

Master of Fine Arts, Web Design & New Media Midpoint Review Guidelines

This Guidelines contains the Web Design & New Media 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 15](#) of this Guidelines.

It is your responsibility to use the latest version of the Midpoint Review Guidelines. If you are uncertain if this is the latest version, please refer to the Web Design & New Media page on the Graduate Showcase:

<http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/>

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1. ELIGIBILITY FOR MIDPOINT REVIEW

A. Eligibility

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

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

These courses must be taken by all WNM students*

- WNM 601: Inside Programming
- WNM 605: Typography for Digital Masters
- WNM 606: Principles of UX
- WNM 608: Web Technology 1
- WNM 613: Topics in Motion Graphics
- WNM 643: Interactive Design & Concepts

*Core courses may be waived with academic director approval.

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 prepare as much of your project as possible by the beginning of the semester.

2. MIDPOINT REVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Review Date

Midpoint Reviews are conducted as part of the *WNM 643: Interactive Design and Concepts* class in the spring and fall semesters. Presentations typically start in the **fourteenth (14)** week of the respective semester. All Midpoint Review presentations will be held as part of the class, during a scheduled class session. This schedule will be determined early in the semester by the section instructors.*

NOTE: Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate term to enroll in *WNM 643: Interactive Design and Concepts*.

*WNM students should not sign up for a Midpoint Review date though the Midpoint Review Coordinator's online form. Presentation dates will be determined by class session dates and times.

B. Attendance & Cancellations

Midpoint Review is a required component of your Master's of Fine Arts level program and must be completed before commencing Directed Study or the final portfolio portion of your program. Students who do not present Midpoint Review as scheduled will be considered "No Show" and will be noted as "Not Approved" for the Midpoint Review.

Students who receive a "Not Approved" result will be required to retake the WNM 643 class the following spring or fall and must present again during that semester.

3. DELIVERABLE DETAILS & DUE DATES

Your Midpoint Review will consist of the following two components: A written Midpoint Review Proposal and a presentation. [Link to tutorial on uploading work to LMS.](#)

Proposal: Your Midpoint Review Proposal is the PDF document that you will show to the committee during your Midpoint Presentation. This is the most important document you will create, so you should work to make this proposal as polished and professional as possible. **Flawless spelling and grammar are required** of all submissions.

Upload/Deliver To: Upload same file to the “Thesis Book” and “Portfolio” Icons in the LMS

Due Date: 1 week prior to your review date*

Format: PDF Required

Practice & Prepare: Practice your verbal presentation in advance of your review. Be prepared to answer questions when you are finished.

Notes: You may use notes, flashcards, or prompts in your presentation as cues to help remember the information. Do not read your entire presentation.

***IMPORTANT:** If your Midpoint Review Proposal is not received in time, your Midpoint Review will be cancelled, and you will need to retake WNM 643 and present the following semester.

Professional Editing: The proposal must be professionally executed, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors and typos.

[Link to more detailed Midpoint Review Proposal checklist](#)

4. MIDPOINT REVIEW PROCESS

A. Review Expectations and Structure

Midpoint Reviews are 30 minutes in duration. Your presentation should be 10-15 minutes long. The Midpoint Review will follow this structure:

Midpoint Review Presentation:	10-15 minutes
Committee Q&A Session:	10-15 minutes
Committee Decision & Feedback:	Provided after review

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 entire Midpoint Review presentation class session, the committee will deliberate in private to discuss the merits of all the student proposals presented during that class session. Students will receive their results and feedback in written form approximately 24 hours after the review. This information will be available in the review dashboard. Results will not be given during the class session.

B. Results

The committee will deliver one of the following outcomes:

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

Not Approved: You have not passed, and will not be allowed to proceed to Directed Study. You will have to retake the WNM 643 class next semester and must present again as part of that class.

Please follow [these instructions](#) to view your results and written feedback after your Midpoint Review.

C. Evaluation Questions

The work you submit will be assessed using the Graduate School of Web Design & New Media program learning outcomes. At the Midpoint Review the review committee is looking at your progress toward achieving the stated outcomes.

http://www.academyart.edu/academics/web_design/graduate

5. MIDPOINT REVIEW CHECKLISTS

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST AND TIPS

Midpoint Review Proposal Contents: The Midpoint Review Proposal is an important document that serves as a guidebook for the development of your Thesis Project. It contains the Presentation Slide Deck and the Supporting Documents. Be careful not to over complicate the Midpoint Review Proposal. You should include supporting information, links, and research in the “Supporting Documents” section.

