

Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART

Master's Project Handbook
2017

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INTRODUCTION

The Master's Project is a serious demonstration of a graduate student's ability to formulate effectively, in both concept and structure, a plan for an enterprise that contributes to current art world practices and forms of exchange. Alternatively, projects might analyze existing patterns or tendencies, rather than propose novel types. The project may take multiple forms, each demonstrating a serious commitment to exploration, original thinking, extensive research, and organization of materials. The works will be presented orally, as well as submitted in written form. The project should serve as a bridge to the "real-world," with an emphasis on practical applications of the highest professional measure.

The Master's Project becomes a visible and permanent record of the kind and quality of work that a graduate student has accomplished at the Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York. Thus every submission must represent the highest academic and professional standards.

Students will begin identifying and developing their plans during the Spring Semester Master's Project Workshop. Continued development and realization of projects is conducted through the Master's Project Seminar in the Fall Semester.

Prior to submission of final projects, students will be required to make detailed concise, formal presentations that include visual and textual information. These will receive close scrutiny and feedback from peers and faculty, and will be open to members of the Institute community. Completed written submissions are due at the end of Fall Term.

PROJECT SUPERVISION

Seminar Instructors will both serve as section leaders and advise students on the structure and content of their projects. In addition to class meetings, office hours will be available for individual advising. The instructors will serve as a student's primary advisor. However, as projects often require both broad and specialized knowledge, students are encouraged to identify a secondary advisor who is capable of helping with the particulars of their topic. Secondary advisors can be members of the full-time or adjunct SIA faculty, or outside professionals working in appropriate disciplines. It is the responsibility of the student to seek out such advice.

Seminar leaders will also serve as first readers and graders for projects. A secondary adviser could serve as a second reader, or one will be appointed from the faculty.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Master's Projects will be graded according to the following criteria:

- A clear statement of the intent of the study or enterprise, the set of problems or issues undertaken, the methods or criteria used, the extent of research, the strength of independent argument and conclusions drawn.
- Innovative, analytical and critical thinking demonstrating rigor and insight, originality of idea and approach, and an illuminating use of materials.

- Clarity and overall quality of both oral presentation and writing.

Final Project evaluations will count for a portion of the final seminar grade, and will be assessed according to the Institute's standard alpha/numerical scale. In-class presentations, both initial proposals and advanced projects, as well as attendance and general participation will also contribute to the final course grade according to the following scale:

- Final Project: 60%
- Final (oral) Presentations: These will count together with the written final project – Finished concise presentations will be assessed by the instructors and visiting faculty.
- Mid-term Presentation: 20% – A formal presentation incorporating visual and/or other materials such as Powerpoint displays, models, other forms of documentation.
- Initial Proposal Presentation: 10% – A discussion of project ideas and methodological plans.
- Attendance and Participation: 10% - Participation is strongly emphasized, as peer feedback in the form of constructive and supportive criticism is a central feature of the seminar. Presentations are conducted primarily for the purpose of such exchange.
- Response Papers to Guest Lectures: Pass/Fail

REQUIREMENTS

As stated in the Introduction, a project should be an original contribution to, or study that reflects the current art world. As a project can take numerous directions, there is no one “correct” form. Appropriateness of structure and content should be determined through consultation with seminar leaders and independent advisors. Yet some general guidelines apply to most all projects, as follows:

Length

The amount and nature of writing will depend on the nature of the project - this, to be determined in consultation with the instructor. In general, about 25 pages of submitted work is expected.

Past guidelines have included:

- Curatorial Proposals
 - Curatorial Narrative: 500 words
 - Works List and Logistics Plan: full work information including location, square footage, shipping and installing requirements/projections, basic budget, exhibition layout with illustrations and/or model.
 - Essay: 4000 words (about 12 pages)
- Enterprise/Business Plans (to follow conventional template provided in the course)
 - Executive Summary (750 words maximum)
 - Market Analysis (750 words minimum)
 - Company and Product Description (750 words minimum)
 - Marketing Plan (750 words minimum)
 - Operation and Development Plans (750 words minimum)
 - Basic Financials (750 words minimum, must include cost and revenue projections for at least three years)

All projects should also contain the following:

- Footnotes
- Appendices (as relevant)
- Bibliographies
- Relevant visual materials, properly annotated and attributed

Format

All projects must follow the following format guidelines and adhere to basic standards of clear, correct English.

