

Differences in College Art Programs

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Art School vs Non Art School

Art School

Pros

- Your fellow classmates *know* they want to be around art *all* the time—they signed up for the experience, and are likely to share your passion for creativity and expression
- Many standalone art schools are some of the highest ranked, and hold some serious industry credibility
- Art schools often have more opportunities to focus on your work, as the majority of your coursework will be in the studio

Cons

- Financial aid is likely to be lower than at traditional universities due to smaller endowments, so you may have a harder time financing your degree
- The required liberal arts/general education courses may be “watered down” compared to what you’d experience at a more traditional university—that is to say, you may not get the same comprehensive education you would elsewhere
- If you’re looking for the “traditional” college experience (big school pride, athletics, Greek life, student clubs), you’re unlikely to find it at an art school

The Bottom Line

It you eat, sleep, and breathe art then art school may be a good fit....if you can afford it.

RISD



Traditional University

Pros

- Expect lots of opportunities for interdisciplinary work—design students can work on augmented reality or modeling for anthropology or neuroscience, for example
- Universities tend to have larger endowments than small art schools, and therefore you'll have better access to funding and financial assistance while working on your degree
- Students have more diverse tastes, personalities, backgrounds, and goals—you won't just be in classes with other artists, which can lead to inspiration in some surprising places
- If you're not 100% certain about “art as a career,” you'll be exposed to many more disciplines and potential career interests—plus, you'll have the option to double major

Cons

- You will be expected to complete coursework in fields outside the arts, such as math, English, and science—not necessarily a con, but it does mean less time spent on your art

The Bottom Line

If you're looking for a wider range of experiences (and possibly more practical career prospects), choosing a traditional university with a dedicated arts department is the safer option.

SVA



BA vs BFA in Art

BA

- Generally a 4 year degree is about 120+ credits
- With a BA, 25-30% of credits are in Art and Art History, with the remaining credits in other general education areas

BFA

- Generally a 4 year degree is about 120+ credits
- With a BFA, 50-60% of credits are in Art and Art History, with the remaining credits in other general education areas
- Often you need to apply and be accepted into a BFA program
- There may be other requirements such as a thesis exhibition, advanced coursework in specific areas, etc.

BA	VERSUS	BFA
Bachelor of Arts		Bachelor of Fine Arts
An academic degree		A professional degree
Broad range of subjects like history, literature, language etc.		Practical subjects like acting, photography, arts, etc.
Theoretical side of a subject		Practical side of a subject
Less course work than a BFA		More course work than a BA
More elective courses		Less elective courses
Prepares students for a wide range of jobs		Trains students for a more specific job
		Pediaa.com

Baccalaureate Degrees

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

General Education 45 credits
BA Requirements 12-24 Credits
Major Requirements 24-43 Credits
Electives 13 minimum

Bachelor of Science (BS)

General Education 45 credits
Major Requirements 55-85 Credits
Electives 13 minimum

The College of the Liberal Arts

Example of 4 year plan

https://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartmouth/college-of-visual-and-performing-arts/undergrad-curriculum-guides/AGA_cvpa_umassd_F2022.pdf

ANIMATION + GAME ARTS

BFA, Art + Design, 120 credit, four-year program of study



STUDENT'S NAME:

STUDENT'S ID NUMBER:

ADVISOR'S NAME:

STUDENT'S PHONE:

STUDENT'S EMAIL:

YEAR OF ENTRY:

2022/23

RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE OF STUDY

FIRST YEAR FALL

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 101 Visual Arts Seminar | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 110 Structural Drawing | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 120 2D Form and Surface | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 140 Digital Essentials | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ENL 101 Critical Writing & Reading I | 3 credits |

FIRST YEAR SPRING

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD ____ 200+ Level Drawing | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARH 102 Intro to the History of Art | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 130 3D Form and Space | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ The Social World** | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ENL 102 Critical Writing & Reading II | 3 credits |

SECOND YEAR FALL

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 245 Story Structures | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 345 3D Modeling | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ENL 200 Topics in Literature | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD ____ Studio Elective | 3 credits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARH 200 Theory and Criticism of Art and Design | 3 credits |

SECOND YEAR SPRING

REQUIRED COURSES BY CATEGORIES

Foundations Requirements

- | | Grade |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 101 Visual Arts Seminar | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 110 Structural Drawing | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 120 2D Form and Surface | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 130 3D Form and Space | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOU 140 Digital Essentials | _____ |

Concentration Requirements

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 245 Story Structures | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 246 Principles of Animation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 248 Principles of Game Design | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 345 3D Modeling | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 346 3D Animation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 347 Visual Design for Games | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 348 Game Design | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 445 Senior Animation Studio | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 446 Advanced Topics in AGA | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 447 Senior Game Studio | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 448 A+GA Capstone | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AXD 405 Professional Design Practice | _____ |

Art History Requirements

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARH 102 Intro to the History of Art | _____ |
|--|-------|

SAIC



Structure

- Many Art programs have foundation classes
- They are generally in drawing, design, and sometimes 3D
- Some schools have you do the entire first year as a foundation year, before you even start in specific classes such as ceramics, painting, photography, etc.
- Some schools have you take just a few foundation classes your first year while you also take other art electives in specific areas.
- Art programs generally all require art history classes, but the number of them and the amount of choice you have in picking them may be different.
- Once you pick a major concentration area (such as Ceramics) some schools have you take the majority of your advanced art classes only in that area, while other schools require you to take beginning AND advanced classes in one or more areas.

MICA



Access

In some art programs, art classes are only available to Art Majors and Minors. They may let in non-art students if there is space after art students have chosen their classes.

Some art programs continue that by major concentration. For example, advanced ceramics classes are only available, or available first, to art students concentrating in ceramics. Other schools allow any art students students to sign up for advanced ceramics classes, even if it is not their concentration.

Virginia Commonwealth University



Facilities

When visiting and investigating art programs, check out what kinds of facilities they have, specifically looking at:

- hours that art making facilities are open
- art supplies available at school book store, and location of off campus art stores
- as a senior, do you get a private or semi private art studio space? Does the school also offer spaces to juniors, sophomores, and freshman?
- equipment in technology labs, and equipment such as cameras that are available for check out.
- spaces and opportunities for undergraduate students to exhibit work
- museums? Local or attached

CalArts



MICA booklet on choosing an art school

<https://goo.gl/u8ndTj>

University of Iowa - College of Art & Art History



Money

- MassArt is a public dedicated art school - and may cost less for many students
- Other dedicated art schools are generally private NON profits (such as RISD, Pratt, SVA, MICA, SAIC). Their tuition is generally higher, and there may be some scholarship money
- Art programs at state and private colleges and universities (such as UMass Amherst or Northeastern) would have the tuition and scholarship money that is generally available to all of their students
- Private FOR profit art schools have neither the prestige nor the scholarship money of the other options

SCAD



Art School Rankings

<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-15-top-art-schools-united-states>

<https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-fine-arts-schools/fine-arts-rankings>