

MAINE MEDIA

COLLEGE

Student Handbook:
MFA Program

2017- 2018

NOTICE

The reader should take notice that this Handbook is not a contract. Maine Media College provides the information herein solely for the convenience of the reader and reserves the right to make changes at any time without prior notice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

150.000 – DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVENCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES	4
150.010 – ACADEMIC PROBATION	4
150.020 – ADMINISTRATIVE PROBATION.....	5
150.030 – ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL	6
160.000 – STUDENT SERVICES & POLICIES	7
160.020 – CANDIDATE RECORDS.....	7
160.030 – LIBRARY & LEARNING RESOURCES.....	8
190.000 – ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES	9
160.040 – MFA PROGRAM STAFF & COMMITTEE.....	9
190.020 – MFA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	10
190.030 – TRANSFER CREDITS & ADVANCED STANDING.....	11
190.040 – WITHDRAWAL & REFUND POLICY	12
190.050 – INITIAL RETREAT & ROLE OF ADVISOR.....	13
190.060 – REGISTRATION FOR GRADUATE CREDIT.....	14
190.070 – LATE REGISTRATION & TERM WITHOUT CREDIT (TWC).....	15
190.080 – DEFERRED AMISSION.....	16
190.085 – LEAVES OF ABSENCE & EXTENSIONS	17
190.090 – FULL-TIME CREDIT LOAD	18
190.100 – ADD/DROP/CHANGE	19
190.110 – MFA RETREATS.....	20
190.120 – MENTORED PROJECTS	21
190.130 – INTENSIVES	22
190.140 – WORKSHOPS.....	23
190.150 – THESIS PROJECT	24
190.160 – CREDIT DISTRIBUTION	25
190.170 – CREDIT AWARDING.....	26
190.180 – CREDIT AWARDING STANDARDS	27
190.190 – EVALUATION PROCEDURES.....	29
190.200 – PROGRESS REVIEWS.....	30
190.210 – DOCUMENTATION & EVALUATION.....	32
190.230 – DOCUMENTATION & SIGNATURES.....	33
190.240 – TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS.....	34
190.250 – CANDIDATE REPRESENTATION.....	35
210.000 – MFA THESIS GUIDELINES	36
210.010 – COMPONENTS OF FINAL THESIS PROJECT	36
210.020 – PROCEDURE OF FINAL THESIS PROJECT.....	38
210.030 – SAMPLE: SIGNATURE PAGE.....	39

210.040 – SAMPLE: TITLE PAGE	40
250.000 – APPENDICES	41
250.010 – MFA EVALUATION RUBRIC	41
250.020 – LETTER TO PROJECT MENTORS.....	45
250.030 – PROCEDURES FOR MENTOR PROJECTS	46
250.040 – CRITIQUE PRIMER	48

150.000 – DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVENCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

150.010 – ACADEMIC PROBATION

Date Revised: September 2015

POLICY

Academic probation serves as a formal warning that a Candidate must rectify specific deficiencies to remain in good standing.

PROCEDURE

A Candidate is placed on academic probation if they fail to register for credit two consecutive semesters without prior approval; fails to attend two consecutive retreats without prior approval; fails the Gateway Review or Penultimate review. Candidates who fail the Gateway Review may be dismissed from the program immediately (without formal warning), at the discretion of the MFA Committee. Deficiencies must be corrected by the start of the subsequent retreat, or a Candidate may be dismissed. A Candidate dismissed from Maine Media College for academic reasons does not receive a refund.

150.020 – ADMINISTRATIVE PROBATION

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate placed on administrative probation is under a formal warning that their conduct is being considered closely by the MFA Steering Committee. A Candidate receives written notification.

150.030 – ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate may be dismissed from the school for administrative reasons following a hearing before the Academic Standards Committee. A Candidate dismissed from Maine Media College, for any reason, does not receive a refund.

PROCEDURE

Reasons for administrative probation or dismissal include but are not limited to the following: repeated plagiarism; violence; theft from a fellow student or the school; use of illegal substances on campus; sexual harassment; violation of campus policies; unauthorized use of Maine Media College facilities and space; non-payment of tuition or other fees. Dismissal on the basis of theft, violence, or the use of illegal substances does not require previous warnings or probation periods.

160.000 – STUDENT SERVICES & POLICIES

160.020 – CANDIDATE RECORDS

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

The College maintains three separate files for each Candidate: academic, financial, and personal.

PROCEDURE

A Candidate's academic records including transcripts, mentor evaluations, the findings of progress reviews are kept in locked files in the Registrar's Office. A Candidate may review their academic file with the Registrar present.

Transcript copies may be obtained by contacting the Registrar. The Registrar updates Candidates' records as to credits awarded as soon as this information is available, but no later than 30 days after an MFA retreat. The Registrar updates Candidates' records with regard to MFA projects undertaken (registered for) as this information is received.

Candidates' registration forms are due within 30 days of the end of an MFA retreat.

Candidates' financial files are retained in the Registrar's office. These files contain all financial information, financial statements and budget worksheets. These files are locked and accessible only by the Director of Finance and Administration, the Business Manager, the Registrar, the Assistant Registrar and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Candidates may request to view their files but may not remove them from the Registrar's office.

Candidates' personal files are retained in the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. These files contain all personal information including, letters of recommendation, medical and emergency information and any other material of a sensitive nature. This file is locked and only accessible by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Assistant Registrar.

At this time, all Candidate records are retained permanently. The College retains documentation of MFA Candidates' thesis projects and copies of written theses in its library.

160.030 – LIBRARY & LEARNING RESOURCES

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

The Maine Media College Library is located in the Haas Building. There are standard reference works, both specialized and general, as well as periodicals, CDs, videos, DVDs, and audio tapes on a variety of subjects. Books and other materials on the work of past and contemporary imagemakers are represented.

PROCEDURE

Most of the library materials are for research use only, and are non- circulating. However, videotapes and selected text books and other course materials are available for loan. The loan period is one week. Special arrangements may be made for faculty members and graduate students to use materials for longer periods. All patrons must sign out materials with the business office, leaving name, contact information, and, in the case of video tapes, a major credit card.

MMC students may procure library cards from the Rockport Public Library by presenting their student identification cards. Through the Rockport Public Library, students have access to participate in inter-library loan services. MMC students also have access to University of Maine libraries with a valid MMC identification card.

