ART STUDIO MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

ART STUDIO: ARCHITECTURE, DIGITAL ART, DRAWING, GRAPHIC DESIGN, PAINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, PRINTMAKING, SCULPTURE, AND TYPOGRAPHY

The art studio program enables students to become fluent in visual language—its analytical and critical vocabulary and the rigors of its technique and method—as a means to explore intellectual issues and human experience. To this end, students learn technique while searching for a personal vision, beginning with basic studies in drawing and introductory art history, proceeding through study of various media, and working toward the successful completion of the major’s comprehensive requirement—the presentation of a one-person exhibition in the spring of their senior year. The program seeks to reflect the diversity of technical and intellectual approaches practiced in the field of visual art and is open to interdisciplinary experimentation as well as traditionally focused studies.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

At the time of application for major status, a student is expected to have completed ARST131 and one art history course, along with another art studio course. The prospective major must consult with an art studio faculty member (in the proposed area of study) who is willing to serve as advisor. Some faculty may expect the student to have completed outstanding work in a second-level course within a particular medium (for example, ARST352 or ARST340) before agreeing to support a major applicant. Together, student and major advisor devise a program of study for the final two years. Admission to the major requires a review by the art studio faculty and a minimum academic average of B+ and an average of B+ for at least three courses in the department, two of which must be in the art studio program.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Students majoring in art studio must satisfactorily complete 11 courses in the department:

• ARST131
• At least eight courses numbered 200 or higher:
  • four art studio courses—at least one of which must be in either of the three-dimensional areas of sculpture or architecture
  • four art history courses
    • one Classical through Renaissance
    • one post-Renaissance (ARHA110 preferred)
    • one non-Western
    • one additional course from the offerings
• two semesters of senior thesis

1 In the rare case a student finishes all of his/her graduation requirements in January of the senior year, he/she may complete the major with only one semester of thesis tutorial, still exhibiting in the Spring.

That breaks down to five art studio courses, four art history courses, and two semesters of thesis. Further course study in art studio and art history is recommended. On occasion, 100-level art history courses may be substituted for the requirement of 200-level courses. Majors are required to fulfill their general education as described by the University guidelines, since all are required to complete a senior thesis for honors. Teaching apprentice tutorials in the department will not be counted toward the major.

In the final year of study, each student will develop a focused body of work and mount a solo exhibition. That exhibition is the culmination of a two-semester thesis tutorial and is developed in close critical dialogue with a faculty advisor. The exhibition is critiqued by the faculty advisor and a second critic and must be passed by a vote of the faculty of the art studio program. The senior thesis exhibition provides a rare opportunity for the student to engage in a rigorous, self-directed, creative investigation and in a public dialogue about his/her work.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Art studio majors are required to fulfill their general education requirements as described by the University guidelines, since all are required to complete a senior thesis for honors.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

The art studio program faculty has set the following goals for student achievement or success in the major:

• Exploration of and proficiency with a wide range of media and technique, at the introductory level and beyond
• Honing 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
• Critique methodologies, and the ability to analyze art from diverse intellectual traditions and technical approaches
• Development of independent studio practice, ideation, and methodology, culminating in a one-person exhibition senior year

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

No Advanced Placement credit is accepted in art studio.

TRANSFER CREDIT

A major is obliged to consult with his/her advisor and receive approval for off-campus study, leaves, or addition of a second major. Off-campus study in the senior year is not encouraged and requires additional approval of the program director. Students should also consult carefully when planning off-campus study before they have been accepted to the major. An art studio faculty member must approve coursework taken outside of Wesleyan in advance, and a portfolio review is required after the course is completed to transfer credit toward the major. Transfer of course credit toward the major is not automatic, even from a Wesleyan-approved program. A student may count no more than three art studio and art history courses taken outside the Wesleyan department toward the major without specific permission of the faculty. Students transferring to Wesleyan who wish to receive credit toward the major for art studio courses taken at another institution should seek approval from the department prior
to enrollment; portfolio review is required, transfer of course credit is not automatic.

HONORS

All art studio majors are required to complete an honors thesis, the senior thesis exhibition. The studio faculty 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.