



MFA PHOTOGRAPHY ONLINE Final Review Guidelines

PRIOR TO YOUR FINAL REVIEW

- In the semester prior to your Final Review, you must contact your Academic Advisor to Petition to Graduate.
- Thoroughly review the Final Review guidelines (*general AND photo specific guidelines*) and clarify any questions you may have in regards to the requirements. Questions can be addressed to PH department AAU full time faculty or to your Department Directors who can answer specific questions about the Final Review process.

FINAL REVIEW PRESENTATION

- Final Review presentations can be made either online (through Cyber Campus) or on-Campus in San Francisco. In either case, your written Thesis Summary must be sent to San Francisco in advance of your presentation, for review by the Final Review Committee. If presenting online, you must also send your Final Prints, your archive materials for the Library, and your Directed Study Journal(s) in advance, to be received at least 2 weeks prior to your review (1 week in advance in the Summer semester).
- Signups for your presentation are made through the Final Review Coordinator: finalreview@academyart.edu. All Final Reviews are held at the end of the semester you intend to Graduate. Once your review has been scheduled and confirmed, you will receive instructions regarding sending in your work prior to your review date. Final Review information is also available by contacting Tamara Hubbard at: THubbard@academyart.edu.

FINAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

OVERVIEW

The Final Presentation is intended to satisfy the Director and the Review Committee that you have completed your Final Project to a high level of accomplishment with thoroughness and rigor. While the Final Presentation is in some ways the culmination of the student's efforts related to his or her project, the real experience of the project will have been done in the doing of it. The student should not expect the presentation to be an event designed for his or her fulfillment but rather, a close review by the department of the work done and its quality in relation to the granting of the Master of Fine Art degree.

All MFA Photography Students presenting for their Final Review must prepare and have the following ready for their presentation (please read specifications to follow):

- **Thesis Project Images, as proposed in your Midpoint (16–20 images in most cases).**
- **Written Presentation**
- **Oral Presentation with PowerPoint**
- **Hardcopy Directed Study Journal(s)**
- **Professional Portfolio** (Art for Commerce and Photojournalism/Documentary students only)
- **Gallery-Ready work** (Fine Art students only)
- **Final Project Materials for Library Archive**

All physical materials submitted must be clearly labeled with your name, student ID number, date of presentation, major and project title. If your materials are incomplete, the granting of your degree will be delayed.

PRESENTATION (*Additional details are included in the Final Review Handbook*)



FINAL PROJECT IMAGES

- For your Review, you will display your completed Thesis Project images, a cohesive series or group of photographs that represent the culmination of your Thesis Project.
- You must present the number of images proposed at your Midpoint Review (16-20 in most cases)
- All work presented for the Final Review should be created after successfully passing the Midpoint Review.
- The images must exemplify your highest level of technical proficiency.
- The images must be professionally presented, and mounted and matted or otherwise presented in a manner that is appropriate for the work. Fine Art presentations must follow gallery presentation standards.
- The images should be printed and presented at the size and style proposed at your Midpoint Review.

WRITTEN PRESENTATION

The Final written presentation must be received 2 weeks prior to your Review date. Please submit four (4) copies, bound and of professional quality, and 1 CD of the written presentation in PDF format to the Final Review Coordinator. For the Written Presentation:

- Review the general AAU Final Review guidelines, but be certain to follow the Photography-specific guidelines, and the MFA Photography Final Review Handbook when writing your written proposal.
- Be sure the proposal is grammatically correct and free of spelling errors and typos. The Academy Resource Center (ARC) offers support for both your written and oral presentation.
- Your written presentation must include the following sections. Requirements for each of these sections are detailed in the Final Review Written Presentation Checklist (attached at the end of this Document):
 - **Cover Page**
 - **Autobiography**
 - **Resume**
 - **Abstract**
 - **Thesis Project Summary**
 - **Influences**
 - **Statement of Future Plans**
 - **Timeline**
 - **Images**
- Your written Presentation must significantly reflect the evolution of your project since your Midpoint Review. Do NOT simply recap what you wrote in your Thesis Project Proposal at your Midpoint Review.

