

School of Fine Art- Sculpture

Midpoint Review Guidelines (Master of Fine Arts)

All Master of Fine Arts students are required to conduct a Midpoint Review as of part of the Master's program to present their Final Thesis proposal. Your thesis proposal must be presented and approved before you begin your Directed Study coursework.

Important Contact Information

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Eligibility

Prior to scheduling your Midpoint Review, you must have done the following:

- Completed 24-36 Units
- Completed or be in progress of completing all core requirements (listed below)
- Completed 6 units of Liberal Arts

These core courses must be taken by all Fine Art Sculpture students *

- FASCU 622: Moldmaking
- FASCU 624: Expression & Composition in Clay
- FASCU 644: Final Project Seminar (Required to take after 2nd semester or concurrently with Midpoint)
- FASCU 637: Metals – Foundry **-OR-** FASCU 649 MS: Modular Casting for Sculpture & Jewelry (Online students only)
- At least one (1) more FASCU class

* Core courses may be waived with academic director approval only

Note: International students who are tested into or choose to take EAP 605S or 605W: English for Art Purposes should do so immediately after taking EAP 604: MS: English for Art Purposes and before they plan to do their Midpoint Review.

- Plan ahead and be prepared to present your proposal by the beginning of the semester.

Scheduling

Please review the [Midpoint and Final Review Handbook](#)

Deliverables

Portfolio

You will need to include two samples from each studio class and two samples of a style you wish to pursue or other artistic influences. These need to be the very best samples of your work. More details and guidance can be found in the [Portfolio Checklist](#)

Online Students: Please review the [Online Technical Requirements](#) page for requirements relating to your submissions for upload

Thesis Book

In your thesis book, you must include the following sections, in this order and with a separate heading for each: Cover Page, Table of Contents, Autobiography, Resume, Class & Personal Portfolio, Midpoint Thesis Abstract, Midpoint Thesis Project Proposal, Influences, Statement of Professional Goals, Timeline. More details and guidance can be found in the [Thesis Book Checklist](#).

Students presenting on campus must submit a physical copy at the time of the review.

Oral Presentation

You will present your work to a panel, which typically includes the department director and two full-time faculty members. Expect to spend approximately 20 minutes in this oral presentation. You may use notes and flashcards as cues to help you remember the information during your oral presentation. Do not read your entire presentation.

More details and guidance can be found in the [Oral Presentation Checklist](#).

Due Date for Deliverables

Your portfolio and thesis book must be uploaded to the LMS review portal at least two weeks before the date of your presentation. The file size for your upload must not exceed 50 MB.

Structure

Midpoint Reviews are one hour in duration. Your presentation should be 30 minutes long.

Midpoint Review Panel/Student Introduction	5 minutes
Midpoint Review Presentation	20 minutes
Committee Question & Answer Session	20 minutes
Committee Discussion – closed door/offline	15 minutes
Committee Decision & Feedback	10 minutes

Midpoint Review Preparation Timeline

3 to 4 months prior	Review department specific guidelines
2 to 3 months prior	Check graduate website for Midpoint Review sign-up schedule Solidify your Thesis Project Concept
6 Weeks Prior	Prepare your thesis book for printing. Work with an editor or a friend to make sure your thesis book is grammatically correct and typo-free.
1 month prior	Create your PowerPoint/PDF slide show Organize and create notes for your oral presentation Work with a friend, or colleague on your oral presentation
3 weeks prior	Review the online-specific requirements and test all of your equipment Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer
2 weeks prior	Upload your thesis and portfolio to your review page. On-campus students verify your equipment works prior to your actual presentation date
1 week prior	Meet online with your Online Graduate Department Learning Coordinator to review your presentation room setup and use Plan your attire, dress professionally Practice your presentation in front of a live audience
Tips for the day of	Get plenty of rest the night before Arrive early to prepare physically and vocally for the group performance Greet your committee members prior to beginning your presentation Listen to the committee's advice and take notes Maintain professionalism during the entire review
Following your review	View your Midpoint Review results here Indicate anticipated number of works to be produced per GDS course and per semester through 6 GDS courses (18 units)

Portfolio and Presentation Checklists

Portfolio Checklist

You will need to include two samples from each studio class and two samples of a style you wish to pursue or other artistic influences. These need to be the very best samples of your work.

Make sure to include title of artwork, date(s) created, class and teacher information, and any additional relevant information.

Thesis Book Checklist

In your thesis book, you must include the following sections, in this order and with a separate heading for each:

- Cover Page

The cover page must include the following:

- Project title
- Your Name
- Student ID Number
- Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Fine Art Sculpture
- Identify this is your “Midpoint Proposal”
- Date of Presentation
- Time of Presentation

- Table of Contents

All Midpoint proposals must have a table of contents (TOC)

- Number each page of the proposal
- List each topic section and its corresponding page number in the TOC

- Autobiography

For your autobiography, you will briefly address the following in no more than one page in length

- Introduce yourself
- Explain how you became interested in sculpture
- Discuss what led you to enroll at the Academy of Art University
- You may also include other information that seems appropriate or relevant to your work as an artist.