Non-resident students are required to establish relationships with their local research libraries, most of which convey privileges to students with a valid college identification card. In the event that a local library is resistant to extend privileges to a MMC student, MMC staff will attempt to broker access.

190.000 – ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

160.040 – MFA PROGRAM STAFF & COMMITTEE

Revised: September 2015

ADMINISTRATIVE

President – Meg Weston

Vice President of Academic Affairs – Elizabeth Greenberg

Registrar – Kerry Curren

Program Coordinator – Linnea Brotz

MFA COMMITTEE

Charles Altschul (*Advisor*)

Wayne Beach

Charlotte Dixon (*Advisor*)

Mimi Edmunds

Scott Fuller (*Steering Committee*)

Elizabeth Greenberg (*Advisor, Steering Committee*)

Howard Greenberg, Chair (*Advisor, Steering Committee*)

Cig Harvey

Meg Weston (*Advisor, Steering Committee*)

190.020 – MFA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

To earn an MFA degree at Maine Media College a Candidate must complete 60 graduate credits. Of these 60 credits, 39 credits (65%) must be earned through mentored projects where the primary focus is on producing creative work; 11 credits (approx. 18%) must be earned in mentored projects where the primary focus is academic; 4 academic credits (approx. 7%) must be earned by completing 4, one-week intensive courses offered at Maine Media College; the remaining 6 credits (10%) may be studio, academic, or any combination of the two as is most beneficial to a Candidate. A Candidate with the guidance of their advisor determines the appropriate distribution of elective credits. While it is possible to earn the required 60 credits in 2 ½ years, an MFA Candidate has three years from matriculation to complete the program.

Credits are semester hour credits. Please refer to “Time on task” in “Standards for Awarding of Credits” for a description of the relationship between semester credit hours and clock hours. These standards conform to those generally accepted throughout academia.

PROCEDURE

The MFA degree is conferred only when the following conditions and requirements are met:

- Successful completion of all projects and coursework with a “satisfactory” evaluation or better, totaling 60 credits over 3 years.
- Successful completion of comprehensive progress reviews including the Gateway review after the first year to qualify continuation in the program as well as the Penultimate review to determine the preparedness to undertake thesis work
- Successful completion of all components of the Thesis Project: a discrete creative work, a written thesis, an oral presentation to take place at a student’s final retreat, and a public exhibition or screening of the creative portion of the thesis. The MFA Committee, including appropriate guest faculty, must accept all elements before the degree will be granted.

190.030 – TRANSFER CREDITS & ADVANCED STANDING

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

Maine Media College does not accept credits from other MFA programs nor does it award credit for professional experience. The MFA Committee views the program holistically, as a process, rather than as an amalgamation of academic credits. The Committee recognizes professional experience in making admissions decisions.

PROCEDURE

Candidates may take courses for credit at other graduate institutions while enrolled at Maine Media College MFA upon prior approval of the MFA Committee. The Committee grants no credit for courses of a technical nature. Moreover, the Committee favors mentored learning and individualized courses of study. It is therefore disinclined to endorse surveys or other generalized courses unless it deems such courses most appropriate in individual cases. Candidates taking courses at other institutions must pay half the regular tuition costs of credits to Maine Media College.

190.040 – WITHDRAWAL & REFUND POLICY

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

Students are required to register and pay for credits within 30 days of the start of a semester. The semester start date is determined as the Monday immediately following a retreat. Should a student elect to permanently withdraw from the program prior to registration, no refund of tuition is due. In instances that a student has prepaid for credits and subsequently withdraws permanently from the program, a full refund of tuition is paid for any unearned credits, provided the student formally withdraws prior to registration (within 30 days of the start of the semester) and project mentors have not earned any part of their fees. If mentors have begun working on projects with the student prior to registration, the tuition refund will be prorated as of the date of withdrawal.

PROCEDURE

A refund of half the tuition for any unearned credits is paid should the Candidate withdraw after 30 days but prior to 90 days after the start of the semester.

After 90 days, no refund of tuition is paid.

Requests to withdraw must be made in writing to the MFA office. Fees paid for retreat attendance are nonrefundable.

190.050 – INITIAL RETREAT & ROLE OF ADVISOR

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A student formally enrolls in the program when they sign a completed MFA Program Commitment Form and pays a matriculation deposit. During the initial retreat a Candidate is assigned an Advisor with whom they work with over the course of their MFA program. The advisor provides overall supervision and guidance to ensure that the requirements of the degree are fulfilled. An advisor meets with a Candidate during retreats and keeps in touch throughout the year. An advisor also provides assistance selecting mentors, deciding on projects, evaluating credit distribution, and preparing the Registration for Credit forms. More information about the Advisor's duties is included in the Advising Handbook. The Advising Handbook may be downloaded from the College website.

PROCEDURE

A Candidate may, at any time, provide the Vice President of Academic Affairs and /or the Chair of the MFA Committee with information regarding an Advisor's performance, or request a change of Advisor if the Candidate believes they are being underserved and does not believe this problem can be resolved. Candidates evaluate their advisors annually by completing the Advisor Evaluation Form. Completed advisor evaluations are kept in files in the Vice President of Academic Affairs' office. Copies of completed forms are provided to the advisors. The MFA Chair and the Vice President of Academic Affairs review Advisor Evaluation forms to determine whether any problems exist between the Advisor and advisee, and what actions should be taken to address them. Two of the following individuals who are not the candidate's Advisor review the forms in the event either the Vice President of Academic Affairs or the President or the MFA Chair are a Candidate's Advisor: the College President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or the Chair of the MFA program.

190.060 – REGISTRATION FOR GRADUATE CREDIT

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

The program calendar consists of two terms per year, each six months long, beginning with the April and November retreats. By 30 days after each retreat, counted from the Monday following the retreat, a Candidate and their advisor complete and sign a Registration for Graduate Credits form. This form commits a Candidate to a course of study for the coming term. All credits to be earned, started, or carried through the term are to be listed on this form, which is to be signed by a Candidate, advisor, and MFA Chair. Completed Mentored Project proposal forms and/or Workshop proposal forms must accompany the Registration for Credit form. A Candidate must register for each term for which they wish to receive credit toward the completion of the degree.

PROCEDURE

If a Candidate fails to register for credit for two consecutive terms without prior approval by the MFA Committee, the Candidate is placed on academic probation. A Candidate may not register for credits if they are not current in their payments to the College, or has not established a plan to become current with the Director of Finance and Administration.

