

ART

Undergraduate Program Information

Within the scope of the university's land-grant mission, the Department of Art utilizes our unique geographic location to serve and reflect diverse border communities. The program supports innovative and hybrid techniques, investigation of materials through both studio practice and a museum conservation program, as well as exhibition and curatorial opportunities. Establishing a foundation in critical and cultural discourse includes in-depth examination of theory, methodology, and materiality of art and art history. Capitalizing on the expertise of the department's faculty, as well as a state-of-the-art facility, students are provided with multiple platforms for artistic and critical engagement, as well as professional advancement. The curriculum fosters learning through collaborative and cross-disciplinary approaches and encourages exploration through a variety of research and curatorial practices. Critique and discourse are contextualized within historical and contemporary frameworks, with the possibility of developing new strategies of inquiry into culture and knowledge production. The faculty of nationally and internationally recognized practicing artists, historians, and conservators, in conjunction with a vibrant roster of visiting artists and researchers, create opportunities for active engagement across varied disciplines.

The department offers four undergraduate degrees: a Bachelor of Arts (BA) with a concentration in Studio Art, a BA with a concentration in Art History, a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Studio Art and a BFA in Museum Conservation. Our studio degrees provide students with the opportunity to either specialize or diversify their program of study in the following media areas: graphic design and media arts, ceramics, sculpture, metals and jewelry, photography and lens-based media, painting and drawing and museum conservation. We also support students who are interested in research practices in installation, performance and multi-media.

BA in Art History – This program is designed to give students a broad familiarity with the visual arts through the study of aesthetics, cultural contexts, visual and iconographic traditions, stylistic development and technical practices.

BA in Studio Art – The BA provides a solid background in materials, techniques and idea development across all media areas combined with art historical studies. Students have the opportunity to specialize or generalize in various medias. This degree offers more space for electives, making it useful for students who wish to double major or incorporate minor(s) into their degree program.

BFA in Studio Art – The BFA curriculum offers a more intense investigation into contemporary visual arts. Students who wish to embark on a professional career in art apply to the BFA program through a portfolio process in their sophomore year. Areas of potential specialization include photography and lens-based media, graphic design and media arts, ceramics, drawing, painting, jewelry/metalsmithing, and sculpture, or students may elect to focus on multiple specializations for an intermedia concentration. This degree culminates with a BFA thesis exhibition.

BFA in Museum Conservation - the BFA in Museum Conservation is an interdisciplinary degree, combining the studio arts, art history, anthropology, history, chemistry and conservation technologies to yield skills in the conservation of material objects of all types and historical value. NMSU offers one of only a few undergraduate degrees in museum conservation in the country.

The study of art provides an appropriate background for the pursuit of careers in studio art and art history in such areas as: the visual arts; graphic design and advertising; conservation; libraries and archives; museums and galleries; architecture and interior design; photography, video and cinematography; crafts; education and art therapy; publishing; theatre and set/lighting design; television; industry and business; communication; management and research in the creative and academic areas. A major in art also provides students with a broad humanistic background appropriate to preparation for advanced degrees in other fields.

Graduate Program Information

The Department of Art offers a Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art and Master of Arts with an emphasis in Art History. Graduate students focus on an individualized program of study, supported by required coursework and mentorship with the graduate faculty. MFA students are encouraged to work across disciplines and cultivate their personal research within the broad context of 21st-century art, art history and theory. The department supports work in and across the following areas: ceramics, graphic design, time-based media, lens-based media, jewelry and metalsmithing, painting and drawing, sculpture and museum conservation.