Department of Interior Architecture

Master of Fine Arts Program in Interior Architecture Handbook

For more information about this program, please contact:

Amanda Gale
Graduate Program Director
ajgale@uncg.edu

Department of Interior Architecture
UNC Greensboro
P.O. Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402

Iarc.uncg.edu/graduate

Cover image by Jessica N. Evans. Thesis work of Monica Davis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The MFA program in Interior Architecture (IARc) is a 60 credit post-professional degree intended to provide opportunities for individuals to develop expertise in a specialized aspect of design that aligns with IARc faculty's area of scholarship. Graduate coursework includes three design studios, research methods, electives, and professional experience that will culminate in a written thesis and public exhibit of design work.

Relationship of the UNCG Catalog to Program Handbooks

The Academic Catalog is the publication that documents all academic policies, regulations, and program requirements for a given academic year for all Graduate students and programs. The student's Catalog Year determines their curriculum requirements. This handbook is a supplement to the UNCG Catalog, intended to expand the information found in the catalog specific to the Department of Interior Architecture. For information regarding important academic regulations, degree requirements, and University policies, students are strongly advised to refer to the UNCG Graduate Catalog at https://catalog.uncg.edu/. Additional information on graduate education at UNCG is available at http://grs.uncg.edu.

Official Program Communication

Email is the official method of university communications. *Students must use their assigned UNCG email address at the uncg.edu domain or they will miss important program communications.* Please include your nine-digit UNCG ID# in all emailed communications with the Graduate School.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student
Much of graduate coursework is independent, therefore, the progress made is up to the student. Thesis topics and studio investigations are self-directed, guided by the chair, and tailored to the individual interests of the student. The thesis chair is there to facilitate the process but it is up to the student to create the drafts and solicit feedback. The student is responsible for being proactive and meeting milestones (see page 2).

Thesis Chair
A graduate student selects a thesis chair by the *end of the fall semester of their first year* in the program. The thesis chair must be graduate level faculty within the IARc department with a related research/creative focus. The chair will work with the student on forming a thesis committee, constructing the plan of study, developing a thesis proposal and studio proposal, and scholarly activites for the thesis/exhibit. All work must be approved by the chair.

The Thesis Committee
A graduate student selects the thesis committee by the *end of the spring semester of their first year* in the program. The thesis committee consists of at least three (3) graduate faculty members, including the chair. At least two committee members must be from IARc. Additional committee members, who do not have graduate faculty status can be part of the committee, however, they are non voting members. The thesis committee approves the plan of study, thesis proposal and thesis.

The Graduate Program Director
The Graduate Program Director (GPD) is the assigned advisor for all graduate students in the program. The students meet with the GPD during advising periods each semester to discuss schedules for the next semester and receive their advising code. The GPD is there to offer guidance on policy, procedures, and any conflicts that arise.

PROGRAM GOALS/ LEARNING OUTCOMES
MFA students are expected to engage in design discourse, problem solving, and research to develop a body of work anchored in our values of promoting ethical, sustainable, inclusive and meaningful built environments. In addition, we expect that our students display a strong sense of professionalism, are independent and critical thinkers, and embrace the present and adapt to the future by means of intellectually informed and thoroughly articulated designs.

Professional Communication
Students will demonstrate competence in speaking to clearly articulate the concepts, process/method, and outcomes.

Scholarly Writing
Students will demonstrate competence in writing to clearly articulate the relevant literature, appropriate method, and accurate outcomes of design scholarship.

Focused Body of Work
Students will create a scholarly body of design work through multiple studio investigations that culminates in a thesis exhibit during the semester the student defends their thesis. Preliminary efforts are presented, and feedback is given by a panel of faculty during studio presentations.
The work presented should comprehensively demonstrate the following: evidence-based design, comprehension of visual language skills, and mastery of appropriate media skills.

CURRICULUM

The curricular requirements can be found at:
https://catalog.uncg.edu/arts-sciences/interior-architecture/interior-architecture-mfa/

The MFA program is designed to be completed in 5-6 semesters when entering with a bachelor's degree in a closely related field; this includes the thesis and exhibit. The length of time is largely dependent on completing the necessary scholarly activities for the thesis. Refer to the milestones.

