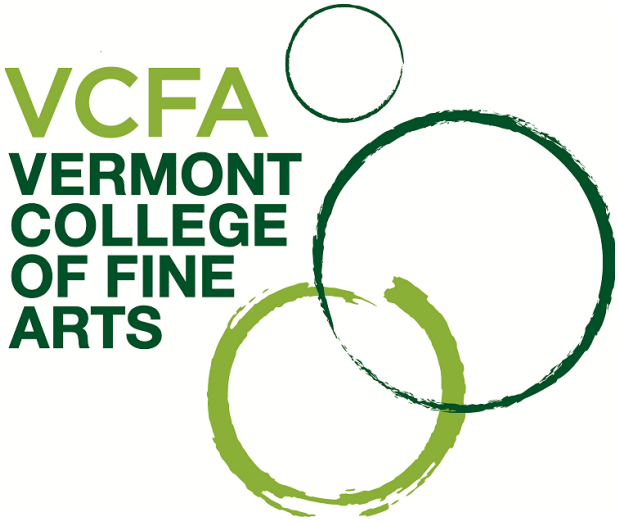

2011–2012
College Catalog

VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
36 College Street, Montpelier, VT 05602
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www.vcfa.edu

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to Vermont College of Fine Arts (VCFA).

Vermont College of Fine Arts occupies a unique place in American higher education. Devoted exclusively to graduate study in the fine arts and anchored on its historic campus in Montpelier, Vermont, VCFA is an extended community of writers, musicians, designers and artists. As a national center for graduate arts education it is a gateway for the next generation of artists, a place where emerging and established artists go to take on new challenges, pursue new directions, and invigorate their artistic lives. For more than 30 years, VCFA has offered a unique combination of intensive, one-on-one mentorship and self-directed artistic practice that enables students to earn their terminal graduate degrees while pursuing highly individualized programs of study. Our model is designed to give students the practical experience and critical insight they need to accomplish their artistic goals.

Our students come here from all walks of life—and from all over the world. But they all come for the same reason—to work closely with an award-winning faculty and highly motivated peers, to gain a better critical understanding of their discipline, and to use that critical understanding to explore and refine their craft.

In the pages of this catalog you will find descriptions of and learning goals for our five academic programs: MFA in Writing, MFA in Writing for Children &Young Adults, MFA in Visual Art, MFA in Music Composition, and MFA in Graphic Design. This catalog is a compendium of information and policies across the college. For more detail on specific academic requirements and policies, I refer you to the individual program handbooks for each of our MFA degree programs.

We want your experience at VCFA to be clear and enriching, and the information here is intended to serve that goal. If you have further questions as you review the information this catalog, I invite you to contact the director of the program in which you are interested or are currently enrolled.

I look forward to seeing you on campus.

Thomas Christopher Greene
President

ABOUT VCFA

Mission

Vermont College of Fine Arts is a national center for education in the arts, fostering the excellence of emerging and established artists and advancing the arts to create a more humane world.

Purpose

Vermont College of Fine Arts is a place where the creative expression of individuals is nurtured and a sense of community flourishes. For seventy years Vermont College® has been a site for progressive education. Anchored firmly on this historic campus in Montpelier, VCFA seeks to shape the global future of the arts with an emphasis on excellence that allows its members to reach for the highest artistic standards as individuals while recognizing that the arts are one of the foundations of a healthy and creative society. This is a place where national and international leaders in the arts gather, teach, and show and perform their work. The college prides itself on its openness and on creating an environment that is safe, welcoming, and built on mutual respect.

Vermont College of Fine Arts: An Overview

Vermont College of Fine Arts (VCFA) is the only college of its kind devoted exclusively to fine arts education in a low-residency model. VCFA uses a student-centered learning process in which students, with the guidance and approval of faculty, design their plans of studies within a framework of learning objectives determined by their program.

After decades during which its programs were subsumed within larger university structures, VCFA achieved accreditation as an institution with individual standing in 2010. While the quality of the education offered by our MFA programs in the context of other institutions in the past was nationally acclaimed, their distinctive mission and purpose is now clearly reflected in the particular mission and purpose of Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Because of its high quality low-residency programs, the College is able to attract students and faculty from around the country and overseas. Its mission takes into account the importance of the College as a vital gathering place for faculty, visiting writers, and artists, including current students who are treated as fellow artists from their first contact with the institution. Writers and artists connected with VCFA are drawn to the College as a national center of their circle of interest, a place where their quest for excellence is shared by others.

Low-Residency Model

All VCFA programs require participation in intensive residencies to begin a 15 or 16 credit semester. Residency content differs for each program, based on the requirements of the field of art with which the program is concerned, but all programs offer faculty lectures, readings, exhibits or performances; critiques and workshops; and visiting artist presentations, as well as individual time with faculty and opportunities for students to share work in readings, performances, and exhibitions on campus.

Post-residency, the semester revolves around intense interactions between students and their semester faculty advisors, during which time they exchange work, ideas, and critiques, and faculty offer guidance regarding the student’s development in the context of the student's own goals.

Governance

Vermont College of Fine Arts is governed by a **Board of Trustees** whose composition and activities are guided by its By-Laws, adopted February 26, 2007 and revised January 12, 2008. The Board of Trustees has final responsibility for the institution, and assures the institution's health by exercising its authority to: determine the mission of the College; hire, evaluate and retain the President of the College; approve the strategic plan; and set tuition and budget. The Trustees delegate operating authority to the President of the College to achieve the College mission and realize its strategic plan within the established budget.

Academic affairs receive input from an **Academic Council** consisting of program directors and faculty of each program along with the Academic Dean. Operating decisions at the level of academic programs and administrative offices are the responsibility of Cabinet Level Administrators and Program Directors. Students with questions about policies, operating decisions, or governance should discuss their inquiries with their Program Directors.

Students are encouraged to form a cross-program **Advisory Committee** on which each program is represented by a student from each entering cohort. This group is self-organizing and makes recommendations to the Administration of the College.

The **Student Advisory Council**, consisting of two student representatives from each academic program, provides student input on College affairs, including strategic planning, academic programs, and student services. Program Directors may nominate two students from their respective programs whom the President, Academic Dean, or other representative of the College administration or faculty will consult by telephone conference when issues arise requiring student consultation.

Accreditation

Vermont College of Fine Arts is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., through its Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:

Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
New England Association of Schools and Colleges
209 Burlington Road
Bedford, MA 01730-1433
Phone: 781-271-0022
E-mail: cihe@neasc.org
Web address: http://www.neasc.org/

DEGREE PROGRAMS

Vermont College of Fine Arts awards the Master of Fine Arts degrees in the following disciplines: Graphic Design, Music Composition, Visual Art, and Writing. Vermont College of Fine Arts recognizes the Master of Fine Arts as a terminal degree.

Graphic Design

Introduction

The MFA in Graphic Design engages students in vibrant discourse with a broad community of designers and educators committed to relevant, inventive, dynamic design. Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in design history, theory, and research in order to develop and deepen their fluency in visual culture. The merger of creative practice with critical inquiry results in designers uniquely equipped to realize personal, artistic vision in an ever-evolving, interdisciplinary field.

Work of the Program

Residency

Every semester begins with a required on-campus residency at Vermont College of Fine Arts located in Montpelier, Vermont. The seven-day residency period, which occurs every six months in October and April, serves as a principal component of the Graphic Design Program. It provides students with a breadth of exposure to balance against the more specific focus of the semester design projects, time to prepare the study plan with the help of faculty advisors, general direction in the development of an individualized curriculum, and is a source of stimulation and support. The residency engages students in vibrant discourse with a broad community of designers and educators committed to relevant, inventive, dynamic design. Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in design history, theory, and research in order to develop and deepen their fluency in visual culture. The merger of creative practice with critical inquiry results in designers uniquely equipped to realize personal, artistic vision in an ever-evolving, interdisciplinary field.

Faculty, visiting designers, and graduating students will all give presentations at each residency. Students are expected to attend a minimum of 10 of these sessions and are encouraged to attend all of them. Additionally, faculty will hold individual, small, and large group critiques of design work. Students are required to participate in these sessions as specified. In general, students are expected to participate fully in the residency. Critiques and workshops are not open to students on leave or to guests. Every student has design work critiqued during the residency. Students are asked to bring representative samples to each residency for this purpose.