190.070 – LATE REGISTRATION & TERM WITHOUT CREDIT (TWC)

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

Should a Candidate fail to register within 30 days after a retreat, they will be charged a late-registration fee, after which they will be allowed to register for up to 45 days after the retreat (an additional 15 days). After 45 days, a Candidate is no longer permitted to register. This will be deemed a “term without credit,” and the Candidate will be assessed a TWC fee. The Candidate’s deadline for completing the program will not be adjusted.

190.080 – DEFERRED AMISSION

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate may defer admission for up to one year from the date of acceptance. After this date, they must reapply to the program.

190.085 – LEAVES OF ABSENCE & EXTENSIONS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

Leaves of Absence are granted at the discretion of the MFA Committee. A Candidate may request a leave of absence by submitting a letter to the MFA Program Office and a copy to the Candidate's advisor. The MFA Committee shall determine on a case-by-case basis as to whether to extend the program completion deadline for a period equal to the term of the extension.

PROCEDURE

Under certain conditions, a Candidate may petition the MFA Committee for an extension of up to one year ending four years from the date of matriculation to complete the requirements for the degree. These conditions are as follows:

1. The occurrence of an unforeseeable event or circumstance by which a Candidate is compelled to discontinue work in the program for a period of time in excess of 30 days or during a period of time that a retreat is conducted, and;
2. A Candidate has no more than 15 credits remaining to complete the requirements of the degree.

A formal written request for an extension detailing the reasons for the request must be received by Maine Media College no later than three years from a Candidate's date of matriculation. The MFA Committee shall notify a Candidate in writing of its decision and any provisions of the extension, if granted, within 30 days from the date of receipt of a Candidate's petition.

190.090 – FULL-TIME CREDIT LOAD

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate is not required to register for a specified number of credits per semester.

PROCEDURE

During the final semester, a Candidate may only register for nine credits, the number of credits awarded upon successful completion of the thesis project. Maine Media College therefore considers nine credits to constitute a full-time load per semester.

190.100 – ADD/DROP/CHANGE

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

If a student elects to discontinue a project for which they have registered, this will be treated as a project change.

PROCEDURE

The Candidate must complete and sign a Project Add/Drop/Change Form, and submit it to the Program office. The form must be reviewed and signed by the student's Advisor and MFA Chair. The project mentor will be paid any fees owed for services performed to the date of discontinuation. The student will be invoiced separately for these fees and the College will assess a processing fee.

190.110 – MFA RETREATS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

Two MFA retreats are held each year, one in November and the other in May. Retreats begin on Tuesday evening and end on Sunday morning. A Candidate presents completed studio work to the MFA Committee, guest faculty and peers for critique; meets for individual critiques; consults with his/her advisor to assess progress toward the degree.

PROCEDURE

A Candidate is expected to attend retreats. Should a Candidate fail to attend two consecutive retreats without prior approval from the MFA Committee, a Candidate is placed on academic probation. Candidates are expected to complete and submit a Retreat Evaluation and critique notes for each of their fellow Candidates. These are due 30 days after the retreat along with the Registration for Credits for the following term. A Candidate attends a total of seven retreats, including the final retreat during which the Candidate presents the thesis project.

190.120 – MENTORED PROJECTS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

The majority of credits a Candidate earns are through mentored projects. A Mentored Project for studio or academic credit is closely supervised by a mentor selected by a Candidate.

PROCEDURE

Students must earn a minimum of 39 graduate credits by successfully completing mentored studio/creative projects. Individual mentored studio/creative projects are typically six credits, although students may elect to undertake three-credit projects when most appropriate as agreed to by students' advisors. In order to meet federal guidelines for time on task (45 hours per credit), and given the length of our semesters (approximately 21 weeks), students must spend at minimum 14 hours per week on six-credit projects, including time spent in critique with project mentors. Students should expect to confer with project mentors, at minimum, ten hours over the course of the semester.

Students must earn a minimum of 15 graduate credits by successfully completing mentored academic projects. Academic projects are mentored by MFA core faculty members. Individual mentored academic projects are almost always three-credit projects. Students must spend, at minimum, a total of 135 hours on task, including at least five hours conferring with project mentors, over the course of the semester. Other requirements and procedures related to mentored projects are discussed in "Awarding of Credits" and in Guidelines and "Additional Procedures for Mentored Projects".

Mentors for studio projects may be Maine Media College faculty or qualified individuals who have been approved by the MFA Committee. When choosing a mentor who has not previously been approved by the MFA Committee it is the obligation of a Candidate to have the Mentor submit a CV for approval by the MFA Committee. Mentors for academic projects must be MFA faculty members. A Candidate must complete a Project Proposal form for each Mentored Project indicating the scope and nature of the project.

Mentors provide creative guidance and instruction, critical feedback and procedural advice on the project. Mentors write mid-term and final project evaluations. Other recommendations for project mentors are included in a letter sent to them by the Chair of the MFA Committee. A copy of the letter is in the 250.000 APPENDICES section.

On some projects a Candidate may wish to have more than one mentor. It is common for a Candidate to choose two mentors for the Thesis Project, one mentor for the studio work and another for the written work. A Candidate must list all mentors on the Project Proposal form with the percentage of the mentor fee due to each based on the relative amounts of work each does. In the event that a Candidate's advisor is a Mentor on a project, another member of the MFA Committee acts as a Candidate's advisor on that specific project.

190.130 – INTENSIVES

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

The College offers one-week (Monday through Friday) academic “intensives” immediately following retreats.

PROCEDURE

Intensives focus on topics of common concern to media artists, such as the histories of various media, aesthetics and visual culture, and professional development. A Candidate must earn four credits by completing four intensives.

190.140 – WORKSHOPS

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate may take up to nine approved (levels III and IV only) workshops for credit. A Candidate receives one credit for the successful completion of a one-week workshop.

PROCEDURE

As with any other mentored project, the Candidate must complete a project proposal form for the Penultimate Project.

190.150 – THESIS PROJECT

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate earns nine credits for the successful completion of the thesis project, including six credits for studio work and three credits for an academic paper.

PROCEDURE

The Candidate prepares a Project Proposal form for the thesis project; the Candidate, mentors for the creative and written components, the Candidate's advisor, and the Chair of the MFA program all sign the form. A description of the Thesis Project and guidelines for completing it are included in the Appendix, "Thesis Guidelines".

