FINE ARTS (FA)

Explanation of Course Numbers

• Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
• Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-division undergraduate courses that can also be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work
• Those in the 6000s and 8000s are for master’s, doctoral, and professional-level students
• The 6000s are open to advanced undergraduate students with approval of the instructor and the dean or advising office

FA 1000. Dean’s Seminar. 3 Credits.
The Dean’s Seminars provide Columbian College first-year students focused scholarship on specific intellectual challenges. Topics vary by semester; see department for more details. Laboratory fee.

FA 1014. Handbuilt Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Working with clay as an art form. Pinch, coil, slab, hump and press mold, paddling, and hollowing techniques. Sketch studies, clay and glaze making, reduction and oxidation kiln firings.

FA 1015. Wheelthrown Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Development of cylindrical and open forms. Sketch studies, trimming, clay and glaze making, reduction and oxidation kiln firings.

FA 1075. East Asian Calligraphy. 3 Credits.
Writing of Chinese characters with traditional writing implements. No knowledge of the language required. Covers the history, aesthetics, and philosophy of East Asian scripts and calligraphy and their relationships to paintings, seal carving, and literature. Same as EALL 1075.

FA 1101. Introduction to Handbuilt Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Introduction to working with clay as an art form; fundamental hand-building techniques such as pinch, coil, and slab; basic surface, glaze, and firing techniques. Introductory history of ceramics. Materials fee.

FA 1201. Sculpture: Material Investigations. 3 Credits.
Beginning study of design and fabrication of sculpture. Introduction to sculptural techniques across multiple media, with a focus in hand-built processes including textile, wood, and found object techniques. Materials fee.

FA 1301. Drawing Fundamentals. 3 Credits.

FA 1401. Painting: Visual Thinking. 3 Credits.
Development of technical and perceptual skills that are the foundation of visual expression. Beginning projects start with a simple introduction to the mechanics of paint handling: how to begin a painting, apply paint, and model form. Value, line, color, and abstraction.

FA 1501. Black and White Photography. 3 Credits.

FA 1502. Color Photography. 3 Credits.
Introduction to the materials and processes of color photography. Color theory, exposure techniques, film scanning, digital color correcting, and printing. The use of color as a means of visual communication and creative expression. Materials fee.

FA 1601. New Media: Digital Art. 3 Credits.
Introduction to the tools and processes of digital, electronic, and time-based arts. Development of technical skills necessary for using the computer as a creative tool. The history and current role of digital representation and distribution in art, ideas, and relationships. Materials fee.

FA 2000. Sophomore Colloquium. 3 Credits.
The Sophomore Colloquia are small, seminar-style courses limited to second-year students in Columbian College. These courses engage students deeply in a discipline, focus on a narrow issue of high interest and impact, and require independent research projects of the students. Topics vary by semester. See the department for more details.

FA 2001. Concept Lab. 3 Credits.
Connecting concept, materials, media, and audience; addressing challenges using materials and media. Cross-disciplinary thinking and individual and collaborative creative practices as well as historical, contemporary, and theoretical context of art works. Materials fee. Restricted to students who have completed a minimum of 6 credits in Fine Arts (FA) courses.

FA 2111. Ceramic Design in Handbuilt Forms. 3 Credits.
Further development of handbuilding techniques in ceramic sculpture; pinching, coiling, paddling, and hollowing; use of slabs and hump and press molds. Students produce clay and glazes and experiment with those materials in various reduction and oxidation firing ranges. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1014 or FA 1101 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2112. Ceramic Design in Wheelthrown Forms. 3 Credits.
Use of the wheel to create intricate elements and practices that accompany advanced functional and non-functional ceramic forms, including sculptural applications. Clay and glazes in various reduction and oxidation firing ranges; relationships between clay, surface, and fire. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1015 or FA 1102 or permission of the instructor.
FA 2113. Ceramic Sculpture. 3 Credits.
Sculptural ceramic forms that integrate quality and creativity; transferring ideas into forms using techniques in hollow and solid construction; varied temperature firings in oxidation and reduction atmospheres. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1101 or FA 1102 or FA 1014 or FA 1015.

FA 2190. Special Topics: Fine Arts. 3 Credits.

