The University of Chicago is a compelling place to acquire artistic knowledge—visually, conceptually, and across disciplinary boundaries. A major or minor in visual arts builds on the University of Chicago’s emphasis on critical thinking and intellectual rigor, as realized in the practice of making art. The Department of Visual Arts places paramount importance on critical perception and production in order to engage with a world that is increasingly dominated by the visual. Visual arts teaching at UChicago understands that perception involves the complex interaction of the senses and the intellect as a means of understanding the world.

Our course of study develops a consciousness of and ability to interact with such phenomena as the relative nature of color and the particular measure of space, and the ways in which this knowledge shapes meaning. These perceptions are fused with the world of ideas and thereby become a vehicle not only for aesthetic pleasure but also for philosophical inquiry, social critique, political activism, and psychological insight.

Curriculum
Required studio core courses teach students the observational skills for making precise phenomenological distinctions in the constructed world and within works of art.

Sample Courses

**Photography**
Photography is a familiar medium due to its ubiquitous presence in our visual world. In this course, students learn technical procedures related to 35mm cameras, black-and-white film, and print development—as well as personally establishing criteria for artistic expression.

**Collage**
This studio course explores collage as a means for examining complex cultural and material relationships. Projects and assigned texts outline the history of collage as a dynamic art form with a strong political dimension, including how it is used today.

**Color Theory and Practice**
This course introduces students to color mixing and the visual impacts of specific color combinations through studio exercises, as well as conceptual and theoretical investigations into optics, the science of color, and color’s psychological and symbolic effects.

**Sculpture**
Building on the historical, aesthetic, and technical strategies of making and thinking about sculpture, students in this course are directed toward the realization of 3-D objects. Discussions and gallery visits help students understand sculpture within a societal and historical context.

**Chicago Film History**
If there is a Chicago style of filmmaking, the characters are politicians and the set designers are Mies van der Rohe and the Chicago Housing Authority. Students consider how Chicago informs documentary, educational, industrial, narrative feature, and avant-garde films.

The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, opening in spring 2012, will house state-of-the-art studios and exhibition spaces for the visual arts.

Visual arts majors at the University of Chicago develop intellectual, analytical, and communicative skills through artistic production.

For more information, visit [collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu](http://collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu)
These skills are acquired by making images/objects, by examining the images of others, and by regular critiques of artworks by classmates. Discriminations learned through the heuristic processes are taken to cultural sites, to the streets of Chicago with its rich architectural and urbanistic history, and to the powerful visual and spatial markers of our lives (for example, television, the great Chicago commercial emporia).

Students who major in visual arts at UChicago are exposed to a wealth of knowledge and creativity, and are thereby able to bring to their work a curiosity, rigor, and depth that would not be possible within a major that is more bound by the disciplines. Students are encouraged either to focus their major in the studio or to construct an interdisciplinary major that combines studio and non-studio courses with a particular theme. Courses in painting, photography, drawing, video, and sculpture provide opportunities to understand the expressive potential of the visual world through a specific medium.

Additionally, visual arts majors are granted studio space in which to work during their fourth year. Undergraduates may also choose to take graduate-level courses in the visual arts and have the opportunity to pursue a master of fine arts degree at the University of Chicago.

**Visual Arts Organizations on Campus**

The University of Chicago is home to dozens of extracurricular arts organizations, including Doc Films, the country’s oldest student film organization; Experimental Film Club; Festival of the Arts; Iris, a photography magazine; Glass Eyeball, a photography club; Japanese Animation Society; MODA, the campus fashion organization; Outside the Lines, a figure drawing club; the Wrens, who work with the Renaissance Society; and the Smart Museum Activities Committee, which promotes and organizes activities for the Smart Museum of Art on campus.

**Grant Opportunities**

The University of Chicago is dedicated to nurturing the artistic work of its students. Grants available to students include:
- The Student Fine Arts Fund, which supports student-initiated projects with grants up to $1,500. Priority is given to projects that encourage more students to explore opportunities within the arts, bringing together two or more disciplines, or create opportunities for collaboration.
- The Arts Council Summer Fellowships, which provides students with up to $1,500 over the summer to pursue original creative projects that are typically intended for production, performance, or publication during the following academic year.
- The UChicago Arts Grant program, which provides between $1,500 and $10,000 to student groups, departments, and campus institutions, giving preference to innovative projects that involve students.

**Facilities**

The study of art as intellectual creative work is integrated with the University of Chicago curriculum. Extracurricular appreciation of the arts is also pervasive, especially each spring when the entire campus is turned into a gallery for the Festival of the Arts. Art students work primarily in Midway Studios, which was the workplace of noted sculptor Lorado Taft.

The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, slated to open in spring 2012, will be a venue for artistic expression, multidisciplinary inquiry, performance, and production. In addition to housing four University programs of study in the creative and performing arts, the center will contain state-of-the-art studios and exhibition space for the visual arts, computer and editing labs, media classrooms, a film vault, and a screening hall.

UChicago students also have access to the following resources:
- Cochrane-Woods Art Center, which houses a comprehensive slide collection, a computer station for digital imaging, and the world-class Department of Art History
- Smart Museum of Art, an outstanding teaching museum with a large permanent collection of painting, sculpture, prints, drawings, photographs, and decorative arts
- Oriental Institute Museum, which displays one of the world’s finest collections of ancient Near Eastern art
- The Renaissance Society, which, through exhibitions, publications, and events, is recognized as a leading North American venue for international contemporary art
- Film Studies Center, which, under the auspices of the Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, contains more than 2,500 films and videos, and provides a site for students to pursue inquiries into the history, criticism, and theory of film
- Franke Institute for the Humanities, a center for humanities work at the University that facilitates interdisciplinary projects