190.160 – CREDIT DISTRIBUTION

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate must fulfill specific requirements, academic and studio, for which they earn graduate credit.

PROCEDURE

These requirements are indicated as follows:

	Credits Granted	Type of Credit	Requirements
MFA Intensives	1 per Intensive	Academic	4 required minimum
Workshops* (elective)	1 each	Studio	9 maximum
Mentored Projects	2 – 6 each	Studio	39 minimum
Mentored Projects	2 – 3 per project	Academic	15 minimum
Thesis	9	3 Academic, 6 Studio	9 required

* Not all Workshops have been approved for graduate credit. A Candidate should verify the status of a workshop with his/her advisor or the Vice President of Academic Affairs prior to registering.

190.170 – CREDIT AWARDING

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

Credits are awarded on a pass/fail basis. The MFA Committee grants all credits. Mentors, faculty and advisors may only recommend that credit be granted or denied.

PROCEDURE

In order for studio credit to be granted, a Candidate must present work completed in connection with studio Mentored Projects and Workshops to the MFA Committee for critique during a retreat. A Candidate must submit abstracts, approximately one page in length, of papers completed for academic credit (academic projects). These must be sent to the program office at least two weeks prior to the start of the retreat. The Candidate's work is evaluated according to the standards listed below. Additionally, the Candidate must complete and submit written self-evaluations for each mentored project undertaken at mid-semester and at the end of the term. Mentors complete and submit written evaluations of the Candidate's projects at mid-semester and at the end of the term. Workshop instructors complete grade sheets in evaluation of the Candidate's efforts in workshops undertaken for credit in the MFA program. Grade sheets are submitted immediately upon completion of these workshops. Blank evaluation forms may be downloaded in PDF form from the College website.

A Candidate not seeking credit for work may present it at a retreat for critique only. The Candidate shall specify on these occasions that they are not seeking credit. A Candidate may not present the same work, or substantially the same work, more than once for credit.

190.180 – CREDIT AWARDING STANDARDS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

In assessing work with regard to the awarding of credit, the MFA Committee considers a set of criteria including: time on task; growth in individual art practice; development of creative vision; and capacity for self-evaluation, critical thought and discourse.

PROCEDURE

Candidates are not graded, however the Committee ensures by majority consensus that all of these criteria are met before credit is granted. This is accomplished at a Saturday evening meeting during a retreat; the Committee deliberates and votes as to whether credit should be granted. A Candidate is notified during or shortly after the retreat if their projects have been accepted for credit. On those occasions that the MFA Committee declines credit, the Committee so advises a Candidate and stipulates deficiencies that must be corrected if credit is to be granted at a subsequent retreat. In cases where the project mentor recommends credit be granted but the MFA Committee does not believe credit has been earned, the Committee advises a Candidate if the work should be modified and re-submitted. In the event that a project mentor does not recommend credit but the Committee believes the Candidate has met the criteria for receiving credit, credit is granted. Credits earned will not appear on a Candidate's transcript until such time as the MFA Office receives all corresponding documentation.

- 1. Time on task:** The Candidate must spend a minimum of 45 hours on task, including time spent in discussion with a mentor, to receive one graduate credit. Project planning in conjunction with advising is not considered in determining time on task. A Candidate is not required to keep a record of hours spent on task; the Committee believes it can recognize whether this standard is met, particularly in relation to how well a candidate has met the other criteria for the awarding of credit. The MFA program is designed to allow working individuals, or those with other extracurricular responsibilities, to earn the degree. However, the program is rigorous and demanding. To earn the degree within the allotted period of three years, students must register for between nine and eleven credits per semester. The typical mentored- project load for each semester is nine credits. Students therefore should expect to devote, at minimum, 21 hours per week to their studies. Additional credits may be earned through completing one-week intensives and qualified workshops, in residence at the College.
- 2. Growth in individual art practice:** The Committee evaluates the project under consideration for evidence of a Candidate's progress in refining craft and other elements of facture specifically related to their art forms. As this is an assessment of progress, it is generally made with consideration given to work a Candidate has previously submitted for critique.
 - a. Confidence and Respect for the Creative Process:** Each candidate should develop confidence in their abilities, be able to demonstrate respect for their creative process and work, and to evolve as an artist independently without relying on the critical support and feedback of others.
 - b. Competency and Technical Excellence:** Each candidate should be able to demonstrate technical excellence and superior competency in whatever media they elect to use in the translation of their concepts and intentions.
 - c. Responsibility for Personal Goals:** Each candidate should take responsibility for their decisions in the pursuit and realization of their ambitions in making art, in the business of art, or in art education.
- 3. Development of creative vision:** Whether the project under consideration is of a studio or an academic nature, the Committee requires that it contribute to the overall artistic maturation of the Candidate. Therefore, the project must be deemed not only relevant in this regard but of a quality exemplary of graduate-level work.
 - a. Ability to meet Challenges:** Each candidate should possess the skills, confidence, and ability to generate and develop ideas in the interest of furthering their creative vision, to meet challenges, to address problems intelligently, to solve problems creatively, to accept and embrace risk in order to evolve as an artist.

- b. Adaptation of New Technology to Achieve Personal Vision:** Each candidate should develop and nurture a curiosity for new technologies and the ability to adapt them in their personal vision without compromising that vision.
 - c. Consistency and Focus:** Each candidate should be able to demonstrate that projects undertaken for studio or academic graduate credit are integral to the advancement of a unique creative vision.
- 4. Capacity for self-evaluation, critical thought and discourse:** The Committee makes such judgments based on a Candidate's participation in critiques of work, reviews of their academic papers, and the appraisals of their own efforts as described in project evaluations they must complete and submit to the Committee.
- a. Intentions, Concepts, Context and Syntax:** Each candidate should be able to demonstrate superior oral and written abilities in the discussion of their work. This continuously practiced dialogue should adequately communicate the intentions, concepts, context and syntax employed in that work.
 - b. Historical, Social and Cultural Context:** Each candidate should be able to identify relevant contexts for their work and to demonstrate superior oral and written abilities when discussing where they perceive their work currently fits within these contexts.
 - c. Relationship of Art History and Other Disciplines to the Medium:** Each candidate should be able to demonstrate superior oral and written abilities in the discussion of the history of art, the humanities, and other disciplines as they impact visual culture, and make connections that establish relationships to their chosen practice.