- Resume:

You will need to include a formal resume in your proposal. This is a single-page professional document that lists your work experiences, skills and education. In addition, your resume provides the reader with your contact information and a list of past experience, including:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Email and Website
- Additional Contact Information
- Recent Exhibitions
- Recent or pertinent employment history
- Other recent information relevant to your career as an artist including teaching experience, professional memberships, volunteer experiences, relevant skills, etc.
- Dates should be listed chronologically, most recent at the top of the list

- Class and Personal Portfolio

You will need to include two samples from each studio class and two samples of a style you wish to pursue or other artistic influences. These need to be the very best samples of your work. Make sure to include Title of artwork, Class and teacher information, Date(s) created, and Additional information.

- Midpoint Thesis Abstract:

The Project Abstract is a short but detailed summary of your proposed Thesis Project. By reading this abstract, the committee should get a solid sense of what you will be doing without having to read the full proposal. The Project Abstract should be approximately 150 words. There are a number of important elements to consider for inclusion in your abstract:

- Area of emphasis
- Subject Matter
- Reason for choosing the subject matter
- How you plan to present Final Project

- Midpoint Thesis Project Proposal & Sketches:

The Thesis Project proposal is the focal point of the thesis book. In this section of the document, you will relay the details of your proposed project to the Panel. You will want to address the following in an articulate and well thought-out manner (approximately 2 pages in length):

- Define your Thesis Project in detail
- Describe what led you to the project
- Describe any challenges you expect to face with the project
- Include how you expect to spend your Directed study time

- Influences:

The Influences & Inspirations section in your proposal needs to identify and describe your artistic influences in making the project. You should identify at least two artists as influences. You will want to identify:

- Who your artistic influences are (historical and contemporary)
- What part of their work inspired you
- How their art has influenced your work
- Include examples of work created by your Influences.

Though this section does not need to be long, you will want to be specific in describing how and why these artists have influenced/inspired you and/or your work.

- Statement of Professional Goals:

The Statement of Professional Goals should identify the following:

- Identify your professional goals, including where you would like to be with your work upon graduation and what you would like to be doing 5 years from now
- Identify the ways in which the development of your Thesis project, and knowledge learned in the process, may assist you in the realization of your professional goals

- Timeline

The timeline must include the following:

- List by semester the courses that you have taken to date, including the course number, title, and instructor.
- List courses that you are considering by semester, including course title and Group Directed Study course.
- Identify your anticipated graduation date(semester/year)

Oral Presentation

The Midpoint Review is a formal presentation before a Review Committee, where the Graduate School evaluates your eligibility for Master's candidacy based on the following:

- Challenge and quality of proposed Final Project
- Level of critical thinking and problem solving
- Quality of work completed and presented

Presentation Content:

- Introduction/Autobiography: Introduce yourself and give a brief history.
- Class Samples: Include two samples from each studio class to show. The samples shown needs to be from your time as a student at Academy of Art University.
- Personal Samples: Include 2-4 samples of your personal style. If you don't have samples show 2-4 samples of art that inspires you.
- Final Thesis Proposal: Propose 8-20 sculptures depending on scale and complexity (size commitment is not necessary to be defined).

Recap: Recap your written document at your presentation, but do NOT read your paper verbatim.

PowerPoint: A PowerPoint presentation, accompanying your oral proposal, is required.

Oral Presentation Checklist

PowerPoint Development Guidelines:

Here are some important PowerPoint development guidelines that you must follow for the online Web Conference:

- **Font**: Use an easily readable font (some fonts do not load correctly). Use a font size and color that is large enough to read
- **Images**: Make sure your images are large enough to be clearly seen and no text outside of the class number and date on images
- **Credit**: When including art made by other artists, credit the artist
- **Content**: Use bullet points instead of written paragraphs. References, copyright information, and technical notes may be included at the end of the presentation

DO NOT: Embed anything in your PowerPoint presentation (Audio, Video, or Flash Content - transitions, etc. If you want to present this type of material to the Midpoint Panel, please discuss with your online facilitator in advance of your review.

Midpoint Review PDF Checklist

The Powerpoint/PDF must include the following items.

Introduction Slide: The introduction/title slide must include the following items:

- Your name
- Student ID Number
- Department Name
- Project Title
- Date/time of presentation

Portfolio Slides: Include the following in your presentation:

- Artwork in .jpg format
- Class, semester and teacher information.

Thesis Project Slides: Include the following in your presentation:

- Bullet points describing the important aspects of the project

Influences Slides:

In your Influences slides, be sure to include:

- Names of your Influences
- Art made by your influences

Closing Slides: This slide should clearly indicate that you are finished with your presentation. You may choose to include the following

- Your Name
- Your Project Title
- Thank you

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?

A: Once you have completed your eligibility requirements, you can sign up online when the sign up is available. Check the Graduate School calendar for dates and the Graduate School's Midpoint Review Page for the sign up link.

Q: How many pages should the thesis book be?

A: There is no specified length for the completed written proposal. There are some sections that have limitation of length, but the main part of your proposal does not have a limit. The written proposal should be thorough in describing all aspects of your project, but you also want to think about how you can be concise and avoid redundancy of information in the content.

Q: If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?

A: No, you only need to upload the digital copy of your thesis book.

Q: Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?

A: Work not executed at the Academy of Art University should not constitute more than 10% of your portfolio presentation.

Q: Am I supposed to have a fully developed thesis or portfolio prepared for the Midpoint?

A: No. That will be developed through your group directed studies after you pass your Midpoint Review.

Q: Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?

A: We would recommend against it. Simple, easy to read and easy to see content is best.