Students entering through the Accelerated Master's Program (AMP), should expect to complete the degree in 3-4 semesters.

Students who require pre-requisite undergraduate courses to apply for the graduate program should expect to complete the MFA degree in 5-6 semesters once they have begun graduate level coursework. The pre-requisite coursework is an additional year (including two summers) and prepares the students to be successful in the first graduate studio course.

The degree must be conferred within five years.

Continuous Enrollment is defined as completing 1 credit hour one semester during the academic year.

Course add/drops: For university policies and academic calendars, visit https://reg.uncg.edu/

Registration

- You will need an advising code to register. The Graduate Program Director has a code for each student.

- *Independent Studies* [IAR 527 and 601]
  The department and graduate school require a form before allowing you to register for independent study courses. For the university: https://reg.uncg.edu/forms/permission-to-

register-for-independent-study/. The department form is available via google drive, where all forms are stored. Each graduate student and faculty member have access to the folder. Only Graduate level faculty can direct independent study courses

- *Professional Experience* [IAR 600 and 690]
Approval is needed prior to registering for IAR 600 and 690. Instructions for both courses are available via google drive, where all forms are stored. Each graduate student and faculty member have access to the folder. You must enroll in the course <u>during</u> the semester you are gaining professional experience. This cannot happen retroactively.

Grading:
- Grading scales within IARc align with the graduate school, visit https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/#sectioniacademicrequirementsandregulationstext
- To see the grading format for each course, visit: https://catalog.uncg.edu/arts-sciences/interior-architecture/#coursestext

A cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in graduate coursework is required to remain in academic good standing. Any student whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on Academic Probation. For more details regarding Academic probation and eligibility to remain in graduate school visit, https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/#sectioniacademicrequirementsandregulationstext

Computer & software requirements
https://iarc.uncg.edu/undergraduate/computer-requirements/

Professional Experience Waiver:
Students with two years of full-time experience working with a licensed architect or NCIDQ certificate holder may request a waiver from the 3-credit professional experience requirement. If a waiver is granted, you will be required to complete three additional hours of elective coursework.

- To request a waiver, submit a portfolio of professional (nonacademic) work completed and a resume listing the firm, job title, years of experience, and a description of responsibilities to the Graduate Program Director.
- The Graduate Committee will meet monthly during the fall and spring semesters to review waiver requests.
- If you have already obtained your architecture license or NCIDQ certificate a waiver will automatically be granted.

SEQUENCE & TIMELINE (typical program trajectory for full time student)

<u>FALL (1st year)</u>	<u>SPRING (1st year)</u>	<u>SUMMER (1st year)</u>	* thesis proposal must be defended before a student can begin IAR 502
IAR 645 (3)	IAR 631 (3)	IAR 600 / 690 (3-4)	
IAR 501 (6)	Electives (9-12)	Electives (3)	
Electives (3-6 credits)			
Select thesis chair by the end of semester	*Select thesis committee* *Approved plan of study*		
	Defend thesis proposal*		

FALL (2ⁿᵈ year)

IAR 502 (6)

Electives (6-9 credits)

SPRING (2ⁿᵈ year)

IAR 602 (6)

IAR 699 (6)

Notes:

1. Professional experience (IAR 600/690) can be completed any semester, however, it is shown the on the timeline where most students take the course. See Graduate Resources (https://iarc.uncg.edu/graduate/resources/) for "Professional experience packet"

2. Thesis credits can be taken in a single semester or split between two semesters. Thesis credits can only be taken once a thesis proposal has been approved.

3. The particular sequence and timeline can be modified as necessary with the approval of the thesis chair and Graduate Program Director

4. Independent study courses can be used as electives. You may propose an independent study with any graduate faculty. However, the faculty must agree to teach the course and decide on the deliverables.

