

# HISTORY OF DECORATIVE ARTS, MA

**Banner Code:** LA-MA-HDA

## Academic Advising

B359 Robinson Hall  
Fairfax Campus

Website: [historyarthistory.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-hda](http://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-hda)

The MA in the history of decorative arts is offered in partnership with The Smithsonian Associates. It presents students with the challenge of integrating the history of the decorative arts into the study of art history and cultural studies as a whole. Students take courses in decorative arts, design history and theory, material culture, and museology.

The program prepares students for employment at museums, historic organizations, and in the commercial art and design marketplace. It is also excellent preparation for a number of doctoral programs.

## Admissions & Policies

### Policies

To receive the MA in the history of decorative arts students must complete 48 graduate credits with a minimum GPA of 3.0. A maximum of 9 credits from other institutions may be transferred into this program or may be reduced based on a previously conferred graduate degree. Reduction or transfer of credit is subject to the approval of the director and the dean.

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP .6 Graduate Policies.

## Requirements

### Degree Requirements

Total credits: 48

#### Core Courses

ARTH 570	Proseminar in History of Decorative Arts	3
ARTH 571	Survey of Decorative Arts I	3
ARTH 572	Survey of Decorative Arts II	3
ARTH 630	Material Culture Studies	3
ARTH 640	European Decorative Arts	3
ARTH 650	Global Decorative Arts	3
ARTH 660	Museum Studies	3
ARTH 670	Design and Design History	3
Total Credits		24

#### Electives

Students choose electives in consultation with an advisor. Courses with variable topics may be repeated for credit when the topic varies. A total of 6 credits of independent study and 6 credits of internship each may be applied to the degree.

Students may apply 3 or 6 credits of thesis in place of 1 or 2 elective courses. Students who do not complete a thesis complete 24 elective credits and a comprehensive examination.

Select six to eight electives (18-24 credits) from the following:		18-24
ARTH 593	Internship in Art History and the Decorative Arts	
ARTH 594	The Museum	
ARTH 596	Independent Study	
ARTH 599	Special Topics in Art History and the Decorative Arts	
ARTH 610	Theory of Decorative Arts	
ARTH 620	Topics in Individual Decorative Arts	
ARTH 630	Material Culture Studies	
ARTH 640	European Decorative Arts	
ARTH 650	Global Decorative Arts	
ARTH 660	Museum Studies	
ARTH 670	Design and Design History	
Total Credits		18-24

### Examination or Thesis

Students must successfully pass a comprehensive examination or complete a 3-6 credit thesis	3-6
Total Credits	3-6

### Examination

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the student's familiarity with the important objects and literature relating to one major and one minor field. Fields are defined by country, medium, and century. The student is expected to be conversant with bibliographic references, be able to evaluate information critically, and be able to recognize objects, makers, and styles. The exam consists of a one-hour oral component on the major and minor fields followed by an essay on the major field.

### Thesis

A thesis requires a minimum of 1 semester. Students who undertake a 3-credit thesis take 3 fewer elective credits. Students who undertake a 6-credit thesis register for 3 credits the first semester and 3 credits the second semester; they take 6 fewer elective credits.

Once enrolled in ARTH 799 Master's Thesis, students are required to maintain continuous registration until the thesis is submitted to and accepted by the University Library. The continuous registration policy is specified in the Academic Policies section of the catalog.

ARTH 799	Master's Thesis	1-3
Total Credits		1-3