

**TULANE UNIVERSITY
NEWCOMB ART DEPARTMENT
ART HISTORY GRADUATE PROGRAM**

GUIDE FOR INCOMING GRADUATE STUDENTS, 2025-2026

WELCOME!

This short guide is designed to welcome you to the Newcomb Art Department of Tulane University as a new member of our intellectual community.

Please read this short guide carefully and ask the Art History Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or your advisor (if you have chosen one) any other questions. More information can also be found online on the departmental website, including the various degree requirements you must complete before graduation. You need to be familiar also with the guidelines posted on the SLA (School of Liberal Arts) Graduate Studies website <https://liberalarts.tulane.edu/academics/graduate-studies>. This guide begins with an examination of the general direction of your studies and will continue with most specific subjects. SLA has also compiled a useful handbook, accessible here: <https://srss.tulane.edu/sites/default/files/2024-03/Resources%20for%20Graduate%20Students.pdf>

YOUR DEVELOPMENT

The graduate program of study is designed to help you develop both professionally and intellectually. Your mandatory classes will offer you ample opportunities to work with faculty and with other graduate students, as you write papers that articulate a personal and original scholarly voice, and proactively participate in class discussions. Also expected, and key to your growth, is your attendance at art history lectures, which are offered by both leading and emergent scholars in the field. Works-in-progress events are also designed to enhance your professional skills in the field. These events are posted to the online department calendar, which you can synch with your own.

ADVISORS and DEPARTMENT STAFF

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) is Adrian Anagnost (aanagnos@tulane.edu). Please see the DGS regarding academic departmental issues involving TA assignments, general program requirements, etc. You will also be choosing a thesis advisor, who will advise on your course selection, distribution requirements, and thesis. Allison Beondé, the department Operations Manager, and Molly LeBlanc, the Administrative Secretary, handle administrative items relevant to the department such as filing receipts for reimbursement, scheduling courses, and room assignments. Dean Ann Schumacher in the School of Liberal Arts handles university-wide administrative items such as stipend disbursement, health insurance, etc.

CURRICULUM

In the MA program, you should select one of these two tracks:

Track I: ancient and early modern studies, before circa 1500.

Track II: modern and contemporary studies, after circa 1500.

Distribution requirements call for students in both tracks to take one class in each of the following three areas:

- 1) Ancient and Medieval Europe and Asia; Autonomous-era Americas (pre 1520)
- 2) Colonial Americas; Early Modern Asia; Renaissance, Baroque, & 18th-c. Europe
- 3) Modern Europe, Asia, the Americas, African Diaspora

You are expected to take three classes in your selected track with the art history faculty members teaching in the area that most closely relates to your own research, and who will most likely be on your thesis committee. MA students must take a total of eight classes (24 credits) at the 6000 and 7000 level, plus the thesis (6 credits). In the first year, full time students must enroll in no fewer than three classes a semester; you may take the other two classes any time during your second year, usually one each semester while you are writing your thesis. With permission of your advisor, two of your classes may be outside of Art History. Students in the Art History/Latin American Studies Ph.D. program have a different set of criteria, which can be explained by your advisor.

FACULTY AND THESIS ADVISOR

When selecting your advisor, keep in mind that only the tenured and tenured track faculty members are able to direct theses, although other faculty can serve on the committees. Visiting faculty do not direct theses, and affiliated faculty in other departments do so only in very selective cases, which require the approval by all tenure-track art history faculty. You can find the complete information about the faculty listed below on our departmental webpage.

Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty

Adrian Anagnost, Contemporary Art & Modern Latin American Art, Performance, Urbanism

Mia Bagneris, African Diaspora Art & Studies of Race in Western Art

Holly Flora, Medieval Italian Art, Materiality

(on leave Fall 2026)

Michelle Foa, 18th, 19th, and early 20th-century European Art, Impressionism/Post-Impressionism

Leslie Geddes, Renaissance & Baroque Italy, Landscape, Drawing

(on leave Fall 2025)

Barbara E. Mundy, Autonomous-era Americas (pre-1520), Colonial Art of Latin America

(on leave Fall 2025)

Stephanie Porras (Chair), North European Renaissance, Global Baroque, Theory of the Copy

(on leave 2026-2027)

Tony Yeboah, Architecture and Built Environment of West Africa

Fan Zhang, Medieval China, pan-Asian/Silk Road, Gender, Ethnicity

(on leave 2025-Fall 2026)

Teaching Faculty

Alexis Culotta, Renaissance Italy, architecture and ornamentation, big data, Digital Humanities

Affiliated Faculty

Allison Emmerson, Classical Studies, Greek and Roman Art and Archaeology.

Susann Lusnia, Classical Studies, Etruscan and Roman art and Architecture

Emilia Oddo, Classical Studies, Greek Art and Archaeology

THESIS

The thesis demonstrates that one is ready to produce a long scholarly project, an independent work that meets professional norms. You are solely responsible for moving your thesis project forward, which means that you must be aware of all the deadlines, and that you must produce the necessary prospectus, application grants, research, writing, and revisions on a timely fashion. While the faculty is always here to help you whenever you need it, it is up to you to make appointments, confer with your professors requesting whatever advice you may need, and work around their schedules. During the summer months, faculty may go abroad and be less accessible. Plan ahead.

