

HUNTER COLLEGE
MFA PROGRAM
STUDIO ART

APPLICANT GUIDE

Welcome!

The MFA program is an ambitious, interdisciplinary course of study, embedded within a diverse community of working artists. The three-year program allows students the time and space to more fully evolve while being exposed to the professional aspects of an art career in New York City.

The Hunter MFA Program has much to offer:

- Highly competitive tuition
- A diverse faculty comprised of professionally active, distinguished artists and art historians
- Access to leading artists, curators and art historians through various initiatives: MFASO (student-led visiting artist program), Cisneros (Latin American Art), Zabar (contemporary visiting artists), and Goldberg (Art History)
- A studio in Tribeca for three years
- Access to New York City art institutions and their alumni networks
- Unique tripartite structure that combines Studio Art, Art History and four galleries, allowing for interdisciplinary collaboration
- Optional curatorial certificate

We hope that you will join us at Hunter! We've assembled this document to answer some common questions.

Please feel free to reach out if there's anything we haven't answered here.

Address: 205 Hudson St., New York, NY 10013

Email: gradart@hunter.cuny.edu

What does an MFA in Studio Art require?

The program is 48 credits total, typically completed over 3 years (6 semesters).

Course requirements – each class is 3 credits:

- 3 Tutorials - independent study and critique with one professor (seven one-hour meetings over the course of the semester)
- 3 Seminars - interdisciplinary group critique classes
- 3 Studio Electives - classes focused on a specific medium or topic
- 3 Art History Classes
- Critical Thinking
- 1 Free Elective - additional studio courses, art history classes, or graduate courses in other departments at Hunter or in the CUNY system
- MFA Thesis Writing
- MFA Thesis Exhibition

We recommend that students take 9 credits during semesters 1, 2, 4, and 5; and 6 credits during semesters 3 (mid-program review) and 6 (thesis). A typical course progression looks like this:

<u>Semester 1</u> 9 credits • Seminar 1 • Studio Elective • Art History	<u>Semester 2</u> 9 credits • Critical Thinking • Tutorial 1 • Studio Elective, Free Elective, or Art History
<u>Semester 3: Mid-Program Review</u> 6 credits • Tutorial 2 • Seminar 2	<u>Semester 4</u> [Option to study abroad] 9 credits • Art History • Studio Elective • Art History or Free Elective
<u>Semester 5</u> 9 credits • Tutorial 3 • Seminar 3 • MFA Thesis Writing	<u>Semester 6: Thesis</u> 6 credits • MFA Thesis Exhibition (with your thesis advisor) • Art History, Studio Elective, or Free Elective

The maximum time limit for completing the MFA degree is four years from the date of matriculation. Officially approved leaves of absence for one year for illness or emergencies are accommodated within this time limit.

All US students and most International Students are required to attend the program for the full 3 years (on rare occasions, the department may approve a 2-year completion; this accommodation is for International Students only).

Transfers from other programs are not allowed.

Mid-Program Review

In the Mid-Program Review, students present their artwork in a crit space, and it is publicly reviewed by all full-time studio faculty members. This takes place during a student's second tutorial and seminar (in the third semester). This review not only offers comprehensive feedback at the student's midpoint in the program, but it also allows faculty to assess a student's progress in the program and offer guidance, as a preparatory stage prior to developing a thesis exhibition.

Thesis Project

The MFA Thesis Project is the final requirement for the completion of your MFA degree. Each student will have a two thesis advisors chosen from the full-time faculty who will work closely with the student (in the same format as a tutorial) to prepare for an exhibition in the 205 Hudson Gallery in their final semester. The first thesis advisor will work with the student for their 5th semester, and the second thesis advisor will work with the student in their 6th semester. The work in the exhibition represents the culmination of the students' MFA studies and should be at a professional level. Students are also required to produce a 10–15-page written thesis paper, accompanied by visual documentation of art works and reference images. The thesis paper is structured to expand upon the student's artistic research, discuss the themes of their work as well as the personal, historical and contextual issues that inform it.