190.190 – EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

Mentored studio/creative projects – Students receive written evaluations from project mentors at midterm and at end of term. Mentors do not grant credit, however, and the MFA Committee (MFA core faculty and invited guest faculty) must review the projects. Students present completed projects to the MFA community during retreats for critique. Subsequently, the MFA Committee meets to review projects in order to determine credit-worthiness based on the MFA evaluation rubric. The rubric sets forth three possible ratings for each area of evaluation: Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory and Exemplary. Students must achieve a satisfactory or better evaluation in each area for credit to be awarded. The Committee makes recommendations pursuant to this discussion of work to students via their advisors.

PROCEDURE

Mentored academic projects – MFA core faculty members mentor all academic projects. Mentors provide written evaluations at midterm and end of term. The faculty mentor also grants credit based on student achievement of satisfactory or better evaluations in the areas of the evaluation rubric pertaining to academic work.

Intensives – MFA core faculty members teach all intensives. The instructors determine whether or not the objectives of the intensives are met and if credit should be granted. Intensives are pass/fail.

Workshops – Workshop instructors submit grade sheets to students and the program administrator. Workshop instructors may not grant credit, however, and the MFA Committee must review all work completed in workshops. Work is presented to the Committee for evaluation during retreats and credit is awarded on the same bases that it is for studio/creative projects.

190.200 – PROGRESS REVIEWS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

A Candidate's progress is formally reviewed twice during the program. The first review, the Gateway, is conducted during the second retreat after matriculation into the program. A Candidate meets with the MFA Committee for this review. The Committee will evaluate Candidates' progress in meeting degree requirements as well as the quality of work Candidates have completed to the date of the review. Should the Committee determine that a Candidate is not making adequate progress in earning credits to complete the degree within three years or is not producing work of acceptable quality, the Candidate may either be placed on academic probation or be dismissed without formal warning from the program, at the discretion of the MFA Committee.

The second review is the Penultimate during which a Candidate's readiness to begin the Thesis Project is assessed by the MFA Committee. The penultimate is a comprehensive review of student progress and preparedness for undertaking thesis work.

The MFA Committee determines by majority vote whether or not students pass or fail these reviews. Findings are documented. Students' advisors communicate results of these reviews to students.

PROCEDURE

The following issues are considered during reviews:

Gateway

- Has a Candidate completed enough credits, properly distributed between studio and academic work, to complete the program within the required 3-year time frame? Is all required paperwork completed?
- Does a review of Mentor project evaluations show that a candidate has been producing work of sufficient and sufficiently improving quality?

Should the advisor and MFA Chair find as a result of the Gateway review that a candidate is not making adequate progress through the program, or is delinquent in completing paperwork, the following steps may be taken:

- If a Candidate is not earning enough credits or maintaining the proper distribution of credits to graduate on schedule, the advisor and Candidate re- evaluate the credits planned for the current and future terms to re-align the pace of the program.
- A Candidate is required to rectify documentation problems within a timeframe specified by the MFA Committee. No Candidate is permitted to graduate until such time as all documentation is complete.

Penultimate

- **Growth in Individual Art Practice:**
 - Self-reliance and confidence within the creative process
 - Skills and techniques
 - Professional and creative goals
- **Development of Creative Vision:**
 - Problem finding and solving
 - Engagement with new technologies
 - Consistency and focus
- **Capacity for Self-Evaluation, Critical Thought and Discourse:**
 - Intentions, concepts, syntax
 - Historical, social and cultural context
 - Relationship to Art History and other disciplines relevant to the chosen medium

- **Initial thoughts regarding the Thesis Project itself**

Clarification of a Candidate's vision of the discrete body of work to be presented as the thesis project.

Discussion of the forthcoming written thesis, an explication of meaning of the work, an outline citing the historical influences and appropriate critical contexts for the proposed work.

Rationale for the project describing what a Candidate expects to learn and its significance.

Should the MFA Committee find as a result of the Penultimate review that a Candidate is not prepared to undertake thesis work or if the quality of work is determined to be substandard, the following steps may be taken:

- If a Candidate's work is not deemed to be of sufficient quality or quantity, a Candidate may be required to do remedial work to be presented to the MFA Committee at a specified time.
- If a Candidate fails to complete remedial work to the satisfaction of the MFA Committee a Candidate may be dismissed from the program.

190.210 – DOCUMENTATION & EVALUATION

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

Candidates, Advisors and Mentors are required to complete a number of forms and submit them to the program office.

PROCEDURE

Program forms, instructions for completing them, and a flow chart of documentation may all be downloaded from the College website. The information provided by these forms is not only used to monitor Candidates' progress but it is critical to program administrators in their efforts to strengthen the program. Advisors are to assist Candidates in completing these forms and in providing information when necessary to assist Mentors in completing forms.

190.230 – DOCUMENTATION & SIGNATURES

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

All documents (paperwork) must be completed, signed, and submitted on time.

PROCEDURE

Registrations for Credit, Project Proposals, Mentor Agreement forms, Mentor Payment forms, Workshop Proposal forms, MFA Retreat Evaluations, discussion group papers and critique notes must be filed within 30 days of the retreat. A Candidate is responsible for obtaining all the required signatures on each form. A Candidate must submit all forms to the program administrator by the published deadlines.

190.240 – TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

Opportunities are highly competitive and no positions can be guaranteed to MFA students.

PROCEDURE

A Candidate may apply for teaching assistantships or other support positions during the workshop season and/or during the school year in the professional certificate programs.

190.250 – CANDIDATE REPRESENTATION

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

The Candidates elect one of their members to represent them at a meeting of the MFA Committee conducted during the retreat. The Candidate Representative is charged with communicating to the Committee any matter the Candidates deem to be of importance.

PROCEDURE

Candidates have ongoing opportunities to evaluate all aspects of the MFA program by submitting the required evaluations of Mentors, Advisors, Retreats, and Program. Evaluation forms are available in the MFA Form Book, downloadable from the College website along with instructions for completing them. The College values Candidates' input. Program administrators review the information contained in these evaluations on a regular basis and implement changes whenever warranted and possible.

210.000 – MFA THESIS GUIDELINES

210.010 – COMPONENTS OF FINAL THESIS PROJECT

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

The Master of Fine Arts degree at Maine Media College is contingent upon a Candidate's successful completion of the 9-credit final thesis project.

