Graduate Program in Visual Studies

2000 Humanities Gateway; (949) 824-1124
http://www.humanities.uci.edu/visualstudies/
Bridget R. Cooks, Director

The graduate program in Visual Studies, administered jointly by the faculties of the Department of Art History and the Department of Film and Media Studies, offers students the opportunity to pursue a doctorate in the cultural analysis of visual artifacts and experiences. Visual Studies synthesizes methodological insights from both component disciplines in order to examine the social practices of visual representation and visuality itself. The program leads to a Ph.D. degree in Visual Studies. While the program (in certain instances) grants an M.A. to students en route to their Ph.D., it admits only those students intending to complete their doctorate at UCI.

In addition, an emphasis in Visual Studies, described later in this section, is available to Ph.D. and M.F.A. students in all departments at UCI.

Admission

The program is open to students applying with either a bachelor’s or a master’s degree, and applicants must meet the general requirements for admission to graduate study at UCI. A recent sample of academic writing—such as a representative undergraduate paper, or the master’s thesis or a major research paper written at the master’s level—should be submitted with the application packet.

The deadline for application is December 15, and the program accepts applicants for admission for the fall quarter only. Additional information is available from the Director of the Visual Studies program.

Language Requirements

All students are required to demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language and are strongly encouraged to develop competence in a second. Students consult with the Director and/or their principal advisor(s) to determine the appropriate language on which the student will be tested, based on their interests and program of study. Advisors, moreover, may require the demonstration of reading knowledge in additional languages according to the scholarly demands of the student’s specific field. All language requirements must be satisfied before students are awarded a master’s degree or, if they enter with an M.A., before they are advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

Course Requirements

Beyond the core series (VIS STD 290A—VIS STD 290B—VIS STD 290C), students are required to complete an additional 11 courses for a total of 14 courses. Out of this total, at least 10 courses (including the core series and VIS STD 297) must be within the program in Visual Studies, and at least two courses are to be from outside the Visual Studies discipline. In order to establish a level of expertise in one conventionally defined discipline, students must take (among their 10 courses noted above), at least three courses that have a strong component of art history or at least three courses that have a strong component of film studies.

Students admitted with an M.A. in a related field may petition the Visual Studies Graduate Committee to have some of their course requirements waived and advance early; such petitions will be considered in close consultation with the primary advisor and on a case-by-case basis (though all students must take the core sequence). Under normal circumstances, up to two courses may be waived. A maximum of four courses may be waived, in which case no more than two waived courses may count as required Visual Studies courses. The petitioned courses must be reviewed and approved first by the Visual Studies Graduate Committee and thereafter by the Graduate Division. Students wishing to waive course work must petition by the end of the fall quarter of their first year in the program. While students may accrue units for University Teaching (ART HIS 399 or FL&M&MDA 399), Reading for the Preliminary Examination (VIS STD 298A), and Prospectus Research (VIS STD 298B) these do not count toward the required number of courses.

Master’s Paper and M.A. Degree

In the winter quarter of their second year, students admitted without an M.A. in a related field will enroll in VIS STD 296 for the purpose of expanding and developing a seminar paper into a Master’s paper under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The Master’s paper is an essay of near-publication quality, approximately 30 pages in length. In addition to the advisor, two additional readers from the Visual Studies faculty will assess the Master’s paper and the student’s overall academic performance. The committee will assess whether or not the student has satisfied all requirements for the M.A. Those students who have satisfied the M.A. requirements, but whose committees assess their work as not meeting the standards for Ph.D. study, will receive a terminal M.A. degree.

Preliminary Examination

By the end of the first year, a student must reach an agreement with one of the program’s core faculty members to serve as principal advisor. The student will work with the principal advisor to plan completion of his or her program requirements and to select the faculty who will supervise examination fields. The examination committee will be constituted as follows: the principal advisor, who will supervise one examination field; two additional faculty members supervising examination fields, at least one of whom must be a member of the Visual Studies faculty; a fourth member from the Visual Studies faculty who will not supervise an examination field but will participate in the oral examination; and a designated “outside” member who must be a member of the UCI faculty but cannot hold either a primary or joint appointment in Visual Studies, Art History, or Film and Media Studies. Except in extraordinary circumstances (to be adjudicated by the program’s Graduate Committee), students are required to include at least one member from Art History and one from Film and Media Studies among the three faculty members supervising the examination fields.