Post-Residency

Students meet in both group and individual conferences with their advisors to plan semester work and set up a semester schedule. Students will prepare a Semester Study Plan in consultation with their faculty advisor during each residency. The Semester Study Plan is a formal document that summarizes the nature of the individual work embarked upon for the six-month semester, as well as agreed upon methods of communication. The project is completed away from campus with frequent and thorough dialogue between students and their faculty advisors. The primary focus of the semester project will be each student's creative work. The student will submit work to the faculty advisor every three to four weeks, respond to criticism and suggestions, and submit revisions of the material. The student will submit writing (paper, letter, journal, blog – format to be agreed upon by advisor and student) to accompany each monthly submission of work reflecting on process, influences, questions, etc.

Following each monthly interaction, the faculty advisor will provide a brief summary of that month's

interactions and guidance. At the faculty advisor's discretion, submission of schedules and work methods may be modified to suit individual needs. Semester projects require a minimum investment by the student of 25 hours per week and a minimum of five substantial exchanges between students and faculty advisors. The semester project plans are filed with the MFA office. The faculty advisor is the primary resource for the semester project. However, students are encouraged to become involved with local and professional activities that can enrich and support their semester projects. While these activities do not substitute for work with the faculty advisor, they do evidence increased experience and commitment to the practice.

Thesis Semester

Each semester, faculty advisors work with students in the dual modes of practice and theory. Critical theory and acquired knowledge of visual culture are integrated each semester with emphasis on personal growth. The thesis is seen as the culmination of the four semesters of study. The primary submission is a proposed and approved body of creative work, primarily visual, developed over the four semesters and organized to reflect an increasing focus on a particular theme or topic which has arisen over the course of study. This creative work will be supplemented with, or in some cases integrated with, a written document articulating the central ideas of the thesis and tracing the student's progress in discovery and expression. This written document is informed and supported by the student's work from each semester.

Learning Goals

- Development of design skills in form, content, and craft
- Critical ability as appropriate to a lifetime of further development
- Knowledge of design discourse and the culture of the field
- Designers as generators of content and agents of change

Music Composition

Introduction

Vermont College of Fine Arts awards the Master of Fine Arts in Music Composition degree through the MFA in Music Composition program. The Master of Fine Arts in Music Composition degree represents the study of music from the composer's, not the critic's or the scholar's, perspective. The focus for every student is on the art of composition, first and foremost. The program offers students the opportunity to work with faculty across a range of musical genres and, through that process, gain the technical tools and formal clarity to most fully realize their own compositional voices.

Work of the Program

Residency

Every semester begins with an on-campus residency at Vermont College of Fine Arts located in Montpelier, Vermont. The seven-day residency period, which occurs every six months (in August and February) is a principal component of the MFA in Music Composition program. Required to initiate a semester's work, the residency provides the student with a range of presentations, workshops, and performances to balance against the individualized focus of the semester composition projects; an opportunity to choose a Faculty Advisor; time to prepare the study plan with faculty guidance; general direction in the development of an individualized curriculum; and a source of stimulation, support, and community. All enrolled students are expected to participate fully in the entire seven-day period. Such participation is required for the semester's credit and for the granting of the degree. Residency activities include presentations given by the faculty, visiting composers, and graduating students; master classes where faculty critique student work; and demonstrations and performances by the resident ensembles.

Post-Residency

Once the student returns home, the focus of work is on the semester project. During the residency period students choose a Faculty Advisor and design a six-month individualized study plan. The project is completed in the six months away from campus, with frequent and thorough dialogue with the Faculty Advisor. During the study planning process at residency, the student and the advisor will determine the method (e.g. Skype, e-mail, etc.) for communication during the semester.

The primary focus of the semester project will be the student's own creative work. The student will submit work to the Faculty Advisor every three to four weeks, respond to criticism and suggestions, and submit revisions of the material. The student will submit writing (paper, letter, journal, blog – format to be agreed upon by advisor and student) to accompany each monthly submission of work reflecting on process, influences, questions, etc. Following each monthly interaction, the Faculty Advisor will provide a brief summary of that month's interactions and guidance. At the Faculty Advisor's discretion, submission schedules and work methods may be modified to suit individual needs. Semester projects require a minimum investment by the student of 25 hours per week and a minimum of five substantial exchanges between student and Faculty Advisor. A process document (1,000 - 3,000 words) reflecting on the work of the semester, reporting on the activities that supported the composing such as studying outside pieces, attending concerts, considering influences, etc. will be submitted to the Faculty Advisor at the end of each semester. Two semesters must include work written for resident ensembles (not necessarily all the work done in each of those semesters will be for the ensemble). Students may choose to write for the ensembles in each semester.

At the end of at least three successful semesters, and with faculty approval of the thesis composition proposal (submitted halfway through the third semester), the student proceeds into the final semester project. The final semester project focuses on the thesis composition and the reflective thesis paper. The reflective thesis paper (approximately 4000 words) discusses the student's compositional processes over the 4 semesters. The thesis document will be built upon the reflective semester

papers and will include a summary of the student's view of the development of their work and directions the work has moved in, and will contain a statement of future compositional goals. The thesis composition and the reflective thesis must be reviewed and approved, in final form, by the Faculty Advisor and submitted by the end of semester date. The work of each graduating student will be featured in a performance at the final residency.

Learning Goals

- High achievement in the creation of music
- Ability to productively describe and discuss music and the compositional process
- Knowledge of music, and writing about music, relevant to the student's compositional interests

Visual Art

Introduction

The Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art program at Vermont College of Fine Arts allows students to earn a 60-credit MFA degree over a period of two years through a combination of ten-day, on-campus residencies followed by six-month semesters of self-designed studio practice. Students work from their home studios in the context of the communities in which they live, work, and make art.

Since 1991, the MFA in Visual Art program has based its educational success on the principle of individualized learning. In the program, students complete a series of interdisciplinary writing projects with a faculty member and pursue their studio work with a local artist chosen in collaboration with the program. This system encourages artists to develop their own mentor system and determine educational values and expectations according to self-initiated ideas of progress and professionalism.

Work of the Program

Residency

Twice each year, students and faculty gather on the Vermont College of Fine Arts campus for stimulating, intensive ten-day residencies. It is during this remarkable period that interactions between existing and new artistic concerns and communities are formed. Students present their critical and studio practices to each other, to faculty, and to visitors while planning their next non-residential period of study. By combining different levels of interaction and evaluation, affinities and ideas are generated at a remarkable rate.

While on campus, the faculty acts as the organizing community behind the immense amount of residency activity -- presentation, evaluation, provocative thinking, and learning. Critiques, lectures, advancement meetings, and student presentations provide a level of contact between faculty and students that serves as the foundation of each student's individual planning and development. Because the faculty as a whole directs the program, this ongoing contact creates a broad, general understanding of each student's process in an integrated and democratic manner.

Post-Residency

During the semester, students return to their home studios where they actively pursue their art practice under mentorship of a qualified local Artist-Teacher and receive academic guidance on a research project in visual culture from a Faculty Advisor throughout the semester.

Studio Project

The studio component is the heart of the program. During the semester, students complete a 12-credit Studio Project in their own studios, using the media and method of their choosing. Students are guided toward moving their practice forward, designing a project that will challenge them to meet new artistic goals. The trajectory of this work follows a study plan developed with an Artist-Teacher, who is chosen by the student and approved by the program. The faculty can facilitate a connection to an artist with particular expertise or sensitivity that coincides with the student's interests and individual sensibility. The strength of the exchange between student and Artist-Teacher is one of the highlights of the student's experience and a significant contributing factor in her/his growth. Students are encouraged to take risks, pushing the boundaries of their practice and inquiring deeply into their intent, aesthetic choices, subject matter, and subject position. In critical dialogue with their mentors, students strive to effectively integrate form and content. Experimentation and exploration are highly valued. The development of two years of studio work enables students to define and own their art practice such that they can leave the program attuned to who they are as artists and why they make the work they do.

Visual Culture Project

Together with a faculty member who has interdisciplinary expertise in art history, visual culture, and critical theory, each student also designs a three-credit academic Visual Culture Project. These individualized studies address the student's specific artistic interests and needs. Students design their own research regimen, write critical papers, and correspond regularly with their faculty advisor throughout the semester.

In the final semester, in lieu of a research paper, each student writes a final thesis or Process Paper. By examining their experience in the program, including an appraisal of work completed while in the program, they create a statement of reinvented professional purpose and expectation. Students situate their work and themselves in the larger cultural conversations of our time, with reference to the social context, contemporary culture, and history of ideas.

