

Illustration

NYSED: 28604 HEGIS: 1009

The 60-credit, part-time, evening and weekend 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 is exhibited at The Museum at FIT, and a written master's thesis. Curriculum below is for the entering class of Fall 2017.

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COURSE OF STUDY

Pre-Semester		
MI 572	Digital Boot Camp	0
Semester 1		
MI 501	Thesis 1: Initiating the Process	3
MI 521	The History of American Illustration	3
MI 581	Drawing for Illustration	3
Semester 2		
MI 571	Integrating Digital with Traditional Media	3
MI 582	Exploring Media	4
MI 583	Narrative Art	3
Summer Session 1		
MI 532	Directed Projects in Illustration	2
Semester 3		
MI 603	Thesis II: Evaluating and Composing for Content	1
MI 641	Creative Writing For Illustrators	3
MI 681	Creating Character	3
MI 783	Illustration in Motion	3
Semester 4		
MI 531	Studio Management Intensive	2
MI 602	Reportage: Theory and Practice	4
MI 604	Thesis III: Editing, Designing, Defending and Publishing	3
MI 682	Exploring and Expanding Your Artistic Voice	3
Summer Session 2		
MI 631	On Location: Studio Visits	2
Semester 5		
MI 672	Everything That Rises Must Converge: A Survey of Digital Illustration	3
MI 731	Business Practices and Self Promotion Strategies	3
MI 791	Visual Thesis Studio	3
Semester 6		
MI 782	Art is Where You Look For It: Diversifying Illustration's Application	3

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.

Maintenance of Matriculation

To maintain matriculation, a degree candidate must register each semester following entry into a program for either (a) at least one approved course or (b) maintenance of matriculation. If a student does not maintain continuous matriculation, or does not complete all degree requirements in the time allowed, that student will be required to apply for readmission to the program following the procedures and requirements listed in the catalog of the readmission year. If readmission is granted, the student will also be required to pay all delinquent maintenance of matriculation fees prior to being awarded the degree.

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 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.

Thesis

Graduating students in the MFA in Illustration program are required to complete a master's thesis, in the form of an academic paper focusing on a specific aspect of illustration—its history, various applications, or current state. Students should select a topic whose research and composition is manageable within an 18-month period.

It is the responsibility of the student to submit, and have approved, his/her topic proposal to the department thesis coordinator; the thesis coordinator will then select an individual advisor whose area of expertise is relevant to the paper's topic and research. Students are expected to submit their written proposals approximately six weeks into their first semester.

Detailed guidelines on the thesis process will be distributed in the early weeks of the first semester. Papers are due in April of the student's fourth semester in the program, when the student presents his/her research to a committee to discuss and defend the paper, prior to the paper's final approval. In May of the fourth semester, students meet individually with a committee—composed of the department associate chairperson, the thesis coordinator, and the student's thesis advisor—to discuss and defend their thesis and research work, prior to the paper's final approval.

Students will be expected to retain a professional copy editor during the process.

Time Requirement for Degree Completion

Students will have three years to complete all degree requirements, except for the qualifying paper, which is due within 18 months after beginning the program.

Boot Camp

Please note that students enrolled in the Illustration MFA program are required to attend a late-summer intensive program prior to the first week of the first semester of classes. For specific information, please contact the program chairperson.

MI 501 — Thesis 1: Initiating the Process

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Thesis I: Initiating the Process will begin with a basic overview of the thesis and its educational objectives. The Thesis Guidelines, a booklet addressing the specific content and formatting needs of the paper, will be distributed and discussed at length and will be used as a supplemental text throughout the development of the project.

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 531 — Studio Management Intensive

2 credits; 2 lecture hours

This course is a seminar designed to cover the full complement of premises and responsibilities that an illustrator need think about when running a successful studio. A myriad of options to do so will be presented along with time management techniques, suggestions for resources, and case studies of successful and also no-so-successful scenarios as teaching tools as well as an off-site studio venue visit.

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; 0 lecture and 0 lab hours

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 592 — Visual Thesis Creation Seminar

1 credit; 1 lecture hour

The seminar begins the process of creating the culminating Visual Thesis exhibit. Each student will produce a body of work as a visual thesis that is exhibited in the Museum at FIT. The seminar serves to prepare the student for the process of identifying the Visual Thesis topic and is intended to familiarize the student with the development and fulfillment structure for creating the final body of work.

MI 602 — Reportage: Theory and Practice

4 credits; 8 lab hours

This course is designed to enhance the ability to draw from life; to document people, environments, and events. The course explores reportage theory, history and practice. On location drawing sessions allows students to heighten their sense of observation and to apply the practice of reportage drawing to illustration assignments.

Prerequisite(s): MI 581.

MI 603 — Thesis II: Evaluating and Composing for Content

1 credit; 1 lecture hour

After intensive scrutiny and evaluation, students will revise, edit and assemble in complete, final, and fully copyedited form the entire historical overview section and will begin the process of researching, interviewing primary sources, sending out and tabulating questionnaires, and authoring and assembling the current state section of the paper.

Prerequisite(s): MI 501.

MI 604 — Thesis III: Editing, Designing, Defending and Publishing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

The completed thesis is due on April 15th of this semester for submission to the Defense Committee. In preparation for thesis defense, students will embark on a process of finishing their work and following up with the careful editing and designing of their final papers.

MI 631 — On Location: Studio Visits

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 — Everything That Rises Must Converge: A 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 — Creating Character

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 682 — Exploring and Expanding Your Artistic Voice

3 credits; 1 lecture and 4 lab hours

This course is designed to guide the student in the discovery and development of one's self as a personal brand. Students will be challenged to experiment and to explore different media, subject matter, stylistic approaches and markets in solving a variety of assignments while maintaining the integrity of one's personal artistic vision and also searching for one's broader artistic voice.

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.