Presentation Slide Deck (*Maximum slides 40*)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover Page | <input type="checkbox"/> Table of Contents | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Introduction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Introduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Audience Survey Results | <input type="checkbox"/> Target Audience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key Persona | <input type="checkbox"/> Task Flow | <input type="checkbox"/> User Story |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of Concept (w/links) | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitors & Inspiration | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Summary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Testing/Testing Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Bibliography | |

Supporting Documents (*No limit on number of slides*)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Content Plan* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concept Video* | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Development* | *Optional |

Cover Page: The cover page must include the following:

- Project title
- Project subtitle (if needed)
- Your name
- Student ID#
- Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Web Design & New Media
- Identify this is your “Midpoint Review Proposal” and the version
- Date of Midpoint presentation

Table of Contents: All Midpoint Review 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
- Select an appropriate font: font size should be no smaller than 10 pt. and easily readable

Personal Introduction:	<p>For your personal introduction, you will briefly address the following in no more than one page in length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Brief personal introduction or bio that tells us a little about you<input type="checkbox"/> You may also include other information that is appropriate or relevant to your work as an artist, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Relevant work experience<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant educational experience<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant personal experience<input type="checkbox"/> Career goals<input type="checkbox"/> Link(s) to a portfolio or work examples
Project Introduction:	<p>Introduce your project theme or topic, in 3-5 sentences. Show that you have a deep understanding of your topic and show why it is important to you. Include a summary of your topic research.</p>
Competitors & Inspiration:	<p>Briefly discuss your competitors and demonstrate that you understand the market. Show a topic competitor, functional competitor, and inspirational project. Identify what they are doing well, not doing well, and what you can learn from them. Don't limit yourself to direct competitors only. Analyze projects and influences outside of the topic that influence your ideas about the functionality and interactivity.</p>
Target Audience:	<p>Analyze and define your target audience and how your project delivers a measurable outcome to this audience. Identify your primary and secondary audience and potential outcomes for each audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Interview 3 people in your target audience, and give a few points about each person you interviewed.
Audience Survey Results:	<p>Identify and summarize 3 key findings or conclusions from your audience survey.</p>
Key Persona:	<p>The key persona is a well-developed persona of your typical user. This persona should be created through audience research. Be specific about who this person might be, give specific details about them, and identify their needs or motivations.</p>
User Story:	<p>Give a narrative or story about your key persona and how they use your project. Include clear context of the situation in which they use it, how they interact with it, and what is the result.</p>

- Task Flow:** Identify a clear task flow for your key persona to accomplish a specific task. Identify the achievable, measurable result of the task flow. List the steps of the task flow and briefly describe what the user is doing in each step.
- Proof of Concept:** The proof of concept is an expanded, visual version of the task flow in the interface. Include a sequence of images that show how the key persona moves through the interface, step-by-step to complete the use case scenario/task flow. Demonstrate how the project delivers a measurable outcome. This is an external document. Provide link in the Midterm Review Proposal.
- Keep the number of screens reasonable; 8-12 is the optimal number. It is critical to provide detailed labeling on each page, including page numbering, page title, short description and indicators that show where the user has clicked or tapped inside the interface. Take a narrative approach, and tell the story of your key persona moving through the user task. Use your experience map as a guideline.
- List all external links for your proof of concept and/or prototype.
- Testing Plan:** Include a brief, preliminary testing plan for development of your project. This may include further audience surveys, paper prototype testing, A/B testing, etc. and approximately when each phase will occur.
- Technical Summary:** Give a brief overview of the technical aspects of your project and how it will be built. List languages, libraries, frameworks, APIs, or software you plan to use to create your prototype. Remember that this is an opportunity for you to ask the committee for recommendations about specific technologies, classes, and recommendations for technical scope and research.
- Bibliography & Credits:** Cite all resources and attribute research accordingly. For more details see [WNM Commitment to Original Work](#).
- If your project contains any outside references such as images and written text that are not your property but relevant to the final project, you must obtain the necessary guidelines, permissions for usage and copyrights. This is the sole responsibility of the student. References will be expected in the Bibliography. [Tips for citing work](#).