Learning Goals

- Mastery in artistic accomplishment, both aesthetic and technical, in self-selected media
- Clear understanding of various criteria for making critical judgments about art based on its relationship to visual culture, art history, and social context
- Substantive knowledge of visual culture and an understanding of methodology for doing historical research

Writing

Introduction

The MFA in Writing Program prepares students for advanced work in the genres of fiction, poetry and nonfiction. Students delve into independent study and established the disciplined practice of a writer's life, while reaping the guidance and wisdom of dedicated, experienced mentors. The program honors multiple viewpoints, respecting all styles, forms, approaches and voices and enjoys the meaningful literary dialog they inspire.

Translation Option

Students interested in a career as a literary translator, or who simply want to continue improving their own writing through the practice of translation, we offer a special concentration in translation. Students who are majoring in poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction can add translation as an area of concentration by taking an additional semester of study with an advisor who is both a writer and translator. These students will participate in translation workshops and panel discussions, as well as complete a translation project.

Work of the Program

Residency

Students in the MFA in Writing Program convene with other writers twice each year for intensive 10-day residencies. They participate in small, intensive, faculty-guided workshops in which each writer's work is carefully examined. Special workshops are offered in translation, the novel, and other focused topics. In addition to workshops, daily seminars, lectures, and discussions, as well as readings by faculty, graduating students, and visiting writers from all over the country, students engage in formal and informal exchanges in a supportive writing community. The residency is a nonhierarchical learning environment in which students and faculty explore issues of craft and prepare individual study projects for the ensuing semester. This experience allows students to spend time immersed solely in the writer's life. Residencies are held primarily at the VCFA campus in Montpelier, Vermont, although residency-abroad options are available in Slovenia for the summer residency or Puerto Rico for the winter residency.

Post-Residency

While the semester's work is termed "independent study," students are closely supervised every step of the way and maintain a constant dialogue with faculty and quite often with their peers, thereby making the study truly collaborative. Reading and critical analysis appropriate to individual backgrounds, interests, and needs expand students' writing skills and critical judgment. Throughout the four semester projects, students take an active role in shaping their own curriculum, while participating in sustained dialogue with writers of national reputation.

Faculty tailor their work with each student individually, based on each person's needs and development, as well as their own teaching styles. Students are expected to devote a minimum of 25 hours per week to their program studies.

Exceptional writers may be accepted in two genres. Dual-genre candidates will complete a five-semester course of study and creative theses in both genres. In addition, a student may apply for a Cross-Discipline Semester that allows a writer to explore another genre for a term. Both Dual-Genre and Cross-Discipline studies can include study in the Writing for Children & Young Adults Program.

Writers who desire a secondary concentration in translation will also be required to complete a fifth semester of study.

Scope and Sequence

The first and second semesters concentrate primarily on writing, reading, and critical thinking. The

third semester requires, in addition to the ongoing focus on writing and reading, a 5,000-word critical thesis. With counsel from their faculty advisor, students determine a subject and outline an in-depth study on an aspect of writing or literature of particular interest to them. In the fourth semester, students compile a book-length manuscript of writing completed while in the program, as well as prepare a lecture on a subject of their choice and a reading of their own creative work, both to be presented at the final residency.

Learning Goals

- Creative ability in the field, both technical and aesthetic
- Knowledge of the literature or “culture” of the field
- Critical ability in the field

Writing for Children & Young Adults

Introduction

The Writing for Children & Young Adults Program was the nation's first fully developed MFA program focusing on writing for young readers. Established in 1997 at Vermont College, it has quickly attracted the attention of accomplished writers and publishers around the country. The program is committed to individualized education and to supporting a dynamic writing community. After the vibrant exchange of ideas that takes place during residencies, students embark on their faculty-guided independent-study projects. The flexibility of our model allows students to follow their particular interests and passions, as well as develop independent work habits and skills, which will serve them throughout their professional writing careers.

Work of the Program

The MFA in Writing for Children & Young Adults Program takes 2 years to complete -- 4 semesters and 5 residencies. The residencies occur in mid-to-late July and mid-to-late January. Students can choose to study in three genres: picture book, middle grade, or young adult -- although they are often encouraged to try each, as well as poetry and nonfiction.

Residency

Each semester begins with a 10-day residency on the Vermont College of Fine Arts campus. During residencies, students participate in workshops and student readings and attend lectures, readings, informal talks, and panel discussions. Students are assigned their faculty advisor during the residency. Once this pairing is made, students and faculty create a semester study plan together. This is an individualized plan based on the interest of the student and input from the advisor. It is a fluid document with plenty of flexibility.

Post-Residency

After the residency, students return home and begin their 6-month independent study. Students are expected to spend an average of 25-30 hours per week on their studies and will exchange 5 packets of writing with their faculty advisor over the next 6 months. Each packet is accompanied by a letter from the student addressing his or her thoughts and concerns from the past month.

Although advisors differ in the specifics of what they ask for in the student letter, this letter is the primary medium of the continuing dialogue on craft. This is where much of the dynamic interaction occurs between the student and advisor.

Scope and Sequence

First- and second-semester students focus on creative writing, critical essays, and reading. A major component of the third semester is a 20-50-page critical thesis along with the creative work and reading. The fourth-semester focus is on producing a creative manuscript, as well as a lecture to be delivered at the final residency, along with a public reading of the student's original work.

At the final, graduating residency, students present their lecture and give a public reading of their work.

Picture Book

The program offers a one-semester graduate-level picture book certificate program. Led by a faculty member who specializes in the genre, the Picture Book semester is intended to provide students with an in depth look at this unique art form. Students may participate in the picture book semester as a stand-alone certificate or as part of the MFA degree.

Cross-Discipline Options
Students enrolled in the program may also apply for study in the MFA in Writing program in poetry, fiction or creative nonfiction for adults. Students may apply for a one-semester cross discipline semester, or a dual-genre MFA degree. These expanded and intensive studies are completed over five semesters.

Learning goals:

- Achievement of full creative potential as writers for children and young adults
- Sharpened analytical and critical writing skills
- A cultivated knowledge and application of literature in the field.
- Participation in an ongoing community within which to continue a life of writing.

Academic Calendar (2012-2013)

Semester	*Program*	*New Student Orientation*	*Semester/ Residency Start Date*	*Residency End Date*	*Semester End Date*	*Graduation Date*
Winter 2012	Writing	12/28/11	12/29/11	1/7/12	6/26/12	7/6/12
Winter 2012	Writing for Children	1/8/12	1/9/12	1/18/12	7/8/12	7/18/12
Winter 2012	Visual Art	1/27/12	1/27/12	2/5/12	7/26/12	8/3/12
Winter 2012	Music Composition	2/11/12	2/12/12	2/18/12	8/5/12	n/a
Winter 2012	Graphic Design	4/15/12	4/15/12	4/21/12	10/13/12	n/a
Summer 2012	Writing	6/26/12	6/27/12	7/6/12	12/28/12	1/7/13
Summer 2012	Writing for Children	7/8/12	7/9/12	7/18/12	1/9/13	1/19/13
Summer 2012	Visual Art	7/26/12	7/26/12	8/4/12	1/24/13	2/2/13
Summer 2012	Music Composition	8/5/12	8/6/12	8/12/12	2/9/13	n/a
Summer 2012	Graphic Design	10/14/12	10/14/12	10/20/12	4/13/13	n/a
Winter 2013	Writing	12/28/12	12/29/12	1/7/13	6/25/13	7/6/13
Winter 2013	Writing for Children	1/9/13	1/10/13	1/19/13	7/8/13	7/18/13
Winter 2013	Visual Art	1/25/13	1/25/13	2/3/13	7/25/13	8/4/13
Winter 2013	Music Composition	2/9/13	2/10/13	2/16/13	8/5/13	Aug. 2013
Winter 2013	Graphic Design	4/14/13	4/14/13	4/20/13	10/12/13	10/19/13

******Please consult individual programs for more specific information regarding residency schedules.*

Career Development

Vermont College of Fine Arts has developed a philosophy and approach to the development of a life and work in the arts that is targeted to support the unique needs of graduate students in the arts. Support for students in this process is integrated thoroughly into the curriculum and the teaching and learning model of each program, and continues into students' post-graduate relationship with the College.