MILESTONES

Thesis Chair selection
- Selection of the thesis chair occurs by the fall semester of the first year
- A thesis chair must be selected prior to taking IAR 631

Thesis Committee formation
- Selection of the thesis committee occurs by the spring semester of the first year
- A thesis committee must be selected prior to any work on thesis activities (research or creative works)

Plan of Study approval
- Students are required to complete their Plan of Study in consultation with their thesis chair. The form is approved by the thesis committee members and then submitted by the student to the GPD. The GPD routes the Plan of Study to the UNCG Graduate School.
- The Plan of Study should be submitted to the Graduate School before 50% of course work is completed by the student.
- A minimum of 50% of coursework must be at 600 level.

Candidacy Exam [Thesis Proposal defense]
The student will submit a written thesis proposal outlining their proposed research or creative work prior to presenting. During the presentation, the student will answer any questions put forward by the committee. After review, the committee will vote to *pass*, *fail*, or *revise*. Passing the defense is a necessary requirement for proceeding to 2ⁿᵈ year coursework.

- The defense of the thesis proposal is the candidacy exam for the MFA program.
- The thesis proposal must be approved by the committee prior to beginning any thesis activities (research or creative works).
- The exam should be scheduled by the end of the spring semester of the 1ˢᵗ year of graduate coursework (for full time students).
- Students may not proceed to second year coursework until this milestone is complete.
- Students have <u>three attempts</u> to pass the candidacy exam.

- For research involving Human participants, visit https://integrity.uncg.edu/institutional-review-board/
- See appendix for template. Your thesis chair may ask for additional requirements or have a different template they would like you to follow.

Thesis Defense

The student will present their scholarly work and then answer any questions put forward by the reviewers. After the review, the committee will vote to *pass*, *pass with revisions*, or *fail the project*. Passing the defense is a necessary requirement for the successful completion of the degree.

- All graduate students are required to make a public presentation on their thesis. The flyer should be disseminated at least 10 days ahead of the scheduled presentation.
- The thesis document should follow APA formatting.
- The chapters and content will vary based on the methodology. Check with your thesis chair before beginning.
- For examples of past thesis, visit https://iarc.uncg.edu/graduate/past-thesis-titles/
- For university requirements visit https://grs.uncg.edu/enrolled/etd/

Exhibit
- All graduate students are required to publicly exhibit their body of work
- A detailed proposal for the exhibition should be submitted and discussed with your thesis chair.
- The exhibit is held during the same semester of the oral thesis defense.
- In many circumstances, the oral thesis defense will take place during the exhibition timeframe and within the exhibition space.

Planning in advance for comprehensive exams and thesis defense
- The thesis committee chair should approve your thesis proposal and thesis before the document is sent to the committee.
- Allow 10 working days for committee chair(s) and members to read and respond to submitted materials.
- Most faculty members are on a nine-month employment, from August until May. Students should not expect reviews to occur over the summer semester. Students preparing for their directed research, proposal defense, or thesis defense should plan accordingly and communicate with their committee.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & COSTS

Departmental scholarships are available each year. The submission process is online through Spartan Scholarship System [https://uncg.academicworks.com/]. The deadline to apply for scholarships is March 1. Any funding awarded will be applied to the following academic year.

When funding is available, summer research assistantships will be awarded through the Graduate School. The funding varies each year. The Graduate Program Director will announce, via email, the opportunity in the spring. The research activities should be completed over the summer with supervision of the thesis chair. If more people apply than funding is available, the IARc Graduate Committee will vote on which submissions should be sent forward to the Graduate School.

Graduate Assistants

The department awards limited funding to students in the form of Graduate Assistantships, which are based on merit. Students receive assistantships for a year, contingent upon renewal based on performance, covering the fall and spring semesters. Assistantships are awarded for a maximum of two years.

There are several types of graduate assistantships available within the department (https://grs.uncg.edu/financial/assistantships/#1567800037786-e762593c-d4b2). However, the most commonly appointed types are Graduate Teaching Associates (GTAS), who are instructors of record for a course and Graduate Instructional Assistants (GIA), who assist with instruction, such as grading.