PROCEDURE

The thesis project is comprised of four elements: a discrete creative work, a written thesis, an oral presentation to take place at a Candidate's final retreat, and a public exhibition or screening of the creative portion of the thesis. The MFA Committee and relevant MFA Faculty must accept all elements before the degree will be granted.

The studio component is to be a discrete creative work. Upon successful completion and acceptance of this component by the MFA Committee, a Candidate receives 6 studio credits toward the degree. The work may consist of printed or screen displayed images, a film or screenplay, a media presentation, installation, or other form as agreed to by a Candidate, Mentor, and Advisor, and in accordance with the proposal set forth as part of the Penultimate Review.

A Candidate must make arrangements and successfully bring to fruition a public presentation of all or a substantial part of the creative component of the thesis. The presentation must occur at a venue appropriate to the work. The Candidate shall submit documentation of the public presentation only if said presentation occurs at any time other than during an MFA Retreat and/or at a location as such a distance from campus that would reasonably be deemed prohibitive by the Committee. If the public presentation is to occur subsequent the oral presentation, the Candidate must submit documentation of the public presentation as soon as possible. Maine Media College will retain this documentation for its library. The Candidate will not graduate until such documentation is reviewed and approved by the MFA Committee.

The written thesis must contain components focused on contextual research, an analysis of process and critical exposition. A Candidate earns three credits for the successful completion and acceptance of the written thesis. The written thesis must be appropriately bound or packaged and must fit on a standard library shelf. The Library will pay for and arrange binding for traditional thesis. The Candidate is responsible for binding/packaging of a non-traditional thesis. It is a Candidate's responsibility to appropriately label all documentation of the Thesis Project submitted to the Library and include two original signature pages to circulate among members of the MFA Committee and project mentors.

The research component of the written thesis should be focused on works salient to the development and understanding of a Candidate's project. A Candidate should provide visual examples, both historical and contemporary, of these works. The written thesis must contain a section that traces and analyzes a Candidate's development. Whenever possible visual examples of works discussed should be provided to support the analysis. The written thesis must contain a section devoted to the critical analysis of the final project.

The combination of the final project and the content of the written thesis must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the MFA Committee:

1. That the Candidate has a sufficiently strong grounding in the relevant history, theory, and criticism of their medium, and the contemporary social, conceptual and aesthetic issues touched upon by their work;
2. That the Candidate has sufficient analytical visual and critical expertise about their own work that they can move into professional practice and create successfully without the assistance of mentors.
3. That the Candidate has sufficient tools, technical and intellectual, needed to express themselves meaningfully in the social context in which they live and work.

The oral presentation of the Thesis Project takes place at a Candidate's final retreat. It consists of a presentation and critique of the studio component of the Thesis Project and a discussion of the material in the written thesis. A Candidate should be prepared to respond to questions and comments by the MFA Committee members.

Thesis project-The MFA Committee evaluates Thesis Projects as it does other mentored projects. However, the Committee in its evaluation also considers the discussion of the thesis paper.

210.020 – PROCEDURE OF FINAL THESIS PROJECT

Revised: September 2015

POLICY

A Candidate must choose a mentor or mentors for both the studio and written components of the Thesis Project. The mentor process is the same as with previous projects with the exception of special deadlines that apply only to the written thesis project.

PROCEDURE

Work proceeds according to the following timeline for submissions as related to the Thesis Presentation retreat:

- 120 days prior: An initial outline and bibliography are due to a candidate's advisor and mentor for the written component of the thesis.
- 90 days prior: An initial draft of the contextual research section of the thesis is due to a Candidate's advisor and mentor for the written component of the thesis.
- 60 days prior: A draft of the complete thesis is due to a Candidate's advisor and mentor for the written component of the thesis.
- 30 days prior: An electronic copy of the completed thesis is due to the MFA Program Administrator.
- Last day of Final Retreat: A Candidate is notified of acceptance of the thesis project or the MFA Committee advises a timeline to complete additional requirements.

Should a Candidate fail to meet all deadlines, they are required to postpone the Thesis Presentation until the following scheduled retreat.

Should the Committee deem, during its closed meeting conducted during the retreat but subsequent to the presentation, that the Candidate has substantially fulfilled all program requirements but must make minor changes or additions (typically to the thesis paper) the Committee conveys this to the Candidate through their advisor. In these instances, the Committee will also provide the Candidate with instructions and a timeline for these revisions. A degree is granted only at such time as revisions have been completed and two copies of the thesis have been issued to the College library. A Candidate must be current in payments to the College in order to be eligible to receive the degree.

Should the Committee deem that the Candidate has not substantially fulfilled all thesis requirements its members will convey what actions the Candidate must take to correct any deficiencies and present the thesis again at a subsequent retreat.

210.030 – SAMPLE: SIGNATURE PAGE

Revised: September 2015

ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS AT MAINE MEDIA COLLEGE

(First reader, Thesis Mentor) (Date)

(Second reader, Faculty Advisor) (Date)

(Third reader, MFA Chair) (Date)

210.040 – SAMPLE: TITLE PAGE

Revised: September 2015

MAINE MEDIA COLLEGE

(TITLE OF THESIS)

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF MAINE MEDIA COLLEGE IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ART

BY

_____ (CANDIDATE'S NAME)

_____ (CANDIDATE'S SIGNATURE)

ROCKPORT, MAINE (MONTH, YEAR)

250.000 – APPENDICES

250.010 – MFA EVALUATION RUBRIC

Revised: September 2015

Copyright © MMC Rockport, Maine
2015

Student _____ Project _____ Mentor _____ Date _____

1. Time on Task:

The candidate must spend a minimum of 45 hours on task, including mentoring, to receive one graduate credit. Time exclusions include: project planning in conjunction with advising, Retreat reviews, and pre-registration discussions regarding project proposals.

	Incomplete	Satisfactory	Excellent
45 hrs per credit	Product and process do not reflect required hours on task.	Effort exhibited coincides with required hours on task.	Overall demonstration of above standard effort on task.