The College has identified four components of the development of life and work in the arts: craft, creative practice, collegiality, and professional practice. Students at VCFA will experience individual attention to craft, which the College defines as the quality and efficacy of a practitioner's work, informed by their own purposes and an evolving mastery of the tools, an awareness of traditions and emergent practices, and knowledge of the critical and philosophical discourse of their disciplines. They will be challenged and supported to consistently create work in their creative practice. They will be a part of a strong and geographically distributed network of colleagues to support and critique work, and with whom to collaborate in identifying and developing venues and opportunities for professional practice. Their academic work with colleagues and faculty mentors will mirror the ongoing professional practice of an artist working independently or in collaboration to first develop work, and then relate an often-remote partner in bringing the work to an audience, such as editor, design director, client, publisher, conductor, producer, curator or gallery owner.

Library

The VCFA Library offers an international catalog listing periodicals, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, reference and children's books.

Library Contact Information:

VCFA Library
36 College Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 828-8512 (phone)
(802) 828-8514 (fax)
http://www.vcfa.edu/library

General Email Correspondence:

Send a message to vcfalibrary@vcfa.edu to request:

- Interlibrary loans
- Copies of research documents
- Circulating library materials
- Renewals of circulating materials currently on loan to you
- Research assistance, answers to reference questions, etc.

NOTE: Please be sure to identify yourself within the text of your email message.

ADMISSIONS

Admissions to the Master of Fine Arts programs of Vermont College of Fine Arts (VCFA) have the goal of assuring a capable and engaged student body moving toward the timely completion of graduate degrees that recognize excellent creative and critical work. Students are admitted based on their records of preparation to do graduate work in the discipline and/or genre(s) in which they apply, and on the judgment of the faculty that they can succeed in their program and contribute to the collaborative learning environment of the college. Candidates' creative and critical ability, commitment, and goals must be appropriate for graduate-level work and consistent with the requirements and goals of the program to which they apply. While mindful of the value of a diversified student body, VCFA faculty and administration will make admission decisions that are not determined by age, gender, sexual preference, race, religion, nationality, disability or any factor apart from the criteria expressed above.

Applications may be filed online, or forms may be downloaded from the website. All application materials become the property of VCFA.

Deferral of Admission

Accepted applicants admitted into a particular semester may defer admission to a later semester without penalty, providing they make such a request at least three months prior to the residency. If, however, admission is delayed for as much as one year beyond the initial acceptance, the accepted applicant is required to reapply. Readmission is not guaranteed.

International Students

Vermont College of Fine Arts is certified by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to admit international students and to issue I-20 Certificates of Eligibility for Nonresident (F-1) Student Status.

The I-20 Certificate of Eligibility is not a student Visa. Rather, it is the document which is necessary to obtain a student Visa (or in the case of Canadian citizens, to enter the U.S. at a port of entry). The I-20 is valid only for the duration of the residency period, and international students must return to their home country after each residency period. All international students must complete the I-20 process (and if necessary, obtain a student Visa) every semester, prior to entering the U.S. for each on-campus residency period. In addition, students are required to pay the SEVIS I-20 fee in advance of each semester in order that a new semester-specific I-20 can be issued. The current I-20 fee is $200.

VCFA does not issue I-20 certificates to dependents (spouses or children) of students.

No Optional Practical Training (OPT) is available to students studying at VCFA. International students are not permitted to work off campus.

Admissions staff members are familiar with the SEVIS process and are available to assist prospective international students. The registrar serves as the Primary Designated School Official and can be contacted for further information about SEVIS.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Freedom

Vermont College of Fine Arts protects the right of faculty members, students and staff to freedom of inquiry, thought, expression, publication and peaceable assembly. Faculty may not be penalized by VCFA for expressions of opinion or associations in their private or civic capacity. They should, however, remember that the public may judge VCFA by their utterances and should at all times be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, and show respect for the opinion of others, making every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

Academic Progress and Length of Program

While the self-designed nature of each student's curriculum assures that learning is relevant and meaningful, the maintenance of rigorous College and program standards for academic progress assures that each student's learning constitutes a graduate-level education accomplished in a timely manner and within the administrative and educational capabilities of the institution. Detailed narrative evaluations of student learning are completed both at midterm and the end of each term, and these and other program-specific reviews and requirements determine whether students are awarded credit, continue to the next semester, are placed on probation or leave-of-absence, or are dismissed.

In addition to VCFA's academic probation policy, satisfactory academic progress is assessed on the following basis. Most MFA programs at Vermont College of Fine Arts are designed to be completed within four semesters of full-time study; in a few cases, the MFA can require five semesters. Each semester requires 15 or 16 credits of enrollment in one semester study (or in the Visual Art program, at least one semester project). Each semester study or semester project is assessed at the end of the semester, and a final credit assessment of "CR" (Credit), "NC" (No Credit) or "W" (Withdrawn) is recorded in the student's academic record. An assessment of "I" (Incomplete) is temporary and must be replaced by a final assessment of "CR" or "NC" by the end of the approved extension period. Grade point averages are not calculated.

Credits attempted include all credits a student is registered for each semester, regardless of final assessment. Students enrolled in the MFA programs will be considered to be making satisfactory progress if their progress allows for completion of the program at the following rate: total credits attempted must be satisfactorily completed within 150% of total credits required for completion of the program. For example, if the total credits required for program completion is 60, the maximum attempted credits allowed would be 90 (150% of 60). If the total credits required for program completion is 64 credits, the maximum attempted credits allowed would be 96. If the total credits required for program completion is 80, the total attempted credits allowed would be 120.

A final assessment of "CR" means the student has satisfactorily completed the semester study or semester project and full credit was awarded. For any semester study or semester project for which a final assessment of "NC" or "W" is earned, no credits are awarded. The student must repeat the entire semester or project. A student may repeat any semester study or project only once, and only two semesters or projects can be repeated throughout a student's enrollment in the program.

If a student receives a final assessment of "NC" for any enrolled credits, s/he will be placed on probation for the following term. Probation is not allowed for two consecutive terms, or for more than two terms total, during the student's enrollment at VCFA.

Each student's academic progress will be reviewed at the conclusion of every semester.

Attendance

An integral component of the MFA programs is the on-campus residency period which brings students and faculty together on the VCFA campus every summer and winter. Required to initiate each semester's work, these residency periods are dense with exchanges that offer an extraordinary range of input, feedback, and ideas. The residencies provide students with a breadth of exposure to balance against the more specific focus of the semester projects, an opportunity to choose a faculty advisor, and to plan their next non-residential period of independent study. All enrolled students are expected to participate fully in the entire residency period. Graduating students are also expected to participate in a final, culminating residency at the end of their program of study, prior to graduation.

During the independent study portion of the semester, vigorous and productive dialogue between students and their faculty advisors is required. Such participation (during both the residency and the independent study portion of the semester) is required for the semester's credit and for the granting of the degree.

Credit Hours per Semester

The MFA degrees awarded by VCFA are consistent with comparable degrees offered by other graduate programs in their standards, content, and length of study. While the self-designed nature of each student's curriculum assures that learning is relevant and meaningful, the maintenance of rigorous College and program standards for academic progress assures that each student's learning constitutes a graduate-level education accomplished in a timely manner and within the administrative and educational capabilities of the institution. Intensive one-on-one work with faculty advisors is the student's primary venue for learning and artistic growth, richly augmented by the five on-campus residencies with their extensive offerings. The work students do during and between residencies—which culminates in the production of their critical and creative theses—is commensurate with the quantity and quality of work done in conventional MFA programs.

In keeping with the standards recognized by the higher education community, VCFA utilizes the following general guidelines for estimating credit hours per semester:

The unit of credit at VCFA is the equivalent of the semester hour credit. Each semester at VCFA is 6 months in length, for which 15 to 16 credits are awarded for successful completion. Each semester begins with an on-campus residency with a minimum of 100 hours of instructional time. The remainder of each semester requires an average of 25-30 hours per week of independent study under the supervision of a faculty member. Each program requires students to participate in a final graduation residency, which is the culmination of the educational experience at VCFA.

