [Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence](#)
- [CLAS Leave of Absence Petition Form](#) (PDF)

Required University Milestones

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on your behalf by your department after the exam date has been scheduled. The College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty holding regular graduate faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

Oral Exam Attendance

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

Enrollment Requirement

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Students are strongly advised to closely review the College's page on Post-Comp Enrollment. This page explains requirements in great detail.

[Review the Post Comp Enrollment Requirements](#)

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make-up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work

with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria](#)
- [Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (M.A. & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students [planning to graduate](#) must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

COGA GRADUATION CHECKLISTS

COGA's graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student in the College as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for [formatting](#) and [electronic submission](#) of the

thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

“MY GRADUATION CHECKLIST” CANVAS COURSE

If you are graduating with a PhD or a thesis option master's degree, you will submit documents and track the completion of your graduation requirements via your "My Graduation Checklist" site in Canvas. This site will be your online hub for all instructions and resources related to degree completion and graduation.

Your My Graduation Checklist Canvas site will be activated at one of these times, whichever comes first:

- On the 20th day of classes for students who have submitted an Application for Graduation via Enroll & Pay for that semester
- When your department submits your exam date and information for pre-approval
- During the week after the graduation deadline, for students who have applied to graduate for the upcoming semester

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible, but at minimum prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester you want to graduate so that you can get access to the information and resources in your Graduation Checklist site as early as possible!

If your Graduation Checklist has not been activated yet, you can utilize the Graduation checklists referenced above.

GRADUATE STUDIES FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate Studies offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to the Office of Graduate Studies. Some of the available funding includes:

Dissertation Fellowships: intended for doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive examinations; for one academic year, non-renewable.

Summer Fellowships: intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

Graduate Student Travel Fund: intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Doctoral Student Research Fund: Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

