

Exhibition & Capstone Research Requirements | PHOTOGRAPHY

The standard paradigm for the MFA photography capstone exhibition involves a research paper and an associated body of new visual works. The intention of the visual work is to support, explore, and illustrate the subject of the thesis paper. The student will develop a body of new visual work exhibiting a breadth and depth of problem solving and/or skill in addressing a comprehensive theme or situation that is worthy of being described as a visual thesis. The graduate committee will determine the parameters and appropriateness of such a research proposal.

When enrolled in Art 573: Photographic Exhibition & Capstone Research, the student will focus on the research paper and visual component. The only other course the student will typically be enrolled in is Art 564: Graduate Seminar. The committee and program coordinator will guide the student during this process.

Students must begin the process of developing a research topic proposal at least two quarters in advance of enrollment in Art 573. It is required that the proposal be developed two quarters in advance of graduation, and that the preparatory writing and designing be accomplished before enrolling in Art 573.

Research project subject matters

Graduate committees typically allow wide latitude of choice in the selection of research topics. However, certain criteria are required to be met for these topics:

The research proposed must allow the student to investigate issues and draw conclusions based to a considerable degree on his/her own efforts. Subjects that have already extensively researched, or work continued from previous quarters, and visual problems presenting a degree of challenge on a par with advanced undergraduate assignments do not meet the standards of a capstone project.

The visual thesis project must be a homogeneous body of new work addressing a shared subject or theme, named with a comprehensive title, and not a series of disassociated project pieces.

The written component is a research paper on the genre in which the student is working, in addition to the proposed visual work by the student.

Research paper for Photography

Use the Modern Language Association (MLA) formatting and style guide for rules on the paper's form.

(see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> for a simplified guide).

Minimum length, 25 pages; must include at least ten sources in the bibliography.

The student must receive approval from the committee for the research topic in September.

Provide an outline of the research paper by November of the fall quarter.

Provide a review draft for your committee by the first week of March.

Thesis show for Photography

Discuss the details and provide sketches or roughs of the visual content of the show within the first two weeks of the winter quarter. Provide a comprehensive overview presentation on all aspects of the thesis show during the fourth week of the term.

Because the visual thesis will be presented in a gallery exhibition and defended by the student in a gallery review, the thesis show must be developed to effectively address the available exhibition space and presentation requirements. It is the student's responsibility to accommodate work that is on a very small scale, requires visual projection, displaying on a screen, sound amplification, is fragile/perishable, etc. Students must consult with their committees and the gallery director to determine exhibition needs and appropriate responses.

Requirements for the visual work

The thesis work must be presented at the spring quarter 18-hour review for discussion about the direction of the work, the meaning behind it, aesthetics, and theories.

Deadline for thesis submission

The student must receive approval for the research topic in September.

An outline of paper is due in November to the committee and graduate coordinator.

The draft of the paper must be turned in to the committee and graduate coordinator in the first week of the spring quarter (March).

All students must have an oral defense in the gallery during the MFA exhibition during the 1st week of the show.

Final research paper and CD/DVD of the visual show due: first week in May