Final Assessment (Grading System)

At the conclusion of each semester, students and their faculty advisors and/or artist-teachers complete final evaluations of the students' work throughout the semester. If a student's work has been successfully completed, a final assessment of **CR** (Credit Awarded) is recorded in the student's academic record, and full credit is awarded. If a student's work has proven to be inadequate, a final assessment of **NC** (No Credit) is recorded and no credit is awarded. If and enrolled student withdraws during the refund period of a semester, an assessment of **W** (Withdrawn) is recorded and no credit is awarded. Occasionally an assessment of **I** (Incomplete) is used to signify that the work has not yet been completed.

An assessment of **CR** (Credit Awarded) is considered the equivalent of a B or better in a conventional grading system. The underlying assumption is that students at the graduate level should perform well, not just adequately. Therefore, an assessment of **CR** indicates substantial effort, productivity, and artistic progress.

Letter Grade Equivalents

Only in extraordinary situations where a student may be penalized by the absence of a traditional letter grade will the registrar, upon receipt of a letter-grade equivalent from the program, provide documentation of such to the requesting organization. All third-party requests for letter grades should be submitted in writing to the appropriate program director, who will determine whether the situation warrants conversion to letter grade equivalents. If so, the program will request letter-grade equivalents from the appropriate faculty, submit to the registrar, and the registrar will provide documentation of such to the requesting third party. If not, the registrar will send VCFA's policy regarding Credit/No Credit determinations to the requesting third party.

Final Assessment after Withdrawal

If a student withdraws during the refund period, a final assessment of "W" (Withdrawn) will be recorded on the student's academic record. If a student withdraws after the refund period has passed, a final assessment of "NC" (No Credit) will be recorded on the student's academic record. If the withdrawal is effective at the end of the semester, the final credit determination as supplied by the evaluating faculty for each course will be posted to the student's academic record. In the case of an appeal of an academic decision, the refund schedule may be paused until a final determination is made.

Transfer Credit

The Master of Fine Arts programs at VCFA will *consider* accepting a maximum of one semester of graduate-level transfer credit toward the MFA degree. In order for credits to be considered for transfer, the student must apply and be accepted into the program, and the credits must be from an accredited institution of higher education. All potential transfer credits are subject to Faculty and/or Admissions Committee review. The earliest that a transfer credit decision will be made is at the point of acceptance into the program. See the individual program sections of the Student Handbook for program-specific criteria and procedures.

Credits obtained at Vermont College of Fine Arts are transferable only at the discretion of the receiving school.

Transcripts

Transcripts are issued by VCFA's Registrar's Office. Transcripts must be obtained through ***myVCFA***, the college's secure "Self-Service" portal: (https://vcfacommunity.vcfa.edu/Home.aspx). Unofficial transcripts may be viewed and printed free of charge; there is a $10 fee for each official transcript issued, and payment must be submitted with the transcript request. VCFA will not issue transcripts of a student's academic record until all debts with the college are cleared. For more information on how to request a transcript, please contact the Registrar's Office at (802) 828-8724 or visit registrar@vcfa.edu.

Students who have not fulfilled their financial obligations will not receive diplomas until all amounts due to the college have been paid.

Academic Appeals

Vermont College of Fine Arts assures that students have access to a process for the reconsideration of academic evaluations, advancement decisions and other academic actions of the programs. Specific details can be found in the program sections of the Student Handbook.

Enrollment Status

Full-time Enrollment

Full-time enrollment at Vermont College of Fine Arts is defined as a minimum of 12 credits per semester. Part-time study is not offered, except in extraordinary circumstances in the Visual Art Program when a student may be allowed to enroll in just the Visual Culture Project (3 credits) for one semester.

Leave of Absence

Enrolled students may request up to two semester-long leaves of absence from the program without jeopardizing their enrollment or their standing in the program. See the Student Handbook for specific program guidelines.

IMPORTANT: Leave of Absence status as described above does NOT constitute an "Approved Leave of Absence" as defined by federal financial aid regulations. Recipients of federal Title IV financial aid must be aware of the implications of a leave on their financial aid situation, the 180-day grace period, and repayment schedule. Students contemplating a leave of absence should discuss their individual situations with VCFA's financial aid counselor (877-612-2599).

Withdrawal

Students may voluntarily withdraw from the program at any time. The date of withdrawal is defined as the day on which the Program Director or Registrar receives official notification of withdrawal by the student or such later date as the notification may indicate. See the Withdrawal & Refund Policy for more specific information.

Dismissal

Occasionally, a student may be dismissed from the program. The conditions for dismissal are if the student has consistently failed to do the minimum amount of work required, has goals and working methods which are inconsistent with the program design and purposes, refuses to participate fully in the residency, or is abusive of faculty and other students. If the work of a student is found to be below the standard of performance reasonably expected at the graduate level, his or her continuation in the program can be denied. No student may receive a determination of "NC" (No Credit) for two consecutive semesters and remain in the program.

The date of dismissal is defined as the date on which the student receives written notice of dismissal from the College. A student may reapply to the program after a minimum of one year from the date of dismissal.

Graduation

Graduation requires both academic and financial clearance. The Program Director and Registrar will certify that all academic degree requirements have been fulfilled. The Bursar's Office will audit financial accounts. If academic and/or financial clearance is not granted, a hold will be placed on the graduation process and diplomas will not be issued until the academic deficiency and/or the financial obligation is cleared.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Definition:

VCFA conducts its academic programs in accord with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which stipulate that:

- No student may be excluded from any program or any course solely on the basis of disability;
- Modifications in degree or course requirements may be necessary to meet the requirements of some disabled students;
- Auxiliary aides, such as tape recorders, note takers or amplification devices must be permitted in the classroom when they are required to ensure the full participation of disabled students;
- Special teaching equipment or devices used in the classroom (and in some cases teaching techniques that rely upon the sight, hearing, or mobility of students) may require adaptation in individual cases;
- Alternate assessment and evaluation methods for measuring student achievement may be necessary for students with impaired sensory, manual, writing or speaking skills (except where those are skills being measured);
- Group meetings, classes, seminars, and/or lectures may have to be relocated to permit access for students with mobility impairments;
- Counseling of disabled students toward more restrictive careers than non-disabled students is discriminatory; unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession.

Implementation:

Upon acceptance to a Vermont College of Fine Arts program, every student is sent a form asking if the student has any disability that has been officially diagnosed by a licensed professional. Even if a student does not have a disability, or if a student chooses not to inform the College about a disability, the form must still be signed, indicating the student has read it, and returned it to the student's program office. These forms will then be forwarded to the Program Director. Students who have not received this form should obtain one from his or her program's office and return it at the earliest opportunity.

Preliminary Review:

After consultation with the student, the Program Director makes one of several recommendations:

- The student submits appropriate professional assessment and documentation of a disability from a qualified, licensed professional to the Disabilities Services Coordinator. The licensed professional will provide a comprehensive report, including diagnoses and recommendations for academic or other accommodation. Specific College guidelines for documentation can be obtained from the Disabilities Services Coordinator and should be made available for evaluators to follow. All evaluations must be as current as possible, conducted within a reasonable time prior to their submission. VCFA does not conduct nor pay for such assessments.
- That professional assessment and documentation is not indicated or required but the student should seek out appropriate academic assistance from faculty and program staff.
- That there does not seem to be reason to suggest assessment or assistance.

Accommodation Profile:

Upon receiving appropriate documentation of a disability as described above, the Disabilities Services Coordinator will, if a student so requests, develop an educational profile recommending accommodations and providing suggestions for students and faculty in the living/learning

environment. The student must release this document to any individual by way of a signed release form provided by the Disabilities Services Coordinator. It may not be distributed by any other means or discussed publicly for reasons of student confidentiality.

Voluntary Nature of this System:

Students are not compelled to report disabilities, or to follow up on referrals to the Disabilities Services Coordinator, or to seek and pay for professional assessments, or to release the educational profile for accommodations to the program. Unless the student voluntarily completes these actions, VCFA cannot make accommodations for the student.

Confidentiality:

The material provided by the student or by professionals who have been involved in the student's diagnosis or treatment will be treated as confidential information. Access will be granted only to the Disabilities Services Coordinator and those involved in the student's education. It will be shared only to the extent that it contributes to developing an individual educational profile for the student. Information will be shared with others only with the written permission of the student.

Appeal:

Any student dissatisfied with the adjustments made to accommodate a disability will have the right to appeal. The appeal process will be as follows:

A written statement of the dispute will be sent by the student to the Academic Dean. This statement should include all relevant information and should request clear remedial action. Based on this statement, the Academic Dean will either activate changes to the individual accommodations, or resolve that the profile as developed is appropriate. The Academic Dean level of appeal will be final.

