

Master of Fine Arts, Graphic Design Midpoint Review Handbook

This handbook contains the Graphic Design Midpoint Review requirements, planning guides, and resources. Please read through all of this information carefully before preparing your materials for Midpoint Review. If you have any questions or need clarification on any aspect of your upcoming Midpoint Review, you will find information about who to contact on page 16 of this handbook.

It is your responsibility to use the latest version of the Midpoint 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 MIDPOINT REVIEW

A. Eligibility

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

- Completed or enrolled into 30 Units
- Completed or enrolled into all core requirements (listed below)
- Completed 6 units of Liberal Arts

These core courses must be taken by all Graphic Design students *

- GR 616: Making Ideas Visible
- GR 617: Type Forms
- GR 618: Visual Literacy
- GR 619: Type Compositions
- GR 620: Visual Thinking
- GR 601: Type Systems
- GR 600: Visual Communications Lab (must take concurrent with Midpoint Review)
- GR 613: Type Experiments
- GR 605: Digital Design Studio 1

* 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.

2. SCHEDULING YOUR MIDPOINT REVIEW

A. Review Date

Midpoint Reviews are conducted in the spring, summer and fall semesters. In the Graphic Design school presentations are held in the last week of semester. You can find the signup dates in the Graduate School Calendar:

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

NOTE: Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate time to schedule your Midpoint Review. It is important to know the final cut-off date for scheduling your review.

You should receive an email from the Midpoint Review Coordinator approximately one week prior to the start of the semester you will be presenting your Midpoint 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. Attendance & Cancellations

Midpoint Review is a required component of your Master's level program and must be completed before commencing the directed study or final portfolio portion of your program. Cancellations or postponements must be organized through the Midpoint Review Coordinator at least 5 working days prior to the scheduled review date. Late cancellations or postponements will be considered "No Show" and fail the Midpoint Review.

3. DELIVERABLE DETAILS & DUE DATES

Your Midpoint Review will consist of the following components: a portfolio of work completed in the program to date, showing a 3 minute Thesis Proposal Video, fielding questions in a questions for clarification session.

IMPORTANT: If your Three Minute Thesis Proposal video and Portfolio are not received in time, your Midpoint Review will be cancelled and you will need to retake GR600 Visual Communications Lab and present in that semester.



Portfolio:

- Images representing all final projects from any Graphic Design classes completed to date in the program. Each project should have approx. 1 – 5 images, enough images to accurately represent the work.
- Images can be shot professionally or by the student. See the Photography How-To in the Online Resources Area of the AAU site for detailed instructions.
- Images should be 2mb or less.
- 768 pixels wide x 432 pixels high (16:9)
- Resolution: 72 dpi
- Color space: RGB

Naming Convention:

- lastname-firstname_classnumber_pro-projectnumber-jpegnumber_instructorlastname.jpg
- Example: smith-maureen_gr616_pro1-01_hake.jpg
- Uploads are sent to your **Student Homepage on your Profile Page, in the Review Tab, under Thesis Proposal.**

Upload Instructions:

- Upload JPGs of your portfolio to your **Student Homepage on your Profile Page, in the Review Tab, under Thesis.**

[Link to more detailed portfolio checklist](#)

**Thesis
Proposal
Video:**

The Thesis Proposal Video will need to be understandable to anyone who sees it, so one of your biggest challenges will be to pose the content in a universal manner. Generate an engaging narrative for your video.

In this video, we are not looking for just a litany of facts. We want insights. Leverage the insights that are specific to your topic.

The visual quality of the Thesis Proposal Video should be commensurate with the standards of the School of Graphic Design MFA program to date.

[Link to more detailed thesis proposal video checklist](#)

Specifications for the Three-Minute Thesis Proposal Video:

File Format and Video Specifications:

- Format: .mov
- Maximum duration: 3 minutes
- Size and orientation: 16:9 ratio; horizontal
- File size 250mb or less

Naming Convention

- yearsemester_lastname-firstname_MPV.mov
- Example: 13FA_StoutJeremy_MPV.mov

Upload instructions:

- Upload your Thesis Proposal Video to your **Student Homepage on your Profile Page, in the Review Tab, under Thesis.**

Audience(s):

- The Midpoint Review Committee.
- Potential employers.
- An audience of your own choosing, as determined by your opportunity gap.

In order to be eligible to be reviewed by the Midpoint Review Committee, students must complete the video by uploading to the correct location.

Purpose: To amalgamate and organize the work you have done and present it for evaluation by the Midpoint Review Committee.

**Oral
Presentation:**

You are required to field questions for clarification on your Three Minute Thesis Proposal videos following the committee viewing.

[Link to more detailed oral presentation checklist](#)

4. MIDPOINT REVIEW PROCESS

A. Review Expectations and Structure

Midpoint Reviews are one hour in duration. You will present alongside two other students in that hour. Your presentation should be 3 minutes or less long.

