

ART HISTORY AND VISUAL CULTURE

The MA in Art History and Visual Culture examines the production and consumption of images, objects, and spaces from varied cultures. It challenges prevailing ideas about cognition and perception, and includes the study of the ocular. Because the visual is crucial to our understandings of cultural difference, Art History and Visual Culture Studies is vitally concerned with the manner in which the interdependent elements of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class construct identity. It demands that we think across cultures and national boundaries, and within a global context. Students will learn to discuss and write critically about objects and images in their material, critical, theoretical, and contextual totalities. Students will also explore the concept of identity, the power of visual rhetoric, and the shifting power dynamics inherent in art and its disciplines both in historical and contemporary contexts.

Administrative Staff

Director of SOFAM

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Graduate Faculty

This list may include Regular Graduate Faculty, Associated Graduate Faculty and/or Graduate Faculty from other universities.

Amanda Boetzkes

BA Victoria, MA, PhD McGill - Professor
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Susan J. Douglas

BA Western, MA Carleton, PhD Concordia - Assistant Professor
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BA Regina, MA Victoria, PhD East Anglia (UK) - Associate Professor
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Christina Smylitopoulos

BA Victoria, MA York (UK), PhD McGill - Associate Professor
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MA Program

Admission Requirements

Admission to the MA program in Art History and Visual Culture may be granted on the recommendation of the School of Fine Art and Music to:

- the holder of a BA degree (honours equivalent), or an honours BA (or its equivalent in art history) with a minimum of a 75% average; or

- in exceptional cases, the holder of a degree in another field who has completed a minimum of six one-semester courses in art history; or
- a student who has satisfied the requirements for transfer from the provisional-student category.

It is highly recommended that applicants complete at least eight semesters of courses in art history, cultural studies, or related areas prior to applying. Serious interest in, and substantial familiarity with, historical and contemporary issues in Art History and Visual Culture is expected.

Program Requirements

The MA program is intended to provide students with core knowledge about Art History and Visual Culture within an interdisciplinary research context beneficial for transition to higher levels of education and research and for careers in a variety of related fields, including publishing, collections management, work in the not-for-profit sector, museums and galleries, and cultural agencies, more broadly. The program aims to prepare students for future study at the doctoral level in the core discipline or a related disciplinary program, and those who wish to enter into the workforce with advanced skills in visual analysis, critical thinking, research, and writing. Towards this end, the objectives of the MA program are:

- To enable students to gain a command of visual literacy through global and critical understandings of art and its cultures and histories;
- To combine art historical methodology and visual and material culture perspectives in the study of objects both past and present;
- To explore critically the assumptions underpinning writing about art history and visual culture.

Students enroll in one of two study options:

- course work and major research paper, or
- thesis.

Thesis

In the thesis option, students must complete three (3) core courses, one (1) elective and a thesis.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses		
AVC*6100	Proseminar: Critical Methods I	0.50
AVC*6200	Proseminar: Critical Methods II	0.50
AVC*6300	Special Topics in Art History and Visual Culture	0.50
Electives ¹		
Select one of the following:		
AVC*6310	Topics in Art and Visual Culture I	0.50
AVC*6320	Topics in Art and Visual Culture II	0.50
AVC*6330	Topics in Art and Visual Culture III	0.50
AVC*6340	Topics in Art and Visual Culture IV	0.50
AVC*6350	Topics in Art and Visual Culture V	0.50
AVC*6400	Practicum: Art Institutions	0.50
AVC*6500	Directed Reading	0.50
Thesis		

Complete a thesis, consisting of an extensive piece of research of 30,000-35,000 words, a public colloquium, and an oral examination. ²

¹ One elective may be an approved course from another College of Arts program. The courses selected must be acceptable to the school and the Board of Graduate Studies for graduate credit. Students must obtain an overall average grade of at least 'B-' standing.

² The thesis topic is subject to the approval of the MA AHVC Graduate Committee, which includes an examiner from the profession. The thesis is a project of publishable quality. In essay form, it discusses the critical, historical, and theoretical aspects of the student's subject of research. Students are expected to present and defend their work orally in a manner appropriate to a professional art historian's public presentation.