Closing of the College or Programs

Consistent with standard 4.11of the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, Vermont College of Fine Arts (VCFA) recognizes its responsibility in the case of the closing of any VCFA program to assist enrolled students to complete their education with a minimum of disruption. The preferred solution in such a case will be to teach-out the program using appropriate educational standards and resources. If that is not possible, VCFA will do its best to assist students in finding comparable programs that will accept them using articulation agreements created to assure transferring students the least possible disruption and expense.

Plagiarism

Because the highest standards of academic honesty are necessary to assure the integrity of academic credit, Vermont College of Fine Arts will not tolerate plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another's work, and the person who plagiarizes does so with the clear intent to pass off the work of another as his or her own.

See the program sections of the Student Handbook for program-specific procedures related to instances of plagiarism.

Student Right to Privacy (FERPA)

Vermont College of Fine Arts complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended. The purpose of the act is to afford certain rights to students concerning their education records. The primary rights afforded are the right to inspect and review the education records, the right to seek to have the records amended and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the records. The Act does not apply to students admitted to Vermont College of Fine Arts who have not officially enrolled. VCFA affords all of the rights under the law to its students.

Educational Officials

FERPA specifies that VCFA staff and faculty and certain other government or accrediting officials with a legitimate educational interest do have the right to review student records without consent. This includes any person employed by the college in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or other administrative position; individuals serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official committee (such as a grievance or disciplinary committee) or in a supervised Work Study position; individuals, organizations and other entities employed by or under contract to VCFA (such as an auditor, attorney, contractor, consultant, collection agent, or volunteer); accrediting or financial aid agencies and state and federal officials conducting lawful activities; and other outside parties providing services and functions or otherwise acting on behalf of the institution. VCFA staff and faculty with legitimate access to education records must be aware of their FERPA obligations with respect to privacy and disclosure of student information.

Legitimate Educational Interest

Education officials have a legitimate educational interest when, in the exercise or completion of their administrative, supervisory, academic, research or other administrative responsibilities on behalf of the institution, incur the need to know specific information from education records.

Annual Notification

Students will be notified of their rights as stipulated by FERPA annually, by publication in the Student Handbook or any other method deemed appropriate by the Registrar.

Directory Information

Student records are confidential, with access limited to those directly involved in the administrative or academic process. In accordance with FERPA, the college will not release student educational information without the expressed, written consent of the student. There are, however, some exceptions. As specified under the provisions of FERPA, certain information is considered to be public information, or “directory information,” provided that students are given the opportunity to prohibit the disclosure of such information.

At VCFA, the following information is considered “Directory Information”:

-Student’s name
-Student’s address
-Telephone number
-Email address
-Dates of enrollment
-Status of enrollment (i.e., whether the student is, or is not, currently enrolled)
-Major field of study
-Anticipated date of graduation, if currently enrolled
-Degrees earned, if any, and date conferred
-Photographs and video images

Students have the right to withhold the release of "Directory Information."
To do so, a student must make a written request to the Registrar to withhold this information. It should be noted that if a student asks for "Directory Information" to be withheld, it will be withheld from a variety of sources, including: friends, relatives, prospective employers, honor societies and the news media. Students should be aware that directory "blocks" are permanent and will not be removed without written request.

Examples of other exceptions:

- Emergency situation
- Lawfully issued subpoena
- Educational "need to know" by appropriate faculty or staff at the college.

Students have the right to review any of their educational records. Students should submit to the Registrar and Program Director written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect.

Students have the right to seek amendment of educational records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Students should write to the Registrar and Program Director, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the Registrar and Program Director decide not to amend the record as requested by the student, the student will be notified of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing. Students who disagree with the resolution of a challenge are allowed to document their objection, and this statement must be retained and released with the education record to which the student objected.

Students have the right to file complaints with the Department of Education concerning alleged failure by Vermont College of Fine Arts to comply with the law. Written complaints should be directed to the following office:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
6oo Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 26202-4605
(202) 260-3887, Fax (202 260-9001.

For more information about FERPA and/or student records at VCFA, please contact the Registrar's office.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Tuition & Fees

Tuition and fees for each program are determined on an annual basis as approved by the Board of Trustees, and are published on the college website. Tuition and fees are subject to change without notice.

Tuition bills are mailed six to eight weeks prior to the beginning of each new semester. Payments may be made by check or online credit card payment. A student may elect, when the bill is received, a deferred payment option that requires four payments over the first three months of the semester. Only the amount remaining due after deducting financial aid may be divided into monthly payments. The monthly payment option is the only deferred payment option available for students. See the Payment Plan Policy for more specific information about this option.

Students may not register for the next semester if the balance from a previous semester has not been paid, unless special arrangements have been made with the Bursar's office. Students who fail to pay past due balances may be dismissed from the college.

Enrollment Deposit Fee

New students are required to pay an enrollment deposit fee (see tuition and fee schedule) prior to their initial residency or registration. The deposit is applied to the matriculated student's first semester of tuition and fees. The enrollment deposit is non-refundable.

Financial Aid

Vermont College of Fine Arts participates in the federal student aid loan programs (Federal Direct Stafford Loan and Federal Direct Grad PLUS) and offers a limited number of VCFA scholarships, some based on merit. Financial aid starts with the filing of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) which can be found at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/ .

How to Apply for Financial Aid

File the FAFSA at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov using the VCFA school code 003697. For enrollment periods beginning in summer 2012 through spring 2013, file the 2012-2013 FAFSA.

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program

Direct Loans are low-interest loans for students and parents to help pay for the cost of a student's education after high school. The lender is the U.S. Department of Education rather than a bank or other financial institution. Additional information on Federal Direct Loans is available from the Department of Education at http://www.studentloans.gov or 800-848-0979.
There are three types of Direct Loans:

Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans

These are based on financial need. The government will pay the interest on the loan while the student is in school.

Starting with loans processed for enrollment periods after July 1, 2012, the government has eliminated subsidized loans and all graduate loans will be unsubsidized. The total maximum Direct Stafford Loan per year will remain at the 2011-12 level, which is $20,500.

Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Students get Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans regardless of need, but will have to pay all

interest charges.

Federal Direct Grad PLUS Loans

Graduate and professional degree students may borrow under the PLUS Loan program up to their school's cost of attendance minus other financial assistance

Application Procedures

To apply for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan you will need to complete the four steps below.

Step 1. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by using "FAFSA on the Web" at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Step 2. Complete the VCFA loan request form available online at http://www.vermontcollege.edu/admissions/financial-aid

3. Complete the online loan entrance counseling (required for first time borrowers) at http://www.studentloans.gov

Step 4. Complete and sign the electronic Master Promissory Note (if not already signed) at http://www.studentloans.gov

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a Federal Direct Loan a student must::
be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien;
be taking at least six credit hours and be matriculated in a degree program;
not owe any refunds on a Pell Grant or other awards received and not be in default on repayment on any type of student loan.

Note: Students enrolled in a certificate or post-graduate study do not qualify for federal financial aid. Alternative loans may be available for these options. For more information contact Admissions at 1-866-934-8232 or by email at admissions@vcfa.edu or go to http://www.finaid.org/loans/privatestudentloans.phtml for a listing of potential lenders.

Maximum Loan Amounts

Independent Student – An independent graduate student may be eligible to borrow up to $8,500 subsidized and $12,000 unsubsidized for a total of $20,500 per year. An independent graduate student may borrow up to an aggregate limit of $138,500. No more than $65,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans. This maximum total graduate debt limit includes Federal Stafford Loans received for undergraduate study.

Financial aid is a means of payment, and the absence of or delay in receipt of financial aid funds does not affect the financial responsibility of the student for charges due to the college.

For more information or to speak with a financial aid counselor:

VCFA-FAO@financialaidservices.org or call Wanda Carmical at 1-877-612-2599**.**

Canadian Students

The Canada Revenue Agency recognizes VCFA as a university outside of Canada for the purposes of the Canadian Income Tax Act. This means that Canadian citizens who attend VCFA may be able to claim a tax credit for tuition expenses. Please go to the Canada Revenue Agency website to "INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS – EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE OF CANADA" (www.cra-arc.gc.ca) for more information and details.

