

MAINE MEDIA

COLLEGE

MFA
Advising Handbook & Guidelines

2015-2016

An advisor's responsibilities to the advisee include:

1. Assisting the candidate in creating a plan to complete the MFA degree.

In developing an effective plan, the advisor and advisee must consider:

- a) the **specific degree requirements**
- b) the advisee's **individual goals**
- c) the **timeline** for meeting requirements and goals

The plan should be reviewed after each retreat and modified if necessary.

An advisor must be familiar with the specific degree requirements as listed in the MFA Handbook: the total number of credits to be earned (60), the timeframe for completion (3 years exclusive of leaves and/or extensions), appropriate credit allocations between studio and academic areas, mandatory projects such as the thesis, required intensives, retreat requirements, residency periods, electives and workshops. An advisor must ensure that the advisee understands these requirements as well. Degree requirements are published in the MFA handbook.

An advisor should assist the candidate whenever necessary in completing forms and other documents required by the College.

The advisor and advisee should discuss the advisee's individual educational goals and the ways they may be integrated into the program. Because travel expenses and related time away from family and work are typical concerns of candidates in the program, the advisor and advisee should also work to develop a plan that is accommodating to the extent this is possible.

2. Suggesting projects and recommending mentors.

To make informed recommendations in these instances, the advisor should understand the advisee's interests, creative or academic, and have a reasonable belief that a certain mentor is suitable.

While core faculty serving as mentors and experienced mentors outside of the core faculty ought to be familiar with program objectives as well as all factors considered in the evaluation of student work, new mentors may require additional guidance in formulating project objectives that conform to program requirements and objectives. When a student is preparing to work with a new mentor, the student's advisor should contact the mentor to discuss these matters as well as the individual student's status in the program and specific program objectives requiring attention.

3. Acting as a liaison between an advisee and the MFA Committee.

In this capacity, the advisor may be required to relate information to the candidate on behalf of the Committee, make requests or inquiries to the Committee on behalf of the advisee, interpret critique commentary, and so on. It is, therefore, imperative that the

quality of the relationship between advisor and advisee be maintained. Should the relationship become permanently impaired, it is incumbent on the advisor to notify the MFA Chair or the Dean and request that the advisee be assigned another advisor.

4. Assisting an Advisee in completing required program forms.

Candidates, Advisors and Mentors are required to complete a number of forms and submit them to the program office. Some forms are required at the start of the semester while others are submitted at various times during the semester. Program forms, instructions for completing them, and a flow chart of documentation may all be downloaded from the College website. Sample forms and discussion of related procedures and purposes are available.

Registration for Credits

Of the forms required by the MFA administrator and the registrar, the first to consider is the Registration for Credits. The candidate lists the mentored projects, intensives, and workshops he or she intends to undertake during the semester and seek credit for at the subsequent retreat. The candidate indicates the project title, the name of the project mentor, and the credit value and type (studio or academic) for each project. *Candidates are advised to keep project titles relatively general, as they may not be changed after the form has been processed.*

Checklist of forms and documents to be submitted with the Registration for Credits related to mentored projects:

- Mentored Project Proposal (for each project listed on the Registration for Credits)
- Mentor's CV (if the mentor has not yet been approved)
- Mentor Agreement Form (for each project listed on the Registration for Credits)
- Mentor Payment (for each project listed on the Registration for Credits)
- Support / Supply Lists for Photography, Digital & Film projects (if necessary)
- Workshop Proposal

Mentored Project Proposal & Mentor's CV

The Registration for Credits provides an aggregate view of the candidate's upcoming semester. The candidate provides a more detailed description of individual projects by completing a Project Proposal for each mentored project listed in the Registration for Credits. The candidate may complete the Project Proposal without the assistance of the advisor; however, the advisor must review and sign the completed form, as must the project mentor, and the MFA Chair. While it is understood that some of the information requested on the form is difficult to ascertain in advance, the candidate should respond to all of the questions on the form to the best of his or her ability. Taken together, these responses outline the goals and objectives of the project and a strategy for attaining them.

The MFA Steering Committee must approve project mentors, in advance. Should a candidate wish to use a mentor who has not yet been approved, the candidate must request from the proposed mentor that his or her CV and contact information be sent to the MFA Office for review. Generally speaking, an individual who holds the terminal

degree in an area related to that of the candidate's project is likely to receive approval to act as a mentor. Absent the terminal degree, the proposed mentor should have significant professional experience in the related field demonstrated by the CV.

Mentor Agreement Form & Mentor Payment

For each project listed on the Registration for Credits form, the candidate must have the mentor complete and sign the Mentor Agreement Form and send it to the MFA office. The program administrator and the MFA Chair will also sign the form. For each project listed on the Registration for Credits form, the candidate must provide the mentor with a Mentor Payment form, which the mentor completes and submits to the MFA Office. *The mentor will not be paid until these forms have been received. While this material is due with the Registration for Credits and Project Proposals, the candidate and advisor should consider submitting a not-yet-approved mentor's CV at least one week in advance.*

In the event that a candidate requests his or her assigned advisor to act as a project mentor, the advisor should request that another faculty member act as advisor for the specific project and sign as such on the Project Proposal form.

During the semester, both the candidate and the mentor must submit other forms related to the progress of the project. Specifically, each submits mid-term and final evaluations. As is the case with all forms, these are available in PDF form in the Maine Media College Form Book.

The advisor may be asked to assist the candidate in responding to questions on the form, particularly if the candidate is new to the program. While experienced advisors should have little difficulty in providing this assistance, the advisor may seek additional help from the MFA Chair.

Support / Supply Lists for Photography, Filmmaking & Multimedia Projects

This form is not required. Candidates complete this form only when they are requesting support and/or supplies for a project. Candidates provide a list of things they will need to complete the project. Candidates are asked to be specific about their needs as to space, equipment, crew, etc.

Workshop Proposal

This form is only required when the Candidate expects to complete a workshop for credit during the semester.

Checklist of forms to be submitted during the semester related to mentored projects:

- Mentor Mid-Project Evaluation (due at midterm)
- Mentor Final Project Evaluation (due at end of semester)
- Candidate Mid-Project Evaluation (due at midterm)
- Candidate Final Project Evaluation (due at end of semester)
- Candidate Evaluation of Project Mentor (due at end of semester)