UMD’s B.A. in Art History is designed to help students learn to critically engage with the world through visual and material culture. From ancient ruins to the history of museums to contemporary activist imagery, the program’s courses explore a variety of cultural and historical contexts in relation to aesthetic traditions, cultural values, and social experience.

Why UMD

UMD has something special!

- Emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of art history through curricular connections to other departments/programs, including: Museum Studies; Urban & Regional Studies; Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies; and World Languages & Cultures
- Prepares students to think critically & make informed connections across many fields of study
- The deliberate merging of Art and Design in one department stimulates and provokes students as independent thinkers and creators who explore various media and methods
- Our distinguished faculty continue to create, exhibit, and publish research, in addition to teaching and providing mentorship and career guidance
- UMD Art and Design is accredited by NASAD, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design
- Museum internships available at UMD’s Tweed Museum of Art or at Glensheen the Historic Congdon Estate, or at other local museums/societies as well, including the Duluth Art Institute and Prøve Gallery.

Acquired Skills

Art History majors and minors become proficient in disciplinary and critical modes of scholarly inquiry in the visual arts, including the role of historical research. Students likewise learn to identify the significance of art and visual culture to everyday life, both across time and in the present moment.

The program’s focus on critical thinking, research, and written and verbal expression prepares students for work in a variety of cultural institutions, as well as pursuit of post-graduate degrees in a variety of fields.

Career Possibilities

Now more than ever, earning an art degree can lead to a number of exciting career fields. As new technologies develop and influence our society, new jobs are emerging for all types of creative individuals. Art History graduates pursue careers as diverse as professor, archivist, art dealer, conservator, curator, editor, gallery owner, museum technician, art educator, or writer, and also work at non-profits.

Scholarships

Admission to Art & Design programs is based upon standard UMD admission guidelines. Several departmental scholarships are awarded to returning Art & Design majors after the first year; additionally, any student can submit creative pieces to the Student
Exhibition each spring, which does include several small scholarships for outstanding selected artwork and/or research. At least one deserving art history student is recognized annually.

Student Clubs

Student clubs in the Department of Art & Design vary each year according to interests but typically include an Art Education Club, Student Photography Cooperative, Mud Guild (Ceramics Club), Art History Symposium, Media Arts Club, and Student Design Organization (SDO).

Faculty Highlights

Dr. Sara Blaylock’s research on experimental art and state culture in the Cold War Eastern Bloc countries contributes to debates on the cultural legacy of communism currently taking place in both academia and the arts. In addition to her PhD in Visual Studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz, she holds a BFA in Media Arts from the California College of the Arts, and is eager to support students pursuing both creative and academic futures. Dr. Blaylock has received support from institutions leading the study of art history, including the College Art Association and the Museum of Modern Art. Her research has been published in a variety of academic and arts venues, including in translation.

Dr. Jamie L. Ratliff teaches classes on Contemporary, Non-Western, and Latin American Art. Her research interests broadly focus on gender and art, representations of women, and social justice and protest in Latin America. Her writings have been published in international journals such as Arteologie, the Journal of Curatorial Studies, n.paradoxa: international feminist art journal, Nierika: Journal of Art Studies, and in the volumes, Feminism and Museums: Intervention, Disruption, Change. She also has local curatorial experience and is interested in the development of global art history and global exhibitions of contemporary art. She is a working board member for Prøve Gallery, a non-profit experimental contemporary art space in Duluth, MN. And she is a member of the FACilitation Leadership Team for the Duluth-based activist organization, the Feminist Action Collective.

Dr. Jennifer D. Webb’s classes explore the history of visual culture, architecture, and urban form. Her research considers patronage practice and the role of women in Renaissance Italy as well as in the history of Duluth. In her urban planning class, ArTH 2300: The City as a Work of Art, students work on “real-world” projects with stakeholders in the City of Duluth. She serves on the Boards of the Duluth Art Institute and Glensheen: the Historic Congdon Estate and is an active member of the Junior League of Duluth.

Requirements

Along with the courses required within the major, Art History B.A. students must complete a minor or second major appropriate for their academic goals.

All UMD Art & Design majors are required to bring a 15-inch Apple MacBookPro with Retina display. See specs: sfa.d.umn.edu/about/technology

Graduate Report

Recent UMD Graduates Job Placement Data & Employers

Here’s a sampling of positions Art History grads have attained six months to one year after graduation.

- Photographer - Lifetouch, Maple Grove, MN
- Solutions Content Writer & Search Engine Optimization Specialist - ResortsandLodges.com, Cottage Grove, MN

For more data see the Art History Graduate Follow-Up Report.

For ideas about Art History and other majors visit Career & Internship Services.