

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 in the spring and fall semesters. Presentations typically start in the fourteenth (14) week of the fall or spring 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>

NOTE: Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate term 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 with details on how to sign-up. The email will direct you to the Graduate Midpoint and Final Review Showcase <http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/>. If you do not receive this email by week seven, please contact the Midpoint Review Coordinator.

B. Review Orientation

You are required to watch the online Midpoint Review Orientation prior to completing the Midpoint 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 Midpoint Review online please review the online presentation specifications (section 9). You will be sent confirmation of your review date about 2 weeks after the close of the review sign-up period. Please contact the Midpoint Review Coordinator if you have any questions on scheduling your review.

C. 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. Cancellations must be organized through the Midpoint Review Coordinator at least 5 working days prior to the scheduled review date. Cancellations will be considered "No Show" and will be noted as "Not Approved" for the Midpoint Review. Students who receive a "Not Approved" result will have to retake the WNM 643 class and must present again next 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 to the “Thesis Book” Icon 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 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 one hour in duration. Your presentation should be 15-20 minutes long. The Midpoint Review will follow this structure:

Midpoint Review Panel/Student Introduction:	5 minutes
Midpoint Review Presentation:	10-15 minutes
Committee Q&A Session:	10 minutes
Committee Discussion (private):	15 minutes
Committee Decision & Feedback:	10 minutes

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

Upon reconvening, the committee will present you with 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 and must present again next semester.

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 |

- Proof of Concept (w/links)
- Competitors & Inspiration
- Technical Summary
- Testing/Testing Plan
- Bibliography

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

- Additional documents
- Resources
- Content Plan*
- Concept Video*
- 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 and time of Midpoint presentation (*extremely important - make this apparent*)

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:

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

- Brief personal introduction or bio that tells us a little about you
- You may also include other information that is appropriate or relevant to your work as an artist, such as:
 - Relevant work experience
 - Relevant educational experience
 - Relevant personal experience
 - Career goals
 - Link(s) to a portfolio or work examples

Project Introduction:

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.

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 top 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:	<p>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.</p>
Proof of Concept:	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>List all external links for your proof of concept and/or prototype.</p>

- 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 [WNNM 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 15-30 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 [WNNM 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 to the Midpoint Review committee, which is comprised of the Department representatives including the Director, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and/or industry professionals approved by the Academy of Art.

You may present your Midpoint Review online or in-person (in San Francisco). If the Midpoint Review Proposal is approved, you then you may begin Directed Study classes to develop the approved project.

Duration and Schedule:

The duration of the entire Midpoint Reviews is approximately 60 minutes. The Slide Show presentation should be succinct and be completed in 10-15 minutes. The meeting will follow this schedule:

Committee/Student Introductions	5 Minutes
The Committee Chair will briefly describe the Midpoint Review process, introduce the Committee Members, and have you do a quick introduction.	
Presentation	10-15 Minutes
You will present your proposal presentation.	
Question & Answer Session	10-15 Minutes

After you have presented your final project proposal, you should be prepared to defend your concept with honesty and conviction through a committee-lead question and answer session.

Committee Discussion (Closed Door/Offline)

10-15 Minutes

The committee will recess in private to discuss the merits of the proposal. When the Q&A session is complete, the Chair will ask you to step outside the review room and wait to be called back in. Online students will be prompted by the Review Facilitator to temporarily log out of the virtual meeting room. During the Panel Discussion, the Committee will review your presentation and determine the results. When the Committee is ready the Chair will notify you to return to the room.

Results Comments

5-10 Minutes

Upon reconvening, the panel will give your results and make comments about your work. All details can later be found on your review tab.

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. PREPARATION TIMELINE

3 to 4 months before your review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review guidelines and important information ➤ Watch the Midpoint Review Orientation
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 ➤ Listen to the committee's advice and take notes ➤ 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

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<p>When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?</p>	<p>Once you have completed your eligibility requirements you will be signed up for the review by your midpoint review coordinator. Check the Graduate School Calendar for dates and visit the Graduate School Review Page for details. You should contact MidpointReview@academyart.edu (415) 618-6297 if you don't see your review info in your LMS by week 7.</p>
<p>How many pages should the Midpoint Review Proposal be?</p>	<p>As many as makes the best presentation within 15-20 minutes. Recommended no more 30-40 pages for the presentation portion of your proposal. 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>I'm using the latest version of Keynote. Will my presentation file load?</p>	<p>Maybe not. Our computers are rebuilt once a semester so we may not have the latest version of your presentation software. This is why we recommend the PDF format. It's your responsibility to create backwards-compatible versions of your presentation if you want to use Keynote or PowerPoint.</p>

8. IMPORTANT LINKS

<p>Graduate Student Homepage & Calendar</p>	<p>http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources</p>
<p>Academy Resource Center -ARC</p>	<p>http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resource-center</p>
<p>Graduate School Review Showcase</p>	<p>http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu</p> <p>Links to review orientations, guidelines, tips, technical requirements, and sign up dates</p>
<p>Online Connection Through Mobile Apps</p>	<p>http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect/apps/adobe-connectmobile.html</p> <p>Online: Application required for using Adobe Connect from your mobile device</p>
<p>Technology Troubleshooting</p>	<p>https://arcps.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm</p> <p>Online: Check to see if your computer has the latest versions of plugins needed to run Adobe Connect</p>
<p>Accessing Your Review Results</p>	<p>http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Review_Results_FA15.pdf</p>
<p>Uploading Review Deliverables - Midpoint Review Proposal</p>	<p>http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content.pdf</p>
<p>WNM Websites</p>	<p>artuwnm.com Facebook.com/artuwnm</p>

9. 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

B. Online Presentation Guidelines

You are required to provide a PowerPoint or PDF presentation with visual and written information that will go along with your oral presentation. You can also find a checklist below with details on what to include in your presentation.

Please refer to the links below for technical requirements:

[Online Technical Requirements](#)
[Adobe Connect](#)
[Diagnostic Test](#)

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

Midpoint Review Coordinator:	MidpointReview@academyart.edu (415) 618-6297
WNM Department Contact:	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