

School of Design & Production (Visual Arts)

Michael J. Kelley, Dean

I. Overview of School

Visual Arts is an exploratory program designed for high school students in their junior and senior years that have an artistic interest, dedication and enthusiasm they wish to pursue in a structured course of study. “VA” is a carefully planned, two-year arts curriculum that promotes intellectual, aesthetic and emotional growth. Discipline is emphasized as an essential component of developing an effective professional and personal work ethic.

Students take studio classes in drawing, design, and sculpture, with the addition of art history in the second year of study. Studio assignments are designed to introduce the student to a variety of media and the nature of the creative process. Research, design, fabrication, exhibition, analysis and critique of the student’s works are all essential components of the curriculum. The faculty also stresses the importance of the academic program as an integral part of each student’s intellectual development.

II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

Enrollment in Visual Arts is primarily offered to North Carolina residents who qualify for in-state tuition status, as defined in the North Carolina General Statute 116.143.1. Typically, students apply during their sophomore year of high school so that they may attend the program for both their junior and senior years. A limited number of highly motivated, talented and mature high school seniors are also accepted into the program so that they may experience the first year of the curriculum.

The presentation of a physical portfolio (15-20 pieces of original work) and an on-campus interview are prerequisites for admission. Examples of work to be included in the portfolio should include drawing and may also include graphic design, painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, or any medium of choice, including sketchbooks. Although many students have had previous art training, this is not a requirement. Final decisions concerning admission are based on the artistic potential of each applicant, letters of recommendation, and the official high school transcript.

Essential Qualifications

Applicants who are accepted and enrolled in the Visual Arts Program must be committed to a rigorous course of study in design, drawing, sculpture and art history. The list of essential qualifications includes, but is not limited to, the ability to:

- Participate physically in all phases of art production and studio maintenance.
This covers a broad range of physical movements and hand-eye coordinated activities that includes, but is not limited to: standing at a drawing easel, design table, or sculpture stand for extended periods of time; free-hand drawing and painting; using hand and power tools to measure, cut, fold and secure designs; spatial understanding that allows for mold-making, modeling, carving, casting and other fabrication methods; as well as a full range of body motions in the execution of classroom assignments and performance art activities.
- View reference materials and observe demonstrations, as well as to hear required lectures in studio art and art history courses.
- See images, hear sounds, process information and clearly communicate with faculty, staff and their peers.

III. Standards of Achievement and Evaluation

A. Progression towards Diploma

Students are evaluated by the faculty each term and are continued only as long as they demonstrate substantial growth toward artistic excellence and academic responsibility. It is also important that students demonstrate success in being a contributing member of the unique, artistic and predominantly residential high school and university environment that constitutes the UNCOSA campus.

As members of a selective group of dedicated young artists, it is very important that each student contribute to maintaining a safe and effective teaching and learning environment. As such, students are required to assist with studio set-ups, and group and individual clean-ups. They are also required to complete work by assigned deadlines, participate in critiques, and, in general, treat the facilities, faculty, staff, administration, as well as one's peers, with respect.

Further, to remain in the Visual Arts Program, students must maintain an overall 2.7 grade point average in their studio art courses. For academic classes, please consult the High School Academic Program section of the bulletin. Students who have been excessively tardy or absent in one or more arts courses during a semester may be placed on Probation. Should a student fail to meet the expectations of the Probation, either the High School Academic Program and/or the Visual Arts Program may recommend that the student be withdrawn from UNCOSA.

B. Required Skills

Students enrolled in the program are required to:

- Produce original works of art that are compelling on an aesthetic, conceptual and technical level in a variety of mediums, genres and styles. Students must be ready, willing and able to participate fully in the design and fabrication of works of art that result from both direct classroom instruction (assignments) and purely independent motivations;
- Analyze and discuss works of art produced in the program, as well as examples drawn from a broad range of cultural and historical references. In written and oral critique sessions, students are expected to respond to a variety of learning modalities occurring in both traditional and nontraditional teaching environments;
- Work in both large and small group settings in the completion of program related tasks, from maintaining a clean and productive studio environment to working collaboratively on art and research assignments;
- Actively participate in a learning environment that encompasses an openly diverse range of philosophical, social, moral, and ethical approaches to the creation and analysis of art and culture;
- Undertake serious study of the human form. Figure drawing, the traditional cornerstone of art training that includes portraiture and the nude, is a required component of the curriculum.

C. High School Diploma

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts high school diploma with special "Concentration in Visual Arts" is awarded to students who satisfactorily complete the requirements of the Visual Arts Program and UNCOSA High School Academic Program.

D. First-Year Program (3 units per year)

Students take three studio art courses each semester: design, drawing, and sculpture. These classes stress developing foundational art and design skills in a variety of media, employing an appropriate art and design vocabulary, as well as using critiques to encourage analysis and self-evaluation.

E. Second-Year Program (4 units per year)

Studio art courses in design, drawing and sculpture continue at an advanced level. Students also are required to take AP Art History. Although structure and technique are addressed, greater emphasis is placed on the interpretive style of each individual and the development of a portfolio.