



MFA PHOTOGRAPHY ONLINE Midpoint Review Guidelines

PRIOR TO MIDPOINT REVIEW

- Prior to your midpoint proposal, it is required that you take PH 680_OL, Thesis Project Seminar. This class is specifically designed to help you prepare for your Midpoint presentation and is best taken the semester immediately before your Midpoint Review.
- Thoroughly review the Midpoint Review guidelines (*general AND photo specific guidelines*) and clarify any questions you may have in regards to the requirements. Questions can be addressed to: Tamara Hubbard, FT Faculty, MFA Photography Online: THubbard@academyart.edu.

MIDPOINT PRESENTATION

- Midpoint presentations can be made either online (through Cyber Campus) or onsite in San Francisco.
- Whether presenting Online or On-Campus, 4 copies of your Written Proposal, bound in a professional manner and 1 CD that contains a .pdf document of your Written Proposal must be received by the Graduate office 2 weeks prior to your Midpoint Review (one week in advance in the Summer semester).
- If presenting Online, all 12-16 of your Midpoint images (mounted and/or matted in a professional manner) must be received by the Graduate office 2 weeks prior to your Midpoint Review (1 week in advance in the Summer semester).
- Signups for your presentation are made through the Midpoint Review Coordinator: midpointreview@academyart.edu. Presentations typically start in the third or fourth week of the Fall or Spring Semesters and in the second week in the Summer semester. Plan ahead and be prepared to present your proposal by the beginning of the semester. Once your review has been scheduled, you will receive instructions regarding sending in your work prior to your review date.

PRESENTATION

PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION

- You must present 12 to 16 cohesive photographs that specifically relate to your Midpoint Proposal. These images should represent the beginning of your Thesis Project and the specific direction of where the project will be going.
- The work must exemplify your highest level of technical proficiency.
- The images should be printed in the size of your proposed final work.
- The photographs must be professionally presented-- mounted or matted or presented in a manner that is appropriate for the work (framing is not necessary for the Midpoint Review unless it is an integral part of the work). The mounting and matting of the work can be prepared by you or by a professional as long as the presentation is of professional, archival quality.
- Additional work: Have a few examples from past classes available that, while not directly related to your project, may help to clarify the progress of your work and may be useful to show if requested. Do not display these unless you feel they are relevant to your proposal. You may opt to include them in your power point presentation.

WRITTEN PROPOSAL

- Review the general Midpoint Review Guidelines, and be sure to follow the Photography-specific Guidelines and the MFA Photography Midpoint Review Handbook when writing your written proposal.
- Be sure the proposal is grammatically correct and free of spelling errors and typos.
- Be sure you have a clear concept. The concept should include what the project is about, why you have chosen the project, and how you plan on implementing the project.



- Declare your intention of working towards Fine Art, Art for Commerce or Photojournalism/Documentary and define your involvement. (For example, if you are working in documentary explain whether you are involved with a photo essay, a series of individual photographs, or plan to exhibit the work as the main medium for structuring your efforts.)
- Describe your proposal in detail and ensure that it is not too narrow or overly broad in scope. Address what led you to the project, how you expect your project to evolve and what challenges you foresee. Your project must also allow room for growth through investigation, exploration and risk taking.
- Your written proposal must include the following sections. Requirements for each of these sections are attached at the end of this document, and are also detailed in the Midpoint Review Handbook.
 - **Cover Page**
 - **Autobiography**
 - **Resume**
 - **Abstract**
 - **Thesis Project Proposal**
 - **Influences**
 - **Statement of Professional Goals**
 - **Timeline**
 - **Images**

ORAL PRESENTATION

- Your oral presentation should be presented in approximately twenty minutes.
- Recap your written document as your presentation, but do NOT read your paper verbatim.
- A PowerPoint presentation, accompanying your oral proposal, is required. If presenting 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.
- Refer to your images as appropriate in your presentation.
- You may use notes, flashcards, or prompts in your PowerPoint as cues to help you remember the information during your oral presentation. Do not read your entire presentation.
- Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to insure your comfort level during the presentation. Be prepared to answer questions when you are finished.