2. Growth in individual art practice:

The Committee evaluates the project under consideration for evidence of a Candidate’s progress in refining craft and other elements of facture specifically related to the their art forms. This is an assessment of progress as it relates to work a Candidate has previously submitted for critique. This element of evaluation is reviewed with regard to the following dimensions:

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
a. Self-reliance and confidence within the creative process	A lack of self-direction within the creative process; dependence on feedback to define vision.	Work reflects the development of a self-sustaining process; ability to evaluate relevant feedback.	Consistent and respectful pursuit of an independent vision; sage use of feedback to complement work.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Excellent
b. Skills and techniques	Skills in chosen media insufficient to support the development of creative vision.	Fluent in chosen media; applies skills to support concepts and intentions.	Innovative and adaptive applications of chosen media to support artistic direction.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
c. Professional and creative goals	Lack of direction and awareness of goals and outcomes of work.	Purposeful direction in development and pursuit of goals.	Superior awareness of goals for professional and creative pursuit.

3. Development of Creative Vision:

Whether the project under consideration is of a studio or an academic nature, the Committee requires that it contribute to the overall artistic maturation of the Candidate. Therefore, The project must be deemed not only relevant in this regard but is of a quality exemplary of graduate-level work. This element of evaluation is reviewed with regard to following dimensions:

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
a. Problem finding and solving	Inadequate awareness of challenges within work; lack of resolve in problem solving; trepidation toward change.	Embraces new ideas, intelligently addresses problems and approaches challenges or risks as elements in the development of a personal voice and vision.	Seeks out challenges and risks in furthering artistic vision; creatively solves challenges within work.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
b. Engagement with new technologies	Lack of curiosity for new forms of potential importance to a candidate's work.	Overall awareness of new forms and willingness to investigate integrating new technologies.	Adaptation of new forms and technologies as a complement to artistic vision.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
c. Consistency and focus	A lack of coherence of effort toward advancement of the work or project.	Work adequately integrates with and advances creative vision	Steadily advancing progress in expanding a coherent artistic vision.

4. Capacity for self-evaluation, critical thought and discourse

The committee makes judgment regarding the development of skills of critical reflection based on a Candidate's participation in critiques of work, reviews of academic papers, and the appraisals of project self-evaluations. This element of evaluation is reviewed with regard to the following dimensions:

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
a. Intentions, concepts, syntax	A lack of written or oral fluency regarding intentions, concepts, and syntax of work.	Developing fluency in written and verbal responses to the product and process of work.	Fluency in medium and confident articulation of creative vision.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
b. Historical, social and cultural context	Inadequate awareness of historical, social and cultural context; inability to contextualize work.	Ability to situate personal vision and locate influences within an historical, social and cultural context.	Use of historical, social and cultural contexts as on-going reference points and frames for creative vision.

	Dissatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
c. Relationship to Art History and other disciplines relevant to the chosen medium	Inadequate knowledge of fields related to chosen medium hinder making relevant connections to work; oral and written abilities lack confidence and fluency.	Demonstrate oral and written abilities in the discussion of the history of art, humanities and other disciplines as relevant to visual culture; establish relationships to their chosen practice.	Make insightful connections with work in other disciplines to deepen and advance the development of creative vision. Superior written and oral delivery of ideas.

250.020 – LETTER TO PROJECT MENTORS

Revised: September 2015

Dear Project Mentor:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a mentor for a student enrolled in our MFA program. Your efforts are invaluable to all of us at Maine Media College. We prefer to allow the relationship between mentor and student to develop with as little administrative imposition as is prudent. This approach has worked well. Historically speaking, the benefits to our students generally exceed those that could be expected were a rigid structure of guidance imposed without regard for the relational dynamics involved with mentored learning.

Students must present work to the MFA Committee for critique in order to receive graduate credit. The Committee votes on this matter at the end of each retreat.

Mentors may recommend that credit be granted or denied, and the Committee considers mentors' evaluations in arriving at its decisions. In an effort to apprise you of the criteria that the Committee uses in evaluating student work, I am attaching a copy of our evaluation rubric to this letter. It may be helpful to you in working with the student and as you write midterm and final evaluations.

We observe federally accepted guidelines for credit hours. As you will note in the rubric, the time on task required to earn one credit is 45 hours. Given the length of our semesters, students should expect to spend at minimum fourteen hours per week on the typical 6-credit creative project. This includes the time spent in discussion with the mentor. As a general guideline I recommend that mentors plan to engage with students every two weeks. It is expected that project mentors confer with students at minimum ten hours over the course of the semester.

Lastly, as you will note, some of the evaluation criteria involve a perspective on students' work as it has developed over time. It may behoove you and your student to discuss their previous work to acquire this perspective, if you have not worked with them in the past.

Again, thank you for your efforts. They are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the rubric, or believe you would like some further assistance in working with a student, please do not hesitate to contact the student's advisor. If you prefer, you may certainly contact me directly.

Sincerely yours,

Howard Greenberg, Chair Maine Media College MFA

250.030 – PROCEDURES FOR MENTOR PROJECTS

Revised: August 2017

GUIDELINES FOR STUDIO PROJECTS

In preparing for critiques of their creative work, Candidates should carefully consider the elements of evaluation set forth in the rubric. While it is not imperative that work presented for critique be in a final form for exhibition, e.g., photographic prints need not be matted and framed, the work should be finished to the extent that no aspect of the presentation would call into question Candidates' craft. Candidates should also determine in advance how their work would best be displayed at critiques. Program administrators will make every effort possible to accommodate Candidates' requests in this regard provided that they are made well enough in advance of the retreat.

Candidates presenting screenplays or treatments should likewise consider how these would best be received and make arrangements accordingly with program administrators. Copies of screenplays and treatments must be sent to the program office no later than two weeks prior to the start of the retreat at which they will be critiqued. Candidates should bear in mind, however, that faculty may have many documents to read and so it may behoove Candidates to forward their screenplays at the earliest date possible. A "White Paper" regarding screenplays and treatments is attached.

OBJECTIVES FOR ACADEMIC PROJECTS

- Demonstrate the ability to research and analyze subject matter relevant to their creative work.
- Articulate this research and analysis in ways that make evident the significance of such connections.
- Reflect a deepening understanding of their work as a result of the academic study.

Notes:

Demonstration of knowledge in the area of study is necessary, but is not sufficient to gain credit for an academic project. Knowledge must always be applied to one or more of the critical ideas listed below. It is expected that the student will apply this knowledge to develop understanding of their working process, their understanding of historical or other contexts, and their capacity for effective self-critique.