The student and principal advisor define three fields to be examined by the faculty. The fields should combine historical breadth and some variety in media. Over the course of the following two quarters, students normally enroll in eight to twelve units per quarter of Reading for the Preliminary Examination (VIS STD 298A) during which time they prepare reading lists in close consultation with their principal advisor and field supervisors, and complete the reading of those lists. The examination takes place near the end of those two quarters of study, normatively at the end of the academic year. Submission and approval of the M.A. paper is a prerequisite for enrolling in VIS STD 298A (Reading for the Preliminary Examination) for students entering the Visual Studies Program without an M.A. Normally, the M.A. paper submission should be completed by spring quarter of the second year.

The first part of the examination consists of a written component, in which the student is called upon to respond to questions posed in the three examination fields. The student’s written responses are circulated to all committee members. An oral examination follows, normally within two
weeks, and consists of questions prompted both by the student’s reading lists and by the written examinations. Based on the student’s written and oral performance, the committee will determine whether the student has successfully passed the examination. If the committee is not satisfied with the student’s performance, it may also decide to reexamine the student on one or more fields after a specific interval. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no student will be given more than two chances to pass any given section of the examination.

When students have completed their exam readings, they enroll in four to twelve units per quarter of Prospectus Research (VIS STD 298B). In the winter quarter after students take their exams, they are required to take VIS STD 297, a writing practicum in which they draft a prospectus that defines the scope, approach, and rationale for a proposed dissertation and begin research on the dissertation. Advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree is contingent upon successful completion of this course, subsequent approval of the prospectus by the dissertation committee, and satisfaction of all language requirements. The dissertation committee meets with the student in the spring quarter following successful completion of VIS STD 297 to review the prospectus and the progress of the student, and determines whether to recommend advancement at that time. The normative time for advancement to candidacy is four years. Once students have advanced, they may enroll in Dissertation Research (VIS STD 299).

Dissertation
The student and the principal advisor consult to determine the composition of a doctoral committee of three members including the principal advisor, which then must unanimously approve the prospectus before the student proceeds with the dissertation. The doctoral committee, on the basis of the candidate’s past academic performance and proposed dissertation topic, may require additional course work or other forms of preparation for the dissertation. The doctoral committee, under the direction of the principal advisor, supervises the student’s research program and ultimately approves the dissertation. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. program is seven years, and the maximum permitted is eight years.

Graduate Emphasis in Visual Studies
In addition to the doctoral program in Visual Studies described above, the Program in Visual Studies also offers an emphasis in Visual Studies available to Ph.D. and M.F.A. students in all departments at UCI. Satisfactory completion of the emphasis is certified by the Director of Visual Studies and is noted in the student’s dossier.

Admission to the Program
Students must first be admitted to, or currently enrolled in, a Ph.D. or M.F.A. program at UCI. Applicants must submit to the Director of Visual Studies a summary of prior undergraduate and graduate course work related to Visual Studies, institutions attended, and major(s), together with a brief statement of purpose, including career objectives, areas of interest and research, record of research, teaching, professional accomplishments, and/or creative work. Lack of prior course work does not preclude admission, so long as a compelling statement of research interests, congruent with the emphasis, makes the case. Admission to the emphasis is on a rolling basis. The Director tracks students’ progress toward fulfillment of the emphasis requirements and meets with students to advise them on a program of study, as required.

Emphasis Requirements
Minimum course work for the graduate emphasis in Visual Studies consists of four courses: VIS STD 290C and three additional elective Visual Studies seminars.

For doctoral students, the qualifying examination and dissertation topic should incorporate Visual Studies as a central concern. One area of the Ph.D. qualifying examination should be on a Visual Studies topic, and one member of the candidate’s qualifying examination committee and dissertation committee is normally a member of the Visual Studies faculty. There are no requirements concerning qualifying examinations or theses for M.F.A. students.

