



*Advancing Art Education*

# Careers in Art and Art Education

## Art & Design Careers

### Preparing to enter an Art/Design School, College, or University as an Art/Design Major

Acceptance to an undergraduate program in art or design is based on many considerations. These vary widely among institutions. For example, some have stringent requirements prior to admission, while others have open admission policies followed by thorough examinations at some point in the program to determine whether the student may continue as an art/design major. For specific application requirements, contact NASAD accredited institutions directly. The suggestions below indicate how you can best prepare during the high school years, not what you must achieve to apply or be accepted. The advice provided describes two things: first, an ideal set of knowledge and skills goals for college-level applicants; second, competencies needed by artists, designers, scholars, and teachers as they practice the various aspects of the profession in college and beyond. In brief, you should learn as much as you can as early as you can.

#### ***Take responsibility for your own development.***

Each art/design student has a unique set of talents, aspirations, and abilities. Although you are in school and probably studying in your community or with a private teacher, it is important to take increasing responsibility for developing your particular abilities toward your specific goals.

Begin by obtaining the admission requirements of schools you may wish to attend—the earlier, the better. Ultimately, you are responsible for choices about how you use your time to prepare for your future. For most art/design professionals, that future involves art/design at the center supported by many other capabilities.

#### ***Draw ‘til you drop.***

Take every opportunity to train your eye by taking courses or studies in drawing. Developing the eye is a lifetime job. The earlier work is started, the better.

#### ***Practice, practice, practice.***

Whatever you do or intend to do in art/design, try to practice it as much as possible. This applies not only to your studio area, but also to other types of work. For example, prospective teachers should try to observe and gain teaching experiences under appropriate supervision, those interested in art/design scholarship or criticism should practice writing and speaking on art/design topics. No level of knowledge or skill that you can attain will be too high.

#### ***See as much art and design as you can.***

Try to see as much art/design from as many historical periods and cultural sources as possible. Ask your teachers or local art/design professionals for recommendations. Try to make sure that you have seen the major works of all types in the particular area of art/design that interests you. Seek more to learn the breadth and depth of the visual world than to enjoy what is already familiar. Whenever possible, see original works. Observe the visual design of the world around you—architecture, product design, fashion design, for example—and spend lots of time with visual media such as books, magazines, films, videos, the Internet, etc.

***Get a sense of art/design history.***

Take opportunities to learn the basics of art/design history. Work with your art teachers, enroll in an AP art history course if it is available in your high school, take classes at your community museum or art school, and otherwise explore opportunities to gain initial acquaintance with this material.

***Become a fluent, effective English speaker and writer.***

As an artist/designer, you will communicate in art/design, but you will also rely heavily on your ability to communicate in words. Everything from teaching, to writing grant proposals, to negotiating, to promoting your interests, to working on teams relies on fluent English skills. Focus attention on learning to speak and write effectively.

***Get a comprehensive high school education.***

Art and design both influence and are influenced by other fields of study: the humanities, mathematics, the sciences, the social sciences, and the other arts—architecture, dance, film, literature, music, and theatre. For entrance into college-level study, you are encouraged to gain a basic overview of ancient and modern history, the basic thought processes and procedures of math and science, and familiarity with works in as many of the other arts disciplines as possible. Many professionals who work with art comprehensively develop a particular sensibility about connections with history and the other arts. Understanding the basics of math and the sciences supports future work in many design areas. Social studies are related to understanding the context for various art and design endeavors.

***Think of everything you study as helping you become a better art/design student.***

As we have said, the best art/design professionals continue to learn throughout their lives. They are always studying and thinking, always connecting what they know about art/design with their knowledge of other fields. Since you never know the direction your career will take, it is wise to spend your high school years gaining the basic ability to understand and work in a variety of fields. Keep art/design at the center of your efforts, but accept and enjoy the challenge of gaining the kind of knowledge and skills in other areas that will support both formal studies at the college level and your art/design career beyond.

