

Department of Visual Arts and New Media

State University of New York at Fredonia

Portfolio Preparation

An accepted portfolio is required for admittance for both freshman and transfer students. While there are currently no specific submission dates for the department, we recommend you submit your portfolio as early as possible.

We encourage you to visit SUNY Fredonia and our department. Contact the Admissions Office for a schedule of Open House programs and campus tours at 716-673-3251 or 800-252-1212. Or arrange a visit directly with the Department of Visual Arts and New Media at 716-673-3537. Please make arrangements well before your intended visit.

*Send your portfolio and departmental application materials to:
Portfolio Committee
Department of Visual Arts and New Media
Rockefeller Arts Center
SUNY Fredonia
Fredonia, NY 14063*

The following guidelines should be used in submitting your portfolio for review.

Portfolio work is normally submitted as 35mm slides or CD-ROM. It should include 10 to 20 examples of your best work.

For slide submissions:

Submit slides in an 8 1/2" x 11" transparent slide protector page. Each slide should be numbered in order and clearly labeled with your name. On a separate page, list each slide by number and give a clear description of each: title, size, media, assignment/theme, and any exhibition/award information.

For CD-ROM submissions:

Submit high-resolution JPEG images with a minimum dimension of 640 pixels wide or 480 pixels high. Label the CD format as Macintosh or PC. Each electronic image should be numbered and titled. On paper, list each image by number and give a clear description of each: title, size, media, assignment/theme, and any exhibition/award information.

- In-person reviews are recommended for transfer students but freshman applicants are encouraged to submit their portfolio by mail. All appointments for in-person reviews must be scheduled in advance. Call the department at 716-673-3537 for details concerning review dates and times.
- Your portfolio must include a minimum of five drawings made from direct observation (not copied from photographs or illustrated publications.)
- Sketchbook images may be included as well as other work: two-dimensional design projects, painting, photography, ceramics, sculpture, digital images, or other examples of art and design experience. Transfer students should present basic foundation work as well as more advanced projects.
- Image clarity for slides or JPEGs is important. The next page gives tips for documenting your work clearly.
- All portfolios must be accompanied with the departmental application form (see page 4 of the Visual Arts Overview.) A copy of high school or transfer institution transcript should also be included.

Evaluation of Your Portfolio

- Your portfolio will be evaluated on the basis of drawing and design ability, originality of ideas, and craftsmanship.
- All accepted portfolios are retained by the Department of Visual Arts and New Media until the second week of the new semester. Portfolios of newly enrolled students are placed in their permanent file. All other portfolios are returned if a self-addressed postage-paid envelope has been provided. Portfolios that are not accepted will be returned immediately after review.
- While every precaution is taken to ensure proper handling, the College cannot assume responsibility for accidental loss or damage to portfolios.

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Tips for Documenting Your Portfolio (Either 35mm or Digital Format)

- Slides are created with 35mm slide film (sold under the designation 'chrome,' such as Fujichrome, Agfachrome or Ektachrome.) Make sure the film is 'daylight' film. Do not shoot with any film designated as 'tungsten.'
- Digital images should be saved as high-resolution JPEG files with a minimum dimension of 640 pixels wide or 480 pixels high at 72 dpi. Number or name each file in a logical order for easy recognition. When creating a CD-ROM, double check to make sure each image opens and displays accurately.
- Shoot your work on a large smooth neutral solid-colored background (gray or beige) without distracting textures. Do not shoot your artwork on a pure white or black background as the dramatically light or dark color of the background will interfere your camera's internal metering system and produce an under- or over-exposed image.
- It is very important thing to shoot your work so that it is perpendicular to the camera lens. If the not, the lens will create unusual distortions.
- When shooting two-dimensional pieces, it may be easier to lay your work on the ground and position yourself above the work. Using a ladder or tripod may help you position yourself high enough to avoid cropping any of the artwork. Large work may need to be propped up on a support and shot straight on.
- When shooting three-dimensional work, make sure to position the work carefully for the most descriptive point of view. This may require positioning yourself above or below the work, or shooting an additional view from a different vantage point.
- Shoot tightly, emphasizing the piece you are shooting. Pay attention to everything in your frame. Do not include mats, frames or distracting background elements.
- Do not shoot any framed artwork under glass. The camera will capture distracting highlights and reflections in the glass.
- Shoot your work outdoors, preferably on an overcast day. Do not shoot in a bright sunny location. The sunlight will create extreme highlights and distracting shadows. If you cannot shoot on an overcast day, then place your work on the north side of a building, again to avoid extreme lighting.
- Following the tips listed above, your camera's automatic setting should record your artwork accurately. If you are shooting 35mm slides and have a camera with manual controls, you should "bracket" your exposures, meaning you should shoot at the camera's suggested meter reading as well as shooting two additional frames, one under and one over the suggested meter reading. For example, if your automatic setting records the piece at f/11, shoot another at f/16 and another at f/8.
- Shoot a detail image of larger pieces or work with small, intricate areas that require emphasis.
- Shoot multiple copies of each image or have duplicates made for your own records.
- Ask your art teacher for assistance if you are still unsure about getting good quality images for your portfolio.