ACADEMY *of* ART UNIVERSITY
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Master of Fine Arts, Graphic Design
Final Review Handbook

This handbook contains the Graphic Design Final Review requirements, planning guides, and resources. Please read through all of this information carefully before preparing your materials for Final Review. If you have any questions or need clarification on any aspect of your upcoming Final Review, you will find information about who to contact on page 15 of this handbook.

It is your responsibility to use the latest version of the Final Review Handbook. If you are uncertain if this is the latest version, please refer to the Graphic Design page on the Graduate Showcase:

http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/

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🌐 ONLINE ICON: The online icon will mark items that are specific to online students only.

On campus students can skip these items.

1. ELIGIBILITY FOR FINAL REVIEW

A. Eligibility

All Final Reviews must be held at the end of the semester in which you complete your regular program units.

You must declare your graduation term before a tentative date can be set. The process has three steps:

1. **DECLARATION**: In the semester prior to your Final Review, you can either contact your advisor to declare your graduation term or go through your self-service page. Additional graduation declaration and commencement information is found online here: http://www.academyart.edu/content/aau/en/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduation-commencement.html

2. **REGISTRATION**: Register for your final semester of coursework with your advisor or online through your Online Student Registration Profile.

3. **REVIEW SIGN-UP**: Once you have declared your graduation term and registered for courses, at the start of the semester you are presenting, you will need to review the Final Review online orientation and complete the online sign-up form available here: http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/. Refer to the Graduate School Calendar for the available online sign-up dates here: http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources . See further details for scheduling a final review below.

NOTE: If Final Thesis Project conditions have not been met within two semesters, you will need to reapply to the Graduate School to graduate.

Plan ahead and prepare as much of your project as possible by the beginning of the semester. Strive to have only your final touches remaining to be completed *during* your last semester of coursework.

2. SCHEDULING YOUR FINAL REVIEW

A. Review Date

Final Reviews are conducted in the spring, summer and fall semesters. Presentations typically start in the eleventh or twelfth week of the fall or spring semester and in the sixth week of the summer semester. You can find the sign-up dates in the Graduate School Calendar:

http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources

No Final Reviews are permitted during the intersession. A finalized date will be set during the semester the Final Review is to be conducted, based on director availability. This date can be changed only in case of personal emergency, and must be approved by both the Graduate School and the department director to be official.

NOTE: Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate term to schedule your Final Review. It is important to know the final cut-off date for scheduling your review. You should receive an email from the Final Review Coordinator approximately one week prior to the start of the semester you will be presenting your Final Review with details on how to sign-up. The email will direct you to the Graduate Midpoint and Final Review Showcase http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/.

B. Review Orientation

You are required to watch the online Final Review Orientation prior to completing the Final Review sign-up form online. You have the option of presenting your Midpoint or Final Review online or on campus. If you will be doing your Final Review online please review the online presentation specifications. You will be sent confirmation of your review date shortly after the close of the review sign-up period. Please contact the Final Review Coordinator if you have any questions on scheduling your review.

C. Attendance & Cancellations

Final Review attendance is mandatory. All Final Reviews must be held at the end of the semester in which you complete your regular program units. If you do not attend the Final Review will be considered a "No Show" and will be noted as "Not Approved".

Cancellations or postponements may be approved as a rare exception, all requests must be organized through the Final Review Coordinator at least 5 working days prior to the scheduled review date. Late cancellations or postponements will be considered "No Show" and will be noted as "Not Approved" for the Final Review.

Students are asked **not** to invite non-committee members, friends or family to their Final Review. Please check with your director before bringing any food to your final review.

3. DELIVERABLE DETAILS & DUE DATES

Your Final Review will consist of the following four components: portfolio, Thesis Process Book, oral presentation, and Directed Study Journals. Link to tutorial on uploading work to LMS.

IMPORTANT: If your Thesis Process Book and Portfolio are not received in time, your Final Review will be cancelled, and you will need to present the following semester.

Portfolio: If Portfolio Seminar has been taken, the final portfolio and collateral system should be represented. If not, the most current version of the portfolio in progress should be supplied.

Link to more detailed portfolio checklist

Upload/Deliver To:	Upload to the Portfolio Icon in LMS
Due Date:	Within 48 hours prior to the due date
Format:	PDF

Thesis Process Book: Professional Editing: Please check that your thesis process book is free of grammatical and spelling errors as well as typos.

Link to more detailed Thesis Process Book checklist

Upload/Deliver To:	Upload to the Thesis Book Icon in LMS
Due Date:	By 48 hours prior to the due date
Format:	PDF; Two (2) professionally bound copy of the Thesis Process Book and one (1) USB Drive containing the Thesis Process Book PDF must be mailed to your department

Oral Presentation: Come prepared to give a professional oral presentation. It should consist of an overview of your work and be no more than 10 minutes in duration.

