

FIRST YEAR

SUMMER INTENSIVE / 8 WEEKS

ALL STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

STUDIO I

Early in the residency, students are assigned a private studio. Residency studio work is supported, monitored and evaluated by faculty. In addition to formal and informal studio critiques, students participate in formal critiques with core faculty, visiting artists, and fellow students. Toward the end of the summer intensive, students and faculty develop goals and objectives to be addressed in the first year fall and spring. This course is the most heavily weighted and where the greatest demands must be met. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR I

This course is complementary to the Studio I experience and is conducted in two parts: as a forum for discussing contemporary topics and pragmatic skills related to cultural production and, as a platform for researching and interviewing the Visiting Artists. Each week throughout the summer, seven Visiting Artists join the class for a series of student-led interviews. Through reading, writing and interviewing Visiting Artists, students examine the link between thought and expression. *2 credits*

STUDIO IN CONTEXT:
Applied Theory and History

This course explores methodologies employed by art historians to understand works of art. Art is not autonomous and its relation to culture is immediate; this course enables students to integrate contemporary and historical ideas with their art practice. Through a series of case studies, students investigate concerns and conditions motivating generations of artists, historians, and theorists. Students will begin to articulate their own positions and voices. *2 credits*

FALL / 15 WEEKS

STUDIO II

During the fall and spring trimesters, Full Residency students remain on site and work in the MECA studios and Low Residency students return to their chosen studios. Studio advisors are selected in August of each year through a careful matching process during which MFA faculty look at every student's work and potential direction, their geographic location, and their particular needs within the trajectory of their career. Each student determines their own working methods and conceptual agendas. Students are required to spend at least 30 hours/week in engaged in meaningful studio activity. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR:
Research Methodologies

(Online) Much like a scientist in a laboratory, MFA candidates will develop experiments to test out certain hypotheses, explore new territory, introduce or remove certain variables and analyze their explorations in service to strengthening artistic thinking and production. This course encourages on the ground, active research—be it through in-studio experimentation or out-in-the-world site-based experiments, field research and study—at once playful and serious. The format allows for risk taking and charting new territory. *2 credits*

Views on Contemporary Art

(Online) Drawing from current publications, field research, and exhibitions, this course will extend and expand on the conversations that began during the Summer Intensive on the shape of contemporary and historic artistic discourse. At the end of this course all students should be able to discuss their work in relation to these terms and further integrate contemporary and historical critical ideas with their art practice. *2 credits*

FALL / SPRING TEACHER ASSISTANTSHIPS - Available to Full Residency students

WINTER INTENSIVE — 1 WEEK: Both Full Residency and Low Residency students come together for a mid-year review faculty feedback, student presentations, professional workshops for one week. At the beginning of the week all students and faculty spend time together as a community and present their studio work according to a structured set of guidelines. First year students leave for guided four day research trip.

SPRING / 15 WEEKS

STUDIO III

Students maintain a focused, independent studio practice, supported by the Graduate Committee, for at least 30 hours a week. Assigned advisors meet and conduct scheduled individual studio visits and group critiques and offer consistent contact throughout the spring session. Students will develop and articulate central questions and ideas while learning to challenge their thinking and studio processes, while taking risks. The Chair oversees this course and maintains contact with students and advisors via email, phone and skype at regular intervals throughout the trimester. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR:
Studio Writing

(Online) The Studio Writing Seminar is meant to prompt deep questioning, analysis, discovery and refinement of isolated qualities in each student's evolving studio work. The goal of this course is two-fold: to generate new perspectives on individual studio production and to enhance the written articulation of process, product and purpose. The body of work produced in the studio course will serve as the major research "text." The exegesis of this "text" takes various approaches including the investigation of material, social, formal and personal concerns. *2 credits*

Approaches to Critical Theory

(Online) This course is designed to explore three ideas; the structure by which we encounter art, the variety of ideas associated with art, and the way we see art of the past in the contemporary. This includes a rigorous survey of the art market and its structures, a discussion of political agency in art, as well as influence and its affect on art practice. This course enables students to integrate contemporary critical theory with their art practice by considering the theoretical issues and related historical framework that come together in the discursive interpretation of art. *2 credits*

