

# ART STUDIO MAJOR

## MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The Art Studio major enables students to become fluent in visual languages—their analytical and critical vocabularies and the rigors of their techniques and methods—to explore intellectual issues and human experience. Students learn techniques associated with various media while developing a personal creative vision, beginning with basic studies in drawing and introductory art history. More focused studies train students in the practices of Architecture, Drawing, Ecological Design, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Product Design, Sculpture and Time-Based Media. The program seeks to reflect the diversity of current technical and intellectual approaches to art and design and welcomes interdisciplinary experimentation.

The Art Studio major is comprised of two distinct pathways, the honors thesis and the capstone portfolio, each with its own emphasis, course requirements, and capstone experience. Students in the honors pathway spend their senior year working closely with a dedicated faculty advisor over two semesters towards the comprehensive thesis requirement—the development of a focused body of work and a solo exhibition in the spring of their senior year. The portfolio pathway emphasizes advanced coursework, requiring students to complete three 300-level courses. Instead of a thesis, students compile a portfolio in the spring of their senior year, documenting their creative achievements in upper-level courses. While this portfolio does not qualify for honors, it is a graduation requirement. Both pathways require students to complete at least three Art History courses, each covering a different geographical area, for a total of 11 departmental courses. Additionally, all students must fulfill their General Education requirements.

Students who gravitate towards the Art Studio major tend to be creative, visual thinkers with a passion for art and ideas, an experimental mindset, and a desire to develop their technical aptitude. They are self-motivated, open to constructive criticism, and dedicated to investing the time and effort to formulate their unique, creative expression.

Art Studio majors develop a broad awareness of current and historical art and design practices, their theoretical concerns and social impacts, and they acquire the ability to analyze art from diverse intellectual traditions. Critical thinking, technical proficiency, and observational skills are used to communicate ideas through artistic means and are applicable to a wide range of creative fields and careers in fine art, arts education, advertising, design, business, curation, art conservation and many others.

## ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

In the second semester of the sophomore year, students may declare the Art Studio major in their WesPortal. At the time of declaration, students are expected to have completed:

- Drawing I (ARST131)
- Another ARST course.
- One Art History course
- At the time of declaration, prospective majors must have a B+ average in the department and a B average overall. All Art Studio and Art History courses must be taken for a grade to count toward the major.

\*Students may be currently enrolled in one of the courses at the time of major declaration.

## MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

In their junior year, Art Studio majors will choose between two major pathways. The following outline presents these options:

**Honors thesis pathway: course requirements and honors thesis**

- Drawing 1 (ARST131)
- Minimum 4 other ARST courses (including one 3-D course)
- 3 Art History courses in 3 different geographical regions (The Americas, Europe, East Asia, South and Southwest Asia, and Africa. A global survey course or a multi-continental course may substitute for one of the geographic areas)
- Senior Seminar (ARST350)
- 2 semesters Senior Thesis Tutorial (ARST409/ARST410)  
**= 11 courses**

\*Must be GenEd compliant

\*1 Individual ARST Tutorial may be counted toward 6 ARST courses

\*Eligible for honors

\*Students pursuing the honors thesis pathway must secure the agreement of a thesis advisor.

\*In the rare case a student finishes their graduation requirements in December of their senior

year, they may complete the major with only one semester of thesis tutorial, still exhibiting in the spring.

**Portfolio pathway: course requirements and capstone portfolio**

- Drawing I (ARST131)
- 6 ARST courses (including one 3-D course, and 3 x 300-level or higher)
- 3 Art History courses in 3 different geographical regions (The Americas, Europe, East Asia, South and Southwest Asia, and Africa. A global survey course or a multi-continental course may substitute for one of the geographic areas)
- 1 Elective (ARST or ARHA course of choice, any level)
- 1 capstone portfolio working with advisor spring senior year (not a credit, but a requirement)  
**=11 courses**

\*1 Individual ARST Tutorial may be counted toward 6 ARST courses

\*Must be GenEd compliant

\*Not honors eligible

Teaching Apprentice Tutorials in will not be counted toward requirements in either major pathway.

## GENERAL EDUCATION

All majors are required to fulfill their general education expectations as described by the University's guidelines.

## STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

The Art Studio faculty has set the following goals for student achievement and success in the major:

- Exploration of and proficiency with a wide range of media and techniques, at the introductory level and beyond
- Honing of observational skill
- Fluency in visual language
- The development of technical facility enabling students to explore their personal visions through making art
- Broad awareness of current and historical art and its theoretical and historical context
- Methodologies of critique, and the ability to analyze art from diverse intellectual traditions and technical approaches
- Development of an independent studio practice, ideation, and methodology, culminating in a one-person exhibition senior year (for students in the honors pathway)

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT

No Advanced Placement credit is accepted in art studio.

## PRIZES

**Jessup Prize** • Awarded to two undergraduates each year who are deemed to show the greatest talent and promise for even greater excellence in sculpture, printmaking, architecture, photography, painting, or drawing. The prize is given in memory of Pauline Jessup, a noted interior designer, who practiced her craft for over 60 years throughout the United States. Mrs. Jessup was noted for her unerring eye, her extraordinarily refined taste, and her steadfast commitment to her clients—many of whom she served over three generations. The award is determined by the Department of Art and Art History.

**Elizabeth Verveer Tishler Prize—Art** • Established in 1981 by a gift from Mrs. Tishler. Awarded annually for an outstanding senior exhibition in painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, photography, or architecture.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

ARST majors must consult with their advisor and receive approval for off-campus study, leaves, or the addition of a second major. Off-campus study in the senior year is discouraged and requires additional approval of the program director. All majors (or intended majors) should carefully consider their outstanding major requirements when planning off-campus study.

There are two types of ARST transfer credit:

- Courses that can be applied to ARST major requirements
- Courses that can be applied for general graduation credit

All ARST transfer credits must ultimately be approved by the Art Studio program director.

The process for students seeking transfer credit for a major requirement is as follows:

- Students should gather information about the course(s) they plan to take at other institutions, including links to course syllabi. The syllabi should outline class contact hours and expectations for work outside of class. This information must be submitted online with the Office of Study Abroad before enrollment.
- Pre-approval is required for courses intended for major credit. Students must present the course details to the Art Studio faculty member specializing in the corresponding concentration (e.g., a photography course must be pre-approved by the Art Studio photography professor).
- Upon course completion, students must undergo a portfolio review with the same faculty member to determine eligibility for transfer credit toward the major. Credit is not guaranteed.

\*Wesleyan students who wish to transfer course credit toward the Art Studio major should note that approval is not automatic, even for courses from a Wesleyan-approved program. Students may apply a maximum of three combined ARST and ARHA courses taken outside Wesleyan toward their major, but only with specific permission from the Art Studio faculty.

\*Transfer students who wish to receive credit toward the Art Studio major for art courses taken at another institution should seek approval from the program director prior to enrollment. A portfolio review is required, transfer of course credit to the Art Studio major is not automatic.

Process for students seeking general credit for graduation:

- Students should gather information about the course(s) they plan to take at other institutions, including links to course syllabi. The syllabi should outline class contact hours and expectations for work outside of class. This information must be submitted online before enrollment.
- Art Studio program director will review the course and approve general credit, if the proposed course is similar in contact hours/workload as a Wesleyan credit.

## HONORS

Students interested in the honors thesis major pathway must first consult with an Art Studio faculty member in their proposed area of media concentration who is willing to serve as their advisor. Typically, faculty expect students to have demonstrated exceptional work in a second-level course within a specific medium (such as Photo II or Painting II) before agreeing to advise an honors applicant. The student and their major advisor will collaboratively design a program of study. Admission to the honors pathway requires a review by the Art Studio faculty, along with a minimum academic average of a B and a departmental average of B+.

In their final year of study, students in the honors pathway will develop a focused body of work and present a solo exhibition. This exhibition serves as the culmination of a two-semester thesis tutorial, developed through close critical dialogue with their faculty advisor. The senior thesis exhibition offers students a unique opportunity to engage in a rigorous and self-directed creative investigation and participate in a public conversation about their work.

Exhibitions are critiqued by the faculty advisor and a second critic and are subsequently reviewed by the faculty of the Art Studio program, who vote to

determine high honors, honors, pass, or fail, on the criteria of originality, mastery of medium, depth and range of investigation, and coherence of the exhibition.

Students in the honors thesis pathway must document their theses and upload edited images to a shared ARST drive as part of their graduation requirements.