Credit Balances

Credit balances created by federal or state financial aid funds will be automatically refunded. Credit balances created by funds other than federal or state financial aid funds will not be automatically refunded to you. Please contact the Bursar's office to receive these other credit balances.

Withdrawal & Refunds

Students may withdraw from VCFA at any point during the semester. (Visual Art students may withdraw from individual study projects.) The amount of a refund, if applicable, is determined by the start date of the semester, the effective date of the withdrawal, and the balance of the student's account, after financial aid adjustments, as of the withdrawal date. Financial aid adjustments are based on federal guidelines. **(See Return of Financial Aid below.)**

The withdrawal must be in writing and should be sent directly to the program office or the registrar's office. The date of withdrawal is the earlier of:

- The date the student notifies the college; OR
- The ending date of the previous semester if the student fails to register for a new term.

The semester begins on the first full day of the residency for each program. If a student withdraws within two weeks of the start date, all tuition and fees will be removed from the student's account (with the exception of the non-refundable deposit and room and board fees for the residency, if applicable*). After that two-week period, refunds are prorated according to the specific refund schedules published in the student handbook.

It is understood that a student who fails to notify the college of withdrawal from the program is obligated for all tuition assessed for the complete semester.

Leave of Absence

Enrolled students may request up to two semester-long leaves of absence from the program without jeopardizing their enrollment or their standing in the program. See each program section for specific program guidelines.

IMPORTANT: Leave of Absence status as described above does NOT constitute an "Approved Leave of Absence" as defined by federal financial aid regulations. Recipients of federal Title IV financial aid must be aware of the implications of a leave on their financial aid situation, the 180-day grace period, and repayment schedule. Students contemplating a leave of absence should discuss their individual situations with VCFA's financial aid counselor (877-612-2599).

Return of Financial Aid

Students who are using student loans to pay their tuition and are considering withdrawing from the program should talk to VCFA's financial aid coordinator about the financial aid ramifications as VCFA's refund schedule does not take financial aid return requirements into consideration.

Federal regulations require Vermont College of Fine Arts to perform a calculation for the return of federal financial aid when a financial aid recipient withdraws, is expelled, or otherwise ceases to be a student before the end of the semester for which aid was received. The return amount due to the federal financial aid program(s) is calculated on a per diem basis with a formula established by Federal regulations. In other words, the financial aid office will calculate the percentage of aid you have earned by dividing the number of days you were enrolled before withdrawal by the number of days in the semester. The remaining portion of your aid will be returned. Returns are required to be calculated on any student who withdraws before 60% of the semester is completed. An example of the federal refund formula is available upon request in the Financial Aid office.

The returns will be applied to the financial aid programs in the following order: Federal Unsubsidized Stafford loans, Federal Subsidized Stafford loans, PLUS loans, and other Title IV programs. Funds returned to the federal loan program will reduce the student's loan balance with their lender. ***The student will be responsible for reimbursing Vermont College of Fine Arts for any funds returned by the university on behalf of the student.*** The student will be notified of this amount by mail, and balances must be paid to the Business Office.

COMMUNITY POLICIES

Alcohol and Drugs

On the VCFA campus, consumption of alcoholic beverages and the use of drugs are governed by the laws of the State of Vermont. Furthermore, the following campus regulations are in effect for VCFA students, faculty, and other participants in VCFA-sponsored events, and infractions are subject to disciplinary action:

- At official college and program functions where alcohol will be sold, only alcoholic beverages catered by an individual or business with a liquor license and contracted by VCFA or an individual program may be consumed. An outside vendor is not required at official college and program functions where alcohol will be served but not sold.
- Public drunkenness and disruptive behavior in public places, including lounges, hallways, and stairwells is not permitted.
- The consumption of alcoholic beverages out-of-doors on the college campus is permitted on the condition that those involved conduct themselves in a discrete and responsible way. This policy applies to individual use and small groups only. Those wishing to organize parties involving the use of alcohol, indoors or outdoors, must contact the appropriate Program Director for permission.

Appropriate Conduct

Vermont College of Fine Arts will take appropriate action regarding students who violate the College's campus and conduct regulations or disrupt the learning and campus environment. The officer responsible for handling disciplinary actions at VCFA is the Academic Dean, or his/her designate.

Students are expected to cooperate with and be respectful of all VCFA personnel as they carry out their duties.

Students will not engage in behavior that is threatening, dangerous or harmful to self or others, that disrupts the learning and campus environment or that damage college property.

Students may not possess firearms, other weapons or fireworks while on VCFA campus.

Students may not tamper with smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, wiring, or electrical equipment. Vermont State law also prohibits such tampering.

Disciplinary Procedures:
In non-emergency cases, where there is indication that student behavior violates campus policy, the following sequence of actions will occur:

- Fact Finding: The offending behavior will be reported to the Program Director or his/her designate and to Security. The Program Director and Security will investigate the allegations and determine the facts of the case, which will be reported to the Academic Dean.

- Interview With Student: The Academic Dean, Program Director and Security, as appropriate, will meet with the student to review the facts of the case, to allow the student to respond to the allegations and to present his/her version of the alleged events.

- Disciplinary Action: Following the meeting with the student, the Academic Dean, Program Director and Security, as appropriate, determine if disciplinary action is warranted. If so, such action may include making continued enrollment conditional upon cessation of the offending behavior. The

decision will be communicated in writing to the student, who will be required to sign a statement agreeing to comply with the conditions for continued enrollment.

- Noncompliance by the Student: If the student violates the conditions for continued enrollment, as determined by fact finding and the Academic Dean, the student will be dismissed.

In an emergency situation, VCFA may suspend its normal disciplinary procedures and temporarily dismiss and remove from campus a student whose conduct is determined to be sufficiently disruptive or dangerous. Such conduct includes but is not limited to behavior that is threatening to self or others, behavior that disrupts the campus and learning environment, public drunkenness, and other offenses deemed appropriate. If the student requests it, VCFA will then follow the non-emergency disciplinary procedures to determine non-temporary discipline. VCFA Security may act to enforce the College's disciplinary determinations.

Appeal:
Decisions made and actions taken pursuant to these disciplinary procedures may be appealed to the President of Vermont College of Fine Arts who shall make a final determination.

Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990

This act requires colleges to collect information about crimes and security on campus, going back to August 1, 1991. We are also required to publish and distribute this information to any applicant for enrollment/employment upon request. College crime statistics are posted on the information board in the main downstairs hallway of College Hall at the start of each academic year.

Discrimination & Harassment

Vermont College of Fine Arts is committed to providing faculty, staff, students, artist-teachers, and invited visitors with an environment where they may pursue their careers or studies free from discrimination. The Chief Financial Officer is ultimately responsible for administering the college's equal opportunity, anti-harassment and accessibility (ADA) policies, and shares procedural responsibility with the program directors. The Office exists, in part, to ensure that all members of the College community understand their responsibility to create and maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

The College pledges itself to the broad application of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, in particular Titles VI and VII, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Americans and Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and comparable state and local laws.

Definitions:

For purposes of this policy, discrimination and sexual harassment are defined as follows:

Discriminatory Harassment

Discriminatory harassment is conduct of any nature, which denies equal privileges or treatment to a particular individual because of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, and status as a Vietnam veteran, or sexual orientation, and/or any other classification protected by law. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, verbal or physical attacks, written threats or slurs, unwelcome banter, teasing, or jokes that are derogatory, or depict individuals in a stereotypical and demeaning manner, or any other conduct based on the protected classification which has the purposes or effect of interfering unreasonably with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating working or learning environment.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and has been defined by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

A. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, promotion, grades or academic status; **or**

B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for making an employment or academic decision affecting an individual; **or**

C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, or of creating and intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for work or learning.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of either gender toward a person of the same or opposite gender when that behavior falls within the operative definition of sexual harassment.

Harassment without an overt sexual component can also violate the law and College policies under the circumstances outlined in the discriminatory harassment definition where it is shown that the harassment is directed at an individual because of the individual's gender.

Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated at Vermont College of Fine Arts. Sexual harassment violates the dignity of individuals and impedes the realization of the College's educational mission. The College is committed to preventing and eliminating sexual harassment of faculty, staff and students through education and by encouraging faculty, staff and students to report any concerns or complaints about sexual harassment. Prompt corrective measures will be taken to stop sexual harassment whenever and wherever it occurs.