Additional optional programs

Advanced Certificate in Curatorial Studies

The certificate program is a sequence of four courses designed specifically to offer both a theoretical and historical grounding in curatorial practices and practical experience in exhibition organization and display and object research and preservation. Every student enrolled in the certificate program will have the opportunity to work on an exhibition from inception to fruition, whether in the annual Curatorial Seminar or in faculty-supervised guided internships at the Artist's Institute, or at cultural institutions beyond the College. Members of Hunter's faculty are actively engaged as curators for special projects outside our galleries in several museums locally and internationally and we have a network of curators from those museums who have taught at Hunter or have expressed interest in working with our students.

The Curatorial Certificate is a 12-credit program. For students currently enrolled in the Hunter MFA program, 6 of those 12 credits can be applied both toward the certificate and toward credit requirements within the existing 48 credit MFA. Six are in addition to 48 MFA credits. MFA students are eligible to apply to the Curatorial Certificate after they have completed 1 year in the MFA program; however, they may enroll in courses towards the certificate at any time, even if they have not yet been accepted to the certificate program.

More information: <https://huntercollegeart.org/curatorial-certificate/>

If interested, please email the Department of Art History: lfrantz@hunter.cuny.edu and cc gradart@hunter.cuny.edu

Exchange Program

The Hunter MFA program has reciprocal exchanges with the following two schools:

- Ecole Des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France
- Universität der Künste, Berlin, Germany

Exchange may only occur during Spring in the students' fourth semester. Applications to study abroad typically go out at the end of the Spring Semester. Students use their 6 "free elective" credits to register to study abroad.

What are the facilities like, and what access will I have?

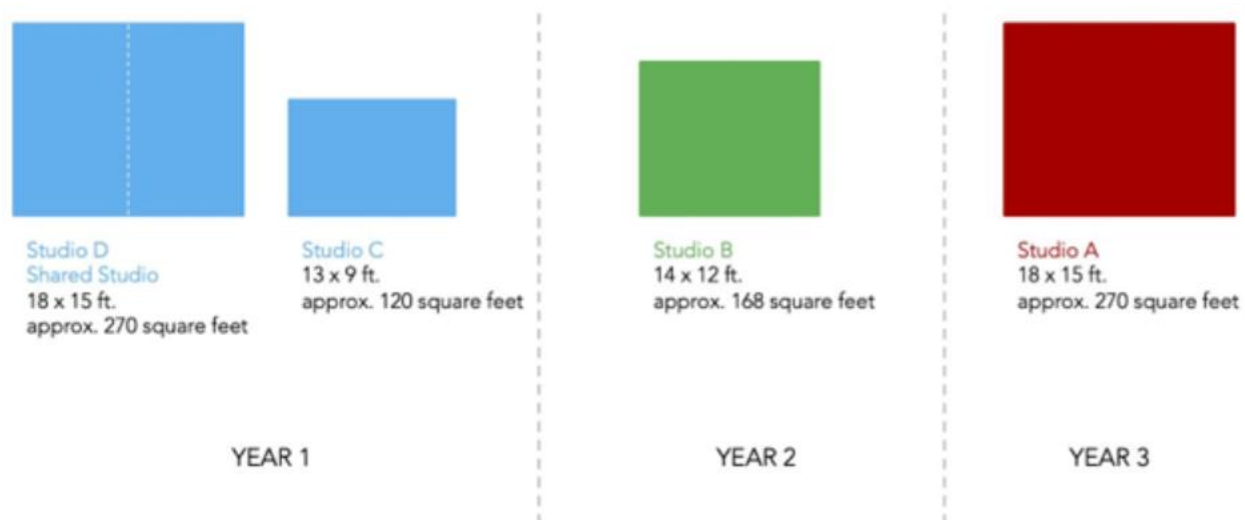
Studios

In your first year you will be offered either a large studio with windows to share with another incoming student or a windowless private studio.