ORAL PRESENTATION

- Your oral presentation should be presented in approximately 20 minutes.
- Recap your written document as your presentation.
- Refer to your images as appropriate.
- Discuss other visual artists work related to the project and how they influenced your way of thinking.
- Plan to answer questions and defend your work at the end of your presentation.
- A PowerPoint presentation accompanying your oral proposal is *required*. If you present Online, Cyber Campus will contact you prior to your review to show you how the online Review process works and how to use your PowerPoint during your oral presentation.
- Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to insure your comfort level during the presentation. Such practice is essential to your preparedness for your Review.



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

ORIGINAL DIRECTED STUDY JOURNALS

You must send in your Directed Study Journal(s) for Committee Review. These must be received with your written books at least 2 weeks prior to your review date (1 week in advance if presenting in the Summer semester). Your journal(s) will be returned to you.

- Your Journal(s) must cover all 18 units of Directed Study
- Your Journal(s) must record the progress you have made with your project between your Midpoint Review and your Final Review
- Be sure to keep prints and other documents, pertaining to the progress of your Thesis Project; include the dates the images were taken and the dates they were printed.

Please refer to the MFA Photography Directed Study Guidelines for further details about the Directed Study Journal Requirements.

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO (Art for Commerce and Photojournalism/Documentary students only)

- Present a copy of your Professional Portfolio, which you intend to show to prospective clients, galleries, or photography organizations.

GALLERY-READY WORK (Fine Art students only)

- You must present a minimum of 1 of your final images framed in a professional manner or otherwise professionally presented, as ready to be hung in a gallery.
- The presentation must substantially support the overall concept for the image

FINAL PROJECT FOR LIBRARY

- **Images:** The Department requires you to submit 3 CDs containing copies of your work) along with 1 set of slides or prints of your final project imagery. Your images should be presented in a book or binder, in an organized manner. These materials must fit in the archival box (see below). CD images must be saved at 10" on the longest dimension at 300 ppi.
- **Archival Box-** This must be paper, not plastic and acid free. The suggested size is 9" x 12" and your Final Project visuals must fit inside. Archival Boxes are typically available through art stores. Please send your archival box when you ship your images.
- Be sure to label your Library materials on the front and sides with your name, student ID number, date of presentation, major and project title.

All Final Review materials must be *received* no later than 2 weeks prior to your Review (1 week in advance if presenting in the Summer semester). Send materials to:

MFA Graduate Office, 79 New Montgomery, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105 Attn: Final Review Coordinator

Note: Your Final Images, Portfolio, any framed work and your Journal(s) will be returned to you after your Review with pre-paid return shipping.

CONTACT:

Final Review Coordinator:

finalreview@academyart.edu

(415) 618-6297



FINAL REVIEW WRITTEN PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

CHECKLIST: In your professionally-bound Written Presentation, you must include the following sections, *in this order and with a separate heading for each*:

- Cover Page**
- Autobiography**
- Resume**
- Abstract**
- Thesis Project Summary**
- Influences**
- Statement of Future Plans**
- Timeline**
- Images**

Below is a Section by Section checklist of all of the necessary information to include in your proposal.

COVER PAGE

The Cover of your Written Proposal must include the following:

- Project title
- Project subtitle (if needed)
- Your Name
- Student ID Number
- School and Department name (Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Photography)
- Date of Presentation
- Time of Presentation
- Area of Concentration (Fine Art, Art for Commerce, Documentary, etc.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

For your autobiography, you will *briefly* address the following in *no more than one page in length*:

- Explain who you are
- Explain how you became involved in the arts, and with photography in particular
- Discuss what led you to enroll at the Academy of Art University
- You may also include other information that seems appropriate or relevant to your work as an artist/photographer, such as:
 - Relevant Work experiences
 - Relevant Educational experiences
 - Relevant Personal experiences

You want to be sure to write your autobiography in a cohesive and succinct manner that is as engaging as possible, and provides proper background and context for the rest of the written presentation.



