

Visual Arts

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Program of Study

The Committee on the Visual Arts (COVA) is concerned with the making of art both as an individual expression and as a vehicle for exploring creativity, perception, and the constructed world. Whether students take COVA courses to meet a general education requirement or as part of a concentration in Visual Arts, the goal is that they will develop communicative, analytical, and expressive skills through the process of artistic production. COVA 10000-level courses are intended for students with no studio background and are appropriate for meeting the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts. More advanced courses presume that students have taken at least one of these, usually COVA 10100. (See individual course listings for specific prerequisites.)

Range of Course Offerings. COVA 10100, 10200, and 15000 serve as introductory courses to the elements of visual communication and the critical investigation of art. COVA 10100 and 10200 introduce elementary visual communication through the manipulation of various materials in the studio and also include readings and visits to local museums and galleries. These courses engage principles of visual language stressing the relationship of form and meaning. COVA 15000, which is primarily intended for concentrators, examines the place of artistic practice in contemporary culture. COVA 20000 to 24900 are media specific courses that begin to teach technical skills and provide a conceptual framework for working in these media (e.g., painting, photography, sculpture, video). COVA 25000 to 26900 are nonstudio courses in the theory and criticism of art. COVA 27000 to 28200 are more advanced studio courses.

Program Requirements

The B.A. program in the Committee on the Visual Arts is intended for students interested in the practice and study of art. The Committee's faculty consists of a core of artists and other humanists interested in making and thinking about art. Those who concentrate in Visual Arts take an individually arranged program of studio, lecture, and seminar courses that may include some courses outside the Humanities Collegiate Division. The program seeks to foster understanding of art from several perspectives: the practice and intention of the creator, the visual conventions employed, and the perception and critical reception of the audience. In addition to work in the studio, these aims might require study of art history and intellectual history, as well as psychology, criticism, and aesthetics. Because of the diversity of student interests and the Committee's interdisciplinary orientation, requirements for the concentration are flexible. All students

must take a core of COVA 10100, 10200, and 15000 as early in their studies as possible. After taking the core courses, but no later than Winter Quarter of their third year, concentrators meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to plan the rest of their program. At least two of the courses beyond the core must be drawn from the second level of predominantly studio-oriented offerings (COVA 20000 to 24900). The remaining five courses may be any intellectually consistent combination of COVA studio courses, COVA critical and theory courses (COVA 25000 to 26900), and any other relevant offerings in the College. Up to two independent study courses that are relevant to the concentration may be counted toward these five electives. (For more information, consult the sample programs of study that follow.) As preparation for the senior project, students must take COVA 29600 in the spring of their third year. This studio seminar examines approaches to independent studio projects. The culminating experience of the COVA concentration is a senior project consisting of a studio project and/or an extended paper that represents a coherent line of inquiry. This work, for which students may receive credit in COVA 29900, is done under the supervision of a primary adviser and must also be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. In the summer between the third and fourth years it is expected that concentrators prepare themselves to present their ideas for the senior project at a group critique at the beginning of the academic year. (NOTE: *The Visual Arts concentration, taken as it is in the context of the College's liberal arts tradition, does not normally prepare a student for admission to an M.F.A. program without additional studio work.*)

Summary of Requirements

Concentration	2	COVA 10100-10200
	1	COVA 15000
	1	COVA 29600 (junior seminar)
	1	COVA 29900 (senior project)
	2	from COVA 20000-24900
	<u>5</u>	electives relevant to the concentration
	12	

Sample Programs. The Committee encourages its students either to focus their concentration in the studio or to construct interdisciplinary concentration programs combining studio and nonstudio courses that focus on a particular theme. The following examples should be taken as suggestions only:

- (1) A program that explores relationships of image and text in the construction of narratives, combining courses in drawing and graphics with courses in creative writing, literature, and art history.
- (2) A program that explores issues of identity construction through image making, and combines courses in painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography with courses in anthropology, art history, and gender studies.
- (3) A program in the practice of painting exploring aesthetic form as a vehicle for individual expression, including art history and philosophy courses.

(4) A studio-based program in photography that concentrates on black-and-white silver-gelatin processes, and includes a thorough investigation of the history and conceptual framework of the medium.