Studio spaces are allocated in the order of seniority; in your second year, you'll have the option to choose from various private studio spaces.

In the third year, all thesis students are guaranteed a large private window studio, unless otherwise requested.

A typical progression in studio spaces is:



The studio building is open 7am - 1am daily. During some busy times (such as mid-program and thesis), there are days of 24-hour access - these vary each semester and are announced by the MFA office.

You will have access to your studio year-round, including summer and winter breaks, with the exception of a few holiday closures (like Christmas and New Year's).

Workshops

Workshops are available to all MFA students who have completed an orientation or training for that area. Orientations are held at the beginning of each semester, and technical staff are available to answer questions, maintain equipment, and provide more detailed tutorials as students need.

Wood Shop and Metal Shop

The wood shop and metal shop contain major stationary equipment, power tools, a variety of hand tools, a CNC Router, and is equipped with a Vibraclean ventilation system. |

Clay, Casting, and Digital Fabrication |

The sculpture area consists of two general work rooms, an industrial spray booth, five kilns, laser cutter, and a 3-D printer. Various materials are stocked for students to purchase, including clay and plaster.

Photography Studio

The photography studio contains a black and white wet darkroom and a print finishing room with digital printers and bookbinding equipment. The studio has three types of printers: large format fine art inkjet printers, a desktop inkjet printer, and color LaserJet printers. The print finishing room has a heat press, paper cutters, and a large table with a cutting surface. |

AV Cage

Cameras, lighting, audio equipment, projectors, displays, and other technology are available for short-term checkout from the AV Cage. Requests to reserve time to use the black box, green screen, photo studio may also be made through the AV Cage. Some equipment will require training before students may check it out.

List of available equipment:

<https://huntercollegeart.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AVCAGE-EQUIPMENT-CATALOG-2020-V3.pdf>

Black Box

Located on the 3rd Floor near the AV Cage, the Black Box is for all students who require a controlled environment to produce video, photography, and performance projects, in addition to students that need space to document artwork. Equipment for the Black Box includes lighting kits, a seamless backdrop system, grip equipment, and a Canon Mark IV camera, among other things.

Printmaking Studio and Riso Lab

The printshop and risograph lab have two presses and two risograph machines, along with a large exposure unit for silkscreen. Additional resources are also available at the 68th St. Campus.

How much does it cost to attend, and is aid available?

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees are calculated per semester, according to the number of credits you are enrolled for and your residency status in New York State. Over the 3-year program, students typically take 9 credits for 4 semesters and 6 credits for 2 semesters.

Based on Fall 2022 tuition rates of \$470 per credit for NYS residents, or \$855 per credit for non-NYS residents:

	9-credit semester:	6-credit semester:
NYS resident	\$4,320.95	\$2,910.95
Non-NYS resident	\$7,785.95	\$5,520.95

Fees total approximately \$450 per semester.

You can use the tuition calculator here to estimate your costs:

https://orapp.hunter.cuny.edu/tuition_calculator/

In-State Tuition

Students may qualify for in-state tuition if they maintain continuous residence in the State of New York for a period of at least twelve consecutive months immediately preceding the first day of classes. Eligibility is assessed through the NYS Residency application, which is submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Many students qualify for in-state tuition after their first year of the program.

For more information:

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/university-tuition-fee-manual/iv-residency/>

Hunter is a “senior college” for these residency requirements.

Federal Loans

Citizens and Permanent Residents may be eligible for Federal Work-Study, Stafford Loans, and Perkins Loans according to need established by the FAFSA. Most students are eligible for up to \$20,500 in loans per year to cover tuition and living expenses.