- Graduate students will receive documentation regarding assistant responsibilities (hours, supervisor, etc.) prior to the start of the Graduate Assistant work schedule each semester.
- Expect to receive an evaluation at the end of each semester. Plan to reach out to the supervisor at least 2 weeks before the semester ends to schedule the meeting.
- Graduate students will be required to maintain and submit a biweekly timesheet.
- Graduate student must be full time (9 credits) to be eligible for an assistantship and maintain a B average, unless it is their last semester and have fulfilled the program requires.
- For all university policies visit, https://grs.uncg.edu/enrolled/teaching-assistants/

Tuition costs: https://grs.uncg.edu/financial/

BUILDING ACCESS

Studio space
- Graduate students will be assigned a desk on the 4th floor of the Gatewood Studio Arts Building for their use.
- Graduate students will have 24-hour access to the building with their key card.

Computer-Aided Making (CAM)
- Graduate students will be able to use the equipment (laser cutter, plotters, 3D printers, 3D scanner, vinyl cutter,) within CAM during the fall and spring semesters. Summer semester is dependent on department needs. Please let the department know of your needs and plans if you would like access during the summer.
- CAM will have hours posted at the start of the fall and spring semesters
- https://iarc.uncg.edu/facilities/cam/

Woodshop
- Graduate students will be able to use the equipment (CNC) within the woodshop during the fall and spring semesters. Summer semester is dependent on department needs. Please let the department know of your needs and plans if you would like access during the summer.
- The woodshop will have hours posted at the start of the fall and spring semesters and requires an orientation before being allowed to use the equipment.
- https://iarc.uncg.edu/facilities/woodshop/

Ferguson
- The computer lab in Ferguson is available for your use for printing (11x17 or 8.5x 11 format)
- Graduate students will have 24-hour access to the building with their key card.
- https://iarc.uncg.edu/facilities/computer-lab/

POLICIES

There are several university and graduate school policies that are be found at the websites below.

Academic Requirements & Financial and Employment Information:
https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/#prefacetext

Academic and Student Affairs:
https://policy.uncg.edu/category/academic/

Student Code of Conduct:
https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct/

Plagiarism:
https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/violations-and-sanctions/plagiarism/

Nondiscrimination:
https://policy.uncg.edu/category/nondiscrimination/

Health, Safety, and Risk Management:
https://policy.uncg.edu/category/safety-risk/

Establishing In-State Residency for Tuition Purposes. (all supported graduate students are expected to make a good faith effort to become residents of North Carolina as a condition of support renewal)
As a state supported institution, the tuition rate for legal residents of North Carolina is less than the tuition rate for nonresidents. After 12 months of continuous residence in NC, out-of-state students are expected to apply for NC residency in order to qualify for in-state tuition and to be considered for continued support by the Department. All students wishing to claim North Carolina residency must file through the State's Residency Determination Service at https://ncresidency.cfnc.org/residencyInfo/.
In order to qualify as a resident of North Carolina for tuition purposes you must have established legal residence ("domicile") in North Carolina and maintained that legal residence for at least twelve months before you apply for classification as a North Carolina resident. In addition to this twelve-month physical presence requirement, there are numerous other factors that must be considered in determining whether or not an individual is a resident for tuition purposes.

Domicile is a legal term defined as a place where a person intends to remain and live permanently, and the place a person intends to return to after any absence. Permanency is the key. Thus, a person who lives in a place for a temporary purpose, for a vacation or to attend college and who intends to live elsewhere when that purpose is accomplished, is not considered to be a legal resident for tuition purposes.

In order to obtain an in-state residency status for tuition purposes, State Administrators must be able to conclude from the information you provide them that your intent is to make North Carolina your permanent dwelling place. Rather than a single action, it is a cluster of events that must produce a preponderance of circumstantial evidence suggesting your intent to remain in North Carolina permanently. In other words, have you done the kinds of things that a permanent resident would do, or have you been acting like a temporary visitor? Each case has its own set of facts and there is no set checklist of items that will guarantee that you will be classified as a resident for tuition purposes.

However, some important information that you are likely to be asked to supply is the following:
- When did you sign your lease, or purchase a home?
- Have you lived there for 365 days? (or somewhere in NC for that length of time)
- When did you obtain North Carolina Driver's License?
- When did you register your vehicle in North Carolina?
- When did you register to vote in North Carolina?
- Where and when did you last vote?
- Where do you keep your personal property?
- Have you filed a North Carolina Income Tax return indicating that you were a resident during the last tax year?

