

**ART DEPARTMENT
MFA PROGRAM**

END OF SEMESTER REVIEWS

The Graduate Qualifying Reviews are a two-phase qualifying process that MFA students must pass before progressing to their second and final year of the program. Due to the wide range of student backgrounds and the many possibilities for study offered in the MFA program, everyone's pathway will be different, and it is impossible to offer an exact "checklist" of how one would demonstrate "competency" in their area.

There are two main criteria with the following more detailed rubric:

- 1.) Agreement amongst the faculty that the student's body of work thus far represents a thoughtful and informed execution and articulation of a contemporary studio art practice.
- 2.) A demonstration of facility with the materials / mediums integral to that student's practice.

Quality of work – 33%

- The overall quality and quantity of the student's work and its presentation / installation. The work should reflect a strong grasp of materials, and a depth of conceptual and formal investigation.
- The student's disciplined and consistent work habits should be evident in the work. Is the student working diligently and productively?
- Does the student's work reflect consistent progress since entering the program?

Participation in Program – 33%

- The student should be a good citizen of the Art Department and MFA Program by successfully fulfilling their GA and/or TA assignments and duties.
- Communicating with and holding regular meetings/studio visits with the chair of their committee and other committee members
- The student's performance and grades in all courses will be considered as part of the review process

Intellectual Development and Articulation (oral and written) – 33%

- The student should define the framework of the inquiry. Students present their work for 10 minutes at the beginning of the review. The student's presentation of the work should be concise and illuminating. (The student may include other/documentation of work if it is relevant to current explorations or to clarify an assertion or direction in the work shown.)
- The written statement should address the presented work conceptually and formally. The student should begin to situate themselves in the contemporary art world in terms of relating to practicing artists.
- The student should be able to answer faculty questions during the review, even with another question.

During their first year, each MFA student will undergo two Reviews. **The 1st Semester Review** will take place at the end of the first semester (Fall). **The 2nd Semester Qualifying Review** will take place at the end of the second semester (Spring). The format is designed to encourage intellectual, artistic, and theoretical exchange amongst the student and the faculty. The Review process will be overseen by the Director of Graduate Studies.

1st Semester Review

At the end of the fall semester during the first year of graduate work, and before 1st Review takes place, faculty will fill out a standard evaluation form for each new student they have had in a course, in registered study, or as a teaching or research assistant; or if they have worked with the student in an advisory capacity; or if they are the student's advisor. The evaluation forms will be coordinated and consolidated by the Director of Graduate Studies. Advisors should also meet with their advisees well in advance of the review in order to help prepare the student for the review process.

The 1st Semester Review consists of the following:

- **Thoughtful 1-3 page statement that discusses their semester's work.** This is not a strict professional artist statement. The statement should address concept and execution, theoretical and formal frameworks (i.e. questions that are guiding your work / your research for your work), historical precedents (i.e. what lineage do you see your work in, and what artists are doing work similar to yours and that inform your work), and a sense of trajectory into the 2nd semester.
- **Narrative presentation of your semester's work,** which can include slides of past work that cannot be reinstalled or recreated, and should also include work installed in your studio or in a clean room (Hanes 222 or Clean Room at the Art Lab). There should be evidence of a significant amount of work showcasing exploration, and experimentation. The presentation should last 5-10 minutes. The presentation should show an initial exploration of specific concepts as suggested in statement and a formulation of strategies for deeper investigation. You should **not** read your statement during your presentation. Faculty will have read your statement in advance.

During the 1st Semester Review, which lasts 40 minutes, students will present the work they have created only during the Fall semester by speaking for 5-10 minutes, as well as showing their work either through slide format and / or temporary installation in their studio or other space. In their verbal presentation, students should be able to begin to articulate larger questions that they are attempting to explore in their work, as well as begin to explain a formal and / or conceptual foundation for their work. If there are issues to be resolved in their work, the student should identify these issues and address the ways they are attempting to resolve them or where the work is taking them. After the student speaks, faculty members are encouraged to ask questions and respond to the student's work. Discussion takes place for 20-30 minutes with student and faculty.

With the DGS leading the discussion with the evaluation forms in consideration, faculty then spend 20 minutes to discuss the student's work without the student present. The goal is to generate a thorough discussion regarding the student's progress for completing a successful MFA thesis by the end of their second year, and preparing the student for the 2nd Semester Qualifying Review, allowing the approval to be based on a well-considered and informed consensus of the faculty. The faculty agree upon a plan of action that will be the outcome of that student's 1st Semester Review.

Within two weeks of the 1st Semester Review, each advisor should meet with their advisee and explain the outcome of the Review, including class recommendations or other requirements. Specific issues or concerns expressed by faculty during the review would be relayed to the student and discussed, as always, without directly quoting particular faculty. The review forms, recommendations, requirements, and final plan will be entered into the student's file. Starting the second semester of graduate work, the student's curriculum will address the recommendations and requirements of the Review process. During the 1st Semester Review, work and progress not seen to be of graduate quality will result in a warning to the student and probationary steps to help the student accelerate towards a successful 2nd Semester Qualifying Review. Failure to demonstrate adequate professional growth during the second semester, after the recommendations, warning, and probationary status following the 1st Semester Review, will lead to dismissal at the end of that year.

2nd Semester Qualifying Review

At the end of the spring semester during the first year of graduate work, and 2nd Semester Review takes place, faculty will fill out a standard evaluation form for each new student they have had in a course, in registered study, or as a teaching or research assistant; or if they have worked with the student in an advisory capacity; or if they are the student's advisor. The evaluation forms will be coordinated and consolidated by the Director of Graduate Studies.

The process for the 2nd Semester Qualifying Review is identical to the 1st Year Review, but is conducted only with the student's committee, and is facilitated by the student's committee chair / advisor. The work presented should include work from Spring semester, and your statement and presentation should be advanced in its focus in terms of materials / process / themes / concepts. Each student's progress determines his or her continuation in the program. Invitations to continue in the MFA program are extended at the conclusion of the first year after the student has passed their Qualifying Review.

Should a student not pass their Qualifying Review, there will be a second opportunity to Qualify at a Review that will occur about 4 weeks later.