

PAFA Low Residency MFA Curriculum

SUMMER IN RESIDENCE I (Eight Weeks)

MFA 705A	Professional Practices: Online Tools	1 credit
MFA 710	Core Critique Group	3 credits
MFA 730	Reframing Theory	3 credits
MFA 740x	Graduate Studio Elective	3 credits
MFA 800	Visiting Artist Program	1 credit
	Total:	11 credits

FALL I OFF-SITE (Fifteen Weeks)

MFA 715	Off-Site Studio Critique	3 credits
MFA 820	Writing on Art for Artists	3 credits
	Total:	6 credits

SPRING I OFF-SITE (Fifteen Weeks)

MFA 715	Off-Site Studio Critique	3 credits
MFA 742	20 th Century Art	3 credits
	Total:	6 credits

First Year credits: 23 credits

SUMMER IN RESIDENCE II (Eight Weeks)

MFA 705B	Professional Practices: Career Skills	1 credit
MFA 710	Core Critique Group	3 credits
MFA 750	Art in the City	3 credits
MFA 740x	Graduate Studio Elective	3 credits
MFA 800	Visiting Artist Program	1 credit
	Total:	11 credits

FALL II OFF-SITE (Fifteen Weeks)

MFA 715	Off-Site Studio Critique	3 credits
MFA 825	Critical Issues	3 credits
MFA 850	Written Thesis I	1.5 credits
Total:		7.5 credits

SPRING II OFF-SITE (Fifteen Weeks)

MFA 715	Off-Site Studio Critique	3 credits
MFA 830	The Studio and Beyond	3 credits
MFA 855	Written Thesis II	1.5 credits
Total:		7.5 credits

Second Year credits: 26 credits

SUMMER IN RESIDENCE III (Eight Weeks)

MFA 710	Core Critique Group	3 credits
MFA 740x	Graduate Studio Elective	3 credits
MFA 800	Visiting Artist Program	1 credit
MFA 860	Visual Thesis	4 credits

Summer Residence III credits: 11 credits

TOTAL CREDITS for the Program: 60.0 credits

Course Descriptions

MFA 705 A and B Professional Practices 3 credits

The Professional Practices courses focus on practical skills artists need to communicate and succeed. The first summer introduces online and digital tools used for the Low-Residency program and beyond. The second summer focuses on career skills necessary for the professional world.

MFA 710Core Critique Group

3 credits each, 9 total

The Core Critique Group requires the completion of 9 credits over three summers in residence on the PAFA campus. Students have weekly studio visits with faculty to discuss their work, progress and ideas. Additionally, participation is required in weekly group critiques. At the conclusion of each eight-week session, students present their work for final review and discussion.

MFA 715Off-Site Studio Critique

3 credits each, 12 total

During the Fall and Spring terms off site, students complete work in their own studios while using a range of online tools to exchange images and ideas through blogs, discussion groups and regular postings of works in progress. This virtual art community is overseen by a faculty critic who provides feedback and guidance.

MFA 730Reframing Theory

3 credits

This seminar will explore the relation between critical theory and contemporary art. The course will focus on some of the key thinkers, ideas, and schools of thought informing debates around contemporary art and aesthetics. The seminar will both situate theoretical ideas within a larger intellectual context and historical framework, while also providing the opportunity to explore these ideas through material visual examples. Primary and secondary texts pertaining to the course material will further extend students understanding of the ideas, individuals, groups, and movements informing aesthetic questions today. In addition to short assignments related to the course material, students will work on a semester long research project relating to their studio interests. The longer assignment will provide an opportunity to consider the potential theoretical frameworks pertinent to their creative work.

MFA 74220th Century Art History

3 credits

This course will introduce students to some of the major artists, works and movements of twentieth century art, placing this aesthetic narrative within the larger historical context of the era. In particular, attention will be paid to the issue of identity and how artists try to define themselves and others through a changing social fabric. The material conditions in which these works were produced will be discussed, allowing students to see how the defining issues of the modern world are negotiated between individuals and the physical world around them through works of art.

MFA 750Seminar: Art in the City

3 credits

The Art in the City seminar is intended to familiarize students with the galleries, museums and art studios of Philadelphia and beyond. Weekly guided explorations will expose students to different venues for exhibiting and making art. From museums that show historical and established work, such as the Barnes Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the museums of New York, to commercial galleries and the artist collective galleries of Philadelphia, to artists studios and collaborative work spaces such as the Fabric Workshop, students will be exposed to a range of artwork and production and exhibition practices.

MFA 740x

Graduate Studio Elective

3 credits each, 9 total

The Studio Elective component requires the completion of 9 credits over three summers in residence at the PAFA campus. Each summer, students choose to enroll in a studio art course that may be offered in a variety of disciplines and formats: graduate level painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, mixed media or new media. Studio offerings will vary according to student needs and preferences.

MFA 800

Visiting Artist Program

1 credit each, 3 total

Students see visiting artists and critics for a lectures and a studio visits. These visiting artists and critics are selected for their importance and prominence as artists, and represent a diverse range of contemporary concerns in the visual arts.

MFA 820

Writing on Art for Artists

3 credits

This course will focus on the many ways artists have used writing and how criticism shapes an artist's work. By looking at various forms of writings by historical and contemporary artists and critics, students will gain greater clarity in their own writing and the objectives of various written documents. Blogs, artist statements, reviews, essays and manifestos will all be studied, and students will adopt these forms to write about their own work and the work of other artists. Faculty will guide each project so that it supports and enhances the student's studio work. Online discussions and peer review are an integral component of the course.

MFA 825

Critical Issues

3 credits

This seminar will focus on critical issues pertinent to contemporary visual culture, mapping their significance against the contested terrains of artistic practice, theory, and history. In doing so, the course will encourage intellectual curiosity through an interdisciplinary approach to research, drawing upon material from philosophy, literature, art, art history, cultural studies, film, criticism, and theory to present topics creatively and with rigorous insight. Contemporary and historical examples of art will be used as a means of exploring the issues being investigated and their significance for contemporary aesthetics. Students will consider their own artistic practice in relation to the topics being explored. The course has a strong writing component and is intended to help support students as they begin their written thesis.

MFA 830

The Studio and Beyond

3 credits

Providing a thoughtful, in depth, and grounded approach to transitioning from graduate school to the art world, this course offers professional development support as it addresses personal definitions of "success", varying modes of operating in the "real" world, and the multitude of options and art worlds one can explore. The course is both practical and philosophical in its approach to what it means to sustain a studio practice.

MFA 850, 855

Written Thesis I & II

1.5 credits each, 3 total

As students approach the final summer of the program, they are encouraged to focus their ideas and consider the context of their work in relation to historical and contemporary art. As part of this process, students are required to write about their work. This process begins in Thesis Seminars I and II, as students explore their artistic antecedents and affinities. As a result of this research, students write a descriptive overview of their work, including any threads of consistency or elements of change, which become evident upon reflection. Through online exchanges, the instructor works individually with each student helping them to clarify their ideas and formulate their writing. Online group discussions allow students to exchange ideas and give each other feedback. The writing process helps students strengthen the relationship between their ideas and work and prepares them for their final summer of studio work.

MFA 860

Visual Thesis

4 credits

The Visual Thesis is the culmination of research students have engaged in over the first two years of the Low-Residency Program. In the final summer, students continue their development and produce a body of work to be exhibited in the museum. Working with faculty, students plan and install an exhibition of their thesis work, which is presented for discussion by a faculty review committee. While developing their visual thesis, students finalize their written thesis, connecting their ideas and their work.