- Supporting Documents:** Include any additional research and outside references that you are not able to include in your presentation portion at the end of this proposal document. This information can be text, images or links to external documents, blogs, or websites. There is no limit to the number of slides in this section.
- Concept Video:** This is an optional short video, generally no longer than 60 seconds, that gives a high-level overview of the project. The video link (hosted by site such as Vimeo) must be included in the Midpoint Review Proposal. Some tips about the concept video:
- There is no set time minimum or maximum for the video as long as it is clear to the committee what the project does, what it might look like, and what problem it solves. Average length: 30-60 seconds
 - Video may include animation or live video, as fits the project
 - Script and professional voiceover are recommended as they add to presentation clarity, but they are not required. Please check [WNM Blog](#) for low-cost recommendations and examples.
- Visual Development:** Optional documentation. Demonstrate the style and potential design direction of your project through a mood board. Include inspiration such as fonts, icons, UI elements, colors, images, etc. in order to convey the design essence of the project.
- Formatting Suggestions:** Here is a list of requirements for the Midpoint Review Proposal:
- **Layout:** Horizontal
 - **Maximum File Size:** 15 MB (smaller is preferred, compress if needed)
- Here is a list of recommendations for the Midpoint Review Proposal:
- **Use a classic/common font.** Do an internet search for “classic fonts”.
 - **Don’t use large, full image-based background** (this greatly increases file size)
 - **Recommended number of pages: Maximum 40 slides for Slide Show** (no limit on the entire document, add as many slides to the “Supporting Documents” as you want).
 - **Do not use page spreads** (this should be formatted primarily for viewing as a digital PDF, not a printed document)
 - **Recommended file size: 1-3 MB**
 - **Always save your Digital Midpoint Review Proposal in PDF format**

Submission Directions and File naming:

Name your Midpoint Review Proposal file according to the following convention:

Lastname_firstinitial_midpoint _Month-Day-Year.pdf

For example, if Jenny Smith was turning in her Digital Midpoint Review Proposal on June 10, 2014 she would name her file smith_j_midpoint_06-10-2014.pdf.

PRESENTATION

The Midpoint Review is where you will formally present your proposal for your Thesis project. You will be presenting in front of your peers and to the Midpoint Review Committee. The committee is comprised of Department representatives including Directors, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and/or industry professionals approved by the Academy of Art.

Midpoint Review will be conducted online or onsite. Students enrolled in the onsite class will present onsite; students enrolled in the online class will present online. Students are required to attend all presentation class sessions for their class section. Observing and supporting your peers is an important part of this process.

Duration and Schedule:

The duration of the entire Midpoint Reviews is approximately 30 minutes. The Slide Show presentation should be succinct and must be completed in 10-15 minutes. The meeting will follow this schedule:

Presentation	10-15 Minutes
Student will present the Midpoint Review presentation. It is important to practice the presentation in advance to make sure it fits within the given time.	

Question & Answer Session	10-15 Minutes
After the student has presented their final project proposal, they should be prepared to defend their concept with honesty and conviction through a committee-lead question and answer session.	

Committee Discussion (Results and Feedback)
After the entire Midpoint Review presentation class session, the committee will deliberate in private to discuss the merits of all the student proposals presented during that class session. Students will receive their results and feedback in written form approximately 24 hours after the review. This information will be available in the review dashboard. Results will not be given during the class session.

Tips for creating effective presentations

The presentation is a critical part of the Midpoint Review. Use a series of visual slides that help to guide the progression of the presentation. Start with an introduction/title slide and end with a final slide, which indicates the end of the presentation to the panel. Your supporting document should be included after the final presentation slide as part of your proposal.

Important Guidelines:

- **Use a readable font:** Use the “classic” Arial font (some fonts do not load correctly). Your font should not require plugins or create presentation errors.
- **Size:** Use a font size that is large enough to read - recommended sizes are: 18 pt. for text, 24 pt. or larger for titles
- **Color:** Use a font color that is easy to read
- **Images:** Make sure your images are large enough to be clearly seen.

- **Credit:** When including art made by other artists, credit the artist
- **Brevity:** Use bullet points instead of written paragraphs
- **Content:** References, copyright information, and technical notes may be included at the end of the presentation.

File Types:

The recommended file format is Adobe PDF. You can use other presentation software but keeping it simple will allow you to focus on the content of your presentation and avoid problems with technical difficulties.

It's not recommended that you use fancy animated slide transitions or animations. This often creates a distraction and makes it difficult for you to navigate back and forth during the question and answer period. Include links in the PDF to videos, such as your concept video or portfolio pieces.

6. ONLINE PRESENTATION DETAILS

A. 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, webcam, 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. Your Midpoint Proposal can still be in progress, but you need to bring what you have up to that point to test in the online meeting environment.

B. Online Presentation Guidelines

Students enrolled in online sections of WNM 643 will still have a scheduled date and time for their class's Midpoint Review presentations. It is required for all students in the online section to attend. The official date and time will be scheduled by the instructor and determined early in the semester for everyone's planning.