FA 2211. Sculpture Fabrication. 3 Credits.
Intermediate to advanced fabrication techniques including woodworking, metal fabrication, mold-making, and textiles. Focus on developing safe and creative uses of more advanced sculptural techniques and tools in the context of site-specific projects. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1201 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2212. Sculpture: Design in Action. 3 Credits.
The design, fabrication, and implementation of artwork to address real world problems using a variety of materials and techniques. Students put their sculptures into action in site-specific contexts. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1201 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2213. Digital Fabrication. 3 Credits.
Basic principles of digital fabrication; the intersection between digital and physical methods of fabrication; hands-on building projects such as woodworking, simple mold-making, and multimedia solutions. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1017 or FA 1071 or FA 1201 or FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2311. Drawing: Perception and Mark Making. 3 Credits.
Further study of the fundamentals of drawing; perceptual and conceptual development; observational practice of drawing and exploration of historical and contemporary developments in drawing. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1301 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2312. Advanced Drawing Techniques. 3 Credits.
Investigation of drawing as an organizing tool for thought, analysis, and personal imagery. Drawing as a method to integrate complex ideas and concepts into the visual field. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1301 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2411. Painting: Watercolor. 3 Credits.
Working with basic issues of light, color, and paint quality, students learn a variety of techniques, including working transparently, wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, lifting, masking, and drybrush. Exploration of the medium’s inherent qualities as well as those it shares with other painting media. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1401 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2412. Painting a Figure. 3 Credits.
Perceptual painting of the figure with a focus on developing visual analysis skills. Materials, construction processes, and formal language of painting; narrative and symbolic language and political critiques of representation; and the history of figure painting and its critical issues. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1401 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2413. Painting: Process and Materials Lab. 3 Credits.
The traditional and contemporary construction processes and materials used in fine art painting: support material, grounds, paints, application tools, and action by the painter. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1401 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2431. Painting: Contemporary Issues. 3 Credits.
The variety of historical and contemporary painting practices; deepening our understanding of painting construction and its meaning-making; developing our own interests, pleasures, and concerns. A critical look at the history and conventions of painting, asking “painting for whom and to what purpose?” How do painted images circulate and function? By deconstructing the vocabulary of painting, we can repurpose it to our own individual ends. Prerequisites: FA 1026 or FA 1401 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2511. Photography: Abstraction versus Representation. 3 Credits.
Theory and practice of abstract and representational photography in historical and contemporary contexts; chemical and digital photographic processes. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1041 or FA 1502 or FA 1042, or permission of the instructor.

FA 2512. Photography: Altered Landscapes. 3 Credits.
Theory and practice of abstract and representational photography in historical and contemporary contexts; chemical and digital photographic processes. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1041 or FA 1502 or FA 1042 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2513. Photography: From Photograms to Scanograms. 3 Credits.
Low-tech methods of producing analogue photographs and generating digital images. Working in both the chemical darkroom and digital lab. Analyzing examples of photography from the earliest practitioners to work being produced by contemporary artists. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1502 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2531. Photography: Contemporary Issues. 3 Credits.
Emphasis on the incorporation of contemporary strategies, trends, and approaches into the student’s personal practice; study of the work of contemporary artists who use photography. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1502 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2611. Video Art and Time-based Media. 3 Credits.
Video art production with a focus on the skills needed to be a technically proficient and thoughtful video maker. The history of video art since 1965; avant-garde moving image languages; and theoretical and social contexts that have informed the development and use of the medium. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1502 or FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.
FA 2612. Video: Remixing the Archive. 3 Credits.
The appropriation and documentary functions of moving images through direct reuse in edited or live remix or as sources for restaging new versions. Projects introduce students to the substantial archival resources in Washington, DC, as well as the ever-increasing collections of material that can be found online. Prerequisites: FA 1502 or FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.

FA 2613. Site and Sound. 3 Credits.
An overview of contemporary sonic art practice and audio production. Audio storytelling, spatialized sound, and site-based sonic artwork. Critical perspectives on sound and audio practice. Prerequisites: FA 1502 or FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3101. Special Topics: Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: One of FA 1014, FA 1015, FA 1101 or FA 1102 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3201. Special Topics: Sculpture. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1201 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3301. Special Topics: Drawing. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1301 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3401. Special Topics: Painting. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1401 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3501. Special Topics: Photography. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1502 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3601. Special Topics: New Media. 3 Credits.
Issues in contemporary new media practices. Topics vary by semester. May be repeated provided the topic differs. See the schedule of classes for more details. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3901. Special Topics: Fine Arts. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1014 or FA 1015 or FA 1021 or FA 1101 or FA 1102 or FA 1201 or FA 1301 or FA 1401 or FA 1501 or FA 1502 or FA 1601 or permission of the instructor.