Departmental Scholarships and Awards

Hunter is a public college and part of the CUNY system. As such, part of our mission is to offer a high-quality education at low cost. Our department has very few private scholarships to offer students. There is no separate application for these scholarships; all accepted students are considered. If you are nominated for a scholarship, you will receive notice through email.

Departmental Employment

Citizens and Permanent Residents may be eligible to apply for college-wide employment through the Federal Work Study Program, pending FAFSA-based financial need and their financial aid award. Our four departmental galleries hire gallery sitters on an as-needed basis. Hunter College employs assistants for college-wide positions at locations such as the Zabar Art Library, and to manage various workshops and labs.

Health Insurance

Hunter does not provide student health insurance. Many students get their health insurance through New York State's health plan marketplace, called New York State of Health: <https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov/>

How do I apply?

MFA ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

MFA applicants must have an undergraduate baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution (BA, BFA, or BS). Applicants must have maintained a 3.0 GPA overall. Applicants who have previously completed a Masters in Fine Art cannot be considered for admission to the Studio Art program at Hunter College.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 4, 2027

The January date is subject to change, and it will be announced on the official website if it is changed.

APPLICATION PROCESS |

1. **General application via [Slate](#) (\$75.00 fee)**
 - a. A statement of purpose (500 words) describing your work, your goals, and how attending Hunter will help you achieve those goals.
 - b. Transcripts from an accredited undergraduate institution. For transcripts from non-US institutions, see guidelines here:
<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions/applying/degree-application/application-requirements/college-university-transcripts>
 - c. Two letters of recommendation from former instructors, preferably studio art faculty from your undergraduate institution or colleagues working in the arts who can speak to the quality of your work and community engagement. A recommender should not be a family member and have known you for a minimum of 1 year.
 - d. TOEFL/IELTS score (if applicable). Applicants whose native language is not English and who have taken all or part of their undergraduate education in a country where English is not the native language are required to submit scores on the TOEFL or IELTS. The following minimum scores must be obtained:
TOEFL iBT: 80 (Overall score - Speaking Component = minimum 60 for the TOEFL iBT)
Paper Based Test: 550 / Computer Based Test: 213
IELTS: 6.5 Overall Band Score
Only TOEFL and IELTS are accepted (DuoLingo is not accepted).

2. **Ten Images and/or three minutes max of video submitted via [Slideroom](#) (\$10.00 fee).** Videos may be uploaded in their entirety if they are **three minutes or less** in length or as a series of excerpts that add up to **three or less minutes**. Do not use password protections on any of your videos. Videos may only be uploaded for the Sculpture/Clay/Casting, New Genres, and Photography concentrations.

**YOU MUST SUBMIT
BOTH
THE HUNTER COLLEGE APPLICATION VIA SLATE**

AND
A PORTFOLIO VIA **SLIDEROOM** TO BE CONSIDERED.

INTERVIEWS

Those selected for an interview will be contacted by the Art Department by February 15th. Please do not contact the Art Department to inquire about the status of your application. Although most interviews take place in person, there is the option for Zoom interviews for International and Out of State Students.

CONCENTRATIONS

Applicants must select one of five concentrations for their application—choose your concentration based on what is most dominant in your practice (i.e. if you primarily paint but are starting to experiment with video and want to add one video excerpt, please just apply in painting)

1. Painting
2. Photography
3. Printmaking/Drawing/Works on Paper
4. Sculpture, Clay and Casting
5. New Genres (Interdisciplinary, Installation, Conceptual Art, Social Practice, Performance and Video)

If accepted, students are not bound by the concentration in which they apply. All students may take classes in any concentration and study with any faculty, regardless of medium.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Do I need to have a BFA or have majored in Art to apply?

No. Many of our students majored in other subjects as undergraduates. You must have an undergraduate degree (BA, BFA, or BS) from an accredited school, but your degree may be in any subject.

Do you have minimum prerequisite credit requirements to apply?

No. The application will ask you to list previous studio art and art history courses you may have taken, but there is no minimum number of art credits to be eligible.

