Department of art
THE ART DEPARTMENT at Humboldt State University offers a unique learning environment. Focusing solely on undergraduate education, we are set in a rural environment perfectly suited to creative contemplation. Whether you are considering a career as a commercial designer or illustrator, a teacher or a museum curator, or if you simply want to prepare a portfolio for entrance to graduate school, we have something for you.

Our program is centered about a vibrant creative community of students and faculty working together towards a common goal of excellence. This feeling of community is made possible by the many opportunities students have to get involved in our program, including extensive access to studio labs after class and on weekends, student clubs and activities, field trips to urban art centers, a visiting artist program and three professional art galleries where you can be inspired by exhibitions of work from local, national and international artists.

We are located in a small, coastal community about 300 miles north of San Francisco. Renowned for its natural beauty.
Our faculty is dedicated to student success and our small classes offer you an opportunity to really get to know your professor. As a student, you can engage in hands-on learning, including internships and docent opportunities at museums and galleries, faculty/student research projects, commercial design and illustration projects, and student teaching on campus and within the community.

In our curriculum, we encourage students to engage in both critical dialogue and visual analysis and to learn to apply creative problem solving to everyday situations. The university’s commitment to environmental and social responsibility helps to create a framework for you to navigate your understanding of contemporary art. We are also dedicated to creating a diverse perspective for students and our art history courses offer students a rich array of topics in both Western and non-Western art.

Our program is an Accredited Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and offers a degree in Art with concentrations in either Studio Art, Art History or Art Education, as well as a certificate program in Museum and Gallery Practices. Our graduates have gone to successful careers as designers, illustrators, entrepreneurs, secondary-school teachers, curators, museum preparators, gallery directors, arts administrators, college professors, jewelers, printers and gallery artists. Our students compete successfully for entrance into the top graduate programs in the country, including CCA, Chicago Art Institute, RISD, Yale, Mills College, School of Visual Art, Cranbrook Academy and Maryland Institute of the Arts.

DEGREE OPTIONS

HSU offers a Bachelors of Art degree in Art with three different tracks of study: Studio, Art Education, and Art History.

BA Art, Art Studio: 54 units
BA Art, Art Education: 58 units
BA Art, Art History: 51 units

Minor available in Art (emphasis in Studio or History)
Certificate available in Museum & Gallery Practices
THE STUDIO CONCENTRATION offers small classes with individual attention and mentoring and large, well-equipped studio facilities. In introductory courses, students learn processes and strategies used in creating works of art in various media through problem solving assignments and accompanying instruction. Students are given the opportunity at the upper division level to concentrate on a particular studio area in depth, allowing them to prepare a portfolio for further professional opportunities or post-graduate study.
Our Ceramics program will give you the experience and skills needed to express yourself in every aspect of the medium. Beginning and Intermediate courses focus on the development of forming and glazing skills, while our Advanced and Honors courses emphasize the development of personal style and will prepare you for a career in the ceramic arts.

Our spacious ceramics facility houses two separate kiln rooms with 14 electric and 4 gas kilns. We are equipped with a large glaze room with a spray booth, a plaster mold-making area, a clay mixing and storage area, throwing and hand building areas, and an outdoor kiln area for raku firings. In addition, there is a separate studio area for our Honors students.

Student artwork (clockwise from top left)
Avery Palmer, Kelley Donahue, Hannah Pierce, and Annakatrin Kraus
In the Drawing program, you will be offered the opportunity to explore your own concepts while progressing through a series of courses designed to strengthen your technical and conceptual skill set. After completion of the foundation course in beginning drawing, you may go on to study the description of the human figure in life drawing and exploration of a variety of thematic content in intermediate and advanced drawing courses.

Illustration is viewed as a discipline tied to text, one that serves to clearly communicate a visual concept. You will develop a strong foundation in traditional, perceptual drawing and painting skills while also being introduced to digital image-making processes. Illustration classes will offer you the opportunity to gain experience creating images for books and magazines, advertisements, graphic novels and more.
Through design study, many of our students go on to find employment in print, web, packaging, publication, information graphics and advertising.

Graphic design is a creative process that combines art and technology to communicate ideas and message from a client to a particular audience. In our program, you will learning industry standard tools, software, and web languages. Students build a strong foundation in visual communication and work toward the development of a entry-level portfolio. Projects reflect the type of work completed at design firms and advertising agencies, ranging from publication design, logomarks and branding, advertising campaigns, web and user-interface design (ux-ui), and packaging design. You will have the opportunity to put your skills into practice by participating in design projects for the department, the university and private businesses in the local community.
In our Painting program, you will have the opportunity to develop your own style and direction while acquiring a strong technical foundation in acrylic, oil and mixed media painting. Our program embraces a wide range of approaches to contemporary painting, with the focus on developing individual expression.

Our facilities include two large studio classrooms/labs with lighting grids, a fully equipped wood shop for building supports and individual studio space for students enrolled in the Honors program. Whether you are interested in teaching, design or illustration, preparing a portfolio for graduate school or becoming a professional exhibiting artist, we have something for you.
In our Photography program, you will have the opportunity to explore the expressive nature of the medium while developing a strong foundation in analog and digital skills. You will have the opportunity to master all aspects of the photograph process - from traditional darkroom photography to color digital imaging.