Course Work and Major Research Paper (MRP)

In the course work and major research paper option students must complete the three (3) core courses, three (3) electives, and a course-based major research paper (MRP) of 10,000-15,000 words.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses		
AVC*6100	Proseminar: Critical Methods I	0.50
AVC*6200	Proseminar: Critical Methods II	0.50
AVC*6300	Special Topics in Art History and Visual Culture	0.50
Electives ³		
Select two of the following:		
AVC*6310	Topics in Art and Visual Culture I	0.50
AVC*6320	Topics in Art and Visual Culture II	0.50
AVC*6330	Topics in Art and Visual Culture III	0.50
AVC*6340	Topics in Art and Visual Culture IV	0.50
AVC*6350	Topics in Art and Visual Culture V	0.50
AVC*6400	Practicum: Art Institutions	0.50
AVC*6500	Directed Reading	0.50
The third elective may also be from the list above or an approved course from another College of Arts program.		
Major Research Paper (MRP)		
Complete a Major Research Paper (MRP) of 10,000-15,000 words.		
AVC*6800	Art History and Visual Culture Major Research Paper	1.00

³ The courses selected must be acceptable to the school and the Board of Graduate Studies for graduate credit.

Students must obtain an overall average grade of at least 'B-' standing.

Collaborative Specializations

Sexualities, Genders and Bodies

The Art History and Visual Culture program participates in the collaborative specialization in Sexualities, Genders and Bodies. MA students wishing to undertake thesis research or their major research paper/project with an emphasis on sexualities, genders and bodies are eligible to apply to register concurrently in Art History and Visual Culture and the collaborative specialization. Students should consult the Sexualities, Genders and Bodies (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/sexualities-genders-and-bodies/>) listing for more information.

Courses

AVC*6100 Proseminar: Critical Methods I Fall Only [0.50]

This proseminar explores the histories, theories, and methodologies of the fields of art history, visual culture, and material culture.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6200 Proseminar: Critical Methods II Winter Only [0.50]

This seminar is a multi-disciplinary survey of critical theory. The aim is to consider which bodies of theory have been and continue to be lively options for the practice of critical thought in relation to visual culture, especially post-1968. The course explores issues which also possess cultural, social and political relevance, theories which affected all the humanities and social sciences, and themes that are also deeply relevant outside the academy. These include: the institutions and networks of knowledge, identity politics, race, sexuality, gender and class, amongst others.

Prerequisite(s): AVC*6100

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6300 Special Topics in Art History and Visual Culture Unspecified [0.50]

This seminar explores issues of historical and critical method by focusing them through the lens of a particular area of concern within the fields of art history, visual culture, and/or material culture.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6310 Topics in Art and Visual Culture I Winter Only [0.50]

This seminar course is designed to explore one or more issues in Art and Visual Culture depending on the expertise of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with ARTH*4310. Extra work is required of graduate students. Students should consult the department for specific offerings. **Restriction(s):** Credit may be obtained for only one of AVC 6310 or ARTH 4310.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6320 Topics in Art and Visual Culture II Fall Only [0.50]

This seminar course is designed to explore one or more issues in Art and Visual Culture depending on the expertise of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with ARTH*4320. Extra work is required of graduate students. Students should consult the department for specific offerings. **Restriction(s):** Credit may be obtained for only one of AVC 6320 or ARTH 4320.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6330 Topics in Art and Visual Culture III Winter Only [0.50]

This seminar course is designed to explore one or more issues in Art and Visual Culture depending on the expertise of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with ARTH*4330. Extra work is required of graduate students. Students should consult the department for specific offerings. **Restriction(s):** Credit may be obtained for only one of AVC 6330 or ARTH 4330

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6340 Topics in Art and Visual Culture IV Fall Only [0.50]

This seminar course is designed to explore one or more issues in Art and Visual Culture depending on the expertise of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with ARTH*4340. Extra work is required of graduate students. Students should consult the department for specific offerings.
Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of AVC 6340 or ARTH 4340.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6350 Topics in Art and Visual Culture V Fall Only [0.50]

This seminar course is designed to explore one or more issues in Art and Visual Culture depending on the expertise of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with ARTH*4350. Extra work is required of graduate students. Students should consult the department for specific offerings.
Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of AVC 6350 or ARTH 4350.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6400 Practicum: Art Institutions Unspecified [0.50]

The practicum provides students with an opportunity to gain practical experience through work with an artist, curator, or other museum or arts professional. This experience may be based in a museum department, gallery, artist's studio, or arts publication office. The course should result in a substantial piece of work - for example, preparatory work for an exhibition, an analysis of a segment of a permanent collection, or a survey or catalogue of an artist's archives. The student is required to submit a written report upon completion of the course.

Restriction(s): Instructor consent required.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6500 Directed Reading Unspecified [0.50]

Each student establishes, in consultation with the faculty member chosen, the content of this special study within the instructor's area of expertise. Faculty varies.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph

AVC*6800 Art History and Visual Culture Major Research**Paper Summer, Fall, and Winter [1.00]**

The Master's Research Project is a 10,000-15,000 word paper that requires original research and argumentation.

Restriction(s): Restricted to Art History and Visual Culture course-work/ MRP students.

Department(s): School of Fine Art and Music

Location(s): Guelph