

The Master of Fine Arts Degree and Faculty Policies

A Statement of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, National Association of Schools of Dance, and National Association of Schools of Theatre

The Master of Fine Arts is recognized as the terminal degree in the creative practice of art and design, dance, and theatre. This recognition comes from institutions of higher education, education organizations in the arts disciplines, specialized and institutional accrediting agencies, and the arts professions themselves.

The Master of Fine Arts degree is earned through a rigorous program of education and training. It requires at least two years of full-time graduate study and a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours or ninety (90) quarter hours, at least double the usual amount for the degrees, Master of Arts or Master of Science.

To graduate with an M.F.A., students must:

- Demonstrate professional competence in one or more aspects of the creation and presentation of works of art and design, dance, or theatre.
- Produce creative and academic work that shows the ability to integrate knowledge and skills in their field and other areas of inquiry and research.
- Complete graduate-level studies associated with their discipline in areas such as history, critical analysis, aesthetics, methodologies, and related humanities, sciences, and social sciences.
- Produce a major final project demonstrating mastery in their field or area of specialization.

These requirements support the following historic policies of NASAD, NASD, NAST, and many distinguished institutions and professional organizations: **holders of the M.F.A. have parity with holders of other terminal degrees for purposes of hiring, promotion, and advancement within faculties of higher education.**

For further information about specific standards for the M.F.A. in the various disciplines, and their relationships to other faculty qualifications, please refer to the *Handbooks* of NASAD, NASD, and NAST.

NASAD, NASD, and NAST are the national accrediting agencies for their respective fields and are recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. They are members of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors. They accredit approximately 400 postsecondary institutions and programs. This statement is endorsed by the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations which includes the three organizations party to this statement and the National Association of Schools of Music.