

**1. How long does it take to complete the MFA program? Is it possible to shorten the time period by taking extra coursework?**

The MFA degree requires 60 credit hours total, 48 hours of coursework and 12 hours of dissertation. It will generally take students 3 years to complete the program. Depending on the number of hours taken each semester, including summers, it is possible to complete the program in 2.5 years.

**2. What does the department consider the most important for admission to the MFA program?**

Admission to the MFA program is competitive. The number of students accepted is usually limited by the availability of studio space. In most cases, the portfolio is considered the most important part of the application. But a strong portfolio alone will not gain you admission. Your statement of intent and academic records weigh heavily in the decision making process.

**3. If I don't have the minimum requirements, such as the 42 hours of studio art and 18 hours of art history for the MFA, will you consider me if I have considerable experience as an artist? Also, does UNM give credit for life experience?**

Minimum requirements for admission to the MFA are 42 hours of studio and 18 hours of art history. In some cases a strong portfolio can be grounds for waiving some credit hours in art studio. All applicants must have a minimum of 15 hours of Art History. Those lacking this requirement will have deficiencies which will need to be made up during the first year of study. Credit is not given for life experience.

**4. What does it cost to attend UNM?**

Check UNM tuition rates here: [UNM Tuition Rates](#)

**5. What forms of financial assistance are available?**

The department offers a limited number of assistantships (GA, TA, RA), which offer a monthly stipend, health insurance, and a tuition waiver of six credit hours (with all additional hours billed at the in-state rate). The UNM Office of Graduate Studies also offers a variety of grants, fellowships and scholarships. Students are also encouraged to apply for federal financial aid.

**6. If I am awarded an assistantship for the first semester of enrollment, am I assured of one for the duration of my enrollment?**

Normally a student is limited to five assistantships during their course of study. Each area of study determines the graduate and teaching assignments for each semester. These selections are based on a student's progress towards their degree, academic performance, evaluations of past teaching experience, and area needs. Awarding of assistantships is a competitive process done each semester. Although there are no guarantees that assistantships will be renewed, in most cases successful teaching and progress towards the degree will be justification for continued financial aid, to the extent that such aid is available.

**7. Is it possible to enroll in graduate credit courses before being admitted into the art graduate program?**

Students with an undergraduate degree, who are not currently enrolled in a graduate program and

wish to enroll in graduate level courses, may apply for Non-Degree status at <http://apply.unm.edu>. Once enrolled in non-degree status a student may enroll in graduate level courses with the permission of the instructor. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be transferred to the MFA program. Transfer of this coursework is not automatic and is subject to departmental approval. Successful completion of graduate level course work as a non-degree student does not guarantee admission to the program.

**8. Do students receive financial assistance for production of the MFA catalog, slides, etc.?**

Students may apply for money through the Graduate Studies Office, the Graduate & Professional Student Association, and Departmental and College scholarships to assist with the cost of the program and dissertation/catalog expenses. See the Useful Links page for links to all of these organizations.

**9. How can I arrange a tour of the facilities?**

Due to the limited number of staff, no formal tours are given. Informal tours can be arranged in advance with Studio Manager Justin Nighbert at [nighberj@unm.edu](mailto:nighberj@unm.edu). Prospective students are usually able to informally visit with current graduate students and faculty. E-mail addresses are available through the department graduate office.

**10. Who can I talk to regarding my specific situation / application?**

You can call the department graduate office (505-277-6672) and speak with the graduate advisor. Also, each area of emphasis is served by a faculty representative, who is available for consultation. Contact the department graduate office for the current area representatives and their contact information.

**11. Are faculty available for critiques?**

If you plan your visit well in advance, we will provide you with information on area faculty so that you can schedule appointments.

**12. Do all students get studio assignment?**

Yes. The department limits enrollment in its graduate studio program to ensure that all students have studio space.