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# Careers in Art Education

## Questions about

### Becoming an Art Teacher

How do you know what kind of art education program will best prepare you to become the kind of art teacher you want to be? Programs vary in terms of content and quality, so asking questions when you visit campuses and reading program descriptions carefully will help you make the right choice for your own professional goals. The majority of colleges and universities have their course bulletins on the web and many feature links to specific program descriptions. Your counselor can also provide you with information about the various art education options in your area. The following questions can help you make a more informed choice:

***Does the art education program focus on the content of the visual arts?***

Art education programs should provide you with a broad range of studio options so that you have the ability to teach these processes to your future students. However, you should have the opportunity to develop a greater degree of expertise in at least one studio area. The content of art is not limited to studio practice, and a program that is will not prepare you adequately to teach art in the 21st century. You should also leave the program with a well-developed knowledge of art history so you can understand the importance of works of art and the context in which art has been created from prehistoric times to the contemporary art world of today. You also must be prepared to incorporate this content into your own teaching. A strong art education program should teach you to respond to art using various methods of art criticism allowing you to discover meaning in works of art while developing the skills necessary to teach your future students how to find meaning for themselves. The art education program should also provide you with exposure to aesthetics, a branch of philosophy that explores the nature of art, and prepare you to develop instruction focusing on aesthetic issues appropriate for young people.

***Does the art education program provide prospective teachers with a thorough knowledge of theory and practice in art education methods?***

In other words, does the program prepare you to teach art through coursework addressing how children,

adolescents and young adults learn and develop in art, and does it prepare you to develop age-appropriate instruction incorporating the areas of studio production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics discussed above? Exposure to a range of ideas regarding art education theory and practice will enable you to develop a sound, personal teaching philosophy.

***Does the art education program provide for numerous experiences observing and working with students during your course of study?***

Student teaching, in which you work in a classroom setting under the direction of an experienced art teacher and a college supervisor, is the culmination of the necessary training to become an art teacher. It is the time in which you get to put your ideas into practice and make the important transition from college student to art teacher. However, experiences observing and working with students should occur throughout your program of study, not just during student teaching. The more opportunities you have to observe and assist in art classrooms, the better prepared you will be for teaching.

***Does the art education program include art history content representative of diverse cultures?***

Until fairly recently, courses in the history of art focused primarily on the art of Western Europe. In today's global society, with students of many cultural backgrounds in our schools, it is essential that the art education program offer you the opportunities to learn about the art of other cultures such as Native American, African American, Hispanic American, and Asian American as well as cultures in other parts of the world. This knowledge will enrich your teaching and enable you to make art relevant to all of your students.

***Is the program accredited nationally as a teacher preparation program?***

Accreditation means that a team of outside experts has closely examined the program and found that it offers the coursework necessary to prepare students to teach, and that these courses are taught by qualified faculty. NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design) and NCATE (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) are the two agencies which accredit art education programs. Accreditation by either group ensures that the program has been examined and does meet the necessary criteria.

***What is the range of certification options?***

Individual states set the criteria for certification, a process that attests to the preparation you received and

your ability to teach art to young people. In addition to graduation, many states require passing scores on an examination designed to test knowledge in art and art education. Reciprocal certification agreements also exist between many states making it possible for teachers who are certified in one state to relocate to another without having to take additional teacher examinations. Many art education programs are designed to prepare art teachers for certification K-12, but this is not always the case.

***Is the use of computers and other related technology incorporated into the art education program?***

Contemporary artists work in many non-traditional media including video and digital imagery. Knowledge of these processes will prepare you to give your students the kinds of skills they need to be successful in the workplace and in their lives. The program should also help you gain the skills necessary to use technology in instruction; for example, how to access appropriate websites and use CD-ROMs in your teaching. The computer is a tool and like any other tool, the more you understand how to use it, the more you will be able to use it successfully.

***What kinds of financial aid and student assistance are available?***

This is a question that basically applies to college admission because, generally speaking, incoming students apply for financial assistance as a part of the admissions procedures. Your counselor can give you access to this type of information. Scholarships are also offered to exceptionally qualified incoming art students in many institutions. Usually, these are awarded on the basis of a portfolio of work created while the student was in high school. Some art education programs have specific scholarships awarded on the basis of merit and/or financial need once you have been admitted to the program.

***Will I need a portfolio to get into the art/art education program?***

To get accepted into an art teacher education program, you will need to contact the schools to which you want to apply. Some require a portfolio for admission and some do not. Your current art teacher(s) can assist you in developing your portfolio and the content that needs to be represented. A statement of purpose and goals is also a good idea. Some colleges and universities have guidelines they can send you.

If you are applying for an art scholarship, you will definitely need a portfolio. Contact the art departments you are applying to and request their applications and guidelines.

***What tests if any are necessary to be accepted into the program and for student teaching?***

Teacher education programs generally require a specified grade-point average (GPA) for admission into the program. Additionally, art education programs also establish their own criteria for admittance. Some programs require a portfolio review, pre-professional skills tests, or an essay in addition to the necessary GPA.