Procedure:

The Chief Financial Officer has primary responsibility for resolving complaints. Students should first bring any concerns to their program director; any other member of the College community who has a complaint should immediately report the incident to the CFO or their immediate supervisor. The College prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint and/or participates in an investigation.

The College will make every effort to promptly investigate and resolve complaints with due regard for fairness and the rights of both the complainant and alleged offender. The College will make every effort to protect the privacy of the parties. If there is evidence of harassment, the College will make the prompt and effective corrective action appropriate to the situation. Knowingly make false allegations of harassment or providing evidence with the knowledge that it is false are also violations of College policy and will subject that person to disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Sanctions:

Disciplinary sanctions for violations of this policy, which may range from a reprimand to dismissal from the College, will be imposed in accordance with applicable College policies.

Dormitory Procedures

The VCFA Academic Programs are responsible for overseeing students' dormitory housing. Students who encounter housing problems should report them promptly to the Assistant Program Director.

In addition, the Campus Services Office is available to assist with hospitality-related services during residencies. The Director of Campus Services has an office on the first floor of College Hall.

The following guidelines should be noted by all students.

- Students should keep their dormitory doors locked at all times.
- Students should take their keys with them whenever they leave their rooms. If a student gets locked out of a dorm room, there may be a considerable wait for a Facilities or Security person to unlock the door.
- Students are responsible for handling their own used linens. Place used linens (sheets and towels) into pillowcase and deposit in laundry bin on the 1st floor of Dewey. Please do not leave used linens in hallways or in rooms. Please do leave pillows, blankets, and mattress pads in rooms.
- Upon checking out of a room, please turn off heat in rooms and close windows.
- Before leaving, students must return their keys to a key drop box. A $75 lost key fee will be applied to any student who does not return a key on the day of departure.
- No student may change assigned rooms without permission from the Program staff.

In general, quiet in the dormitories will be observed throughout the day and night. After 10 PM those students desiring further discourse and social interaction, even in small groups, should adjourn to Dewey Lounge, on the 1st floor of Dewey. When students congregate in a lounge or common area, they should pick up and clean the area when done.

Absolutely no smoking, burning candles, or incense is allowed in any of the buildings. If an alarm goes off, immediately evacuate to the front lawn and wait for assistance. Please see the Smoking Policy for more information regarding smoking on campus.

Emergency Medical Services

No medical services are provided by VCFA. In an emergency **call 911** and report the incident to VCFA Facilities/Security at ext. 8888.

Any non-emergency injury occurring on campus, or other sponsored sites, must be reported immediately to Facilities/Security staff (ext. 8888 or 802-828-8888).

Facilities Operations & Maintenance

The goal of Facilities Operations is to maintain the Vermont College of Fine Arts campus and its atmosphere in appropriate and first-rate order for students. In this regard, students are expected to cooperate in keeping campus facilities clean and in good repair.

Facilities staff enforces safety and security regulations and practices, provides security during residencies, oversees parking on campus and strives to maintain a safe atmosphere conducive to a healthy learning environment.

State laws and building codes prohibit set-ups (tables, chairs, et cetera) in hallways. All requests for set-ups and/or audio-visual equipment should go through the program offices.

Food Service

The New England Culinary Institute (NECI) prepares all meals in the campus dining hall located in Dewey Hall. NECI students are instructed in the dining hall by expert chefs. Students with food allergies or special dietary needs must notify their program office in advance of their residency.

Grievances/Appeals (Non-Academic)

Students dissatisfied with a non-academic college decision or a condition of College life are encouraged to seek a resolution to the problem. The first step toward such a resolution is discussion with their Program Director and/or Faculty Chair. If no mutually-agreeable solution is reached, the student will take the matter to the Academic Dean.

For academic grievances/appeals, see the Academic Appeals Policy.

Guests, Children & Pets

The academic residency of VCFA's programs (and sponsored sites) is a special opportunity for serious and sustained interaction between students and faculty members. For this reason, overnight guests of students are not permitted in student's rooms without permission from the Program Director. Children are permitted on campus only with the advance permission of the student's program office. Children must be accompanied at all times by their parent or guardian.

Guests of students may rent rooms, if available, for overnight stays connected with graduation or other special ceremonies. VCFA Security may remove persons who appear in campus facilities or in the dormitories without permission or invitation. Pre-approval is required for pets.

Lost & Found

VCFA's "**Lost & Found**" is located in the Campus Services Office in College Hall (802-828-8580).

Parking

Student parking of properly registered vehicles is permitted in the lot beside Alumni Hall on College Street and in the lot behind Bishop-Hatch, Noble, and Glover dormitories. Of these, the Alumni Hall lot is preferred. Short-term parking passes are required; these passes can be obtained from your Program office. From April 15 to November 15, 24-hour parking is also available on the city streets around the College, unless otherwise posted. However, throughout the winter months, overnight parking on Montpelier streets is not permitted in order to accommodate snow removal. Vehicles blocking access will be towed and the owner will be responsible for all towing and storage fees.

Quiet Policy

VCFA's campus is dedicated to adult and non-traditional learning. A respectful and serious environment on campus and in the dormitories is an essential component of this goal.In general, quiet in the dormitories will be observed throughout the day and night. After 10 PM those students desiring further discourse and social interaction, even in small groups, should adjourn to a lounge area away from the dorm rooms. When students congregate in a lounge or common area, they should pick up and clean the area when done.

Furthermore, VCFA is located in a residential section of the city, surrounded by private homes. Noisy gatherings on campus are inappropriate. VCFA Security will ask participants in noisy gatherings to respect the College's quiet policy.

Security

VCFA Security provides 24-hour campus-wide security coverage during residencies in order to secure College facilities and assist students. The Facilities/Security staff may be reached by dialing x**8888** on campus phones or (802) 828-8888.

Security staff will provide escort to students on campus, upon request. Security cannot transport students on- or off-campus for any reason.

Students with disabilities can receive assistance from Facilities staff with their luggage.

Thefts of personal property and other crimes at VCFA must be reported immediately to the Security/ Facilities staff. They will take a report from the individual and will, if appropriate, contact the Montpelier Police Department. Students are expected to cooperate fully with VCFA staff and police in the investigation of alleged crimes.

Smoking on Campus

It is the policy of Vermont College of Fine Arts to provide a safe working and learning environment for staff, faculty, students, and visitors. The VCFA Campus Smoking Policy has been written in recognition of the Surgeon General's conclusion that smoking is injurious to health, and that involuntary, second-hand smoke is a cause of disease in nonsmokers. VCFA recognizes the rights of those who choose to smoke but chooses to provide a smoke-free environment to the greatest extent possible.

To protect the health of all community members, and in accordance with state statutes, VCFA prohibits smoking in any form in all indoor places, including all workplaces, VCFA-owned vehicles, and residence halls.

In addition, no smoking is allowed within 25 feet of any building on the VCFA campus. This policy complies with the American with Disabilities Act, which provides smoke free entrances for employees and students with respiratory and other conditions affected by exposure to smoke.

Student ID Cards

Enrolled Vermont College of Fine Arts students will receive a student ID card at their first residency. This card is used in the VCFA Library, for after-hours admission to the computer lab during residencies, and other activities. Students may also use their VCFA student ID cards at libraries which extend their lending privileges to VCFA students and for student discounts elsewhere. There is a $5

fee for replacement ID cards.

VCFA DIRECTORY

Programs

Graphic Design	(802) 828-8896
Music Composition	(802) 828-8610
Visual Art	(802) 828-8703
Writing	(802) 828-8840
Writing for Children & Young Adults	(802) 828-8696

Student Services

Admissions	(802) 828-8535
Bursar	(802) 828-8737
Disabilities Services	(802) 828-8836
Financial Aid	(877) 612-2599
Library	(802) 828-8512
Registrar	(802) 828-8724

Administration/Departments

Office of the President	(802) 828-8613
Senior Vice President	(802) 828-8714
CFO/Vice President of Administration	(802) 828-8545
Academic Dean	(802) 828-8556
Accounts Payable	(802) 828-8731
Alumni Affairs	(802) 828-8589
Campus and Conference Services	(802) 828-8580
Controller	(802) 828-8737
Facilities Operations	(802) 828-8560
Hunger Mountain Journal	(802) 828-8517
Information Technology	(802) 828-8554
Institutional Advancement	(802) 828-8555
Marketing & Communications	(802) 828-8599
Board of Trustees (Secretary)	(802) 828-8544

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