(5) A program that investigates issues surrounding representations of the body (including an engagement with contemporary and historic practices in visual art and film, as well as feminist, gender, race, and class theory) and concludes in an installation of a series of photographs.

(6) A studio-based program in sculpture that examines how our sensory or kinesthetic knowledge of our bodies differs greatly from how we are seen as objects in space by others (possibly including additional courses in the history of art and in anatomy).

Grading. COVA students must receive letter grades for the twelve courses that constitute the concentration. Students must also receive letter grades if they are taking COVA courses to meet the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts. Students concentrating in other departments may take COVA courses for *P/N* grades with the consent of their adviser and instructor.

Honors. COVA students who have a 3.0 or higher overall GPA and a 3.5 or higher GPA for all COVA course work may be awarded honors. The work submitted will be reviewed for honors by the COVA faculty.

Faculty

C. Cohen, T. Cohen, T. Cummins, H. George, T. Gunning, M. Hansen, R. Heller, R. Hooper, L. Letinsky, H. Mirra, R. Peters, K. Rorschach, A. Ruttan, J. Snyder, R. Strier, M. Ward

Courses

Students must attend the first and second classes to confirm enrollment. No exceptions will be made unless the student notifies the instructor before the first class.

Introductory Courses

10100. Visual Language I. *COVA 10100 and 10200 may be taken individually and in any order. This course meets the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts.* Through studio production and analysis of visual images and objects, this course engages the communicative, analytical, and expressive possibilities of the range of images animating contemporary visual culture. The studio is used to explore the principles, conventions, and inventions of image making. Emphasis is placed on the give and take process of making as a means to understand the relationships between the intent of the maker, the content, appearance, and the meanings generated by images. Focusing primarily on two-dimensional images, among the issues which may be explored are originality and reproduction, color, surface organization, spatial illusion, the communicative properties of materials, and the recognition of accident and chance as artistic resources. *Previous experience in media-based studio*

courses will not normally be accepted as a replacement for this course. Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Lab fee \$40. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

10200. Visual Language II. *COVA 10100 and 10200 may be taken individually and in any order. This course meets the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts. Through the examination of three-dimensional forms and a series of studio problems, this course is designed to develop the formal and conceptual skills necessary to think visually, to "see" and to experience the vast array of objects, spaces, and ideas embedded in the contemporary cultural landscape. Emphasis is placed on the give and take process of making (which may include the construction and analysis of objects, alteration of spaces, or the placement/arrangement/collection of objects) as a vehicle for students to learn how ideas, thoughts, and emotions take physical form and generate meaning. Previous experience in media-based studio courses will not normally be accepted as a replacement for this course. Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Lab fee \$20. H. George, R. Peters. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

15000. Art Practice and Theory. *PQ: Required of all COVA concentrators and should be taken before the senior year. Open to nonconcentrators with consent of instructor. This course does not meet the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts. This course examines the place of artistic practice in contemporary culture and the rhetoric of images. Emphasis is placed on the visual arts, examining discourses such as: the assignment of value to works, the formation of taste, the relationship between individual production and institutional practices, the role of authorship (intentionality) in the construction of meaning, the gate-keeping functions of curatorial and critical practice, the function and maintenance of categorical distinctions constituting "otherness" (high/low, naive, primitive, outside), the relationship between truth and authenticity, the uses of art (e.g., transcendence, decoration, activism, therapy, play). Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Winter.*

Intermediate-Level Courses

21000. Literally Figurative: Figure Drawing. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor. This course explores a range of issues relating to the representation of the human figure on the two-dimensional surface, including questions of the meaning and methods of figural representation, the ontology and countenance of the page, and the author's point of view. Lab fee \$60. R. Hooper. Winter.*

21200. Figure Drawing. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor. The live model provides the basic reference for this course. Problems develop comprehension of traditional approaches to the human figure in art and explore the means by which the figure may embody contemporary ideas. Class sessions include studio work, criticism, and visits to local collections. Lab fee \$60. Autumn.*

21500. Graphics: Etching. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* The class consists of basic studies of the intaglio process through art-historical references, technical demonstrations, and studio work. The work is critiqued during each stage of the procedure from the inception of the idea of the sketches, proof prints, final prints, and presentation of a portfolio. Various techniques are introduced, such as engraving, aquatint, mezzotint, soft ground, dry point, and lift ground. Artistic questions raised specifically by these techniques are discussed and considered in relation to the final portfolio of prints. *Lab fee \$60. R. Peters. Winter.*