My school doesn't assign GPAs. What should I list in the application?

For submitting purposes, you may indicate 0.0 or N.A for the overall GPA. The Graduate Admissions office is aware that some schools use different grading systems/methods of evaluating student work and will review your transcripts accordingly.

My undergraduate GPA was below the 3.0 requirement. Can I still apply?

The 3.0 GPA requirement is set across all of Hunter's graduate programs and exceptions may be made but are rare.

I'm not sure if my undergraduate institution was accredited. Can I still apply?

If you are unsure of the accreditation of your institution, please contact Graduate Admissions prior to submitting your application:

www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions / gradadmissions@hunter.cuny.edu

I have an MFA from another university. Can I apply?

No. We are unable to accept students with a previous MFA in Studio Art. If you have an MFA in another field than art, please contact Graduate Admissions to confirm eligibility before applying.

Do you require the GRE?

No.

I am unable to attend an in-person info session, but I'd like to see the facilities in person.

Do you arrange private tours?

Due to the volume of applicants, we are rarely able to accommodate private tours. We offer two in-person and one zoom info sessions in the fall, prior to the application deadline. If you are unable to attend prior to applying, and are granted an interview, we offer tours of the facilities during the interview day.

How recent should the work in my portfolio be?

The Art Department does not have a specific requirement for how recent the works in your portfolio should be. However, your portfolio should reflect your current work and interests, so in general more recent work is best.

I'm not sure which concentration to pick / I work in many media.

You should apply under whatever concentration you feel best fits your work. Once you are admitted, the concentration you applied with does not limit your class choice or path through the program. Students frequently switch media and can work with faculty in any concentration.

Only submit one application for admission. We are unable to issue refunds for duplicate submissions and multiple submissions by one application will not be reviewed.

My painting is sculptural.

You should include details of one or two paintings that show the viewer their sculptural aspect. Perhaps choose the most dramatic so we get a sense of how to look at all the paintings.

My practice is multidisciplinary.

In general, students should apply to New Genres if their work is multidisciplinary.

Can I submit video work longer than 3 minutes?

The maximum length of video you are permitted to upload is three minutes. This can be a complete work, excerpts that you want the faculty to focus on, or one minute each of three different works.

You can use the remaining images (ten work submissions total) for video stills and images of installations. In the description area for each work/image, you can add URLs to YouTube or Vimeo for full length video works or longer excerpts, that the faculty can access if they decide to go deeper into the work. Make sure that any URLs you include are open access—i.e.. they must not require a password.

Can people other than former professors write my recommendation letters?

Generally, recommendations from prior art professors are preferred, but professional acquaintances are also acceptable. Whoever can speak to your artwork and your suitability for MFA studies is a good choice.

Can you accept paper recommendation letters?

No. Recommenders should use the online system to submit their letters. Contact Graduate Admissions if your recommenders are having trouble using the system.

When are recommendation letters due?

Recommendation letters are due by the application deadline, January 6th.

What should I do if my recommender has not submitted their letter on time?

You may submit your application before your recommender has completed their letter - they will still be able to upload a letter to the system after you submit. There is a small amount of leeway after the application deadline for your recommender to submit their letter late. However, the faculty begin their reviews shortly after the deadline, so please encourage your recommenders to be prompt.

I've applied previously, and Slate is not letting me reapply.

To reapply, you may need to create a new Slate account with a new username and password. Click on the "Create Account" tab on the login page.

Do you accept applications after the deadline / rolling applications?

No. All applications must be completed by the deadline to be considered.

Can you waive the application fee?

Unfortunately, no. We cannot offer application fee waivers.

Are there additional requirements for international student applicants?

Applicants whose native language is not English and who have taken all or part of their post-secondary education in a country where English is not the native language are required to submit scores on the TOEFL or IELTS. No English test besides TOEFL/IELTS will be accepted (eg. Cambridge Advanced C1 certificate and Duolingo are not accepted).