SECOND YEAR

☐ SUMMER INTENSIVE / 8 WEEKS

ALL STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

STUDIO IV

Students in their private studios continue to clarify the content of the work with an emphasis on articulating and contextualizing overarching themes and ideas in relation to audience and society. Toward the end of the summer intensive, the student and faculty develop the goals and objectives to be addressed in the second year fall and spring studio projects with a focus on a developing body of work for the thesis exhibition. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR IV

This course consists of in-depth, student-led discussions and dialogues around topics or readings that are important to their own studio work, in addition new ideas are gathered from the thoughtful analysis and the incisive commentary of peers. Each week throughout the summer, Visiting Artists join the class for a series of student-led interviews. Students are divided into small groups and thoroughly research the work and biography of each VA and develop critical and practical questions in advance. *2 credits*

STUDIO IN CONTEXT: Critical Writing

This course works toward the thesis project in full, addressing both the content and delivery of the thesis document and exhibition. Group exercises, in-class presentations, and short writing exercises help student clarify the content for individual studio practices. Through short slide presentations, case studies are examined for structure, content, and rigor. *2 credits*

☐ FALL / 15 WEEKS

STUDIO V

At the close of the Summer Intensive, Full and Low Residency students maintain a focused, independent studio practice in preparation for Thesis Exhibition. Students will demonstrate a strong, consistent ability to reference art history in regard to a body of work and understand their own art historical lineage. Students meet with their advisor 6 times each fall term for a minimum of two hours each meeting. Additionally, advisors offer consistent contact throughout the fall session. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR: Professional Practices

(Online) Beginning with a list of personal career goals, this course addresses where to research career opportunities, goal setting, development of project proposals, budgeting, writing a CV, bio and byline, the importance of networking, identifying and applying for grants, residencies, percent for art projects, exhibitions, or curatorial opportunities and job applications. *2 credits*

Thesis Proposal

(Online) Preparation for Thesis begins with a proposal. As students cross the threshold into the beginning of the second year in MECA's MFA program, their research and focus will begin to shift increasingly toward deepening the unique ideas and pursuits surrounding their own art production. This course is created with that arc in mind, and will consist in part of in-depth discussions and dialogues around readings of their choosing. Second research trip happens this trimester. *2 credits*

WINTER INTENSIVE — 1 WEEK: Both Full Residency and Low Residency students come together for a mid-year review, faculty feedback, student presentations, professional workshops. At the beginning of the week all students and faculty spend time together present their studio work according to a structured set of guidelines that mirrors the oral defense. Following presentations, second-year students complete thesis and professional development workshops.

☐ SPRING / 15 WEEKS

STUDIO VI

Students maintain a focused, self-directed studio practice supported by the Graduate Committee. They will develop a cohesive body of work and using this time and space to prepare for Thesis Exhibition. Students finalize how to articulate and apply focused and ongoing core questions, using critical language to assess one's own work and the artworks of others. In addition, students actively participate in the critique process and generate productive studio visits with core faculty. *6 credits*

STUDIO SEMINAR: Studio Thesis

(Online) As the final part of the MFA program, students are required to present a final exhibit of their work. The exhibition acts as a catalyst to propel each of the MFA candidates' artistic practices out into the world and marketplace by introducing the candidates work to the public and professional arts community. MFA candidates work with an assigned thesis committee, which sees the student through the process that culminates in a thesis exhibition and preparation for the thesis defense. *2 credits*

Thesis Composition

(Online) This course focuses exclusively on assisting graduating students with the development of their written thesis. Each MFA graduate is required to publish a 7,500-word document that clearly articulates their work through concise description, pertinent terminology, relevant examples, innovative perspectives and polished prose, which will accompany their thesis exhibition. The final essay will be published through LULU Books and copies will be kept in the MFA office and catalogued in the Joanne Waxman Library at MECA. *2 credits*

MAY INTENSIVE — THESIS DEFENSE AND EXHIBITION: All graduating students participate in a week-long residency. Both the written and studio theses are defended and the MFA Studio Thesis Exhibition is mounted in the Institute of Contemporary Art. This intensive is facilitated by MFA Chair, core faculty, Administrative Director and, by invitation, nationally established critics, historians and artists, all recognized for teaching excellence.

PERMISSION TO GRADUATE »