Thesis Prospectus

These guidelines are of a general nature and they should be discussed with individual advisors, since they need to be adjusted to specific research projects. Most proposals (3-5 pages) include a clear statement of the thesis, a brief review of the state of scholarship on the subject, and the proposed objectives for the research and writing of the thesis. The prospectus should also include a selected bibliography and images. Once the prospectus is approved by the thesis advisor, it can be forwarded to the full thesis committee for its approval.

Recommended Timetable for MA Students

You should work on a specific timetable for your thesis with your advisor, but the timetable below will give you an idea of how to plan your thesis and research over the course of the two-year degree.

First year**Fall Semester**

Take three seminars in your study track with prospective graduate committee members or to fulfill the distribution requirements.

Take language exam this semester or next.

Spring Semester

Take three seminars in your study track with prospective graduate committee members or to fulfill the distribution requirements.

February 1: Select topic of thesis and thesis committee.

March 1: Submit copy of the prospectus to your advisor.

March 15: Submit travel grant applications.

March 30: Submit finalized prospectus to thesis committee.

May 1: **Forward the prospectus and the committee's emailed approvals of the prospectus to Graduate Coordinator.**

Take language exam this semester if you did not take it in the fall.

Summer:

Carry out research and begin writing.

August 1: Submit an outline or draft of the first thesis chapter.

Second Year**Fall Semester**

Take one class and register for thesis research.

First chapter: September 1

Second chapter: October 10

Third Chapter: November 30

Spring Semester

Take one class and register for thesis research.

First revised draft: January 1

Second revised draft: February 1

Final Draft goes to full committee: March 1

Defense: mid-March

Complete an “[Application for Degree](#)” form [in Gibson](#) by [SLA deadline](#) (late March)

Last day to submit theses in final form: late April ([check SLA Graduate website](#))

Graduate Deadlines

All the graduate deadlines are available online in the Graduate section of the SLA website:

<https://liberalarts.tulane.edu/academics/graduate-studies/graduating-students>.

You are responsible for knowing them, for paying the necessary fees in a timely manner, and for submitting applications for degrees and your dissertations or theses in final form.

GRADES

We expect graduate students to keep an average of A- or A in their classes. If you are getting B grades on your assignments, it is a clear sign that your performance is not at the level where it should be. If your GPA reaches B- you will be placed on academic probation and you may lose your stipend and even your standing in the program. The faculty also reserves the right to put you on probation if you are not making satisfactory progress on your thesis.

Regardless of your grades, we expect you to speak with your thesis advisor and all your professors often in order to improve your performance and enhance your studies at Tulane. Your work is regularly evaluated by the full art history faculty as we consider our function to mentor you and help you thrive in our discipline. We are always available to meet with graduate students to discuss their progress. Continuous enrollment is required unless a student takes an approved leave. ([see SLA guidelines](#)).

TEACHING DUTIES

If you are on a stipend, you are expected to work as a teaching assistant or, on occasion, a research assistant. Depending on the professor, your duties may involve preparing and/or grading quizzes and tests, taking and keeping track of attendance, advising students on class matters, and other tasks as assigned. You should plan to meet before the beginning of the semester with the faculty member you are working with to discuss specific responsibilities. These paid duties are part of your professional development. Your work and study loads will be heaviest at the same time in the semester, so you will have to budget your time carefully to leave enough time for your own research and writing,

OFFICES & MAILBOXES

Room 107 in the basement of the Menschel Art History Wing in the Woldenberg Art Center is the communal space for art history graduate students. You will also have a mailbox in 202 Woldenberg (Studio Wing, Woldenberg Art Center). Please contact the office manager for keys to the relevant facilities and to obtain supplies or equipment needed in the art history Graduate Student Room (room 107). Do remember to check your mailboxes regularly as the faculty will often communicate with you through them.

LANGUAGE EXAMS

MA students are expected to complete their language requirement in their first year, over the summer, or early in the second year; ideally prior to your major research. The language for the exam will be chosen in consultation with your advisor and will generally be the most relevant language for your research. There are typically reading courses for graduate students in select foreign languages (normally free of charge) available during the summer term. The SLA Summer reading course typically rotates among French, German, and Spanish. The Stone Center offers [an exam in Spanish](#), and those of you who wish to take that exam should contact the center directly. Exams for other languages (French, German, Italian) are offered by various art history faculty or by select faculty in the relevant department. When you have selected your language (if it is not Spanish), it is your responsibility to notify the DGS that you are ready to take the test, and to arrange for the test to be given based on contact info provided by the DGS. The language exam consists of translating with the aid of a dictionary an art historical text (chosen by the faculty giving the exam) in two hours time.

ART HISTORY GRADUATE ASSOCIATION / AHGA

The AHGA organizes activities for the students and can request funds from various sources to invite scholars to lecture at Tulane University. The AHGA should elect one student to represent the program at the Tulane-wide [Graduate Student Studies Association](#) (GSSA), so that Art History remains in good standing with GSSA, to be eligible for [GSSA event funding](#) and [GSSA travel funding](#). AHGA meetings may be held in the Graduate Student Room in the basement of the Menschel Art History Wing.