In addition, applicants whose undergraduate education was outside of the U.S. are required to submit course-by-course evaluation reports of their studies. Details can be found on the Graduate Admissions website:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions/applying/degree-application/application-requirements/college-university-transcripts>

If you are admitted, the International Students Office will be your contact for help in applying for a visa: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/student-services/is>

Can I work while also enrolled in the program?

Almost all of our students work part-time. Most students take either 9 or 6 credits (3 or 2 classes) per semester – 48 credits total over the 3-year program. We consider this "full-time" for the program, but it is a lighter course load than most other MFA programs.

What should my Statement of Purpose include?

A statement of purpose should be approximately 350-500 words describing your objectives in undertaking graduate study. Explain your motivations for becoming an artist and discuss personal experiences that have influenced the nature of your work; provide a specific description of your artistic practice and place your work in a critical and historical context (feel free to discuss specific artists, tendencies and theories that play a role in your practice; identify the specific features of the Hunter College MFA Program that would benefit your creative development.

In reviewing applications, considerable importance is placed on the applicant's interest in and commitment to advanced study and professional development.

Could you please share a sample schedule? I would like to pursue this while working full time at my job.

In general, we do not advise working a full-time job while doing this program, although with the right flexibility a full-time job can be possible. Your work schedule may limit what you can take each semester. Exact course offerings change each semester, as do the days those courses are offered. Our MFA courses most commonly run 9am-12:30pm or 1pm-4:30pm and meet once a week for 15 weeks each semester.

Do gallerists and curators visit students during the program?

MFASO (the student-led organization) brings in critics to visit with students, and during your thesis show three arts professionals are hired to do walk-throughs of your show. Selections for both are left to the students and devised through voting.

An archive of visitors to the program can be found here:

<https://www.huntermfastudio.org/events>

You will note that those who we invite for lectures tend to be artists as we encourage learning from artists to artists, to prevent students shaping themselves towards the market. Gallerists do visit the program, but it's not particularly encouraged.

What are some opportunities for professional development?

It depends on what that means to you. There are open studios, thesis exhibitions, and other opportunities to invite whomever you want into your studio or exhibitions. Because we are situated in TriBeCa in New York City, it's relatively easy for contact to occur. Per the link above, you should attend all public events/talks as they give students an opportunity to learn, ask questions, and meet with arts professionals. Zabar lectures give access to mid- and late career established artists. Each student has an opportunity to host a studio visit or join a workshop with Zabar artists twice during their time at Hunter.

Could you provide more details on the fees structure and whether scholarships are available?

Please see the tuition calculator to determine the cost of enrollment: https://orapp.hunter.cuny.edu/tuition_calculator/

Since we are a publicly funded institution, we have limited scholarships and many students who need them. We aim to provide funding when we can, but we advise being prepared to pay (even if with student loans). Upon graduation and at different points in the program we also have some merit-based scholarships we are able to give out. On average 1 in 4 of our students get some form of assistance while going through our program.

I need help with Slideroom.

Troubleshooting:

<https://www.slideroom.com/accessibility-statement/>

I want to track my Slate application.

Tracking your application:

<https://www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions/faq/tracking-your-application>

How do I learn more about the program?

Online:

The most up-to-date source of department information is our website, www.huntermfastudio.org.

You can find information about the faculty and current students there. We also post all our public lectures and events there; you are welcome to attend!

Graduate Admissions: gradadmissions@hunter.cuny.edu

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions>

Financial Aid Office: <https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/financial-aid/>

Academic Calendar: <https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/registration/academic-calendar/>

International Students Office: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/student-services/is>

Email:

Hunter MFA College Assistant: gradart@hunter.cuny.edu

Info Sessions:

Info sessions (in person and online) will be available for prospective students each fall. Please check <https://www.huntermfastudio.org/apply> for the sign-up form.