



The University of Georgia

University Council
Athens, Georgia 30602

March 13, 2013

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2012-2013

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to offer the existing major in Art History (M.A.) with a Non-Thesis Option will be an agenda item for the March 20, 2013, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Provost Jere W. Morehead
Dr. Laura D. Jolly



The University of Georgia

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Lamar Dodd School of Art

October 29, 2012

Maureen Grasso, Dean
The Graduate School
The University of Georgia
320 East Clayton Street, Suite 400
Athens, Georgia 30602-4401

Dear Dean Grasso,

This letter is to strongly support the Lamar Dodd School of Art's request that a non-thesis option for the M.A. in Art History be implemented for students pursuing a non-research, professionally-oriented program of study. The graduate faculty voted and the recorded vote is 12 yes and 0 no. This initiative is consistent with the area's and the department's goals to enhance and broaden its graduate program. It will prepare its graduates for a variety of careers within the field of Art History, as well as the university's broader vision of providing the necessary professionals to serve the interests of the state of Georgia.

The non-thesis M.A. will provide the appropriate educational opportunity for students who intend to pursue careers and professions that require a broad base of art historical knowledge but not the specialized, research-oriented skills required by the Ph.D. in Art History. Numerous careers include positions in art museum's registrar's office or education department, auction houses and art galleries, publishing, libraries and archival collections. Students will be knowledgeable and will be able to perform at the highest level in advertising, fundraising and public relations, and journalism. This century welcomes a broader engagement of study for the art historian as arts professionals beyond academia. This proposal aligns these needs with the Master's program offerings. Students pursuing the non-thesis option will understand that they will pursue a non-academic career track.

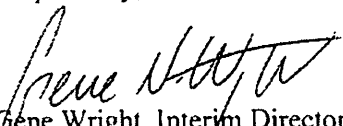
"The program of study for students selecting the non-thesis option would preserve all of the coursework and language requirements already stipulated for thesis-track M.A. students except the six credits of independent work ARHI 7000 (Master's Thesis Research) and ARHI 7300 (Master's Thesis Writing) required for the current thesis option. These six credits are typically taken in the last year of the program. The non-thesis option would require instead that its students take one additional course at the 8000-level and the Professional Portfolio and Practices ARHI 8050 in their last (fourth) semester."

The art history coursework can meet career paths other than those that are purely research. Application of art historical knowledge is critical in numerous fields enumerated in the proposal. For those positions, a thesis requirement would not significantly enhance the skills that the student needs to obtain and perform this work.

The non-thesis M.A. would allow them to graduate with a degree that reflected what they accomplished during their two years in our program. Many peer institutions and aspirational programs already have established a non-thesis M.A. option. With this program we can attract a wider array of excellent students from many institutions. We will keep pace with others who recognize the special circumstances required for divergent fields and offer this opportunity in a non-thesis M.A.

With this non-thesis M.A. proposal we align and enhance employment prospects for our graduates. We are taking a significant step forward to make education viable for a number of students who see clearly that their career paths are not aligned with academic positions in the professoriate.

Respectfully,



Gene Wright, Interim Director
Lamar Dodd School of Art

Proposal to Add a Non-Thesis Option to the M.A. in Art History

Lamar Dodd School of Art, Art History Area

Submitted by: Gene Wright, Interim Director
Dr. Isabelle Loring Wallace, Area Chair of Art History

Prepared by: Curriculum Committee, LDSOA

Basic Information

Proposed Change: Non-thesis option for students pursuing a non-research, professionally-oriented track

Start Date: Fall 2013

Program Description

The Lamar Dodd School of Art's Art History Area is requesting that a non-thesis option for the M.A. in Art History be implemented for students pursuing a non-research professionally-oriented program of study. This initiative is consistent with the area's and the department's goals to enhance and broaden its graduate program and to prepare its graduates for a variety of careers within the field of Art History, as well as the university's broader vision of providing the necessary professionals to serve the interests of the state of Georgia.

The non-thesis M.A. is designed for students who intend to pursue careers and professions that require a broad base of art historical knowledge but not the specialized, research-oriented skills required by the Ph.D. in Art History. These careers and professions include, but are not limited to, employment in an art museum's registrar's office or education department, auction houses and art galleries, publishing, libraries and archival collections. At the same time, the fundamental skills of critical reading, reasoning, writing, and visual analysis that are acquired in the required coursework for the M.A. will prepare some of these graduates for alternative kinds of employment that demand such talents, for example, advertising, fundraising and public relations, and journalism. In view of the greater employment opportunities in the museum and commercial art worlds as compared to the declining ones in academia, the most responsible course of action for the Art History Area is to reflect these realities in its Master's program offerings. Students pursuing the non-thesis option will understand that they will not be considered for the Ph.D. in Art History at the University of Georgia.

The program of study for students selecting the non-thesis option would preserve all of the coursework and language requirements already stipulated for thesis-track M.A. students except the six credits of independent work ARHI 7000 (Master's Research) and ARHI 7300 (Master's

Thesis) required for the current thesis option. These six credits are typically taken in the last year of the program. The non-thesis option would require instead that its students take one additional course at the 8000-level and ARHI 8050 (Professional Portfolio and Practices) in their last (fourth) semester.

At the time of application to the M.A. program in Art History, all students will request consideration for either the thesis or non-thesis track. However, when deemed appropriate by the Art History faculty, an enrolled student may alter his or her track by submitting a degree objective change form to the Graduate School.