Upload/Deliver To:	At the Final Review
Due Date:	At the Final Review
Format:	PDF presentation slides
Practice and Prepare:	Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to ensure your comfort level during the presentation. Be prepared to answer questions when you are finished.
Notes:	You may use notes, flashcards, or prompts in your PDF as cues to help you remember the information during your oral presentation. Do not read your entire presentation.

Link to online presentation details for online students

Directed Study Documentation: Throughout all units of Directed Study coursework you will be keeping progress notes for each course through online Thesis Progress Tracking for students presenting Midpoint Review in Spring 2015 or later.

If your approved Midpoint Review presentation was prior to the Spring 2015 semester, your department will accept Directed Studies journals instead of Thesis Tracking online as this feature was not activated for you.

For more information about your departments specific Directed Study documentation requirements, please refer to the Directed Study Guidelines:

http://www.academyart.edu/content/dam/assets/pdf/gradstudents/directed_study_guidelines.pdf

You must bring your Thesis Process Book and provide a link to your Thesis HQ website during your review.

4. FINAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Review Expectations and Structure

Final Reviews are one hour in duration. Your presentation should be 6 minutes long.

The Final Review meeting will follow this structure:

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

Review Committee: The Final Review Committee is comprised of faculty and/or industry professionals approved by the Graduate School and the Department Directors.

Committee Question & Answer Session: After your presentation, questions will be asked by the Committee for clarification on your project.

Committee Discussion, Decision, & Feedback: After the question and answer session, the committee will recess in private to discuss the merits of your proposal.

B. Results

Upon reconvening, the committee will present you with one of the following outcomes:

Approved:	You have passed the review portion of your degree requirements and may be granted your degree upon completing all degree requirements. See awarding the Master's Degree below.

Not Approved:	You have NOT passed, and will NOT be granted your degree until one of the following has been completed and the Final Review materials are approved by the Final Review Committee:

> **Resubmit**:	Following specific Final Review Committee requirements your project requires small changes that must be corrected and re-submitted within 3 weeks. If the re-submission meets the requirements, then the Final Review materials are approved and you may be granted your degree.

> **OR**

> **Represent**:	Following specific Final Review Committee requirements you must complete additional studio work, and/or rethink your Final Project, to present at a new Final Review next semester. You must sign-up for a new review date at the start of the next semester.

Please follow directions outlined in the link below to view your results and written feedback after your Final Review.

http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf

C. Evaluation Questions

The work you submit will be assessed using the Graduate School of Graphic Design program learning outcomes. At the Final Review the review committee is evaluating your success in meeting the stated outcomes.

http://www.academyart.edu/academics/graphic-design/graduate-degrees

D. Awarding the Master's Degree

Your degree will be awarded and diploma issued after you have completed ALL of the following:

- All curriculum requirements are fulfilled: all units and minimum grade requirements completed.
- Presentation and approval of your Final Review before Committee
- Submission of all Final Project materials.
- No outstanding financial obligations.
- Completed the Online Graduate Survey at http://apply.academyart.edu/careersvsgradtrack/.

NOTE: If Final Project conditions have not been met within two semesters, you will need to reapply to the Graduate School to graduate.

5. CHECKLISTS

FINAL PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Portfolio Contents:	If Portfolio Seminar has been taken, the final portfolio and collateral system should be represented. If not, the most current version of the portfolio in progress should be supplied.

THESIS CHECKLIST

Final Thesis Presentation, Thesis Summary Video and Thesis Process Book must be submitted and received by the committee within 48 hours of your review.

Please submit
- 1 Thesis Process Book as a hard copy, bound and of professional quality

1. Final Thesis Presentation	• **Format:** On screen PDF slide presentation • **Duration:** 6-10 min The PDF slide presentation must include the following content to be considered for approval. However, the order of this content can be altered to fit the particular needs of the topic and presentation: • Speak to the problem, audience, outcome (1-2 min) • Recap important insights and your design process highlights (1-2 min) • Show user feedback (1-2 min) • Show design materials created (3-4 min)
2. Thesis Summary Video (TSV)	• **Format:** Self playing video in .mov format • **Duration:** 30 seconds to 2 minutes approximately. The TSV Should "sell" your project to the outside world (employers, funders, audience, etc) to get them to understand the: • Problem • Audience • Outcome • Design solutions
3. Thesis Process Book	• **Format:** Vertical format, Professional quality bound book (no plastic binding) • **Page count:** 50-100+ pgs. The Thesis Process Book should show the major milestones involved in developing and producing your Final Thesis Project. This book must include the following content: • Student Name and ID number, Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Graphic

Design, Date
- An introduction explaining the project
- Physical sketches
- Documentation of User testing and feedback and results (written and photographic)
- Insights into the process of developing your topic and your solutions
- Documentation of the visual and conceptual development of the materials
- A conclusion explaining the future of the project outside the MFA program and important lessons learned in the Thesis journey.

