MFA Graduate Application
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do you accept applications on a rolling basis?
No, the department of Design Media Arts accepts applications only once a year – for fall quarter admission.

When is the application due?
The Design Media Arts MFA application is due by January 9 for Fall quarter admission. This is a strict deadline. Late, incomplete, or hard-copy applications will not be considered.

What are the portfolio requirements?
Students are accepted into the MFA program in media arts based on evidence of academic achievement and creative talent. A portfolio consisting of up to ten (10) pieces of original work [up to five (5) of which can be videos] is required. Select your best current works that represent your media emphasis and potential for advanced specialized study. DMA’s MFA program in media arts is not a graphic design program. Traditional graphic design portfolios will not be considered.

*Note: A maximum of five (5) pieces of videos is allowed in your portfolio. Each video file may not exceed two (2) minutes. A link to the full video can be provided in the description box after the file has been uploaded.

Still images, interactive media, and sound will also be accepted. Interactive projects such as websites or games should be submitted as a still shot or video. A still shot or video documentation of an interactive project can also be accompanied by a link to the actual project.

Please see the DMA MFA Application Information for instructions on file sizes and types.

Where do I submit my portfolio?
Submit your portfolio only through the UCLA Application for Graduate Admission.

When is the portfolio due?
The portfolio must be uploaded to the UCLA Application for Graduate Admission by January 9th.

What are the application requirements?
Visit the DMA website to see our application requirements.
Can I apply to more than one graduate program?
No, applicants can only apply to one graduate program at UCLA.

Is the MFA program in Design Media Arts a STEM-designated program?
Unfortunately, the MFA program in Design Media Arts is not a STEM-designated program and thus does not fulfill the STEP OPT extension requirement.

Is there a portfolio review day?
The department does not hold portfolio reviews.

What is the minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement?
A minimum grade point average of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale), or its equivalent, in undergraduate study or in graduate level study, if any, is required for graduate admission.

I graduated from a school outside of the United States. Am I eligible to apply?
Please send your inquiry to dmainfo@arts.ucla.edu and include: what institution(s) you graduated from and which degree(s) you’ve earned.

Am I eligible for an application fee waiver?
Please visit this page and select the Fee Waivers tab.

How many letters of recommendation are required?
All applicants are required to provide 2 letters of recommendation. Recommenders can be undergraduate, graduate, or professional contacts; they should be people who can speak to your creative ability and potential. In the UCLA Application for Graduate Admissions, you will see a section to “Add a Recommender.” All letters of recommendation must be submitted by the application deadline.

GRE, TOEFL, and IELTS exams – do I need to take it?
The GRE is not required.

If your first language is not English, you must certify proficiency in English when you apply to UCLA by submitting either the TOEFL scores or the IELTS scores in your application. Applicants are required to submit a minimum TOEFL score of at least 560 on the paper and pencil test or 220 on the computer based test or 87 on the internet-based (iBT) test. An IELTS overall band score of at least 7.0 is the minimum required. Applications are not considered complete without the test scores. Please be sure to list the TOEFL institution code for UCLA 4837 and department code 15. IELTS scores should be sent to the department and the Graduate Division. Please note that TOEFL scores are considered valid for only two years, and that if several scores are submitted, only the most recent is considered.

Am I exempted from the TOEFL or IELTS?
If you hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a university located in the United States or in another country in which English is both the primary spoken language of daily life (e.g.,
Australia, Barbados, Canada, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, United Kingdom) and the medium of instruction; have completed at least two years of full-time study at such an institution, you are exempted from both the TOEFL/IELTS. Please be sure to include such information in your application.

**How do I confirm my TOEFL or IELTS scores have been received by UCLA?**

Once official scores have been received by UCLA, they will appear as verified when you log into your application. Please note that scores match up only if the personal information you provided UCLA is the same as that provided to ETS.

Please note there will be a delay from when the university receives the scores and when it is reflected in the UCLA Application system.

You will be contacted if any document or application material is missing or needed. Please do not email or call to inquire about receipt of documents as it will delay our efforts to process application material.

**Are official transcripts required?**

Transcripts from all educational institutions attended (beyond secondary school or community college) must be uploaded in the online application by the application deadline. Unofficial transcripts will be accepted during the application process. Official transcripts and documents are only required after you have been admitted. If you are a university/college senior, do not wait for senior-year grades before submitting your application and transcript.

**Applicants who are officially notified of admission** will be required to submit official transcripts. You may send transcripts to the following address:

*Graduate Advisor*  
*UCLA Department of Design Media Arts*  
*Broad Art Center*  
*240 Charles E. Young Drive, Suite 2275 Box 951456*  
*Los Angeles, CA 90095-1456*

**Are college seniors required to send transcripts if they haven’t graduated?**

If you are a university/college senior, do not wait for senior-year grades before submitting your application and transcript. You may list in-progress coursework in the application. If you are admitted provisionally, you are required to submit your final transcript showing the degree has been awarded with the date of conferral. The department must receive the final transcript prior to the first month of the quarter. Failure to send final transcripts will result in a hold in your student account.

**Do you accept E-transcripts?**

E-transcripts can be emailed to the department at dmainfo@arts.ucla.edu. They must be sent directly from the institution, not from the applicant.
What if I do not hold a bachelor’s degree in Media Arts?
The applicant’s bachelor’s degree need not be in media arts, though applicants with degrees in interdisciplinary programs that emphasize media arts are preferred. Applicants are expected to have working knowledge of a variety of software. Additional experience with video, interactive media, or 3D modeling and animation is expected.

When will admissions decisions be emailed to me?
Admissions decisions will be sent in March.

How much is tuition for the program?
Please visit the UCLA Registrar’s Annual Fees for UCLA Graduate Programs.

What kind of financial support is offered to admitted students?
Various merit- and eligibility-based financial support is available to entering and continuing graduate students at UCLA. Entering DMA graduate students are offered financial assistance at the time of admission based on the strength of their application; continuing students are usually informed of their second-year financial support before the beginning of their second-year of study. The most common form of financial support is through teaching assistantships, which typically include fee remissions and health insurance. More information on financial support, including extramural awards, is available through the UCLA Graduate Division.

How do I know if I am a good fit for the program?
Explore the UCLA Graduate Division’s fellowships, scholarships, and grants for entering students here.

How do I know if I am a good fit for the program?
Please visit the MFA in Media Arts page. We encourage applicants to explore our Graduate Gallery to see the student work. Explore our Faculty Profiles to see whether your interests align with the DMA faculty. Please note we do not conduct portfolio reviews.

What classes do MFA students take in this program?
Please see our Program Curriculum. For a complete outline of degree requirements, visit Program Requirements for UCLA Graduate Degrees.

Can I speak to an admission counselor and learn more about the MFA program?
Register for a DMA MFA Info Session here.

Other questions:
Please email dmainfo@arts.ucla.edu or visit our DMA website.