Our facilities include a chemical lab for black and white printing, a digital lab equipped with large format printers, and a lighting studio. Whether you are interested in pursuing commercial, editorial, or fine art photography, you will be encouraged to develop your personal style.
The Printmaking program will allow you to express yourself in this versatile medium through linocuts, woodcuts, etchings and engravings, monotypes and lithographs. You will be able to develop your own personal style while learning techniques and processes that will challenge you and reward tenacity and focus.

Our printmaking studio allows students to work in the areas of relief, intaglio, lithographic and monotype processes, with three etching presses, three lithography presses and a proof press for wood engravings. Extensive open studio hours every week, supervised by student teaching assistants, allow you to work outside of class and connect with your fellow students.
The Sculpture program at HSU will lead you through a comprehensive studio experience. Here you will be given tools to transform your ideas into the three-dimensional form, from small, intimate objects to large-scale public installations.

Our 6,000 square foot facility offers a well-developed metal casting and fabrication area. Our extensive and well-equipped studio makes it possible for mold making, casting, fabric construction, mixed media and woodworking. In sculpture you are encouraged to fabricate, carve, mold and cast your own unique artistic vision.

Student artwork
Top: Melissa Hinkle
Right: Dorian Daneau
The Jewelry and Small Metals program offers a creative environment in which you can explore ideas and concepts through the creation of wearable jewelry, conceptual work and functional and non-functional objects. You will be provided with a series of courses and workshops designed to give the technical skills you need to realize your ideas.

Our extensive and well-equipped studio allows you to explore everything from basic fabrication to casting in precious metals. The wide array of tools at your disposal include basic fabrication tools, spray etcher, rolling mills, break, presses and band saws, enameling kilns, hand tools and casting equipment. In addition, we provide a separate well-equipped studio for students enrolled in our Honors program.
With its focus on experiential learning and engagement with community, the Art Education program will give you the tools you need to help others create and appreciate art. Through art docent and service learning projects, you will develop and teach California standards-based visual art curricula in both campus and community-based settings.

The HSU Art Department offers an approved Subject Matter Waiver Program through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Art Education curriculum provides you with the foundation to successfully teach the visual arts in K-12th grades, and offers professional preparation for entering California’s mandated fifth-year, single subject credential program. (Students must apply to the fifth-year program and pass an Art Department review and School of Education interview prior to admission into the credential program.)

Art Education taught me to be prepared to be able to create and present a lesson while giving me the confidence that I have the tools to become a teacher. It is one thing to learn through lecture and books however Art Education is taught through a hands on approach.

- Hilary Holmes, ’13
Humboldt State’s Art History program gives students an opportunity to study the visual culture of the world, from prehistoric cave art to works being produced by artists active today. The art history curriculum focuses on the analysis and interpretation of art, with a particular emphasis on critical thinking and writing. Courses include research projects and oral presentations, which help students develop their analytic and communication skills. These skills prepare students to pursue a wide variety of careers, such as teacher, museum curator, art lawyer, visual resources librarian, art consultant, appraiser, editor, and art conservator.

Art history students enjoy many extra-curricular opportunities, including the Humboldt Art History Association (HAHA), a student club for art history majors. For those interested in museum or gallery work, the Student Access Gallery (SAG) provides paid, hands-on opportunities to manage and install exhibitions of student art across campus. The Art Department also regularly offers a semester-long Visiting Artist Lecture Series, which brings contemporary artists to campus for presentations of their work.
The Certificate in Art Museum & Gallery Practices will put your education into practice and provide you with the education and experience needed to successfully begin a career in art museums and galleries around the nation. You will gain the skills employed by gallery and museum professionals while producing fine arts exhibitions in the HSU First Street Gallery, the Reese Bullen Gallery and the Goudi’ni Native American Arts Gallery and by completing an off-campus internship. Here at HSU, you will practice curatorship, registration, art preparation, collections management, exhibition design, and installation, with our galleries as the classroom.

Many of our graduates have gone on to careers in museum and gallery work or to graduate studies in arts administration and museum studies.

My internship at First Street Gallery has taught me how to work effectively with a team of people, which I think is a significant skill to have when working in the real world.

Brooke Benedix, ’11
Faculty

Julia Alderson
Associate Professor, Art History
Ph.D, Rutgers University

Joanne Berke
Professor, Art Education
MFA, Tyler School of Art
Temple University

Mimi Dojka
Lecturer, Art Education
MA, San Francisco State University

Rick Febré
Assistant Professor, Graphic Design
MFA, State University of New York at New Paltz

Brandice Guerra
Assistant Professor, Drawing and Illustration
MFA, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Nicole Jean Hill
Associate Professor, Photography
MFA, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Heather Madar
Associate Professor, Art History, Ph.D, University of California at Berkeley

Michele McCall-Wallace
Gallery Director
Museum + Gallery Practices
MA, Humboldt State University

James Moore
Lecturer, Painting + Drawing
MFA, Art Center College of Design

Kris Patzlaff,
Professor, Jewelry + Small Metals
MFA, Southern Illinois University

Keith Schneider
Professor, Ceramics
MFA, University of California at Santa Barbara

Sondra Schwetman
Associate Professor, Sculpture
MFA, University of Houston

Teresa Stanley
Professor, Painting + Drawing
MFA, University of California at Berkeley

Sarah Whorf
Professor, Printmaking
MFA, California State University at Long Beach
Art Department
Humboldt State University
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, California 95521

www.humboldt.edu/art

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Osvaldo Ricardo and Michael Royce