6. PREPARATION TIMELINE

3 to 4 months before your review	Read Graphic Design specific Final Review Handbook Pay attention to the specific requirements and information delivered in GR.801-3: Thesis Refinements class.
2 to 3 months before your review	Check graduate website for Final Review sign-up schedule
6 weeks before your review	Begin to prepare your thesis review materials
1 month before your review	Organize and create notes for your oral presentation Work with a friend, colleague or ARC on your oral presentation
3 weeks before your review	Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer 🌐 Review the online-specific requirements and test all of your equipment
2 weeks before your review	On-campus students verify your equipment works prior to your actual presentation date 🌐 Online students: It's recommended that you send in a hardcopy of the Thesis Process book this week. This ensures your book will arrive within 48 hours of your review date. If you need more time to complete your book you must check how long it will take to print and ship and prepare accordingly. Package up and send in any printed/3D materials for assessment by the committee.
1 week before your review	Plan your attire, dress professionally Practice your presentation in front of a live audience Upload your Final PDF and digital portfolio to LMS prior to your review date
Tips for the day of your review	Get plenty of rest the night before 🌐 If you will be using a cellphone, make sure the battery is charged Have a glass of water available during your presentation Arrive at your Final Review on time and ready to go 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 Final Review results here

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When can I schedule my Final Review?	Once you have completed your eligibility requirements and have petitioned to graduate, contact the Final Review Coordinator via email at FinalReview@academyart.edu to be added to the presentation list. *You must be in contact with the Coordinator no later than the first few days of the semester you wish to present.*
If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?	Yes, any printed/3D items must be packaged up and sent into AAU for assessment. If you are in doubt about what to send in please contact the online director.
Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?	Work not executed at the Academy of Art University should be included in your review materials.

8.   IMPORTANT LINKS

Graduate Student Homepage	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Academy Resource Center (ARC)	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academy-resource-center Your resource for proofreading, ESL assistance, Final Review, Writing Lab.
Accessing Your Review Results	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf
Online Chat Schedules & Recordings	Chat Schedule: http://online.academyart.edu/innovative-learning/chats.html Graduate Chats: http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/graduate-chats.html Twitter: @aauchats
Department Specific Websites	https://www.academyart.edu/academics/graphic-design http://online.academyart.edu/schools/graphic-design http://www.79nm.com
Graduate School Calendar	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Graduate Review Showcase	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/ Here you will find a link to the Final Review Orientation, and links to the Final Review Guidelines and Handbooks.
Graphic Design Review Showcase Page	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/schools/graphic-design.html
Online Connection Through Mobile Devices	http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect/feature-details/adobe-connectmobile.html Application required for using the Adobe Connect Meetings from your mobile device.
Online Presentation Do's & Don'ts	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/ Look under Additional Presentation Tools

Online Technical Requirements	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/Look under Resources →Technical Resources → Online technical requirements
Technology Trouble Shooting	To participate in the web conference, you need to make sure that your computer has the latest versions of the Flash and Shockwave plugins and can run the web-casting software. To check this, please click on this link: http://arcps.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm
Uploading Review Content	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content_WI15.pdf
Photographing & Submitting Artwork	http://media.academyart.edu/howto/index.html http://howto.academyart.edu/submitting-artwork

9. ONLINE PRESENTATION DETAILS

Scheduling a Meeting with an Online Graduate Review Coordinator

Academy of Art University's Online Graduate Review process provides a means for Academy students to present their project proposals via the Academy's online meeting environment. An Online Graduate Review Coordinator will contact you after your review has been scheduled to test your computer, internet connection, web-camera, and telephone. The Online Graduate Review Coordinator will also show you how the online review process works and how to upload and use your slideshow during your oral presentation. Students presenting online are required to have their equipment and any required presentation materials ready to upload and test at least two weeks prior to the presentation date (1 week for the Summer Semester).

Please refer to the links below for technical requirements:

Online Technical Requirements
Adobe Connect Diagnostic Test

Online Graduate Review Contact Information
Email: onlinegradreview@academyart.edu
Phone: (415) 618-3614

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

Final Review Coordinator:	finalreview@academyart.edu (415) 618-6297
Contact for Online Students:	onlinegradreview@academyart.edu (415) 618-3614
Department Contact(s):	Graphic Design Administrative Assistant School of Graphic Design Tel: (415) 618-6316 Email: graphicdesign@academyart.edu
Send Materials To:	Academy of Art University School of Graphic Design Final Review 79 New Montgomery San Francisco, CA 94105 **NOTE:** Please obtain a tracking number or return receipt of delivery for your shipments.