Graduation with Distinction: Art, Art History & Visual Studies (ARTHIST, ARTSVIS, VISUALST)

Procedure for selection of students
To be eligible for graduation with distinction, students must have an overall GPA of 3.3 and a 3.5 in the major. In the spring of their junior year, students must:

- Identify an original project or topic of research;
- Select an advisor with whom to work; and
- In consultation with the advisor, constitute a distinction committee of two additional faculty members.

For acceptance into the distinction program, art history, visual arts, art history/visual arts, and visual studies majors must submit an application form (attached below) to the director of undergraduate studies. Students will be selected on the basis of the intellectual and creative merit of their projects.

Expected product

**Art History:** Majors will write an original research paper of 10,000 to 15,000 words (30-50 pages) with footnotes and bibliography. Students are expected to do research using primary sources, including those in foreign languages when necessary, and following conventional style guidelines.

**Visual Arts:** Majors will do a unique project in any medium from drawing, painting, sculpture, and computer graphics to installation, performance, video, film, and photography. These projects will develop a coherent central theme through a number of examples related in technique, format, and subject matter. A written component will accompany the project to analyze and elucidate its conceptual, thematic, and technical aspects.

**Visual Studies:** Majors will either write an original research paper of 10,000-15,000 words (30-50 pages) with footnotes and bibliography, or produce a unique project in an appropriate medium. A written component will accompany the project to analyze and elucidate its conceptual, thematic, intellectual, and technical aspects.

Evaluative body

**Art History:** Honors projects will be evaluated by an advisory committee comprised of the student's advisor and two other faculty members.

**Visual Arts:** Honors projects will be evaluated by the entire Visual Arts faculty.
**Visual Studies:** Honors projects will be evaluated by an advisory committee comprised of the student's advisor and two other faculty members.

**Evaluative procedure**
The research papers of art history majors will undergo several stages of editorial revision with the students' advisory committees. Interim evaluations will enable students to revise and hone their projects. The final paper will be evaluated according to how well students have accomplished their stated objectives, how originally and cogently the subject has been argued, and the quality of research and writing. The projects of visual arts majors will undergo six oral critique sessions, during which the Visual Arts faculty will discuss students' progress. Visual arts projects will be evaluated for the originality of the work and excellence in communicating ideas in visual form. A combination of these two approaches will be used by the students’ advisory committees to evaluate the papers and/or projects of visual studies majors.

**Levels of distinction**
**Three levels:** Distinction, High Distinction, and Highest Distinction. Students will be evaluated for the originality and quality of their work, and for the execution of all the stated requirements of their project. Distinction and High Distinction will be awarded by the student's advisory committee. Highest Distinction for both Art History and Visual Arts will be awarded only by the entire Art, Art History & Visual Studies faculty.

**Special courses, other activities required, comments**
**Art History:** There are two ways to complete a Distinction Project: A) Two consecutive Independent Studies with the student’s advisor, and B) a 200-level seminar in the spring semester of the junior year or in the fall semester of the senior year related to the distinction topic and approved by the advisor, with a 200-level Independent study with the advisor in the spring semester of the senior year. This coursework will result in a paper written in the student’s final two semesters on a subject of student/faculty determination. The research paper should be 10,000-15,000 words (30-50 pages) with footnotes and bibliography. The paper will be read by three members of the faculty: the student’s principal advisor and two readers. It must receive a minimum grade of A- for the student to qualify for graduation with distinction.

**Visual Arts:** In order to qualify for the distinction project in Visual Arts, the student must have taken at least half of the courses towards the art major at Duke by the end of the junior year. They also must have taken at least one upper-level course in the area of focus with their advisor for their project. The student must have a well-defined project focused through an Independent Study taken during the next-to-last semester at Duke. The project is critiqued and evaluated monthly by all the Visual Arts faculty. The results of the project are exhibited on campus at the end of the final semester.

**Art History/Visual Arts:** Double major distinction candidates may elect to pursue distinction in either Art History or Visual Arts.
Visual Studies: There are two ways to complete a Distinction Project. A. Two consecutive Independent Studies with the student’s advisor; and B. a 200-level seminar in the spring semester of the junior year or in the fall semester of the senior year, related to the distinction topic and approved by the advisor, with a 200-level Independent study with the advisor in the spring semester of the senior year. This coursework will result in a paper and or project completed in the student’s final two semesters on a subject of student/faculty determination. The research paper should be 10,000-15,000 words (30-50 pages) with footnotes and bibliography. The paper will be read by three members of the faculty: the student’s principal advisor and two readers. The project should have a written component with it, also read by three members of the faculty. The paper or the project must receive a minimum grade of A- for the student to qualify for graduation with distinction.

See Also:
Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies [link to dept website]

[and then paste the departmental form on the next page(s)]
Application for Graduation with Distinction in Art, Art History & Visual Studies

Name of Student: ____________________________________

Graduation Date: __________________

Cumulative Duke GPA: (all Duke courses - 3.3 minimum required)

GPA in courses taken in the major: (3.5 minimum required)

Major: (check one)

_____ Art History
_____ Visual Arts
_____ Visual Studies
_____ Art History+Visual Arts

Title of Distinction Project:

Principal Advisor:

_______________________________________________________

Signature of Principal Advisor:

_______________________________________ Date

Submission of Application:
to the Director of Undergraduate Studies