- Font: Times New Roman 12 point, or Arial 11 point
- Alignment: left (not justified)
- Double spaced

- 8.5 x 11 inch page
- Margins 1.25 inches left and right, 1 inch top and bottom
- Sections begin on new pages (i.e. after a page break), subheadings or subchapters do not

Ordering and Page Numbers

All required project components should be structured according to the table below. Note that the three main sections (cover pages, prefatory pages, and main body) each have a different convention for page numbering.

Cover Pages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Title Page 2. Abstract 	No Page Numbers
Prefatory Pages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Table of Contents 2. List of Illustrations with complete captions 3. Acknowledgements (optional) 	Lower case Roman numerals beginning with "i" at bottom right
Main Body	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main text, including introduction and all chapter and subheading pages 2. Illustrations, including all images, charts and graphs 3. Bibliography 4. Appendices (if necessary) 	Arabic numerals beginning with "1" at bottom right

Component Descriptions

- Title Page: the title page carries the project title, the author's full name, the year of submission, and the word count of the thesis.
- Table of Contents: the table of contents (TOC) gives page numbers for each chapter and subheading (if applicable). The format of the TOC matches the body of the writing.
- List of illustrations: the list of illustrations is a numerical list of all illustrations (images, charts, graphs, figures, etc.) with complete caption information for each one. Double space between entries; single space within entries. See sample on page 14.
- Acknowledgements (optional): if included, acknowledgements should be single spaced and no more than one page.
- Main text: this is the project proper, and includes the introduction and all chapters and subheadings. All pages must conform to the format outlined above.
- Illustrations: Illustrations, in the form of images, graphs, tables, figures or other non-textual accompaniments.
 - In general, no more than two illustrations should appear on any page. Illustrations must be substantive, not simply decorative, and contribute to an understanding of the project.
 - Images may be black and white or color but no larger than 8 x 10 inches. Margins must conform to the text pages.
 - Graphs, charts, and colored drawings must be in a format that can be reproduced with clarity.
 - All illustrations must be captioned with appropriate information. All illustration captions are single spaced..
 - If large sheets or non-paper materials (e.g. CDs, DVDs, flash drives, etc.) are submitted as part of a project, these must be placed together in a convenient folder or envelope. If larger than such a packet allows, a separate submission will be necessary. A page or pages in the illustration section must refer the reader to the presence and location of these materials.
- Bibliography: the bibliography must conform to *The Chicago Manual of Style* or, in the case of legal studies, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* ("Bluebook").
 - Copies of The Chicago Manual of Style and Bluebook can be found in the Sotheby's Institute Library. The Library also subscribes to The Chicago Manual of Style online edition. Students can access this edition through the offsite resources link on the library homepage. Because it is the style used throughout the program, students would do well to purchase a copy. Basic information is available at the Chicago Manual Website: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>. A Quick Guide is available: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
 - NOTE: Construction of the bibliography is a simple, mechanical process, and as such, there is no reason for it to contain errors in formatting. Students should not ask advisors for assistance on citation format.

- Appendices: any materials that do not fall naturally within the categories above must be submitted in an appendix. Such materials include interview transcripts, multi-page tables or catalogues, reproductions of archival documents, raw survey results, or the like. Students should discuss with their advisors the proposed contents and inclusion of these materials.

Footnotes vs. Endnotes

The Institute encourages the use of footnotes rather than endnotes. Footnotes are grouped at the bottom of a page below a short line or separator. Most word processing programs, including MS Word and Apple Pages, have functions that will insert and automatically format footnotes. Notes must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* or, in the case of legal studies, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*.

Computer Files

If a computer file must accompany the thesis, major brand name CDs, DVDs, or flash drives of the highest quality must be used for storage. Each item should be clearly labeled. If special software is required to run the file this must be noted as well. Submission copies must be tested to ensure file integrity (i.e. that programs run without error).

