

Art History

PROGRAM OVERVIEW We live in an image-saturated world but few of us possess the critical tools to analyze images and to understand their use. The art history major prepares students to navigate the complexity of visual culture, whether past or present, by introducing them to the specialized language and strategies of image making as well as by providing them with a rigorous historical introduction to the production, interpretation, and circulation of images. The curriculum employs new models of teaching and theorizing art history in order to acknowledge changes in the field. For example, unlike the long-standing emphasis on chronology in beginning surveys of art history, the introductory courses at Drake employ a thematic approach that traces formal and conceptual concerns across multiple time periods and cultures. Upper-level courses offer critical reexaminations of the categories fundamental to the founding of art history including national tradition, stylistic periods, and definitions of modernity.

Unlike many comparable programs, the study of art history at Drake is fully integrated within the studio and design areas of the department. The art history major combines studio experience with an introduction to the practices, theories, and debates of the discipline. Students therefore gain experience in making images as well as in interpreting them.

FACULTY The Department of Art and Design includes nine full-time faculty; all hold the highest degrees in their field and are practicing designers, artists and scholars. All full-time faculty are engaged in teaching classes from the introductory to advanced levels.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION There are no entry requirements for the art history major. Recommended high school courses include foreign language study, history, and art history (if offered).

Applicants do not have to show a portfolio to be admitted to the art and design program at Drake. However, students must provide evidence of their work to apply for merit scholarships offered by the Department of Art and Design. A scholarship application form that requires applicants to submit digital images of their work is available on the Department of Art and Design Web site.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MAJOR The art history program consists of 28 credit hours of art history supplemented by basic experience in the studio arts for 40 credits total. Familiarity with a foreign language, preferably French or German, is recommended. The capstone experience is a major independent research paper on a subject of the student's choosing.

DRAKE CURRICULUM The Drake Curriculum, required of all undergraduates, is designed to help students meet personal and professional goals as they acquire fundamental knowledge and abilities in ten Areas of Inquiry, including communication, critical thinking, artistic experience, historical consciousness, information and technology literacy, international and multicultural experiences, scientific and quantitative literacy, values and ethics and engaged citizenship. Students work closely with their academic advisers to craft a program of

study in general education that prepares students for civic and professional leadership.

The Drake Curriculum also requires first-year seminars, which foster development of critical thinking and written and oral communication skills through a topical focus; and a Senior Capstone, in which students demonstrate the capacity to bring information, skills and ideas to bear on one project.

INTERNSHIPS & OPPORTUNITIES Students have completed internships for art history credit at the Anderson Gallery, Des Moines Art Center, Salisbury House, and State Historical Society of Iowa.

Drake provides students with many opportunities to engage in art outside the classroom. The Department of Art and Design holds exhibitions of work by students, faculty and invited artists during the school year, including the annual juried Student Art Exhibition.

Facilities in the Harmon Fine Arts Center include the 3,500-square-foot Anderson Gallery. Providing 1,800 square feet of exhibition space, rooms for handling and storing works of art, and a reception lobby, the Anderson Gallery is an exciting showcase for work by visiting artists, students and faculty. Art history courses linked to the gallery offer an introduction to the curatorial profession that encompasses exhibition research, design, and public programming. Annual assistantships are available through the gallery, providing students with a unique opportunity for hands-on experience in gallery management. Students also have the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with exhibiting artists from around the country. The Anderson Gallery is a visible and vital member of the Des Moines art community, attracting local and national visitors.

Adjacent to the Anderson Gallery is the Weeks Gallery, providing an additional 1,000 square feet of exhibition space. The Weeks Gallery is exclusively reserved for student exhibitions, from senior thesis shows to group shows by the student-led Art Club. Nationally and internationally recognized artists and other visual arts professionals come to campus each year to give lectures and workshops. In addition, field trips allow students to observe major collections and exhibitions in such cities as Chicago and Kansas City. Drake students also take advantage of the exhibitions and lectures offered by the Des Moines Art Center, internationally recognized for its collection of 20th century works of art.

CAREER OPTIONS Museum Curator/Administrator; Museum Education; Museum Registrar; Gallery staff/director; Researcher; Lecturer; Art Writer; Art Critic/Correspondent for newspaper, magazine, other publications; Art Conservator – with technical training; Historical society work; Historic Preservation Agency work; Art Education; Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Public and Private schools; Corporate Curator; Art Appraiser for auction house, art dealer; Administrator for public and private arts organizations (NEA, Local Arts Commissions); Art Librarian; Archivist; Curator of Visual Collections photo, digital, etc.

HONORS Art history majors are eligible for the Judy Smith Award in support of their capstone projects.

HOW TO REACH US

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