## **Questions about Art Education Faculty**

Deciding on the right college or university art education program should also include information about the faculty. The following questions can help you determine if the faculty has the kind of training, experience, and commitment to art education essential to training others to be teachers of art:

***Does the art education faculty have degrees in art education?***

Although not the case at many institutions, at some schools, faculty teaching art education courses and supervising art student teachers have degrees in areas other than art education. It is obviously to your advantage to be trained by faculty who have advanced degrees in the area they teach. Some schools have this information on their websites while at others a simple inquiry is all that is needed.

***Does the art education faculty have teaching experience in the schools?***

It is recommended that art education faculty have experience teaching K-12 students. This has not always been the case. Being trained by professionals who have worked in classrooms themselves and understand its day-to-day challenges and responsibilities will more thoroughly prepare you for the realities you will encounter as a teacher.

***Are the art education faculty active members of their professional organization?***

Many professions require or strongly recommend that you be a member of the professional organization aligned with the profession. For art teachers, that organization is the National Art Education Association (NAEA). Staying professionally involved not only shows commitment to the profession but keeps you up-to-date on the latest information in the field. Attending and participating in regional, state, and national conferences is required in many school districts and provides continual professional development throughout your career. Your memberships and costs to attend conferences are tax deductible. Being trained by faculty who are professionally involved and active strengthens your training. Many art education programs sponsor student NAEA chapters on campus providing students with the opportunity to be part of the professional organization while they are completing the program.

***Is the faculty knowledgeable about the National Standards for the Visual Arts and the Standards for Art Teacher Preparation?***

The National Standards for the Visual Arts specify what students (K-12) need to know and be able to do in the visual arts. 49 out of 50 states have adapted or adopted these standards and use them to determine the content to be covered in classrooms as well as the qualifications teachers must have in order to teach the subject area. The NAEA Standards for Art Teacher Preparation address what colleges and universities need to do in order to prepare effective art teachers capable of meeting local, state, and national visual arts standards. Art education faculty should be knowledgeable about both sets of standards and work to ensure that the program is reflective of their contents.

*Thinking About Teaching Art? Answers for Students, Parents and Counselors [Brochure]. (2000) Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.*

## **An art teacher is:**

- experienced in using diverse art media and studio processes
- knowledgeable about multiple cultural art forms, past and present
- dedicated to making the visual arts accessible and meaningful to all students
- proficient in engaging students in critical response to works of art and visual culture
- skilled at engaging students with a variety of learning styles in the classroom
- sensitive to the needs and interests of individual students
- adept at using a variety of assessment techniques to evaluate teaching and learning
- actively involved in NAEA and state/provincial art education organizations
- committed to ongoing professional development
- an advocate for art education who articulates the importance of student learning in the visual arts to a variety of audiences
- a reflective practitioner who keeps up with the current literature and best practices

# Other Resources

## Bureau of Labor Statistics- Occupational Outlook Handbook

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

The Occupational Outlook Handbook is a nationally recognized source of career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. Revised every two years, the Handbook describes what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, earnings, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations.

### About licensure and certification:

Licensure or certification of art teachers is determined by each state. To find information about licensure/certification in a particular state, use this link to find offices of teacher credentialing, licensure, or certification. The websites listed provide information, resources, and technical assistance on educational matters to the schools and the residents. For your convenience the individual links are listed below:

## Interstate Contract

[http://www.nasdtc.org/docs/NIC\\_2005-2010.doc](http://www.nasdtc.org/docs/NIC_2005-2010.doc)

Most teachers seek employment in the state and county or school district where they reside. However, moving from one state to another and finding a teaching job has been simplified by the Interstate Contract, a mutual agreement by 38 states and the District of Columbia to recognize each other's licenses. Prospective teachers may find information on available positions at state department and school district offices, in county bulletins and newsletters, and on state education department web sites. In addition to the public school system, there are numerous private schools, organized by religious or cultural mission or by academic program. Teachers in 65% of these schools are not required to be licensed by the state, and state requirements vary.

## National Art Education Association

[www.naea.org](http://www.naea.org)

NAEA has several non-commercial links on its web page that offer career and job information, including those to state art education agencies. Also, under the Publication section, you will find information on publications in print available through NAEA with a discount for current NAEA members.