21900. Color Theory and Practice. *PQ: COVA 10100, 10200, or consent of the instructor.* An introduction to color for students in all media. Color is looked at using various theoretical, cultural, and historical models as well as intuitive and conceptual approaches to working. Instruction includes the use of a variety of media such as drawing, painting, collage, photography, and digital. Design and fine art models are used to explore this complex area of visual expression. *Lab fee \$50. A. Ruttan. Winter.*

22000-22100. Beginning Painting. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* This studio course introduces students to the fundamental elements of painting (its language and methodologies) as they learn how to initiate and develop an individualized investigation into subject matter and meaning. The class emphasizes group critiques and discussion. *Lab fee \$25. R. Hooper, A. Ruttan. Autumn, Winter.*

22200. Sculpture I. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* Meant as an introduction to sculpture, this course explores how it is possible through questioning, discussions, and, most importantly, making to progress towards highly individual insights into the fundamental nature of what at first appears to be an obvious and well known form: the egg. Three sculptures are made. The most important is the last, as it attempts to clearly communicate the individual insight of the sculptor into the true nature of the egg. Starting at the same point, we end with radically different sculptures resulting from individual insights and imagination. Thus, it may be understood that sculpture is human thought given esthetic and material form. *Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Lab fee \$30. H. George. Autumn.*

22300. Sculpture II. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* This studio class is a continuation of COVA 22200 and also an extension of COVA 22400, but neither is a prerequisite. Historically, sculpture was a powerful and, in many cases, a fundamental means of communication, self-perpetuation, and storytelling within a culture. Together we explore how particular cultures communicated myths through their sculpture, specifically those having to do with the facets of creation. Each member of the class is asked to invent a culture and, most importantly, that culture's creation myth. That myth is communicated to other members of the class by a large and ambitious sculptural object that in specific ways recounts central aspects of the creation myth found in that fictional culture. *Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Lab fee \$40. Winter.*

22400. Modeling the Figure. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* A live model provides the basic reference point for this course. The work of the quarter is divided into two parts: the full figure and the portrait. Both are formed in clay using a traditional academic studio setting. The fundamental objective of this class is for the student to begin to understand the important difference between looking and knowing, between the eye seeing and the hand making. Although we inhabit a body, we have little visual understanding of its true form. *Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events; one outside project required. Lab fee \$50. H. George. Autumn.*

22500. Digital Imaging. (=CMST 28800) *PQ 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* Using the Macintosh platform, this course serves as an introduction to the use of digital technology as a means of making visual art. Instruction covers the Photoshop graphics program as well as digital imaging hardware (i.e., scanners, storage, printing). In addition, we address problems of color, design, collage, and drawing. Topics of discussion may include questions regarding the mediated image and its relationship to art as well as examining what constitutes the "real" in contemporary culture. *Lab fee \$60. A. Ruttan. Autumn.*

23700. Video I: Short Experiments. (=CMST 28900) *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* An introduction to videomaking with digital cameras and non-linear (digital) editing. Students produce a group of short works, which is contextualized by viewing and discussion of historical and contemporary video works. Video versus film, editing strategies, and appropriation are some of the subjects that are part of an ongoing conversation. *Lab fee \$60. H. Mirra. Autumn.*

23900. Video II: Narrative. (=CMST 28901) *PQ: COVA 23800.* One or two tapes are produced by each student, which are looked at closely along the way in class critiques. We screen work by Chris Marker, Walid Ra'ad, Leslie Thornton, Gregg Bordowitz, Igor Vamos, Alex Rivera, and others. Discussions and readings address experimental and documentary video, fact/fiction/fictionalization, continuity, autobiography, writing for video, and sound recording techniques. *Lab fee \$60. H. Mirra. Winter.*

