

**MFA in Creative Technologies
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Plan**

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Program Contacts:

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Summary

The MFA program in Creative Technologies (CT) centers commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a fundamental value of responsible contemporary practice at the intersections of visual art, creativity, and technology. Keen awareness of and competencies in ethical navigation of issues of diversity and inclusion are crucial for graduate student professional, artistic, and intellectual success. As such, the CT MFA program is committed to compliance with the Diversity and Inclusion Requirement set by the Graduate School in the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A.

Principles of Community

Graduate students entering the CT program must commit to upholding the "Virginia Tech Principles of Community" for the duration of their MFA. Incoming graduate students receive an introduction to the Principles as part of their onboarding orientation process.

School of Visual Arts Diversity Requirements for CT MFA Students

Students completing the CT MFA must complete the following two requirements as part of their MFA degree within the School of Visual Arts (SOVA):

1. Complete "*Creating an Inclusive Climate*" course available here:
<https://tlos.vt.edu/learn/pdn.html>
2. Complete "*Creating an Inclusive Workplace*" course available here:
<https://tlos.vt.edu/learn/pdn.html>
3. Complete *ART 5854G* before graduation. This is a required part of the curriculum for all CT MFA students and may not be substituted with other courses. *ART 5854G* specifically addresses intersectionality, critical race theory, and other important issues of diversity and inclusion within contemporary creative practice at the intersections of art and technology.

Additional Intersections

Graduate students in CT have access to a wide range of resources and opportunities to facilitate deepened engagement with diversity over the duration of their MFA program.

SOVA curricular alignments include a great number of courses that integrate themes of diversity, identity, and social transformation. Some of these courses center creative studio practice, and others are art history and/or theory courses that look closely at highly specific eras, contexts, or communities. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to take such courses throughout the pursuit of their degree.

The Future Professoriate Certificate, offered through the VT Graduate School, is a strongly encouraged addition for CT MFA students who aspire towards professional academic careers. This certificate program includes options for deepened curricular engagement with diversity, such as through *GRAD 5214, Diversity and Inclusion in a Global Society*, and *GRAD 5204, Citizen Scholar Seminar*.

Visiting artists, speakers, and exhibitions provide further opportunities for MFA students to contend with diversity, equity, and inclusion. As part of SOVA's awareness that it is important for students to see themselves reflected in the artists they engage with, SOVA leadership and faculty regularly facilitate artist visits with diverse creative practitioners within the context of courses, as part of school-wide efforts and events, and as part of SOVA sponsored art and media exhibitions on campus.

The SOVA Diversity Committee and CAUS Diversity Committee both provide opportunities for possible student committee membership, and subsequent contribution to the committee's plans and initiatives around DEI issues and goals.

Upper level courses outside of SOVA additionally contribute to the makeup of the typical MFA student's Plan of Study, and often provide DEI learning opportunities. With awareness of courses in adjacent programs and departments, MFA students are able to regularly engage with social, cultural, and intersectional themes and, subsequently, access a widened academic and intellectual university community. For example, MFA students have taken upper-level courses that engage diversity in the Performing Arts, Film, Africana Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, American Indian Studies, etc.

Intersection with faculty research provides a further nexus unique to the graduate student experience in SOVA. Many SOVA faculty members directly engage with themes of diversity, equity, inclusion, representation, identity, and history as part of their creative and intellectual output. CT MFA students interested in further exploring

DEI issues find numerous rich opportunities to learn from, interface with, and even directly contribute to dynamic, public-facing faculty research. In the past this has ranged from CT MFA students leveraging technical and creative expertise as part of faculty-led research teams, to the co-authoring of artworks with faculty, co-presenting research alongside faculty at conferences, and developing collaborative creative artworks works for exhibitions.

Available Avenues of Redress

Students with complaints of misconduct are strongly encouraged to initiate timely processes in which the department and targets of complaints have opportunities to appropriately respond. Virginia Tech has many formal means to address misconduct. Students may initiate these processes by sharing complaints with a faculty member and/or departmental or university authorities. Offices and resources that may receive and respond to complaints are summarized below.

Creative Technologies MFA Program Director — discussion of concerns related to graduate student integrity and civility within the MFA program, all of which remain in confidence other than sexual harassment/assault. Mention of sexual harassment/assault will always result in a phone call to Human Resources Title IX coordinators.

Graduate Student Ombudsperson — discussion of concerns related to treatment by others in the university, all of which remain in confidence other than sexual harassment/assault. Mention of sexual harassment/assault will always result in a phone call to Human Resources Title IX coordinators.

Human Resources, Title IX — reports of sexual harassment/assault. Reports result in HR officer outreach to alleged victims, who then choose whether to authorize continued investigation.

Student Conduct, in the Dean of Students Office — reports of concerns about student conduct, including disruption, threats, incivility, and harassment.

Graduate Honor System — reports of violations of academic integrity.

For **CONFIDENTIAL** discussions of issues of civility, you may contact:

The Women's Center's Counseling staff (concerns about gendered misconduct, sexual assault, sexual harassment), and the **Cook Counseling Center**.



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