

Illustration

NYSED: 28604 CIP: 50.0410

The evening Illustration program was created for working illustrators seeking advanced study, preparing them to better assume their roles and responsibilities in a world of new media opportunities and rapidly evolving technologies. The curriculum is designed to encourage individual creativity and innovation. Through this program, students develop a broad-based skill set encompassing digital and traditional studio techniques, and are encouraged in the kind of entrepreneurial thinking that leads to thriving careers as illustrators.

An award-winning faculty of active professionals, assignments mirroring real-world challenges and specifications, and regular guest lecturers and off-campus field visits maximize student exposure to New York City's art and design world. Graduating students complete a visual thesis project that culminates in an exhibition, and a qualifying paper. Curriculum below is for the entering class of fall 2025.

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COURSE OF STUDY

Semester 1

MI 521 The History of American Illustration	3
MI 571 Integrating Digital with Traditional Media	3
MI 581 Drawing for Illustration	3

Semester 2

MI 582 Exploring Media	4
MI 583 Narrative Art	3
MI 641 Creative Writing For Illustrators	3

Summer Session 1

MI 532 Directed Projects in Illustration	2
MI 610 Qualifying Research Paper Workshop	1

Semester 3

MI 605 Qualifying Research Paper I	3
MI 681 Sequential Storytelling	3
MI 783 Illustration in Motion	3

Semester 4

MI 602 Reportage: Theory and Practice	4
MI 606 Qualifying Research Paper II	3
MI 607 Studio Visits: New York	2

MI 608 Printmaking and Artist's Books	3
Summer Session 2	
MI 631 Studio Visits: LA	2
Semester 5	
MI 672 Survey of Digital Illustration	3
MI 731 Business Practices and Self Promotion Strategies	3
MI 791 Visual Thesis Studio	3
Semester 6	
MI 700 Studio Workshop	3
MI 792 Visual Thesis - Exhibition and Promotion	3
Total Credits	60

COMMON REQUIREMENTS

All degree programs require that students maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 every semester while enrolled in the program. A student is placed on probation if his or her semester GPA is below 3.0.

A student is not subject to academic dismissal at the end of his or her first semester in a degree program. A student will be dismissed from the college after two consecutive semesters with a GPA below 3.0. A final GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation.

ADVANCEMENT TO DEGREE CANDIDACY

Eligibility to Attend Commencement Exercises

Candidates for the master's degree at FIT must have advanced to candidacy before being permitted to attend graduation ceremonies.

Degree Requirements

General

For admittance to degree candidacy, students must have satisfied all outstanding prerequisites, completed a minimum of 60 approved course credits, achieved a final grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0, and had their qualifying paper proposal approved by their committee. Students must have advanced to degree candidacy before being permitted to attend graduation ceremonies.

Qualifying Paper

MFA in Illustration candidates are required to complete a qualifying paper focusing on a specific aspect of illustration—considering the history, cultural context, and current state of the industry. Students should select a topic in an area of their particular interest. Research, composition, design, and presentation occur over a 12-month period.

The process begins in the summer qualifying paper workshop, during which the Qualifying Paper faculty member will provide guidance on the scope, requirements, and timeline of the project. Under faculty guidance, students will discuss and identify topics and begin initial research. During the courses Qualifying Paper I and II, delivered in the third and fourth semesters of the program, students will research, write, and design their papers. In the student's fourth semester of study, the final Qualifying Papers will be submitted in writing and as an oral presentation. Departmental faculty discuss and review the qualifying paper presentation, prior to the paper's final approval.

Time Requirement for Degree Completion

See **Scholastic Standing**.

MI 521 — The History of American Illustration

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course will explore the role of the illustrator and the evolution and importance of illustration as a social barometer of our culture. The course will offer its history of illustration in the broader contexts of world art and of American history and popular culture, using slide shows, field trips and anecdotal lectures.

MI 532 — Directed Projects in Illustration

2 credits; 1 lecture and 2 lab hours

This course is designed to give the opportunity to study intensively with high-profile, industry-active illustrators who are enjoying success within a variety of markets in the industry.

MI 571 — Integrating Digital with Traditional Media

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course will explore new artistic possibilities in creating art by combining traditional with digital media. Using Adobe Photoshop, Corel Painter and a Wacom tablet, students will be given the opportunity to unlock an image's full potential by giving them the digital tools needed to create multiple versions of an idea.

MI 572 — Digital Boot Camp

0 credits

This course is a weeklong workshop designed to introduce the new MFA in illustration student to the language and pace of graduate study in a studio environment. It will encourage and support experimentation in concept development and execution through 'traditional media' and software programs such as Photoshop and Illustrator.

MI 581 — Drawing for Illustration

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course is designed to enhance and to invigorate a solid foundation of drawing. Conventional subject matter such as the nude and costumed figure, still life and reportage, combined with a broad range of media and technique, explores premises of design, composition, dimension and drama.