24000. Beginning Photography. (=CMST 27600/37600) *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* Camera and light meter required. Photography affords a relatively simple and accessible means for making pictures. Demonstrations are used to introduce technical procedures and basic skills, and to begin to establish criteria for artistic expression. Possibilities and limitations inherent in the medium are topics of classroom discussion. We investigate the contemporary photograph in relation to its historical and social context. Course work culminates in a portfolio of works exemplary of the student's understanding of the medium. *Field trips required. Lab fee \$60. L. Letinsky, Autumn, Winter; Staff, Spring.*

24200. Art and Experience. *PQ: COVA 10100, 10200, or 15000; or consent of instructor.* This course deals with art forms that deemphasize the importance of the object. These contemporary, nontraditional art forms (e.g., concept, process, performance, body) are examined through readings that provide a theoretical and historical framework for discussion and studio investigation. *R. Peters. Winter. Offered 2003-04; not offered 2002-03.*

Theory and Criticism Courses

24800. German Identities in Art/Film, 1800 to 2000. (=ARTH 23800)
PQ: Any 10000-level ARTH or COVA course or consent of instructor. This course focuses on the issues concerned with visualizations of the problematics of German identity in conjunction with the Smart Museum exhibition "Confronting German Identities." As a colloquium, it explores how artists and other producers of visual imagery in Germany from the era of romanticism to the present have reflected on issues of the German what, how, and why. Primary focus is on the Smart Museum exhibition and works in it, as well as a selection of German films that address or provoke problems of German identities. *R. Heller. Autumn.*

25100. Aesthetics: Philosophy, Photography, Film. (=PHIL 21100/31301)
 For course description, see Philosophy. *J. Conant, J. Snyder. Winter.*

25400. Introduction to Film Analysis. (=ARTH 20000, CMST 10100, ENGL 10800, GSHU 20000) For course description, see Cinema and Media Studies. *J. Lastra. Autumn.*

25500. Photography and Film: Theory and Practice. (=ARTH 27200/37200, CMST 27500/35200) *PQ: Any 10000-level ARTH or COVA course, or consent of instructor.* For course description, see Art History. *J. Snyder. Autumn.*

25600. Performance Art. (=ENGL 23000/41600, GSHU 26800) *PQ: Consent of instructor. Theater experience or acting training not required.* For course description, see English Language and Literature. *Not offered 2002-03.*

25700. Scene Painting. (=GSHU 26200) *PQ: Consent of instructor.* For course description, see General Studies in the Humanities. *M. Lohman. Spring. Offered 2003-04; not offered 2002-03.*

26100. Scenic Design. (=GSHU 26500) *PQ: GSHU 25900 or consent of instructor.* For course description, see General Studies in the Humanities. *M. Lohman. Winter. Offered 2002-03; not offered 2003-04.*

26200. Costume Design for the Stage. (=GSHU 26300) *PQ: GSHU 25900 or consent of instructor.* For course description, see General Studies in the Humanities. *Spring. Offered 2002-03; not offered 2003-04.*

26500. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. (=ARTH 28500/38500, CMST 28500/48500, MAPH 33600) *This is the first part of a two-quarter course. The two parts may be taken individually, but taking them in sequence is helpful.* For course description, see Cinema and Media Studies. *Y. Tsivian. Autumn.*

26600. History of International Cinema II: Sound Era. (=ARTH 28600/38600, CMST 28600/48600, ENGL 29600/48900, MAPH 33700) *This is the second part of the international survey history for film covering the sound era up to 1960. It is strongly recommended that students take COVA 26500 first.* For course description, see Cinema and Media Studies. *Y. Tsivian. Winter.*

26700/30100. Early Video Art, 1968 to 1979. A survey of the first wave of video art in the United States. We screen and discuss the first ten years of video produced by artists and activists, primarily on the East Coast and in California, including Bruce Nauman, John Baldessari, Martha Rosler, Eleanor Antin, and Top Value Television. Much of the work we look at in this new medium was made as an auxiliary activity by artists already working in sculpture, conceptual art, and performance. We analyze the work as it relates both to this art context and to the sociopolitical climate of the 1970s. *Lab fee \$30. H. Mirra. Spring.*

29000/39000. Real World: Models and Strategies for Contemporary Artists. *PQ: Open to nonconcentrators with consent of instructor.* This course uses both theoretical and practical approaches to assess various strategies for presenting contemporary art. Through readings, lectures, field trips, projects, and discussions, students gain an overview of historical and contemporary exhibition models. We consider contemporary artists' uses of sites such as museums and galleries, as well as a range of alternatives including artist-curated exhibitions, collaborative work, and Web-based, guerilla, site specific, and ephemeral projects. Students broaden their understanding of existing models of presentation and begin considering how these relate to their own practice. *A. Ruttan, S. Smith. Autumn.*