RESUME

You will need to include a formal resume in your proposal. This is a 1-2 page professional document that lists your work experiences, skills and education. In addition, your resume provides the reader with your contact information and a list of past experience, including:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Additional contact information such as email, website, etc.
- Recent gallery showings, exhibitions, publication, etc.
- Educational background (beyond High School)
- Recent or pertinent employment history
- Other recent information relevant to your career as an artist/photographer, including teaching experience, professional memberships, volunteer experiences, relevant skills, etc.

ABSTRACT

The Project Abstract is a short but detailed summary of your Thesis Project. It should articulate clearly to the academically minded audience the details of your Thesis Project. By reading this abstract, the reader should have a solid sense of what you have created without having to read the full proposal. The Project Abstract should include what the project was about, why the project was created, and what photographic methods you used fulfill the intent of the project. The Project Abstract should be approximately 150 words. There are a number of important elements to consider for inclusion in your abstract:

- Area of emphasis (Fine Art, Art for Commerce, Photojournalism/Documentary)
- Genre
- Subject matter
- Reason for choosing the subject matter
- Reason for creating the project
- What the project looks like (aesthetics, style, formal elements, etc.)
- How you are creating the project (style of capture, mode of processing, etc.)
- How many images you are presenting at your Final Review
- How you have presented the project (size and presentation)

THESIS PROJECT FINAL REPORT

The Thesis Project Final Report is the focal point of the written presentation. In this section of the document, you will relay the details of your completed project to the Panel. You will want to address the following in an articulate and well thought-out manner:

- Define your Thesis Project in detail (what, why, how)
- Describe your personal interest and involvement with the project
- Describe Background information on your topic and how you came about choosing this project
- Describe any challenges you encountered with the project and how these challenges were overcome
- Describe what you feel you have learned from the project
- Include your area of concentration and your specific genre of work
- Include the form of the final project (medium/quantity, size, presentation format)

The Thesis Project Final Report is the most involved portion of your written proposal, and must describe all of the information that you feel the Review Panel should know about the development and completion of your Thesis Project. There is no specified length for the Thesis Project Proposal. Though it is always a good idea to be concise in your wording, this section should be as long as it needs to clearly and thoroughly articulate your ideas.



INFLUENCES

The Influences section in your proposal needs to identify and describe your artistic influences in making the project. You should identify at least three artists as influences. You will want to identify:

- Who your artistic influences are
- What part of their work inspired you
- How their art has influenced your work

Though this section does not need to be long, you will want to be specific in describing how and why these artists have influenced you and/or your work. Your influences do not all need to be photographers, as photography is often inspired by other mediums, such as painting or sculpture. Examples of artists work should be included.

STATEMENT OF FUTURE PLANS

The Statement of Future Plans should identify the following:

- Identify the next steps you will be taking with your Thesis Project. Will you be continuing with the project? Do you have plans for exhibiting or publishing the work?
- Identify your professional goals, including what steps you have taken toward meeting these goals.

TIMELINE

The timeline is where you need to:

- List by semester all of the courses that you have taken to date that apply to your MFA degree completion, including the course number, title, and instructor of each course.
- Identify your anticipated graduation date (semester/year)

IMAGES

In the bound Written Proposal, you will need to include photographs that you will be presenting at your Review. These images can be included in a separate "Images" section at the end, or they can be integrated in the body of the Thesis Project Proposal section. You need to include:

- All of the images that you will be presenting in your Final Review (16-20 in most cases)
- The Dates that you took these photographs
- Include no more than 4 images per page

These images do not need to be printed and presented as you will do for your actual portfolio of prints; however, you should make sure that the quality of the prints and paper is such that the images can be clearly seen, as the Review Panel will view these images prior to seeing the actual prints. A simple Xerox copy of the prints, for example, would not be sufficient; however, a representative print on photo-quality paper would be.