Work Process – methods, practices, approaches, techniques

Context – frameworks within and perspectives from which creative work may be considered (other than those to working process), application of critical ideas to one's own work

Self-critique – synthesis of ideas as applied to creative work, progress toward artistic self-sufficiency.

GUIDELINE FOR ACADEMIC PROJECTS

The scope and direction of an academic project is determined through an initial conversation between a student and advisor, as modified by the student and mentor, and as agreed to by the student, advisor, and MFA Chair. Academic papers meriting three credits must reflect substantial efforts in both research and writing. Candidates' compositions should be of a superior quality commensurate with that of any other graduate-level program and all submissions are to include proper standardized footnoting as warranted. Research bibliographies should include a minimum of ten books or scholarly articles. Papers should be approximately eighteen pages in length (minimum, double-spaced, 12-point text, excluding illustrations). All papers should include a reflective component addressing the impact of the research and writing on Candidates' creative work. While appropriate topics are many, students, mentors, and advisors ought to bear in mind, when selecting topics for research, the College's requirements that all Candidates be able to place themselves within historical and ideological contexts by the time of graduation from the MFA program.

REQUIREMENTS

Copies of all papers to be presented for credit must be sent to the program office at least two week prior to the start of a retreat. Candidates must submit to the program office, abstracts of papers, approximately one page in length, at least two weeks prior to the start of the retreat at which these papers are to be presented.

REQUEST

Program administrators request that copies of bibliographies be provided to the library upon completion of projects and awarding of credit as these bibliographies may be of interest to other Candidates researching similar topics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following timeline recommendations are offered as guidance, to keep Candidates on track and on schedule:

- 30 days (one month) from start of term – anticipated bibliographies and other research needs provided to mentors and advisors;
- 60 days (two months) from start of term - annotated bibliographies (a paragraph or two summarizing each book or article) provided to the mentors;
- 90 days (three months) from start of term - outlines to be provided to mentors;
- 120 days (four months) from start of term - rough draft of paper provided to mentors;
- 140 days (four months, three weeks) from start of term - final draft provided to mentors;
- 160 days (approximately three weeks prior to retreat) from start of term - final papers including all revisions provided to mentors

250.040 – CRITIQUE PRIMER

Revised: August 2017

POLICY

The Faculty of Maine Media College view critique as a learning and teaching tool, not a forum for evaluation or generalized assessment. The purpose of critiques is to support through engaged dialogue the development of each student's creative vision, process and product. Faculty model discourse specific to each medium; promote awareness of technical, interpretive and stylistic areas of current and ongoing growth; identify artists, theory, or other sources relevant to the student's work; and support students in addressing challenges or questions in the evolution of each student's work. Critique is a dynamic process that requires active engagement from all the faculty, the student whose work is being critiqued and his or her peers. This primer addresses the role of each participant and identifies postures conducive to productive critiques.

PROCEDURE

For Students

It is helpful to view the Retreat as a time to reflect on the direction of your artistic process and development of your creative vision. The Critique itself and your individual meetings will be more generative if approached as times in which to constructively engage multiple perspectives in dialogue around what you're doing, where you'd like to go and how to get there. Critiques are not final exhibitions, they are part of the learning process and as such framing is discouraged.

Preparing for your Critique:

Try to view the critique as a think tank focused on your work during which you remain open minded to suggestions and feedback. It is important to remember that it is the working being critiqued not you as an artist. Remind yourself that the faculty is supportive of who you are as an artist and what you are trying to say. In doing this, students avoid the most important pitfalls of a critique: defensiveness and reactive listening.

In preparation for your critique, reflect on your core concerns, achievements and challenges during the semester, taking into account the stated objectives in the project proposal, and ask yourself how the critique might best advance your work in moving forward. Using these reflections to shape the way you approach and introduce your critique helps focus your critique on what is most useful and important to your ongoing process and concerns.

It should take no longer than five minutes to introduce the work in a way that will benefit you most. You might want to ask specific questions or you might prefer a more global approach to the work as a whole. Introducing the work with a general description of the process might generate a more global critique while introducing it with a description of particular challenges or concerns directs the discussion toward specifics. Allow your audience a chance to interpret the work and give yourself the benefit of their direct response by limiting explanations of the work itself.

During the critique listen carefully and critically, weigh responses against your goals, identify specific comments or concerns to clarify or probe further. Approaching the critique as a discussion and allowing for a give and take results in rich feedback.

Make sure you understand what is being referred to and described by asking for clarifications. Assess how well your work was understood in your own terms and use this feedback to become a critical connoisseur of your own work. Is your work being perceived and interpreted in the ways you want? If not, those are areas to further probe. This might point out areas of wisdom to be gained from the work itself: is your work doing something different than what you think your work is doing?

Participating in another student's Critique:

Critique discussions model medium-specific discourse and are essential learning opportunities for students who are not being critiqued. What is being said about another student's work will benefit both your own work and your understanding of the field. Listen carefully and critically. Students are encouraged to participate in critiques across all media by sharing comments supportive of the ongoing progress of the work being critiqued. Focus your comments on the work, not the artist. It is often very help to the student being critique if you pose your comment as a question. For

example, “Have you looked at X in relationship to what you’re doing with your print statement?” Thoughtful questions are often the most generative form of critique.

Critique Notes:

Students are required to provide notes on each student critique. The goal in providing these notes is for each student to provide feedback on the work of each of their peers. They also serve to remind the student of issue you found salient during the critique. If there are things you were unable to contribute during the student’s critique, please include them in the critique notes.

Your interpretive view of the work should be geared toward supporting the student’s ongoing process and situated in the context of that student’s objectives. Your responses are extremely valuable but should at all times attend to what you feel would best serve the student and the work. Direct judgments, whether positive or negative, rarely advance the work. For example, if a student is exploring memory through landscape imagery, it is unhelpful to write evaluative comments, such as ‘the connection established between landscape and memory is nebulous’ or ‘this connection has been frequently explored by other artists and what you’re doing is stale.’ However, it would be appropriate and useful to suggest other artists, theorist, and authors with whom you are familiar who have explored the connection between memory and landscape.

For Faculty

The overarching goal of critique is to support the ongoing progress of each student’s work. Faculty is asked to approach each critique with the intention of providing supportive reflections, constructive criticism and interpretations informed by media-specific knowledge. It is quite common for Faculty members to have different opinions. Allowing students to hear dialogue around multiple perspectives and between Faculty members is one of the benefits of group critique and is encouraged at all times.