## Weblinks to State Education Agencies

Alabama	<a href="http://www.alsde.edu/">www.alsde.edu/</a>	Montana	<a href="http://www.opi.state.mt.us/">www.opi.state.mt.us/</a>
Alaska	<a href="http://www.eed.state.ak.us/">www.eed.state.ak.us/</a>	Nebraska	<a href="http://www.nde.state.ne.us/">www.nde.state.ne.us/</a>
Arizona	<a href="http://www.ade.state.az.us/">www.ade.state.az.us/</a>	Nevada	<a href="http://www.doe.nv.gov/">www.doe.nv.gov/</a>
Arkansas	<a href="http://arkansased.org/">http://arkansased.org/</a>	New Hampshire	<a href="http://www.ed.state.nh.us/">www.ed.state.nh.us/</a>
California	<a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/">www.cde.ca.gov/</a>	New Jersey	<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/education/">www.state.nj.us/education/</a>
Colorado	<a href="http://www.cde.state.co.us/">www.cde.state.co.us/</a>	New Mexico	<a href="http://www.sde.state.nm.us/">www.sde.state.nm.us/</a>
Connecticut	<a href="http://www.state.ct.us/sde/">www.state.ct.us/sde/</a>	New York	<a href="http://www.nysed.gov/">www.nysed.gov/</a>
Delaware	<a href="http://www.doe.state.de.us/">www.doe.state.de.us/</a>	North Carolina	<a href="http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/">www.dpi.state.nc.us/</a>
D.C.	<a href="http://www.k12.dc.us">www.k12.dc.us</a>	North Dakota	<a href="http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/">www.dpi.state.nd.us/</a>
Florida	<a href="http://www.fldoe.org">www.fldoe.org</a>	Ohio	<a href="http://www.ode.state.oh.us/">www.ode.state.oh.us/</a>
Georgia	<a href="http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/">www.doe.k12.ga.us/</a>	Oklahoma	<a href="http://www.sde.state.ok.us/">www.sde.state.ok.us/</a>
Hawaii	<a href="http://doe.k12.hi.us/">doe.k12.hi.us/</a>	Oregon	<a href="http://www.ode.state.or.us">www.ode.state.or.us</a>
Idaho	<a href="http://www.sde.idaho.gov/">www.sde.idaho.gov/</a>	Pennsylvania	<a href="http://www.pde.state.pa.us/">www.pde.state.pa.us/</a>
Illinois	<a href="http://www.isbe.state.il.us/">www.isbe.state.il.us/</a>	Rhode Island	<a href="http://www.ride.ri.gov/">www.ride.ri.gov/</a>
Indiana	<a href="http://www.doe.state.in.us/">www.doe.state.in.us/</a>	South Carolina	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/">http://ed.sc.gov/</a>
Iowa	<a href="http://www.state.ia.us/educate/">www.state.ia.us/educate/</a>	South Dakota	<a href="http://doe.sd.gov/">http://doe.sd.gov/</a>
Kansas	<a href="http://www.ksde.org/">www.ksde.org/</a>	Tennessee	<a href="http://www.state.tn.us/education">www.state.tn.us/education</a>
Kentucky	<a href="http://www.kde.state.ky.us/">www.kde.state.ky.us/</a>	Texas	<a href="http://www.tea.state.tx.us/">www.tea.state.tx.us/</a>
Louisiana	<a href="http://www.doe.state.la.us/">www.doe.state.la.us/</a>	Utah	<a href="http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/">www.usoe.k12.ut.us/</a>
Maine	<a href="http://www.state.me.us/education/">www.state.me.us/education/</a>	Vermont	<a href="http://www.state.vt.us/educ/">www.state.vt.us/educ/</a>
Maryland	<a href="http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/">www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/</a>	Virginia	<a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/">www.doe.virginia.gov/</a>
Massachusetts	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/">www.doe.mass.edu/</a>	Washington	<a href="http://www.k12.wa.us/">www.k12.wa.us/</a>
Michigan	<a href="http://www.mde.state.mi.us/">www.mde.state.mi.us/</a>	West Virginia	<a href="http://wvde.state.wv.us/">http://wvde.state.wv.us/</a>
Minnesota	<a href="http://education.state.mn.us/">http://education.state.mn.us/</a>	Wisconsin	<a href="http://www.dpi.state.wi.us">www.dpi.state.wi.us</a>
Mississippi	<a href="http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/">www.mde.k12.ms.us/</a>	Wyoming	<a href="http://www.k12.wy.us/">www.k12.wy.us/</a>
Missouri	<a href="http://www.dhe.mo.gov/">www.dhe.mo.gov/</a>		