7. PREPARATION TIMELINE

3 to 4 months before your review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review guidelines and important information
2 to 3 months before your review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solidify your Thesis Concept ➤ Create a rough version of your proposal
6 weeks before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refine your presentation
1 month before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Finalize and test your presentation ➤ Organize and create notes for presentation day ➤ Work with a friend, classmate or ARC on your spoken presentation ➤ Test files for technical problems: fonts, file types, or other issues
3 weeks before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practice your spoken presentation out loud with a timer ➤ Online: Review the online-specific requirements and test your equipment
2 weeks before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Verify your equipment is working ➤ Online: Meet with your Online Graduate Department Learning Coordinator to review your virtual review room setup and use
1 week before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upload your PDF Midpoint Review Proposal to the LMS ➤ Plan your attire - dress professionally ➤ Practice your presentation in front of a live audience ➤ Re-test your project for technical problems: fonts, file types, or other issues (Recommended: PDF slide decks and backwards-compatible files) ➤ Prepare backups of your slideshow on an external hard drive or cloud service
Day of the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update/Re-upload Midpoint Review Proposal if necessary ➤ Onsite: Arrive on time to upload files ➤ Online: Log into your Midpoint Review 15 minutes prior to your review time in order to upload files and test and materials or links
Tips for the day of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Get plenty of rest the night before ➤ Charge all/any devices you will need (laptops, cell phones, iPads/tablets, etc.) ➤ Have a glass or bottle of water available during your presentation ➤ Arrive at your Midpoint Review on time and ready to go ➤ Greet your committee members ➤ Display professionalism during the review ➤ Online: Make sure your cell-phone battery is charged, if using for review
Following your review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View your Midpoint Review Results in detail ➤ Conduct any required follow up items ➤ Register for your next semester's classes, based upon review results

8. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<p>How do I schedule my Midpoint Review?</p>	<p>Eligibility to present your Midpoint Review will be based on your enrollment in <i>WNM 643: Interactive Design and Concepts</i>. Your review will be scheduled during the week 14 or 15 class session as part of the WNM 643 class. Your instructor will discuss this schedule with your class. You will <u>not</u> sign up with the Midpoint Review Coordinator's online form.</p>
<p>How many pages should the Midpoint Review Proposal be?</p>	<p>However many makes the best presentation 10-15 minutes presentation. No specific requirement for the entire proposal. Do not use spreads.</p>
<p>If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my work?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?</p>	<p>We recommend against it. Simple, easy to read and easy to see content is best and will not "break" your presentation. PDF format is recommended.</p>
<p>Do I have to present a concept video during my presentation?</p>	<p>Optional. It is a very powerful tool for presenting a clear definition of your project concept.</p>
<p>Am i supposed to have a fully-developed thesis prepared for Midpoint?</p>	<p>You do have to have a complete thesis concept detailed through your presentation. This concept will be developed into the final Thesis project after Midpoint in your Directed Study classes.</p>
<p>Do I have to bring my own connector for the projector if I'm using my own device to present?</p>	<p>Yes. The onsite projector has an HDMI in, so you have to provide any special connector between HDMI and your device if you want to present that way.</p>
<p>Can I use Keynote or PowerPoint for my presentation?</p>	<p>We do not recommend this. Our computers are updated once a semester so we may not have the latest version of your presentation software. This is why we recommend the PDF format.</p>

9. IMPORTANT LINKS

Graduate Student Homepage & Calendar	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Graduate School Review Showcase	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu
Online Review: Technical Requirements	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/mprfpr_tech.pdf
Online Review: Connection Through Mobile Apps	http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect/apps/adobe-connectmobile.html If using a mobile device for presentation instead of laptop or desktop computer.
Online Review: Technology Troubleshooting	https://arcps.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm Check to see if your computer has the latest versions of plugins needed to run Adobe Connect.
Uploading Review Deliverables - Midpoint Review Proposal	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content.pdf
Accessing Your Review Results via the Review Dashboard	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Review_Results_FA15.pdf

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

Midpoint Review Coordinator: <i>For technical issues with PDF uploads, viewing results, or online review training</i>	MidpointReview@academyart.edu (415) 618-6297
WNM Department Contact: <i>For department-specific questions</i>	Jenna Robinson WNM Administrative Assistant newmedia@academyart.edu (415) 618-3822
Office Location:	Academy of Art University School of Web Design & New Media 180 New Montgomery Street, 5th Floor San Francisco CA 94105
Mailing Address:	Academy of Art University School of Web Design & New Media 79 New Montgomery Street San Francisco CA 94105