

April 2019

College: COTA
School of Art + Design
Program: Art Practice
Degrees: B.F.A

Introduction

Many prominent Northwest artists, designers, and art historians began their professional careers by studying art at Portland State University. An even greater number of successful and productive people have used their training in the School of Art + Design as the basis for careers in commerce, industry, education, and a variety of fields limited only by imagination. Art, which requires personal initiative and imagination and develops skills in mental and manual dexterity, can provide the student with a background well suited for applications that are wide-reaching and greatly rewarding.

The School of Art + Design at Portland State University consists of artists and designers, educators, and art historians actively engaged in their respective fields and with the extended community. As part of an urban university, the mission of the School of Art + Design is dedicated to helping students understand and experience ways that artists and their works are involved in a larger social context, both in the contemporary world and in the course of world history.

The foundation of the School of Art + Design is the development of a visual, verbal, and critical language of the arts for future artists and scholars, as well as for members of the community. Since visual arts are a form of communication-related to all other forms, understanding the theoretical bases and critical interpretations of this communication is a crucial component of our curriculum. At the same time, because the visual arts are a unique form of communication, students are trained in the necessary technical skills, the theories, the terminology and processes specific to the production of the visual arts.

Because learning “to see” is a crucial component of any art program, the department requires all students to study both the history of art and to have studio experience. The School of Art + Design supports the full integration of art/design studio practice with art history and theory. Whether in the studio, computer lab, lecture hall, or seminar room, students have the opportunity to forge connections between traditions of visual art and their own developing imagination and expression.

Art programs are designed to develop the student’s creative faculties, a sense of critical judgment, and fundamental skills and techniques. Within the art major, the principal and supporting courses have one general purpose: to instill a mature, professional attitude toward the process of artistic creation and expression.

Students enrolled in the School of Art + Design at PSU will acquire:

- Knowledge and experience of the creative problem-solving processes.
- Knowledge of discipline-specific skills and vocabulary.
- Knowledge of art history and design.
- Knowledge of critical theories in art.
- Knowledge and experience to formulate a cumulative body of work in their discipline.

THE ART PRACTICE PROGRAM

Art Practices—BFA degree. The BFA (121 credits) is a professional degree, providing students with knowledge and skills designed specifically to prepare them for a career as a practicing artist and/or the master of fine art degree. The program provides a comprehensive education in visual art practices, applications, theories, and history, with an emphasis on trends in contemporary art. The BFA provides greater depth conceptually and technically, as well as emphasizing professional preparation. The BFA degree requires the student to research, develop, assemble and present a strong body of well-conceived and executed work. The culminating body of work is presented in an exhibition and includes an oral defense. Options for students after graduation include: (1) to undertake formal graduate study; (2) to begin a professional career in the fine or applied arts; or (3) to combine the student's degree program with the basic teaching norm in order to qualify to teach in Oregon public schools.

Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes

01 Acquire/ apply knowledge of formal/ conceptual/ technical visual concepts.

02 Understand/ apply cultural, historic & aesthetic art theory.

03 Understand/ apply strategies towards creative idea generation and conceptual development

04 Initiate/ define/ solve visual problems using art practice skill sets.

05 Analyze, evaluate and critique works of art