FA 3911. Collaborative Practices: Social Practices of Art. 3 Credits.
The effects of artists using their work to participate in political, social and/or cultural change. Ethical, cultural, and political implications of using art in the public sphere. Philosophical, theoretical, and historical background of these practices. Students select one of the prerequisite courses. Laboratory fee. Prerequisites: FA 1101, FA 1014, FA 1015, FA 1021, FA 1102, FA 1201, FA 1301, FA 1401, FA 1501, FA 1502, FA 1601, or permission of the instructor.

FA 3912. The Cinematic in Contemporary Art. 3 Credits.
The influence of cinema on contemporary art in historical, conceptual, and aesthetic contexts. Students employ cinematic strategies through projects that explore setting, sequencing, camera angle, point of view, tracking, lighting, performance, narrative, and sound. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1501 or FA 1502 or FA 1601; or permission of the instructor.

FA 3951. Creative Photovoltaics. 3 Credits.
The fabrication process of solar devices and the parameters of solar cells in design and art applications. Students build a small solar device and conceptualize innovative proposals for new solar technology solutions. Materials fee. Prerequisites: FA 1201 or FA 1601; or permission of the instructor.

FA 4193. Professional Practices. 3 Credits.
A wide overview of the contemporary art world, including how artists promote their work to galleries, public art organizations, and museums; writing successful grant proposals, artist statements, essays, and reviews; and comparing the quality of venues for art and art journalism. (Same as FA 6293).

FA 4195. Critical Practices. 3 Credits.
This structured independent study consists of weekly group critiques that bring together students working in a variety of media. Discussions, which range from practical to aesthetic issues, challenge students to focus and articulate their visual knowledge. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

FA 4199. Internship. 3 Credits.
Open only to candidates for the BA in fine arts with approval of the advisor in fine arts. May not be repeated for credit toward the degree. May be taken P/NP only.

FA 6101. Special Topics: Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6113. Ceramic Sculpture. 3 Credits.
Developing an understanding of sculptural ceramic forms that integrate quality and creativity. Transfer ideas into forms using techniques in hollow and solid construction. Varied temperature firings in oxidation and reduction atmospheres. Restricted to Graduate students only.
FA 6212. Sculpture/Design in Action. 3 Credits.
This course invites students to design, fabricate and implement artworks to address a real world problem using any available materials and techniques. Students will be encouraged to test their sculpture in a performative action in a site-specific context. Restricted to Graduate students only.

FA 6213. Digital Fabrication. 3 Credits.
Basic principles of digital fabrication and the intersection of digital and physical methods. Building projects may require woodworking, simple mold-making, and multi-media solutions. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6231. Ceramic Sculpture. 3 Credits.
Developing an understanding of the sculptural ceramic form that integrates both quality and creativity. Techniques in hollow and solid construction. Varied temperature firings in reduction and oxidation atmospheres.

FA 6233. Architectural Ceramics. 3 Credits.
Advanced studies in ceramic murals and sculptures designed for indoor and outdoor architectural concepts. Laboratory tests and activities.

FA 6249. Special Topics: Sculpture. 3 Credits.
FA 6251. Advanced Drawing Techniques. 3 Credits.
Investigation of the common concerns and creative processes that have dissolved boundaries between drawing and painting in the late twentieth century.

FA 6291. Contemporary Art and Theory for Artists I. 3 Credits.
Part I of a two-semester course that addresses a detailed and thematic history of contemporary art since the late 1960s, along with an introduction to key theoretical ideas shaping contemporary philosophy, art practices, and art history. Restricted to MFA in Fine Arts students or departmental permission only.

FA 6292. Contemporary Art and Theory for Artists II. 3 Credits.
Part II of a two-semester course that addresses a detailed and thematic history of contemporary art since the late 1960s, along with an introduction to key theoretical ideas shaping contemporary philosophy, art practices, and art history. Restricted to MFA in Fine Arts students or departmental permission only. Recommended background: FA 6291.

FA 6293. Professional Practices. 3 Credits.
A critical guide for understanding the infrastructure of the art world through analysis of various sustainable models of contemporary art practice for young artists. Establishing practical modes of criticism, promotion, fundraising and entrepreneurship in relation to exhibiting one's work, seeking venues, conducting studio visits, managing budgets, and writing grants, press releases, and artist statements. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6294. Writing in Practice. 3 Credits.
Consideration of a wide variety of key artists' writings and the ways in which artists incorporate writing into their overall artistic practices. Issues and methods discussed may include questions of intention, the reciprocity of an artwork, agency and locational identity, defining a public/audience, and perceptions of care and engagement. Writing exercises in observation, concepts, and medium/genre. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6295. Critical Practices. 3-7 Credits.
This structured independent study consists of weekly group critiques that bring together students working in a variety of media. Discussions, which range from practical to aesthetic issues, challenge students to focus and articulate their visual knowledge.