SUMMARY

- After your presentation, questions will be asked by the Committee for clarification on your project. Be prepared to defend and/or clarify your proposal, as needed.
- After the questioning, the committee will recess in private to discuss the merits of your proposal. Upon reconvening, the committee will present you with one of three outcomes:
 - *Full Pass*. A full pass enables you to immediately enroll for your directed studies classes and work towards the completion of the Final Project.
 - *Conditional Pass*. A conditional pass requires that you amend your written proposal or complete other work before a full pass is approved. This may include expanding or clarifying your written proposal and/or shooting additional photographic images to better show the direction of your Final Project. Specific suggestions will be provided by the Committee for work to be resubmitted.
 - *Non-Pass*. In the event of a non-pass, the committee feels the presentation is not ready to move forward as a Final Project. In this case, you will be asked to complete an additional studio class or classes and/or improve your technical skills and re-present your proposal the following semester.
- Within a few days of completing your Midpoint Review, you will receive an email from Committee Chair, Will Mosgrove, who will recap the outcome of your Review.

CONTACT

If you have any questions as you prepare for your Midpoint Review, contact:

Tamara Hubbard, FT Faculty, MFA Photography Online

THubbard@academyart.edu



MIDPOINT REVIEW WRITTEN PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

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

- Cover Page**
- Autobiography**
- Resume**
- Abstract**
- Thesis Project Proposal**
- Influences**
- Statement of Professional Goals**
- 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
- Intended 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
 - Career goals

You want to be sure to write your autobiography in a cohesive and succinct manner that is as engaging as possible. Your autobiography is generally the first thing that will be read in your proposal, so be conscientious of how you write this as it will serve as a solid introduction to the rest of the proposal.



RESUME

You will need to include a formal resume in your proposal. This is a one-page professional document that lists your recent (last 10 years) 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 exhibitions
- 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 proposed Thesis Project. It should articulate clearly to the academically minded audience specifically what it is you intend to do. By reading this abstract, the reader should get a solid sense of what you will be doing without having to read the full proposal. The Project Abstract should include what it is you intend to do, why the project is being made, and how you will 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, Documentary/Photojournalism)
- 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 will present for your Final Review
- How you are presenting the project (size and presentation)

THESIS PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Thesis Project Proposal is the focal point of the Written Proposal. In this section of the document, you will relay the details of your proposed 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 involvement with the project
- Describe what led you to the project
- Describe what you feel you will learn from the project
- Describe any challenges you expect to face with the project
- Include your area of concentration and your specific genre of work
- Include how you expect to print and present your work
- Include how you expect to proceed with the project and how you expect to be spending your Directed Study time



(Cont. from previous page)

The Thesis Project Proposal section is the most involved portion of your written proposal, and needs to describe all of the information that you feel the Review Panel should know to consider your project a viable 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 be 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
- Include examples of work created by your Influences

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. This is a good opportunity to utilize your visual vocabulary.

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL GOALS

The Statement of Professional Goals should identify the following:

- Identify your professional goals, including where you would like to be with your work upon graduation and what you would like to be doing 5 years from now
- Identify the ways in which the development of your Thesis project, and knowledge learned in the process, may assist you in the realization of your professional goals

TIMELINE

The timeline is where you need to:

- List by semester the courses that you have taken to date, including the course number, title, and instructor
- List your **anticipated** courses, including course title, for the remainder of your study at AAU, including specifics of how you anticipate spending your 18 units of Directed Study. List the advisors you would like to work with and which classes you may be interested in for Directed Study.
- Identify your anticipated graduation date (semester/year)

IMAGES

In the bound Written Proposal, you will need to include all 12-16 photographs that you will be presenting at your Review. You need to include:

- All 12-16 images that you will be presenting in the Midpoint Review
- The Dates that you took these photographs

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. Include no more than 4 photographs per page.