College of Fine Arts

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www.cfa.cmu.edu

Overview

The College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University was founded in 1905 as the first comprehensive arts learning institution in the United States. For 110 years it has educated outstanding artists, architects, designers, theater artists and musicians who have made important contributions to culture in the United States and the world. The alumni of the College of Fine Arts have shaped the worlds of television, stage, film, and electronic media; are collected in numerous international museums; have composed for and are performing in and conducting major symphony orchestras, choruses and opera companies throughout the world; have built notable buildings, pioneered innovative sustainable design strategies and created interactive software systems; created significant innovations in graphic and industrial design; and are professors and deans in major arts institutions.

The College of Fine Arts concentrates on the education of professionals in the arts in the broader context of Carnegie Mellon University. Beyond their education in their chosen field, through required and elective course work, students are involved with other disciplines within the College of Fine Arts and within the other colleges of Carnegie Mellon University. Further, the College’s location in the Oakland District of Pittsburgh with its broad cultural resources (The Carnegie Museum of Art, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, The Carnegie Library, the University of Pittsburgh, The Hillman Library, the Frick Fine Arts Building, and Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens) places the College of Fine Arts at the center of a premier cultural environment.

The College of Fine Arts has a 9:1 student faculty ratio which provides a rigorous learning environment. It is a highly spirited federation of schools (Architecture, Art, Design, Drama and Music) made up of students and faculty who have an intense need to create and excel. Interacting among the schools, the University and the wider community are research centers such as the Frank-Ratchye Studio for Creative Inquiry, the Center for Building Performance and Diagnostics, Remaking Cities Institute, Center for Iranian Music, and the Center for Arts in Society. The intellectual and artistic life of the College is interwoven with a dense calendar of theater performances, concerts, exhibitions, films and media presentations and lectures by visiting artists, practitioners and scholars.

The College of Fine Arts offers a wide range of professionally oriented majors and minors in each of its schools. In addition, the College offers the Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts (BCSA), jointly with the School of Computer Science, the Bachelor of Humanities and Arts (BHA), jointly with the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA), jointly with the Mellon College of Science, the Engineering and Arts (EA) additional major, jointly with the College of Engineering, and the Master of Arts Management (MAM) and Master of Entertainment Industry Management (MEIM), jointly with the Heinz College of Public Policy and Management. These are presented only briefly below, but a complete listing of the graduation requirements for these programs may be found in the school descriptions later in this section and elsewhere in this volume.

Schools

School of Architecture
Office: CFA 201

The School of Architecture provides deep immersion in the discipline of architecture, intensified by the broader Carnegie Mellon culture of interdisciplinary innovation and creative inquiry. We define the discipline of architecture as the integrated pursuit of design creativity, historical perspective, social responsibility, technical expertise, and global environmental leadership. Though every School of Architecture student graduates with intensive architecture knowledge, no two graduates leave with the same education. In the twenty-first century, few architecture problems are straightforward. Our graduates excel in the roles architects are performing in and conducting major symphony orchestras, choruses and opera companies throughout the world; have built notable buildings, pioneered innovative sustainable design strategies and created interactive software systems; created significant innovations in graphic and industrial design; and are professors and deans in major arts institutions.

The primary mission of the School of Architecture is to develop the individual student the skills, knowledge, and commitment required to work as an artist in society. The four-year undergraduate program leads to a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Architecture. Concentrations within the art major are offered in four areas: 1) Painting, Drawing, Print Media and Photography; 2) Electronic and Time-Based Work; 3) Sculpture, Installation, and Site Work; and 4) Contextual Practice. A Master of Fine Arts degree in Architecture is also offered.

School of Design
Office: MM 110

The School of Design combines its professional program with a sound education in the liberal arts, leading to careers in many fields of design. It offers the following degrees: Bachelor of Design with concentrations in Communications, Products, and Environments; M. Design in Design for Interactions; M.P.S. in Design for Interactions; M.A. in Design; Ph.D. in Transition Design.

