The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art (BFASA) at the University of Illinois offers students unprecedented flexibility in determining their own courses and topics of study, engaging in a diverse, innovative curriculum. In response to a rapidly changing world in which artists and designers are constantly presented with new tools, platforms, topics, strategies and venues for exhibition, publication, performance and other types of cultural work, the BFASA prepares students for the workplaces of the future. The BFASA is designed to equip graduates with the skills necessary to not only create artwork, but to communicate, think critically and creatively, and gain experience in a broad range of topics that will prepare them as innovative artists and as global citizens. Students will navigate a dynamic curriculum that is responsive to current trends in art, culture and creativity. It encourages new, interdisciplinary initiatives and fosters collaboration and research at the undergraduate level within the context of a premier research university. Students must select one required concentration. Students are not permitted to declare more than one concentration.

The BFASA at Illinois begins with basic material and technological tools and concepts in a variety of studio courses. Students are guided in the understanding of visual organization and communication in two, three, and four dimensions by utilizing both new and traditional technologies and strategies. Foundation courses introduce basic material and conceptual approaches to making art, using media from traditional disciplines including drawing and painting, printmaking, clay, plaster, wood and metal, to code, digital imaging, interactive media, and time-based applications.

At the intermediate and advanced levels, curriculum offerings are designed to reflect an increasingly dynamic culture, and to provide students with experiences and skills that will enhance their adaptability. A changing menu of courses on a variety of topics is taught by a faculty with expertise in a wide variety of conceptual, material and technical strategies for making art.

BFASA students are provided individual studio spaces, where they develop a self-directed practice, housed in a communal studio building. The studio configuration provides the stage for a strong, vibrant community of student-artists working together as they establish their interests and participate in exhibitions, performances, and critiques.

The capstone experience is the BFASA Thesis course, in which students develop an individually determined body of work based on their entire educational experience. A portfolio and written thesis paper will demonstrate their conceptual, technical and expressive abilities.

Our graduates will enter professional lives as artists at a time when the boundaries between art and other fields are vanishing. Creative individuals with broad and versatile material, technical and intellectual skills will be in demand within expanding diverse practices that comprise contemporary art and society.

Students in the School of Art and Design must complete the Campus General Education requirements (https://courses.illinois.edu/gened/DEFAULT/DEFAULT/). Some Art and Design courses will also apply toward the General Education requirements (https://courses.illinois.edu/gened/DEFAULT/DEFAULT/).

A portfolio review is required for admission to the School of Art and Design.

for the Bachelor of Fine Arts Major in Studio Art

1. Students will understand and be able to apply basic principles of visual and material communication, including two-dimensional pictorial concepts, three-dimensional formal and spatial concepts, and a wide variety of media and formats for artistic production, and possess the ability to apply them to a specific aesthetic intent.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability and willingness to experiment and explore the expressive possibilities of various media, and artistic and creative strategies for self-directed art-making, and investigate the diverse activities and conceptual modes available to the contemporary artist, including work that directly addresses or engages with recent developments in the field of fine art as well as broader social questions and challenges. Students are trained in the production and critique of artworks that explore forms and technologies identified as new or emerging.
3. Students will gain knowledge of, understand, and be able to apply concepts of visual rhetoric in the development of content, and be able to recognize and critically analyze an evolving variety of communicative practices in art and visual culture, including those that represent diverse
cultures and sociopolitical positions, and to demonstrate openness to new social possibilities and a critical empathy towards both audiences and culture producers of differing histories, origins and identities.

4. Students will develop an innovative, imaginative, and entrepreneurial self-directed studio practice, will gain a deep understanding of their own creativity, be able to apply it in any context, and will learn to independently generate thematic investigation and implementation of research in a broad variety of social locations, including art and educational institutions, activist forums, and cyberspace.

5. Students will be willing and able to investigate and accommodate broad-ranging types of knowledge and artistic strategies for the purpose of synthesizing diverse and even disparate ideas in order to create sophisticated, unique works of art, participate in new types of collaboration, and to make innovative statements and hypotheses, or propose creative solutions to social, organizational and societal problems using aesthetic strategies.

6. Students concentrating in New Media create work for the new disciplinary mechanisms that have arisen to evaluate and promote artwork in digital media, but also for traditional institutional mechanisms of art distribution and art critique. As in Contemporary Art, work in New Media may take the form of performance, sound and radio broadcast, gallery exhibition, curation, public art, cinema and video, a networked event, publication, or even scientific research.

7. Junior and Senior years see students working with critics/professors across the School to develop a portfolio of works in time-based, interactive, physical, networked or performative media. In the process of generating a body of work around a subject and form of their choice, students receive instruction in technical execution, formal composition, and theoretical framing.

8. While pursuing a BFASA, students prepare for work as artists at a time when artists are employed in a variety of spheres – artistic direction, project management, education, research, fine art, curation, performance, non-profit work, activism, advertising, and many others. As digital medias evolve, our graduates will be flexible, able to understand the best use of emerging technologies while crafting new economic and social connections.

9. Students will produce an integrated, cohesive, critically informed body of work for a thesis exhibition, supported by a written thesis document that serves to position their artistic practice within the broader sphere of contemporary art practices, exhibition strategies, audiences, and economies.

for the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art Major in Studio Art

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College of Fine & Applied Arts
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Admissions
University of Illinois Undergrad Admissions (https://admissions.illinois.edu/myillini-apply/)
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