FA 6296. Studio Visits. 3 Credits.
Ongoing critical discourse about each student's creative work through regular studio visits with the instructor, as well as one-time visits by international, national, and regional artists. This course challenges students to interrogate and more fully articulate their individual practices. Restricted to students in the MFA in fine arts program.

FA 6298. Internship. 3-6 Credits.
Open only to M.F.A. candidates with the approval of the advisor in fine arts. May be repeated to a maximum of credits.

FA 6301. Special Topics: Drawing. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6312. Advanced Drawing Techniques. 3 Credits.
Drawing as an organizing tool for thought, analysis, and personal imagery. Traditional and contemporary approaches to topics related to perceptual and conceptual concerns. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6401. Special Topics in Painting. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6412. Painting a Figure. 3 Credits.
Perceptual painting of the figure with a focus on developing skills of visual analysis; materials, construction processes, and formal language of painting; history of figure painting and its critical issues; narrative and symbolic language and political critiques of representation. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6413. Painting: Process and Materials Lab. 3 Credits.
The traditional components of fine arts paintings, including a support material, a ground, paints, application tools, and action by the painter; traditional and contemporary materials and construction processes. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.
FA 6431. Painting: Contemporary Issues. 3 Credits.
Theory and practice of contemporary painting practices and critical investigation of historical precedents; how painted images circulate. Student project. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6501. Special Topics in Photography. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6511. Photography: Abstraction versus Representation. 3 Credits.
Photography beyond an objective conveyer of visual information; abstract and representational photography from a theoretical perspective; practical approaches to photography within aesthetic traditions of historical and contemporary abstract and representational art. Chemical and digital photographic processes. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6512. Photography: Landscape/Cityscape. 3 Credits.
Exploration of imagery that conforms to and contradicts the well-established artistic conventions of landscapes; study of artists who take the landscape as their subject matter. Students produce a final portfolio that investigates local landscape in and around the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6513. Photography: From Photograms to Scanograms. 3 Credits.
Low-tech means of producing analogue photographs and generating digital images; moving between the chemical darkroom to the digital lab; review of images captured by the earliest practitioners to work being produced by contemporary artists. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6531. Photography: Contemporary Issues. 3 Credits.
The incorporation of contemporary strategies, trends, and approaches into the student's personal practice; learning is informed by the work of contemporary artists who use photography. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6601. Special Topics: New Media. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Materials fee.

FA 6611. Video Art and Time-Based Media. 3 Credits.
Video art production skills needed for technical and creative proficiency. The history of video art since 1965; avant-garde moving image languages; theoretical and social contexts that have informed the development and use of the medium. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6612. Video Remix Archive. 3 Credits.
Study of the reuse of moving images in documentary and experimental contexts or as sources for re-staging new versions. Students make use of archival resources in Washington, DC. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6613. Site and Sound. 3 Credits.
Audio production for multiple uses; contemporary sonic art practice; development of audio storytelling, spatialized sound; and site-based sonic artwork. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6901. Special Topics in Fine Arts. 3 Credits.
Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students. Prerequisites: FA 1014, FA 1015, FA 1021, FA 1101, FA 1102, FA 1201, FA 1301, FA 1401, FA 1501, FA 1502 or FA 1601.

FA 6911. Collaborative Practices: Social Lives of Art. 3 Credits.
The effects of artists using their work to participate in political, social and/or cultural change; philosophical, theoretical, and historical background of such practices; ethical, cultural, and political implications of using art in the public sphere. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6912. Cinematic in Contemporary Art. 3 Credits.
Examines how cinema influences contemporary art and considers the historical, conceptual and aesthetic issues that emerged with film. Students exploit cinema's strategies in their own photographic and video work through projects that explore setting, sequencing, camera angle, point of view, tracking, lighting, performance, narrative and sound. Restricted to Graduate students only.

FA 6913. Painting: Off the Wall. 3 Credits.
Non-traditional approaches to painting; painting combined with other creative fields such as architecture, sculpture, social practice, performance, and film/video. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students. Prerequisites: 

FA 6951. Creative Photovoltaics. 3 Credits.
The fabrication of solar devices and the use of these solar cells in design and art applications; scientific methodology for art and design students as well as material protocols and safety procedures. Materials fee. Restricted to graduate students.

FA 6998. Thesis Research. 3 Credits.

FA 6999. Thesis Research. 3 Credits.