School of Drama
Office: PCA 220

The School of Drama offers a highly focused, world-class theatre education with thorough preparation for sustained careers and innovation in today’s widely-varied entertainment industries. The undergraduate programs lead to BFA degrees in Drama, with focuses in Acting, Music Theatre, Directing, Dramaturgy, Design, Production Technology and Management; MFA programs are offered in Scene, Costume, Sound, and Lighting Design; Directing, Dramatic Writing; and Production Technology and Management.

School of Music
Office: CFA 105

The School of Music has as its goal the preparation of musicians for careers in performance, composition, conducting, music education and music technology. The programs provide the opportunity to study with world-class artists utilizing the best aspects of conservatory training in the context of a major research university, combining the educational with the intensely professional. The Bachelor of Fine Arts is offered in Music Composition, Music Performance, and Music Technology (a joint degree with the School of Computer Science and the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department) with minors in Collaborative Piano, Conducting, Music Education, Music Performance, and Music Technology available. The Master of Music is offered in Composition, Conducting, Performance, Music Education, and Music and Technology (a joint degree with Computer Science and the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department).

Academic Standards

Grading Practices

Grades given to record academic performance in the College of Fine Arts are detailed in the catalog section entitled "Undergraduate Academic Regulations." All courses taught by the schools in the College of Fine Arts follow the standard letter grade system of the university. Responsibility for the grade given the student rests entirely with the instructor and the school concerned. A permanent grade may not be raised by taking a second examination. Students who wish to repeat a course already passed must obtain approval from the Dean of the College. At the time of approval, the old grade will be the official grade used as the computing factor for honors. Both grades, however, will appear on the official transcript.

Academic Actions

The decision to impose academic action is first initiated at the conclusion of each semester by the School faculty most involved in the student’s primary...
A student who is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting professional standards, or towards meeting the professional standards of the School. It is imposed for a history of poor performance that has created an impediment to acceptable academic achievement; a student is not making significant progress towards his/her degree; a student already on an action has a significantly poor semester (not achieving the requirements for academic action removal or worse). The student is required to withdraw from the university for a specific period as defined by the School. Re-admission is subject to the conditions specified in the suspension letter and approval of the senior associate dean for academics.

A student who has been suspended from the university is required to leave the campus, including dormitories and fraternity houses, within a maximum of two days after the action and to remain off the campus for the duration of the time specified.

Go to the university policy webpage on student life for more information on a University Suspension at www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/suspension-required-withdrawal-policy.html.

Drop from School
A student is Dropped from the School when it is clear that the student’s progress in professional training is insufficient to warrant continuing in the current professional field of study. This action is taken in the case of a student who has been lacking in some essential requirement in the chosen professional field, but whose general scholastic ability, habits and character justify an opportunity in some other field of education. This action terminates the student’s enrollment in the current School but is not intended to prejudice admission to another Department, School, or College of the University, or to another institution. This academic action allows the student three choices:

1. Transfer to another Carnegie Mellon University Department or School. The student takes responsibility to contact that Department or School of choice to discuss the possibility of applying for transfer.
2. Request for Transitional status in the College of Fine Arts for one semester (refer to the section on Transitional Students in the School’s Student Handbook). It is strongly recommended that the student make an appointment at the Carnegie Mellon Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion to pursue this option.
3. Withdraw from Carnegie Mellon University. A link to the application for Withdrawal/Leave of Absence form is embedded with the letter notifying the student of this academic action, and is also available at www.cmu.edu/hub.

Appeal of Grades and Academic Actions
Refer to the School’s Student Handbook for policy and procedure details.

Returning from Suspension
In order to return from a suspension, a student must have approval from the following administrators:

- Academic Suspension - associate dean;
- Disciplinary Suspension - dean of student affairs;
- Administrative Suspension - vice president for campus affairs or his/her designate.

Graduation Requirements
Because of the special nature of work in the College of Fine Arts, the first year in all schools should be considered probationary, a period in which a student and faculty can evaluate professional promise in terms of the college’s standards. Graduation from the College of Fine Arts follows the general university guidelines. As part of a student’s qualification for an undergraduate degree, the equivalent of two terms of full-time work must be pursued under the direction of faculty members in the college during the period immediately prior to the degree award. Courses completed at other institutions will not be acceptable as terminal credit for a degree.