- Which community or volunteer activities are you involved with off-campus?
- Where did you live before moving to North Carolina?
- How much do others provide for you financially and how much do you provide on your own, either through savings, loans, scholarships, tuition support, stipends, etc.?
- Were you recruited to work as a graduate assistant through our highly-competitive process, and are you currently working as a graduate assistant?

There will likely be other questions, but these should give you an indication of the types of questions that will be asked on your residency application.

Extension Status.
Permission to enroll in extension courses requires verification by the committee chair that the student is making satisfactory progress. Students in extension status are ineligible for state-funded support; they may purchase NC Blue Health Insurance.

Thesis Proposal Template

Understand that the research proposal is NOT your thesis. It is how you *propose* to do your thesis. The main purpose of the thesis proposal is to explain your plan (and process) to your committee. As such, it should be concise, thorough, and *clearly written*. No committee will accept a proposal that they do not understand, therefore you need to include details about how you plan to complete the scholarly activities.

The research proposal should be 10-12 pages (*not including figures, references, and title pages*) outlining the following:
- The context for your study
- The scholarly question / objectives
- Key literature
- Design and methods
- Expected outcomes
- Timeline for development
- List of references

Let's look at each of these pieces individually:

context
This is the introduction. Typically, this is informed from your literature review. It introduces key issues that surround your study. It sets the stage for the study and concludes with arguments leading up to the need for your main research question. This is where you discuss the significance – i.e., why is this research important. There is no mention of methods, expected outcomes, or anything else here.

scholarly question / objective
Begin by stating the main research objective, this is often framed as the purpose of the study before listing the research questions. The research questions are also operational, that is, they are the questions you will use to examine the larger issue. You should identify the variables (independent or dependent variables) and provide definitions. Try to be very clear and precise. Some students find it useful to create a table where the columns have questions and the theoretical construct that supports each one.

literature
Here you have a summary of key points in the literature you have already examined. *This is NOT the literature review of your thesis*--leave that for later. What you want to do here is *summarize* all the different but *relevant* issues that pertain to your study. Make sure to include any literature that you are using for variables, theory, research design or instrumentation. You will NOT write about the literature in full detail here, but you will be expected to do so in your thesis. It is important to use subheadings that group the readings per topic. Include in-text citations.

study design
The study design is a description of your overall plan for the study. This is also referred to as a method. Here you want to state and then explain your overall approach, e.g. a type of case study, an empirical approach, a data driven approach, an ethnography, a historiographic approach, a benchmarking study,

etc. Then you will need to break this down to explain the methods on which you will rely to inform your research and to analyze the data/information you obtain--surveys, interviews, observations, experimentation, journals, expert consensus, statistical analysis, etc. etc. Think about this section as describing set-by-set, how you plan to complete the study (i.e., how are you gathering data, where are you getting the data, when will you get the data, etc.). Keep in mind that in this section you *must* demonstrate how your study design and the methods you have identified and selected lend themselves to answering your different questions. Finally, it is important that you be aware of any limitations inherent to your approach and methods, so here you *must* also discuss the limitations of your study. This is the most important section of your thesis proposal.

expected outcomes

Here is where you share your vision for the results of your study. In this section you should reiterate and expand upon the significance of your study--basically answer the question *why should we care?* How will you present your findings: tables/diagrams? webpage? design project? object? publication? protocol or method? other? How will your findings contribute to the body of knowledge of interior architecture, and how will they benefit society at large?

timeline

For completing your thesis you want to allocate time for the different stages of your study--e.g. preliminary exploration, travel, data collection, data analysis, writing, etc. Creating the timeline will help you figure out what is feasible and when you are projecting to graduate. This may be presented as a bulleted list or table in chronological order, or graphic. You also want to include how your studio coursework (502 and 602) will fit in with the stages of your thesis project in the timeline.

references

Include references in APA format for those sources that you have referenced with in-text citations.

appendices

Include any instruments (e.g., surveys, interview questions, focus group template), consent forms, and documents as relevant to your study.