The Department of Art at Bowdoin comprises two divisions: art history and visual arts. Majors in the department are expected to elect one of these programs. The major in art history is devoted primarily to the historical and critical study of the visual arts as an embodiment of some of humanity’s cultural values and a record of the historical interplay of sensibility, thought, and society. The major in visual arts is intended to encourage a sensitive development of perceptual, creative, and critical abilities in visual expression.

Art history offers courses that examine how works of art function within and contribute to their historical, social, religious, and philosophical contexts. All courses are founded on close visual examination and analysis and utilize the rich collections of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art whenever possible.

The visual arts program offers courses in drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, and other media that explore not only the ways in which art can be taught, but what it is that art can teach, whether a student is preparing for a life in visual arts or hoping to gain a more creative, informed, and visually engaged outlook in any field or walk of life.

Requirements for the Major in Art History
The art history major consists of ten courses, excluding first-year seminars. Required are Art History 1100; one course in African, Asian, or pre-Columbian art history numbered 1103 or higher; one from Art History 2090 (same as Archaeology 1101), 2100 (same as Archaeology 1102), 2130, 2140, 2150, or 2260; one from Art History 2160, 2220, 2230, 2240, or 2320; one from Art History 2420, 2520, 2540, 2620, or 2640; one additional 2000-level course; two 3000-level seminars; and two additional art history courses numbered higher than 1100, one of which may be an independent study. Art history majors are also encouraged to take courses in foreign languages and literature, history, philosophy, religion, and the other arts.

Requirements for the Minor in Art History
The minor consists of five courses, excluding first-year seminars. Required are Art History 1100; two 2000-level courses; one 3000-level course; and one additional art history course numbered higher than 1101. Courses that will count toward the major and minor must be taken on a graded basis (not Credit/D/Fail), and students must earn grades of C- or better in these courses.

Requirements for the Major in Visual Arts
The major consists of eleven courses, which must include Visual Arts 1101; 1201, 1401, and 1601 (two of the three courses); and 3902. Five additional visual arts courses must be taken, no more than one of which may be an independent study course, and one must be between 3000–3999. Two courses in art history are also required.

Requirements for the Minor in Visual Arts
The minor consists of six courses, which must include Visual Arts 1101 and one of the following: 1201, 1401, 1501 or 1601. Three additional visual arts courses must be taken, no more than one of which may be an independent study course. One course in art history is also required.

Interdisciplinary Majors: Art History and Archaeology
Requirements
1. Art History 1100; one of Art History 2130, 2140, or 2150; Art History 2220; and one of Art History 3020 through 3880; Archaeology 1101 (same as Art History 2090), 1102 (same as Art History 2100), and any three additional archaeology courses, at least one of which must be at the 3000 level.

Museum of Art
Bowdoin’s Museum of Art consistently enhances the teaching program of the College by allowing students and faculty direct access to important works of art. The museum houses a collection of more than 20,000 objects, ranging from the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world to work created in the opening years of the twenty-first century.

The 1,800-piece antiquities collection, with Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine objects, is the most comprehensive of any small college museum in the country. Holdings in oriental art include objects from China, Japan, Korea, and India. The collection of Western European art includes Italian and Spanish Baroque and Renaissance paintings. Prints and drawings constitute a major resource, from the Old Masters to the present, with an important and growing representation of nineteenth- and twentieth-century photography. American art, from the colonial period onward, includes works by Feke, Stuart, Copley, Heade, Eakins, Cassatt, Gorky, Wyeth, Sloan, and Rockwell Kent. The Winslow Homer Collection consists of a selection of his paintings, etchings, and wood engravings.

In 2007, a major renovation of the museum expanded galleries, added a seminar room and other program spaces, and improved art storage facilities—all while retaining the building’s iconic architectural features. The Pierce Art Library houses a collection of nearly 15,000 volumes, including books, monographs, art-related journals, museum bulletins, and exhibition catalogs.

The Visual Resources Collection is a continually updated archive of digital images representing the history of art. The collection is available to the Bowdoin College community for educational purposes.
2. Any two art history courses numbered 1010 through 3880.
3. One of the following: Classics 1101, 2211 (same as History 2001), 2212 (same as History 2002), or 2970 (Independent Study in Ancient History); Philosophy 2111; or an appropriate course in religion at the 2200 level.
4. Either Art History 4000 or Archaeology 4000.

Art History and Visual Arts

Requirements

1. Art History: 110; one course in African, Asian, or pre-Columbian art history numbered 1030 or higher; four additional courses numbered 2000 or higher; and one 3000-level seminar.
2. Visual Arts: 1101; one of 1201, 1401, 1501, or 1601; plus four other courses in the visual arts, no more than one of which may be an independent study.

Independent Study and Honors

Independent study is open to art history students, under the close supervision of a faculty member. Students have designed courses of study that allow them to read widely in an area not covered in the current curriculum or to pursue a topic from their formal course work in greater depth. Students with distinguished records may apply to do honors work. To earn honors in art history, a student must produce a substantial honors thesis at the end of the senior year.