Exceptions to this stipulation can be recommended by a school faculty in unusual cases, but the concurrence of the College Council is necessary before final approval of an exception can be given.
To be eligible to graduate, undergraduate students must complete all course requirements for their program with a cumulative Quality Point Average of at least 2.0 for all courses taken. For undergraduate students who enrolled at Carnegie Mellon as freshmen and whose freshman grades cause the cumulative QPA to fall below 2.0, this requirement is modified to be a cumulative QPA of at least 2.0 for all courses taken after the freshman year. Note, however, the cumulative QPA that appears on the student’s final transcript will be calculated based on all grades in all courses taken, including freshman year. Some programs may have additional QPA requirements in order to graduate.

Other graduation requirements in the College of Fine Arts are described in the curriculum of each school. Further questions about specific course requirements and the total number of units required should be directed to the respective school advisors.

Other Regulations Affecting Student Status

Schedule Changes
Courses may be added or dropped within the times stated in the college calendar. No courses may be added or dropped after the stated deadline dates except with the approval of the student’s School Head and the Dean of the College. (See Undergraduate Academic Regulations (http://coursecatalog.web.cmu.edu/servicesandoptions/undergraduateacademicregulations) for Add/Drop procedures.)

Withdrawal/Leave of Absence
Please refer to the Student Leave Policy.

Transitional Students
Transitional status is made available to students upon the advice of their advisors or upon their own request. A student must complete one full semester of study prior to declaring transitional status. The designation Transitional Student has been instituted by the Dean of the College of Fine Arts to assist students who have been judged unlikely to make satisfactory progress in their chosen professional field, or who on their own initiative, have changed their mind about their originally chosen field of study. Being a Transitional Student gives them an opportunity to maintain a temporary relationship with the College of Fine Arts while re-orienting career plans and goals. It also gives them time to enhance their admissibility to another school in the college, another college in the university, or another institution. Ordinarily a student will be permitted to register as a Transitional Student for no more than one semester. If after one semester a Transitional Student has not been accepted into a new program, they may be asked to leave the College of Fine Arts.

Transfer Students
Undergraduate students seeking transfer within or to any school of the College of Fine Arts must file an application with the School and proceed with the established transfer application procedure, audition, portfolio review or ASAT requirements. Admission may dictate freshman status regardless of the student’s prior college experience.

Materials
The college does not furnish students with any drawing materials, make-up materials, textbooks, or other expendable equipment except those in courses in which materials fees are charged to cover specific costs.

Retention of Students’ Work
The college reserves the right to retain indefinite documentation of any student work the faculty may select. All work not retained by the faculty must be claimed at the time specified by the schools concerned. The college assumes no liability for student materials in its custody.

Student Defined Majors
The Student Defined Major program in the College of Fine Arts is designed for the exceptional student, whose area of artistic interest lies outside of any pre-existing program at the University. Student Defined Majors are expected to propose a comprehensive plan of study that combines all of their coursework into a singular focus for their research and artistic practice. To create a successful proposal, the student must engage in additional career and preparatory research outside of their normal coursework. Designing the independent degree program typically takes six months to one year to complete.

Students interested in pursuing this unique degree path should meet with their academic advisors to discuss feasibility. They will then work with the CFA Senior Associate Dean for Academics to ensure that their proposed coursework meets the rigorous requirements of a Carnegie Mellon degree. They will need approval from their academic advisor, faculty mentor(s), relevant Head(s) of School, (Senior) Associate Dean(s), and the Vice Provost for Education. If the proposal is approved and the student has successfully met the requirements of the new major, the degree conferred at graduation will be a Bachelor of Arts with a Student Defined Major “approved title.”

The CFA Office of the Dean, in consultation with the academic advisor, will determine final certification of the degree. Note that all academic actions and CFA policies still apply to Student Defined Majors.