The Midpoint Review meeting will follow this structure:

Midpoint Review Panel/Student Introduction	5 minutes
Midpoint Review Presentation	3 minutes
Committee Question & Answer Session	
Committee Discussion – closed door/offline	
Committee Decision & Feedback	Will be available in writing before the last day of term via the student homepage

Review Committee: The Midpoint 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

At a later date, the committee will present you with one of the following outcomes:

Approved: You have passed, and can now proceed with Directed Study for the following semester.

Not Approved: You have NOT passed, and are NOT allowed to proceed with Directed Study.

Represent: You must retake GR600 Visual Communications Lab and represent a Thesis Proposal.

Please follow directions outlined in the link below to view your results and written feedback after your Midpoint 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 Midpoint Review the review committee is looking at your progress towards achieving the stated outcomes.

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

5. CHECKLISTS

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

**Portfolio
Contents:**

File Format:

- All portfolio images must be in high-quality JPG format.

Content:

- Images representing all final projects from any Graphic Design classes completed to date in the program. Each project should have approx. 1 – 5 images, enough images to accurately represent the work.
- Images can be shot professionally or by the student. See the Photography How-To in the Online Resources Area of the AAU site for detailed instructions.
- Images should be 2mb or less.
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- Color space: RGB

Naming Convention:

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THESIS PROPOSAL VIDEO CHECKLIST

Thesis Video Contents:

Each student will need to present the following in a video, not to exceed three minutes:

- 1. **Background** information about the topic, and any supporting insights or facts.
- 2. Stating the **problem** you have identified through your investigations of your topic.
- 3. Identify an **audience** that is related to the specified problem.
- 4. The specific **outcomes** you hope to accomplish related to your topic.
- 5. Propose **opportunities** for design to address the audience, problems, and outcomes you have identified.

More specific content information

- A narrative structure that leads the viewer through the content.
- An appropriate visual language derived from Lab Project 8: Design Compilation Slides.
- Any pertinent information about how you are connected to the topic.

Note: Student Thesis Proposal videos will be developed and reviewed in GR600: Visual Communications Lab prior to the final due date.

Title Screen:

The Title Screen must include the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project title | <input type="checkbox"/> Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Graphic Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Midpoint Proposal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student ID Number | <input type="checkbox"/> Semester and Year |



PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

Committee Review Guidelines:	Each meeting will be a 1-hour session that will consist of three students presenting their Three Minute Thesis Proposal videos to the review committee. The committee will then have a chance to ask each student questions for clarification related to their proposal. The committee will NOT be giving any feedback or commentary or rendering an outcome in these meetings. Once the three students have finished screening videos and answering questions, the students will be free to go.
Duration:	Following these meetings, the committee, through discussion, will arrive at an outcome of "Approved" or "Not Approved." Additionally, the committee will provide written feedback about the PROPOSAL itself (as well as the PORTFOLIO evaluations performed before the meetings). These proposal outcomes (along with specific committee commentary) will be posted in the LMS for each student to review by the end of the semester.
Purpose:	To secure approval of your Thesis Proposal and to assess your conceptual and development to date.

6. PREPARATION TIMELINE





3 to 4 months before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab.
2 to 3 months before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab.
6 weeks before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab.
1 month before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab.
3 weeks before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab. Schedule your presentation date and time.
2 weeks before your review	On-campus students verify your equipment works prior to your actual presentation date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Upload your PDF of your portfolio and thesis book to your home page ● Meet online with your Online Graduate Department Learning Coordinator to review your presentation room setup and use
1 week before your review	Read and understand all information provided in GR600 Visual Communications Lab. Plan your attire, dress professionally Upload your 3 minute midpoint proposal video to the LMS, this should be done within 48 hours of your review date
Tips for the day of your review	Get plenty of rest the night before <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you will be using a cellphone, make sure the battery is charged <p>Have a glass of water available during your presentation Arrive at your Midpoint Review on time and ready to go Answer the questions for clarification to the best of your ability Maintain professionalism during the entire review</p>
Following your review	View your Midpoint Review results here

Directed Study	Once you have passed your Midpoint Review with an Approved result you will be able to start your Directed Studies. Please review Directed Study information here: http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Directed Study Documentation	Throughout all units of Directed Study coursework you will be keeping a process blog, which will be made into a Thesis Process book. So be sure to keep drawings, diagrams and other documents pertaining to the progress of your Final Project. For details on format requirements for your department please refer to the information provided in GR 810, 830 and 850, which will guide you through making this book.

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?	You do not have to sign up. Students enrolled in GR600 Visual Communications lab will automatically be scheduled for Midpoint Review.
How many pages should the thesis book be?	There is no Thesis Book needed for Midpoint Review.
If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?	No.
Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?	No.
Am I supposed to have a fully developed thesis or portfolio prepared for the Midpoint?	No. That will be developed through your group directed studies after you pass your Midpoint Review.
Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?	Do not use PowerPoint for your presentation.

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, Midpoint 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 Midpoint Review Orientation, and links to the Midpoint 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

Midpoint Review Coordinator: midpointreview@academyart.edu
(415) 618-6390

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
Midpoint Review

79 New Montgomery
San Francisco, CA 94105

NOTE: Please obtain a tracking number or return receipt of delivery for your shipments.