RefWorks

All students are eligible for free passwords to the web-based citation management program RefWorks (please ask the Librarians for the Institute's Group Code). NOTE: References imported from databases and library catalogs often deviate from standard capitalization and punctuation practices. Students who use RefWorks are urged to proofread their RefWorks-generated bibliographies very carefully.

ETHICAL INTERVIEWING AND CONFIDENTIAL SOURCES

The Sotheby's Institute of Art has a responsibility to protect the rights of respondents or human resources who are contacted and interviewed in the course of students' research. All interviews conducted by students should conform to the following guidelines. If you have any questions or reservations about the approach you should take in contacting and conducting interviews, please discuss these with your advisor.

- **Consent:** All interviews must take place with the informed consent of the respondent. You must make clear your connection to the Sotheby's Institute of Art and that the interview is being requested and conducted as part of your thesis research. The purpose of the interview and its place within your research should be clarified, as should how the respondent's answers will be used in the research (quoted verbatim, paraphrased, used on background) and how the respondent will be identified (by name, by position, left anonymous). Note: with regard to anonymous sources, see section on Confidentiality below.
- **Deception:** At no point may you obtain an interview without the respondent's knowledge. For example, recording or quoting casual conversation over drinks at a conference, or contacting a dealer to speak about a commercial transaction in order to obtain information about how a gallery operates, constitute acts of deception.
- **Confidentiality:** No successful (i.e. passing) Master's thesis can be based upon confidential sources. Nevertheless, the Institute recognizes that, given the art world's culture of opacity, many respondents may request that their identities as sources of information be kept confidential. If you must use a confidential source in your thesis, the following protocols must be followed:
 1. Inform and obtain approval from your thesis advisor of your intention to use a confidential source. Your thesis advisor will be informed of the identity of the source, and will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality.
 2. Keep detailed notes, transcripts, and recordings of the information obtained from the confidential source. These will be shared with your thesis advisor.
 3. Confirm with the confidential source exactly how the obtained information will be cited and what rationale will be given for the requested confidentiality. In no instance may a source simply be cited as "anonymous"; the student must negotiate for an allowance to use at least some description of the source, be it position or role with respect to the information given (e.g. "a prominent dealer based in Cologne who asked not to be identified because of continued dealings with the foundation.").
 4. In every case where confidential sources are used, the students must demonstrate to their advisors that the information provided could not be obtained elsewhere or through other non-confidential means.
 5. All information obtained from confidential sources must find corroboration in other research conducted by the student. Again, because confidentiality precludes other scholars or researchers from access to the source, no successful master's thesis can be based upon confidential sources.

SUBMITTING THE PROJECT

The deadline for submitting the final written form of the project is DATE. Files should be uploaded to Canvas under the appropriate assignment area.

Projects must be in pdf form. The file should contain the entire project including illustrations, appendices, and other support materials.

Additional materials may be submitted as needed in presenting the project. These might include documents, 3-dimensional models, prototypes of publications or other such items not reducible to, or better understood than in digital form.

In addition, documents must be submitted regarding publication of the projects through Digital Commons. Students will be asked to publicize, or withhold publication for a limited time or permanently. These options will be discussed close to the end of the semester.

Information regarding Digital Commons can be found at <http://digitalcommons.sia.edu>

GRADING

Master's Projects are assigned a letter grade according to the following criteria:

- A clear statement of the intent of the study or enterprise, the set of problems or issues undertaken, the methods or criteria used, the extent of research, the strength of independent argument and conclusions drawn.
- Innovative, analytical and critical thinking demonstrating rigor and insight, originality of idea and approach, and an illuminating use of materials.
- Clarity and overall quality of oral presentation and writing, as well as accuracy and appropriateness of accompanying materials, data, images and such.