To apply for a Student Defined Major in the College of Fine Arts, one:
1. Must be a student in good standing at the University.
2. Must have successfully completed at least one semester of study and have at least two semesters left prior to their intended date of graduation.
3. Must have a cumulative QPA of 2.75 or better. (A student whose QPA is under 2.75 may still submit a proposal, but is strongly advised against it. If the proposal is accepted by the CFA Senior Associate Dean for Academics, the student must apply for transitional status for the following semester and will have only one semester to improve his or her QPA to the 2.75 minimum. If the student is not successful in raising the QPA to the 2.75 minimum they will not be permitted to continue with the Student Defined Major. They must either be re-admitted back into their old program or seek admittance into another department or college.)
4. Must have a faculty mentor in the College of Fine Arts who has agreed to mentor the student through the completion of the degree. This mentor should be from the school where the student is taking the majority of their courses, and be approved by the CFA Senior Associate Dean for Academics. If a student wishes to work extensively across colleges, they will need a faculty advisor(s) from their additional area(s) of concentration as well as approval from an Associate Dean of each college involved.
5. Must successfully complete the proposal process and submit all approved documentation with necessary signatures to the CFA Office of the Dean, CFA 100, by October 1 to be effective in the spring semester, and by May 1 to be effective in the fall semester. (Proposals that come in after these dates will be considered, but may not be able to be processed until the following semester.)

Student Organizations
Professional and honorary societies for students in the College of Fine Arts are the American Institute of Architects, Architecture Peer Mentors, Architecture Student Advisory Council, the Design League, American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT), Phi Mu Alpha Sioneria (music fraternity for men), Sigma Alpha Iota (music sorority for women), Pi Kappa Lambda (honorary for students in music) and the Music Educators’ National Conference.

BXA Intercollege Degree Programs

BACHELOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ARTS (BCSA), BACHELOR OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS (BHA), BACHELOR OF SCIENCE AND ARTS (BSA), ENGINEERING AND ARTS (EA) ADDITIONAL MAJOR

M. Stephanie Murray, Director & Academic Advisor
Location: Posner 150
www.cmu.edu/interdisciplinary

The Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts (BCSA) is a four-year intercollege degree-granting program designed for students interested in pursuing fields that comprehensively meld technology and the arts through courses offered in the College of Fine Arts and the School of Computer Science. It combines general education requirements, a concentration of courses in the College of Fine Arts, a concentration of courses in the School of Computer Science, and free electives.

The Bachelor of Humanities and Arts (BHA) is a four-year intercollege degree-granting program designed for students interested in blending studies in the College of Fine Arts and the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The BHA degree combines a general education requirement, a concentration of courses in the College of Fine Arts, a concentration of courses in the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and free electives.

The Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA) is a four-year intercollege degree-granting program designed for students interested in combining studies in the College of Fine Arts and the Mellon College of Science. It combines general education requirements, a concentration of courses in the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and free electives.

The Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA) is a four-year intercollege degree-granting program designed for students interested in combining studies in the College of Fine Arts and the Mellon College of Science. It combines general education requirements, a concentration of courses in the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and free electives.
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The Engineering and Arts (EA) additional major is an interdisciplinary program designed for College of Engineering students interested in developing their skills and interests in an area of the College of Fine Arts while retaining their full engineering curriculum and licensure. It combines a BXA course requirement and a concentration of courses in the College of Fine Arts with a student’s primary engineering major.

Please refer to Interdisciplinary Programs (http://coursecatalog.web.cmu.edu/intercollegeprograms/bxaintercollege) in this catalog for details.

The Master of Arts Management Program

Location: 1116 Hamburg Hall

The search for both increased support and larger audiences has intensified over the last decade and now, more than ever, arts organizations seek skilled managers. To meet this need, the College of Fine Arts and the Heinz College’s School of Public Policy and Management jointly developed the Master of Arts Management (MAM) Program to provide strong leadership in theater companies, dance companies, orchestras, opera companies, museums, galleries and arts policy organizations. In addition to the traditional two-year graduate degree structure, the Master of Arts Management Program provides undergraduate students the opportunity to complete the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Arts Management degrees within a period of five years through the Heinz College’s Accelerated Masters Program (AMP). MAM Program alumni can be found managing music and arts service organizations; marketing orchestras, theaters and dance companies; fund-raising for museums, opera companies, ballet companies and public television stations; and managing the finances of university arts departments and private businesses working in the arts and entertainment industry.