Studio Resources

The Robert H. and Blythe Bickel Edwards Center for Art and Dance opened in August 2013 as the new home for visual art at the College. There are classrooms, critique space, and student exhibition spaces, as well as a state-of-the-art digital media lab.

The photography facilities include a 2,200-square-foot, eighteen-enlarger darkroom and “white” room for print washing and drying, three negative developing rooms equipped for 35mm and large format development, a print finishing room, and a critique space. Darkroom equipment includes chemicals for black and white printing and developing, fifteen Beseler 23C III enlargers, three Omega 4 x 5 enlargers, each housed within an individual workstation, and two 16 x 20 Gravity Works archival print washers. The workstations each have an 11 x 14-inch adjustable enlarging easel, and a 16 x 20-inch adjustable enlarging easel is available for larger prints. Digital media lab equipment includes twenty-two Mac Pro towers with Wacom Cintiq displays, Epson 4990, 10000XL and three V750 scanners, two Epson 3880 17-inch wide printers, and two Epson 9890 44-inch wide format printers.

Printmaking classes use the techniques of etching and intaglio printing, silkscreen, woodcut relief printing, letterpress, book arts, and photo-printmaking. The facilities include a print workshop with etching presses and outdoor patio work area, a bright and spacious non-toxic etching room, a new silkscreen facility equipped for large-format screen-making, and a letterpress and book arts classroom.

Intaglio equipment includes a Takah American French Tool Intaglio Press, 78 x 34-inch press bed, Tablettop Intaglio Press, 32 x 12-inch press bed, inking tables with large hotplate, plate cutter, 44-inch wide vertical tanks for etching with ferric chloride, spray booth and hot box for acrylic aquatint, and an oven for heating acrylic roll-on grounds. Silk-screening equipment includes a variety of aluminum frames up to 25 x 36-inch, NuArc screen exposure unit, and a 31 x 40-inch screen darkroom, including exposure and washout rooms. Letterpress equipment includes a Reliant Press, a Poco Tabletop Proof Press, and metal and wood type in a variety of fonts. The painting facilities include a 1,400-square-foot studio with north light illumination. It accommodates eighteen painting workstations in addition to working space for easel size pieces as well as larger works.

The sculpture facilities consist of three studio classrooms and a woodshop. The woodshop is equipped with a “Stop Saw” table saw, a band saw, a compound sliding miter saw, a scroll saw, belt and disc sanders, and hand tools.

Faculty

John B. Bisbee, lecturer in art, B.A. (Alfred), teaches courses in sculpture.

Jackie Brown, assistant professor of art, M.F.A (Virginia Commonwealth), B.A. (Hamilton), teaches courses in sculpture.

Dana Byrd, assistant professor of art history, B.A., Ph.D. (Yale), M.A. (University of Delaware), specializes in American art and material culture.

Pamela M. Fletcher, professor of art history, A.B. (Bowdoin), M.A., Ph.D. (Columbia), specializes in modern European and contemporary British art. Professor Fletcher is chair of the art department, director of the art history division, and co-director of the digital and computational studies initiative.

Michael J. Kolster, associate professor of art, B.A. (Williams), M.F.A. (Massachusetts College of Art), teaches courses in photography.

James Mullen, associate professor of art, B.F.A. (New Hampshire), M.F.A. (Indiana), teaches drawing and painting, Professor Mullen is the director of the visual arts division.


Stephen G. Perkins, Peter M. Small Associate Professor of Art History, B.A. (Colgate), M.A., Ph.D. (Northwestern), specializes in medieval and northern Renaissance art.

Carrie Scanga, assistant professor of art, M.F.A. (Washington), B.A. (Bryn Mawr), teaches courses in printmaking.

Accra Shepp, visiting assistant professor of art, M.A. (New York University), B.A. (Princeton), teaches courses in photography.

Peggy Wang, associate professor of art history and Asian studies, B.A. (Wellesley College), Ph.D. (University of Chicago), specializes in contemporary Chinese art.

Susan E. Wegner, associate professor of art history, A.B. (Wisconsin–Madison), A.M., Ph.D. (Bryn Mawr), specializes in Italian Renaissance and Baroque art and pre-Columbian art.

Mark C. Wethli, A. LeRoy Greason Professor of Art, B.F.A., M.F.A. (Miami), teaches courses in drawing and painting, and public art.

After Bowdoin

Bowdoin art graduates are managing galleries, serving as director of educational programs at the Museum of Modern Art, and working as a sculptor for Industrial Light and Magic. Some visual arts majors have had solo and group exhibitions in major cities, have illustrated children’s books, and have residencies at art colonies all over the country. Visual arts and art history majors have gone on to graduate programs at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Indiana, and other universities; others are teaching at Princeton, University of Massachusetts, Bowdoin, and many public and private schools. Other art and art history majors and minors have gone on to careers in law, business, and medicine.