Advanced-Level Studio Courses

27000. Advanced Graphics. *PQ: COVA 21500 or consent of instructor.* This multilevel course is designed for advanced students who wish to further their exploration into printmaking, as well as for concentrators with a strong studio direction who wish to extend their work into the form and conceptual possibilities available through the print. While intaglio processes (e.g., etching, aquatint) are emphasized, other forms of traditional printmaking (i.e., relief, serigraphy, monotype) and less conventional methods are available as needed. Emphasis is placed on conceptual and procedural invention and clarity. *Lab fee \$60. R. Hooper. Spring.*

27200. Advanced Painting. *PQ: COVA 22000 and 22100, or consent of instructor.* Presuming fundamental considerations, this studio course emphasizes the purposeful and sustained development of a student's visual investigation through painting, accentuating both invention and clarity of image. *Group critiques and discussion. Lab fee \$25. R. Hooper. Spring.*

27500. Video III: Studio Practices. (=CMST 28902) *PQ: COVA 23800.* A production course geared towards nonbroadcast forms in video, including installation. We look at relevant material, including recent work by Harrison and Wood, Fischli and Weiss, Martin Kersels, Jane and Louise Wilson, Halfifers, Douglas Gordon, and others. Discussions and readings address rapidly changing technology, nonnarrative strategies, and viable approaches to producing video art in a world already full of video images. *Lab fee \$60. H. Mirra. Spring.*

27800. Advanced Photography. (=CMST 27700/37700) *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, and 24000 or 24100; or consent of instructor.* Students focus on a set of issues and ideas that expand upon their experience and knowledge, and that have particular relevance to them. All course work is directed toward the production of a cohesive body of either color or black-and-white

photographs. An investigation of contemporary and historic photographic issues informs the students' photographic practice and includes critical readings, as well as class and individual critiques. *Visits to local exhibitions and darkroom work required. Lab fee \$60. L. Letinsky. Winter.*

28200. Sculpture III. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* This studio class is a continuation of COVA 22200, 22300, and 22400 but they are not prerequisites. The first half of this class is devoted to learning about formalist/nonrepresentational sculpture, both its beginning in the Soviet Union, and its later rebirth as minimalist art in the 1970s. One large nonrepresentational work is constructed in the first half of the quarter, while the second half is devoted to a more "open problem" that is carved from stone in the outdoors. We ask: Although these two traditions appear to be very different, are they? And then, can aspects of both be used to form a new sculptural understanding? *Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. Lab fee \$10 plus cost of stone. H. George. Spring.*

Independent Study Courses

29600. Junior Seminar. *PQ: Required of concentrators and should be taken in the Spring Quarter of their third year. Open to nonconcentrators with consent of Director of Undergraduate Studies.* This seminar prepares COVA majors for their senior project. The project is an independent studio project or a combined studio/research paper project that begins in the summer preceding the senior year. Students engage in two main activities: (1) a series of studio projects challenging the imagination and enlarging formal skills and (2) an introduction to the contemporary art world through selected readings, lectures, careful analysis of art objects/events, and critical writing. Studio projects are conceptually structured, allowing students to respond with individualized materials and approaches. Studio skills are developed while contending with the central task of articulating ideas through a resistant medium. *Visits to museums, galleries, and other cultural and commercial sites required, as is attendance at designated events. R. Peters. Spring.*

29700. Independent Study in Visual Arts. *PQ: COVA 10100 or 10200, and consent of instructor.* Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. This course is similar to reading courses in other academic areas. We presume that the student has done fundamental course work and is ready to explore a particular area of interest much more closely. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29900. Senior Project. *PQ: Required of concentrators. Consent of Director of Undergraduate Studies.* Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. This course provides an opportunity for a "summing up." It is a chance to work in a sustained way on a group of paintings or photographs, for example. This work is then presented as part of a graduation show. As an alternative, one might do a paper that examines issues that may have emerged from the studio and academic experience. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*