CHART

Current M.A. with Thesis

Core: (3 credits)

ARHI 8040 – Historiography

Electives: (27 credits)

At least 12 credits of 8000-level ARHI

Remaining credits in 6000-level ARHI or up to 3 cr. in approved courses in related fields

Thesis: (6 credits)

ARHI 7000 – Master’s Research

ARHI 7300 – Master’s Thesis

Oral Defense of M.A. Thesis

Minimum Total Credit Hours: 36

Proposed M.A. Non-Thesis

Core: (3 credits)

ARHI 8040 – Historiography

Electives: (30 credits)

At least 15 credits of 8000-level ARHI

Remaining credits in 6000-level ARHI or up to 3 cr. in approved courses in related fields

Professional Practice: (3 credits)

ARHI 8050 – Professional Portfolio and Practices

Minimum Total Credit Hours: 36

In lieu of a thesis, the M.A. candidate must take and pass ARHI 8050 Professional Portfolio and Practices. This course will prepare the student for various employment opportunities by requiring the creation, presentation, and revision of a professional portfolio. This requirement was chosen over a written exam because students will have had ample opportunity to take and pass written exams in their coursework. This capstone experience will culminate their graduate studies, while simultaneously helping them negotiate the transition from an academic study environment to the professional world. The course will be Pass/Fail and may be repeated should the student fail on his or her first attempt. Should the student fail the course twice, he or she will not be allowed to

obtain the M.A. in Art History. The class will be taught every spring semester so as to ensure that students pursuing the non-thesis track are able to graduate within a two-year timeframe.

Justification for the Proposed Non-Thesis M.A. Option

A non-thesis option in our area is needed for several reasons.

1. Post-baccalaureate coursework in Art History can meet many student goals and career paths without the inclusion of a research-specific component. For jobs such as museum registrar, museum educator, auction house cataloguer, art publisher, or non-profit arts institutional officer, a broad background in the field is invaluable in recognizing the objects and categories with which they are faced and communicating their historical and cultural import to a wide range of audiences. For those positions, additional course work taken in lieu of the thesis requirement is more beneficial.
2. Students who do not intend to pursue the Ph.D. in Art History are not served by the thesis requirement, since it is typically seen as a stepping stone toward writing a dissertation in the field. The non-thesis M.A. would allow these students to develop skills such as critical reading, reasoning, writing, and visual analysis, without dedicating significant time to a requirement that does not immediately serve their professional and personal goals.
3. Many peer institutions and aspirational programs have already established a non-thesis M.A. option. This documentation is included in Appendix A. By not having a non-thesis option, we are at a competitive disadvantage when recruiting students to our M.A. program.
4. Professional practices and a portfolio were once items that students devised and refined on their own, but the trend in higher education has been to offer such courses geared to the special skill set and circumstances of individual fields. As colleges and universities have been held accountable for the employment prospects of their graduates, the very best programs have worked to make sure that talented students are well prepared for a variety of opportunities. Such practices do not seem to be taught in the earlier stages of students' educational programs.

Admission Procedure for Domestic Applicants

The admissions standards are the same for both the thesis and non-thesis options. Admissions are open to all qualified graduates of accredited institutions. Admission materials are available through the Graduate Admissions Office. All prospective students should send to the Graduate School: 1) a completed application; 2) two official transcripts from each institution of higher education attended; 3) Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general scores; 4) a letter of intent describing the applicant's background, interests, and goals. At the time of application, students must declare their intention to pursue a thesis or non-thesis track.

Admission Procedure for International Applicants

The admission standards are the same for both the thesis or non-thesis options. Admissions are open to all qualified graduates of accredited institutions. Admission materials are available through the Graduate Admissions Office. All prospective students should send to the Graduate School: 1) a completed application; 2) two official transcripts from each institution of higher education attended; 3) Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general scores; 4) a letter of intent describing the applicant's background, interests, and goals; 5) official TOEFL or IELTS scores not more than two years old. At the time of application, students must declare their intention to pursue a thesis or non-thesis track.

Impact on Current Students

There would be no adverse impact on current M.A. degree students in the department. Students currently enrolled in the M.A. degree (with thesis) would have the option of changing to the M.A. non-thesis option or completing their degree with a thesis. The programs of study of current students selecting the non-thesis M.A. option would have to reflect the new course requirements described above. We anticipate that only one or two students currently enrolled in the M.A. will switch to the non-thesis option. However, we foresee that it will be more attractive to future classes of students who apply knowing there are these two options.

Financial Impact

Although an additional class is required and a new course will be created for the Non-Thesis M.A. students, we will not need additional faculty or services to implement the non-thesis option. Since the course will be taught by all members of the area on a rotating basis, no new funds will be required.

Comparable and Aspirational Institutions with Non-Thesis Options for the M.A. in Art History

Comparable

University of Washington (Seattle)
University of Kentucky (Lexington)
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Aspirational

Duke University (J.D./M.A. in Art History)
Penn State University (scholarly paper)
Boston University (scholarly paper)
McGill University (Montreal)

University of Arizona (Tucson)

University of Kansas (Lawrence)

University of Hawaii-Manoa

ARHI 8050 PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO AND PRACTICES serves as a capstone experience for students who do not intend to pursue a Ph.D. in the field of Art History. Enrolled students will be required to complete a variety of assignments that draw on the skills developed during their graduate studies: research, critical reading, reasoning, writing, and visual analysis. These assignments will include but are not limited to: critiques of current exhibition; an annotated bibliography on a significant aesthetic issue (e.g., artist, style, movement, theme, method) in which sources are categorized and briefly summarized; a substantially revised research paper suitable for publication or for use as a writing sample; and an oral presentation of research to the whole faculty. In addition, the course will facilitate the transition from an academic to a professional context by crafting and refining materials required for a professional portfolio that demonstrates a broad-based knowledge of art history.