Final Project evaluations will count for a portion of the final seminar grade, and will be assessed according to the Institute's standard alpha/numerical scale. In-class presentations, both initial proposals and advanced projects, as well as attendance and general participation will also contribute to the final course grade according to the following scale:

- Final Project: 60%
- Final Oral Presentations: These will count together with the written final submission.
- Mid-term Project Presentation: 20% – A formal presentation incorporating visual and/or other materials such as Powerpoint images, models, other forms of documentation.
- Initial Proposal Presentation: 10% – A discussion of project ideas and methodological plans.
- Attendance and Participation: 10% - Participation is strongly emphasized, as peer feedback in the form of constructive and supportive criticism is a central feature of the seminar. Presentations are conducted primarily for the purpose of such exchange.
- Response Papers to Guest Lectures: Pass/Fail

Grade Appeal Policy

Grade appeals for the project follow the same protocol as any other grade appeal (as detailed on page 21 of the Student Handbook):

Students may petition for a grade review of the project up to 30 days after the grade is issued. However, before deciding to pursue an appeal, the student must request an informal explanation of the basis of the grade from the advisor. After this explanation has been given, if the student is not satisfied, the student may pursue the matter as follows:

- The student must submit a letter outlining any questions and/or objections directly to the seminar leader, with a copy to the Associate Director of Student and Academic Services.
- The seminar leader submits a written response to the student's letter within one week of receipt, with a copy to the Program Director and to the Associate Director of Student and Academic Services.
- If the student is not satisfied by the seminar leader's written response, the student may appeal further by sending copies of all previous communications to the Associate Director of Student and Academic Services under separate cover explaining the rationale for the request of a further review. The Academic Review Committee will then

review all communications, clarify any outstanding issues, and make a recommendation. The Committee's decision is final; no further appeal will be allowed after this ruling.

THE AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Distinction is not a grade but an award that is given to projects that demonstrate the highest level of excellence in their argumentation, organization, and execution.

Only a very limited number of projects are granted the award (normally no more than 10% of any program's student pool), and the award may not be granted every year.

Students who receive the award will be notified by formal letter signed by the Director of the Institute and the appropriate Program Director. Additionally, recipients of the award will be recognized during the Institute's graduation program in March.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the use of another's ideas without giving proper credit, or the use of another person's words or phrases without citation. Plagiarism also includes simple mechanical modification of another's writing; for example, replacing a word or dropping or interpolating words here and there, but retaining the essence of the other person's work without acknowledgment. The maximum penalty for plagiarism is dismissal from Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Students' work must be their own. All quoted or paraphrased material must be referenced according to the appropriate referencing practice of a student's department and/or discipline. Extracts and quotations may be used to a limited extent for purposes of illustration and criticism. Students should consult a style manual regarding justification for quoting.

The language of the copyright law is vague (and jurisprudence unpredictable) as to what constitutes fair use, so if students are concerned about exceeding the "fair use" doctrine, they should seek permission from the copyright owner or consult with the student's advisor. In general, one of the purposes of consistent contact between the student and the advisor, and of the advisor's reviewing of the student's work product, is to allay any concerns regarding proper and sufficient citation as well as any potential instance of plagiarism.

Students must adhere to the Sotheby's Institute of Art Academic Integrity Policy as outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook.

SAMPLE ILLUSTRATION LIST FORMAT

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1. Alexander McQueen, “Bumster” Skirt, Highland Rape, Autumn/Winter 1995–96 (re-edition from original pattern), Black silk taffeta; Photograph © Sølve Sundsbø / Art + Commerce
- Fig. 2. Alexander McQueen, “Jellyfish” Ensemble, Plato’s Atlantis, Spring/Summer 2010, Dress, leggings, and “Armadillo” boots embroidered with iridescent enamel paillettes; Photograph © Sølve Sundsbø / Art + Commerce
- Fig. 3. Steve McQueen, still from *Giardini*, 2009; 2 screen, synchronized high definition video projection with 5.1 surround sound and lighting control system; 00:30:08; 35mm film transferred to HD; courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery and the artist
- Fig. 4. Steve McQueen, still from *Shame*, 2011; 35mm film in theatrical release; courtesy Fox Search Light Pictures, Film 4, See-Saw Films, & The UK Film Council