MI 582 — Exploring Media

4 credits; 1 lecture and 6 lab hours

This class is designed to not only explore the unique qualities of three traditional mediums appropriate for the execution of illustration assignments, but also disseminates information designed to familiarize the graduate student with the traditional practices, techniques and theories of artists and illustrators of the past.

MI 583 — Narrative Art

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course is concerned with building awareness of, and competence in successfully telling stories with pictures. What is discussed are the ways in which arrangements of elements within imagery can connect with the cognitive process of the viewer, resulting in the telling of a story.

MI 602 — Reportage: Theory and Practice

4 credits; 8 lab hours

Enhances the ability to draw from life; to document people, environments, and events. Explores reportage theory, history and practice. Using location drawing sessions, students heighten their sense of observation and apply the practice of reportage drawing to illustration assignments.

Prerequisite(s): MI 581.

MI 605 — Qualifying Research Paper I

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students are guided on the planning, research, writing, and evaluation of their Qualifying Research Paper. Students complete and submit a topic, abstract, outline, a historical overview. Students also begin a current state of art section, and begin collecting imagery and illustrative examples.

MI 606 — Qualifying Research Paper II

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students complete writing and prepare their qualifying paper for publication and presentation. Emphasis is placed on editing and evaluating the paper's content, as well as design for print and public presentation.

MI 607 — Studio Visits: New York

2 credits; 2 lecture hours

This course is a companion to MI 631 Studio Visits: Los Angeles. This course provides students with face-to-face interactions with East coast-based professional illustrators, animators, and art directors through in person meetings at studio and office visits in New York and Philadelphia.

MI 608 — Printmaking and Artist's Books

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course exposes students to the process of planning and creating hand-printed artist's books and unique editions using traditional printmaking techniques. Emphasis is placed on narrative and sequential projects, and students are encouraged to conceive fully considered book projects and editions of multiples.

MI 610 — Qualifying Research Paper Workshop

1 credit; 1 lecture hour

This course introduces students to the parameters and scope of the Qualifying Research Paper. Students identify a possible topic and begin initial planning.

MI 631 — Studio Visits: LA

2 credits; 2 lecture hours

Studio Visits' main educational goal is to expose illustration students to West Coast markets by traveling to locations in and around Los Angeles. Students will visit the various studios and their subcontractors at which the most advanced work of this kind of being done.

MI 641 — Creative Writing For Illustrators

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

In this course, students engage in intensive writing exercises in a variety of genres, read published works, and discuss the elements of creative nonfiction, poetry, and fiction. They investigate the craft of writing in these genres, with additional attention to children's literature, graphic novels, and other forms that typically incorporate illustration.

MI 672 — Survey of Digital Illustration

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course will focus on the techniques and uses of digital illustration in its varied forms and styles with an emphasis on using appropriate software in a way that maximizes creative expression while taking into consideration the practical aspects of reproduction processes.

MI 681 — Sequential Storytelling

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course is designed to explore the complete spectrum of premises needed to successfully create an illustrated character(s). The class will cover the ideas behind the research, concept and refinement necessary to build a character.

MI 692 — Independent Study in Illustration MFA

1-3 credit; 1 lecture hour

MI 700 — Studio Workshop

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

This course emphasizes experimentation and exploration of materials and studio practices. Students are encouraged to expand their artistic voices and develop their professional identity. They collaborate with classmates on a large scale public art project. The concepts and content of MI 792 are reinforced.

MI 731 — Business Practices and Self Promotion Strategies

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course addresses a myriad of best practices to successfully carry on the business of illustration. The course will be delivered in three separate units of study: Contracts, Copyright, Negotiation, Business Management and Taxes, Marketing, Grants and Self- Promotion Strategies, Licensing and its Tools: Press Releases, Statements.

MI 782 — Art is Where You Look For It: Diversifying Illustration's Application

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

This course explores the ever-emerging and divergent paths an illustrator can take to use his or her skills in traditional and digital media, combined with a personal illustration style to expand into disciplines and areas of the arts not ordinarily considered.

MI 783 — Illustration in Motion

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

Illustration in Motion uses software associated with digital illustrative to make moving images. Through lectures, visual presentations and studio assignments, students will be exposed to the various roles of illustration in moving image media, from initial visual concepts, storyboards, animatics, layout, animation techniques, and digital compositing. The class will cover the twelve principles of animation, as well as paper and digital 2D animation techniques.

MI 791 — Visual Thesis Studio

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course focuses on the execution of the proposal and research completed during the Visual Thesis Creation Seminar. Students will be expected to arrive with work samples representative of the finished Visual Thesis project.

MI 792 — Visual Thesis - Exhibition and Promotion

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

Visual Thesis Creation: Exhibition and Promotion is the last segment and time period devoted to preparing the body work of each MFA graduate that will appear in the culminating exhibition of the MFA program and experience.