

## **Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art (MFA)**

### **Program Purpose**

The Lander Art + Design Department is accredited by the National Association of Schools in Art and Design (NASAD). The MFA program at Lander University is an advanced graduate degree program with a focus in studio art. The MFA is a terminal degree which prepares students at the graduate level for a professional studio career in art and preparation for teaching at the university level which meets the standards put forth by NASAD. This rigorous studio-based program is designed to engender contemporary art practice by challenging students with new and innovative approaches to materials and techniques while fostering growth within their chosen area of specialization. Students gain in-depth knowledge and professional competence in one or more disciplines through creative endeavor, inquiry, and investigation. Students are encouraged to consider the relationship between multiple disciplines through required intermedia study.

Students can pursue an MFA in 2D Visual Art or 3D Visual Art. Each program of study is planned to provide:

- Opportunity to create studio art or design work that shows specific intent, content, methodology, and product
- In-depth professional competence in one or more discipline of studio art and design
- Opportunity to investigate the relationship between materiality, technique and conceptual content.
- Opportunity for research and scholarship in the areas of art and design history, theory, criticism, and pedagogy
- Opportunity to contextualize art and design research on a larger social, cultural, educational, economic and technological scale
- Opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge and practice in art and design.
- Opportunity to enlarge breadth of competence between areas of art and design specialization and
- Opportunity to teach undergraduate majors and non-majors at the university level.

### **2D Visual Art**

MFA students may pursue a degree in 2D Visual Art. This concentration is designed to meet the needs of students who are interested in teaching at the college level or pursuing a professional studio practice in 2-dimensional image making with a variety of media and in a variety of disciplines. These can be traditional disciplines such as drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, or experimental and/or mixed media. Students will be encouraged to consider 2D image making a mindset more than media specific. Experimentation will be highly encouraged. 2D classes will be complimented with intermedia classes and/or other optional studio electives. The intermedia studies will require that students deliberately integrate different media to create new artwork. This will foster innovative ways to work with various media resulting in new unique work which can energize a student's studio practice and promote exponential growth.

### **3D Visual Art**

MFA students may pursue a degree in 3D Visual Art. This concentration is designed to meet the needs of students who are interested in teaching at the college level or pursuing a professional studio practice in 3-dimensional object making with a variety of media and in a variety of disciplines. These can be traditional disciplines such as sculpture or ceramics, or experimental and/or mixed media such as sculpture, ceramics and/or mixed media. Students will be encouraged to consider 3D object-making a mindset more than media specific. Experimentation will be highly encouraged. 3D classes will be complimented with intermedia classes and/or other optional studio electives. The intermedia studies will require that students deliberately integrate different media to create new artwork. This will foster innovative ways to work with various media resulting in new unique work which can energize a student's studio practice and promote exponential growth.

### **Teaching Experience**

MFA Candidates will have the opportunity to gain teaching experience as part of their graduate studies, in teaching specific lessons or demonstrations within a course, within a team-teaching model, and, finally, as Instructor of Record after SACSCOC credentials and experience are met. Teaching experiences will include teaching undergraduate majors and non-majors.

## **MFA in Visual Art Program Objectives**

As per the standards outlined by the National Association of School of Art and Design (NASAD), the MFA is recognized as the terminal degree for art practitioners and educators which requires 60 semester hours of graduate study. Students graduating from Lander University with an MFA degree in Visual Art will have demonstrated the professional intensity and high standards expected of a terminal degree program. Graduates will demonstrate exceptional skill in studio art and design within a well-developed personal aesthetic. Specific standards outlined by the National Association of School of Art and Design include:

1. Demonstrate a high degree of knowledge and professional competence in contemporary studio art practice through a significant body of work.
2. Demonstrate a breadth of understanding in one or more art disciplines through independent thought and studio practice, and art historical contextualization-both past and current.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of contemporary art practice and ideals in primary area of focus in order to actively contribute to the growth of current knowledge base in the field of art and design.
4. Demonstrate breadth of competence and engagement in areas beyond the major area of specialization, the ability to connect art to other fields, and an understanding of art historical context, art theory and criticism.
5. Plan and execute an exhibition of a cohesive thesis body of work in chosen area(s) of concentration in studio art, to be accompanied by a formal published thesis statement and an oral presentation.
6. Demonstrate advanced capabilities with technology in areas of specialization and resources associated with the field of art, art studio practice, and pedagogy.

## **Admission**

To be considered for admission into the MFA Program at Lander University, applicants must submit the following with their application.

1. Undergraduate studio degree in Art or Design (BFA, BA, BS, BDes), and provide official transcripts for all undergraduate or graduate coursework.
2. GPA of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale.
3. Statement of Intent: One-page written statement which includes the following: Description of current studio practice, why the applicant is considering an MFA, what they hope to accomplish in Graduate school, and what their professional goals are after graduation.

Digital portfolio of 20 images (72dpi designed for screen media). Applicants should submit a portfolio of work which includes 15-20 recent creative works. At least 10 should represent their chosen area of focus. Portfolio should be submitted in a single PDF file.

## **MFA in Visual Art Program Faculty**

MFA faculty hold terminal degrees and are specialists in their discipline of choice and are seasoned in the arena of academic study. MFA faculty will assist and advise graduate student curriculum and teaching activities. Students will work with multiple faculty in some capacity to broaden the viewpoint.

## **MFA Assessment**

MFA candidates will be assessed with the following schedule each semester:

1. Students are assigned an MFA advisor based on initial application. This is subject to change. Students must maintain 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
2. MFA students meet regularly with their MFA studio advisor.
3. MFA students will conduct a review of studio endeavors through Open Studio events, which may include a visual/verbal presentation to graduate faculty and fellow students. Faculty advisors will follow up with normally scheduled advisement meetings.
4. At midterm, students will present current in process work for discussion with graduate faculty and students. This will include a current artist statement as well as a verbal presentation of work. Faculty will offer guidance and informed critique.
5. At the completion of each semester, students will present that semester's work to graduate faculty in a formal arena. Students will be required to speak about the direction of their work and plans for future works. Faculty will assess student's progress and offer critique and insight.

MFA students are evaluated in their complete program of study with the following schedule:

1. 30-hour review. Upon the completion of the second year, second semester, each student will present their developing body of work to the graduate faculty with one of the following outcomes:
  - a. Accepted status: Student continues in the MFA program. From this point forward he or she will be considered an MFA Candidate. At this point the Candidate will select a graduate committee composed of at least 3 faculty members.
  - b. Conditional status: Student will be required to complete additional studio work outside the program before he/she can move forward. This time of remedial work may not be counted towards total number of degree credits.
  - c. Unaccepted status: Student will terminate graduate work.
2. Thesis. During the last semester of the degree program, each MFA Candidate will complete a final thesis project composed of a written thesis document and an exhibition of graduate artwork. This exhibition will be a cohesive body of work which has resulted from research completed during the MFA program. The written document will accompany the exhibition. The thesis content will be the responsibility of the Candidate under the direction of his/her Graduate Committee. Final approval of the thesis manuscript must be unanimous by the Graduate Committee.
3. Oral Examination. While the Candidate's thesis exhibition is on display in the gallery, he/she will present a verbal statement of work to graduate faculty, followed by a series of questions by graduate faculty.