Faculty
Aokbar Abbas, M. Phil. University of Hong Kong, Professor of Comparative Literature and of Film and Media Studies (globalization, Hong Kong and Chinese culture, postcoloniality, critical theory)
Eyal Amiran, Ph.D. University of Virginia, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and of Film and Media Studies (digital media theory, twentieth-century literature, narrative and textual theory, psychoanalysis, modern and postmodern intellectual history)
George Bauer, Ph.D. Princeton University, Professor Emeritus of Art History (Renaissance and Baroque)
Linda Freeman Bauer, Ph.D. Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, Professor Emerita of Art History (Renaissance and Baroque)
Catherine L. Benamou, Ph.D. New York University, Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies (Hispanophone and Lusophone cinema and television, transnational media flows and ethnic spectatorship, Orson Welles and post-war maverick cinema, transculturation, cinematic memory and cultures of preservation)
Bridget R. Cooks, Ph.D. University of Rochester, Director of the Graduate Program in Visual Studies and Associate Professor of African American Studies and Art History (African American art and culture, Black visual culture, museum criticism, film, feminist theory and postcolonial theory)
Sohail Daulatzai, Ph.D. University of Southern California, Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies (Black radicalism, Muslim studies, cultural studies, race, postcolonial theory, U.S. imperial culture, cinema and hip-hop culture)
Edward Dimendberg, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, Professor of Film and Media Studies (film and literature, history of the book, scholarly communication)
Anna Gonosová, Ph.D. Harvard University, Professor Emerita of Art History (Byzantine and Medieval art and architecture)
Kristen Hatch, Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles, Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies (American film history, film genres, stardom, histories of gender and sexuality, childhood studies, and reception studies)
James D. Herbert, Ph.D. Yale University, Professor of Art History (Modern European art)
Lucas Hilderbrand, Ph.D. New York University, *Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (cultural and media studies, queer studies, histories of technology, documentary, audio, intellectual property)

Judy C. Ho, Ph.D. Yale University, *Professor Emerita of Art History* (Chinese art, archaeology, common religion, Buddhist art)

Victoria E. Johnson, Ph.D. University of Southern California, *Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (history and critical theory of U.S. television, popular film, and media; politics of geography, race, gender, and sexuality in popular culture; cultural studies)

Kyung Hyun Kim, Ph.D. University of Southern California, *Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures and of Film and Media Studies* (East Asian cinema, modern Korea, critical theory)

Peter Krapp, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Barbara, *Department Chair and Professor of Film and Media Studies* (digital culture, media history, cultural memory, history and theory of artificial worlds)

Felicidad “Bliss” Cua Lim, Ph.D. New York University, *Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (Philippine cinema; temporality; postcolonial studies; feminist film theory; fantastic cinema; politics of genre; taste cultures)

Catherine Liu, Ph.D. City University of New York Graduate School and Center, *Director of the Humanities Collective and Professor of Film and Media Studies and of Comparative Literature* (Hou Hsiao-Hsien, labor history and theory, U.S. intellectual history and educational/cultural/media policy, culture wars, Frankfurt School, historiography and psychoanalysis, spaces of private life, Cold War culture, neoliberalism, science fiction studies, political economy and aesthetic education)

Lyle Massey, Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles, *Associate Professor of Art History* (Renaissance and early modern art)

Margaret M. Miles, Ph.D. Princeton University, *Professor of Art History and Classics* (Greek and Roman art, archaeology)

Glen Mimura, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, *Associate Dean of Graduate Study and Research and Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (minority, diasporic, and third cinemas; popular culture and social movements; media, race, and sexuality)

James Nisbet, Ph.D. Stanford University, *Assistant Professor of Art History* (modern and contemporary art)

Alka Patel, Ph.D. Harvard University, *Associate Professor of Art History* (Asian art, South Asian architecture)

AllisonPerlman, Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin, *Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies and of History* (history of broadcasting, American social movements, media law and policy, media activism, popular memory)