TRAVEL & RESEARCH STIPENDS

There are several sources of travel funding for students seeking to give papers at professional or graduate student conferences; see SLA website under Resources (<https://liberalarts.tulane.edu/academics/graduate-studies/resources>) for graduate students.

Students must apply first to the [Graduate Student Studies Association](https://ogps.tulane.edu/gssaogps-travel-funding) (3 deadlines/year, see <https://ogps.tulane.edu/gssaogps-travel-funding>) and, if eligible, for the [SLA Land Fund](#) (3 deadlines/year). If your conference travel absolutely cannot be accommodated within these deadlines, or funding allocated is insufficient, you may apply to Art History for funding; in this case, use the same application requested by the fund to which you previously applied.

The Art History program offers funding for well-presented research projects, internships, and conference travel. For MA students entering in 2024, each student can request up to \$3,300 during the course of their graduate career from department funds. Each Ph.D. student can also request up to \$3,300 per year, and can draw on art history funds for three years. There is no roll over of funds from year to year or to a fourth year.

Department funds will be awarded twice a year, by application, and they will be distributed in a lump sum. Applications for activities during the academic year are due September 15th; application for summer funds are due March 15. The application form is circulated by the DGS and includes a short narrative, a detailed and itemized budget, and prior approval of the project by your thesis advisor.

Funding for Latin American projects is available by application to the [Stone Center for Latin American Studies](#); usually it is awarded only once. Funding for PhD research and writing is available from the School of Liberal Arts (see SLA website under [Resources for graduate students](#)); one can only receive SLA funds for two years.

The Newcomb Institute also offers graduate conference funding up to \$2,000 for topics related to gender equity. See [their website](#) for more information on how to apply.

See additional [funding opportunities](#) on the relevant section of the Grad Program website.

WORKS IN PROGRESS Presentations

We strongly encourage graduate students to present a work-in-progress talk on their theses; MA students should plan to present one the fall of their 2nd year. This informal series is geared mostly towards the art history community at Tulane and features scholarly papers and open discussions of the subjects presented. These fora are an excellent way to receive valuable feedback on thesis projects and conference papers.

VISUAL RESOURCE CENTER

Please become familiar with our VRC, located in room 309, and its curator, Francine Stock, who will help you with your image needs.

GALLERIES AND LOCAL CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The [Newcomb Art Museum](#), located between the Art History Wing and the Studio Wing of Woldenberg Art Center, is the art museum of Tulane University and organizes exhibitions of local and national importance. The museum regularly offers graduate student internships in curatorial, registrarial, and education departments. The [Carroll Gallery](#) in the Studio Wing of Woldenberg Art Center is the department's own space, and holds shows of student and faculty work throughout the year. The curator is Laura Richens.

Among the important resources available at Tulane is [Howard-Tilton Memorial Library](#), which holds well over a million volumes and possesses relatively large holdings in the history of art. Its [Latin American Library](#) is one of the finest specialized collections in the country. Tulane's [Southeastern Architectural Archive](#) and its [Louisiana Research Collection](#) serve students of American art. Tulane University is also home to the [Middle American Research Institute](#), the [Newcomb Archives and Vorhoff Library](#), and the [Amistad Research Center](#) with its extensive African-American collections. The university enjoys excellent working relationships with other local institutions, such as the [New Orleans Museum of Art](#), the [Historic New Orleans Collection](#), the [Louisiana State Museum](#), the [Ogden Museum of Southern Art](#), and the [Contemporary Arts Center](#).

Additionally, there are numerous commercial and nonprofit art spaces, including artist-run spaces, throughout the city, clustered especially around Julia Street and St Claude Avenue.

INTERNSHIPS

The department values the importance of experiential learning gained through summer internships. Many art history graduate students have worked at local arts and heritage organizations including: the Historic New Orleans Collection; the Beauregard Keyes House; the Hermann-Grima House; the New Orleans Museum of Art; Parlour Gallery; and the Ida Kohlmeyer estate.

Ideally, students who choose to do so would hold internships the summer following their first year of course work. Advisor approval is required and is contingent on progress towards the degree. Students may apply for funding, up to \$2500, drawn from the earmarked allocation. To discuss internship possibilities, contact Professor Culotta (aculotta1@tulane.edu).

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Please follow the instructions in the university website and check your email for instructions from your professors if a hurricane is approaching. If you need to evacuate do the following before you leave: empty your refrigerator and leave it open, unplug all your appliances, and shut off the gas. Keep all your important documents handy during the hurricane season and make sure you can have access to whatever medication you may need while you are away. If you have pets, you must take them with you. Evacuations normally take a few days but can extend longer.

Evacuations are usually mandatory when we are facing large hurricanes but tropical storms and small hurricanes in the area should not be too troublesome. Also, beware of heavy rain, as the city floods easily after a heavy downpour. In such situations, be careful where you drive and where you park your car, especially around campus.