Amy Powell, Ph.D. Harvard University, *Associate Professor of Art History* (Northern European art and visual culture, 1300–1700)

Fatimah Tobing Rony, Ph.D. Yale University, *Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (documentary and ethnographic film, race and representation, postcolonial studies, film history and theory, film production)

Jared Sexton, Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, *Program Director and Associate Professor of African American Studies and Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies* (race and sexuality, policing and imprisonment, contemporary U.S. cinema and political culture, multiracial coalition, critical theory)

Sally A. Stein, Ph.D. Yale University, *Professor Emerita of Art History* (American art, photography and mass media, feminist theory)

Dickran Tashjian, Ph.D. Brown University, *Professor Emeritus of Art History* (American art and literature, American and European avant-garde, art and technology)

Roxanne Varzi, Ph.D. Columbia University, *Associate Professor of Anthropology and of Film and Media Studies* (visual anthropology, Iran, popular culture, war, media and religion)

Cécile Whiting, Ph.D. Stanford University, *Professor of Art History* (American art and culture)

Bert Winther-Tamaki, Ph.D. Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, *Department Chair and Professor of Art History* (Modern Japanese art, Asian American art, art and nationalism)

Roberta Wue, Ph.D. Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, *Assistant Professor of Art History* (late imperial and modern Chinese art, photography and visual culture)

**Affiliated Faculty**

Laura H. Y. Kang, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, *Associate Professor of Women’s Studies, Comparative Literature, and English* (feminist epistemologies and theories, cultural studies, ethnic studies)

Julia Reinhard Lupton, Ph.D. Yale University, *Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Education* (Renaissance literature, literature and psychology)

William M. Maurer, Ph.D. Stanford University, *Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Professor of Anthropology and Law* (anthropology of law, globalization, transnationalism, citizenship and nationalism, finance capital, identity, Caribbean)

Jennifer Terry, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, *Associate Professor of Women’s Studies and Comparative Literature* (cultural studies, social theory; science and technology studies, historical formations of gender and sexuality; critical approaches to modernity; American studies in transnational perspective)

Jonathan M. Wiener, Ph.D. Harvard University, *Professor of History* (recent American history, theory and history)

**Courses**

**VIS STD 290A. Art History: Theories and Methods. 4 Units.** Examine canonical texts and explores current directions in Art History.

**VIS STD 290B. Film & Media Studies: Theories and Methods. 4 Units.** Examine canonical texts and explores current directions in Film and Media Studies.

**VIS STD 290C. Visual Studies: Theories and Methods. 4 Units.** Examine canonical texts and explores current directions in Visual Studies.
VIS STD 294. Getty Consortium Seminar. 4 Units.
Special graduate seminar offered at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, involving faculty and graduate students from the five graduate programs in Art History or Visual Studies located in southern California (UCI, UCLA, UCR, UCSB, and USC).

Repeatability: Unlimited as topics vary.

VIS STD 295. Graduate Seminar in Visual Studies. 4 Units.
Studies in selected areas of Visual Studies. Topics addressed vary each quarter.

Repeatability: Unlimited as topics vary.

VIS STD 296. Directed Reading. 4 Units.
Directed reading on a specific topic agreed upon by student and instructor.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

VIS STD 297. Writing Practicum. 4 Units.
Offered winter quarter each year and taught in a workshop format. Assists students with the preparation and revision of the dissertation prospectus so that they may advance to candidacy.

Prerequisite: VIS STD 290A and VIS STD 290B and VIS STD 290C.

Grading Option: Satisfactory/unsatisfactory only.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

VIS STD 298A. Reading for the Preliminary Examination. 4-12 Units.

Grading Option: Satisfactory/unsatisfactory only.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

VIS STD 298B. Prospectus Research. 4-12 Units.
Research and writing of the dissertation prospectus.

Grading Option: Satisfactory/unsatisfactory only.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

VIS STD 299. Dissertation Research. 4-12 Units.
Research and writing of the dissertation.

Grading Option: Satisfactory/unsatisfactory only.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.