



SFAI Committee to Reimagine

Pedagogy Sub-committee

Co-Chairs: Orit Ben Shitrit and Lindsey White

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Members

Current Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni

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Special Thanks

Oscar Lopez Guerrero, Artist, SFAI Alumni

Christopher Williams, Artist, SFAI Alumni

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Associate Professor and
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Sarah Watson

Chief Curator, **Hunter College Art Galleries**

+ Graduate Candidate in CUNY School of
Labor and Urban Studies
Advanced Certificate in
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This is the moment to take the lead on 21st century education to better serve our community.

The pedagogy sub-committee identified a list of issues that needed to be addressed.

It yielded a collective learning exercise, which included research, dialogue, and respectful disagreements as well as agreements.

We formed the following core values:

Mission and Values

Culture of Respect—implemented through an orientation for all members of the community

Collective Pedagogy—cooperative and inclusive education

Honor Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Affordable to Free Tuition

Experience and Mentorship

Faculty as Artists, Scholars, and Learners

An abstract background image featuring a large, translucent, geometric structure resembling a modern building or a large sculpture. The structure is composed of various colored panels in shades of teal, blue, and magenta. A faint rainbow is visible in the background, partially obscured by the structure. The overall aesthetic is contemporary and artistic.

PEDAGOGIC MODELS

We looked at many existing school models and offerings.

These are some exciting examples:

- [School for Poetic Computation](#)
- [Staedelschule](#)
- [Dark Study](#)
- [The Alternative Art School](#)
- [nxthvn](#)
- [The European Graduate School](#)
- [RAW Material Company](#)

Model 1 is a hybrid model generated from an extensive list of research and ideas by the sub-committee:

A—Artist as researcher

Artist as traveler and social researcher. The school is international, national and local, centered around social justice and research, inhabiting a meeting space between different voices and cultures, bridging differences by informed aesthetic actions.

B—Cooperative Structure

Art School organized through collective membership. All participants are equal. Faculty members, staff, and students are facilitators and work together to create bylaws, governance, curriculum, visiting artists, lectures, & exhibitions. Communal environment. Lateral teaching.

C—BFA mirroring MFA—academic/departmental flexibility

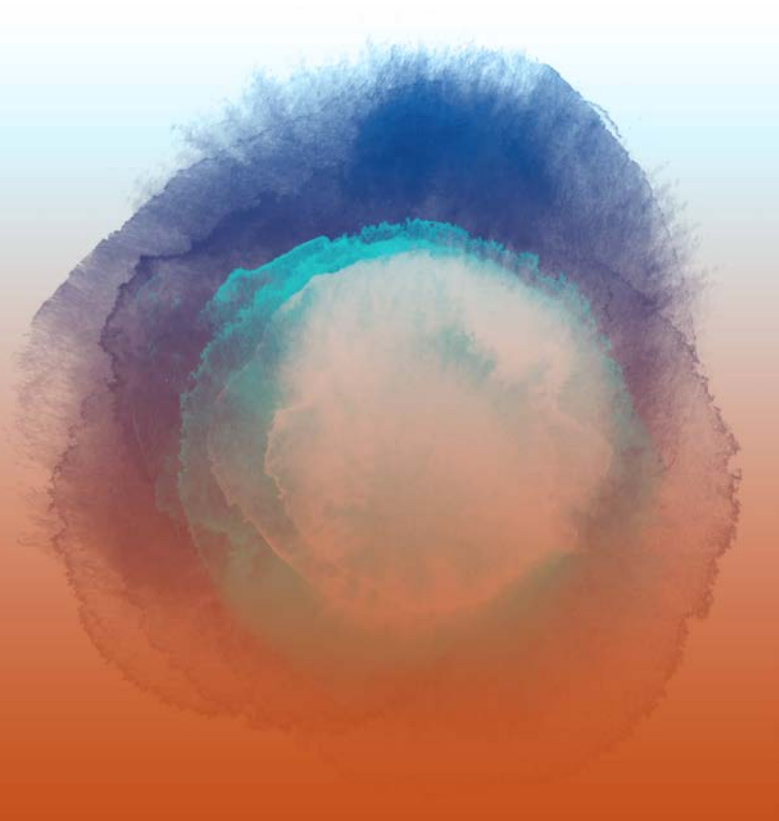
Art School that embodies two-three pathways of study that both run parallel and cross over at different points. For example: Photography paired with Art, Place, Public Studies or HTCA with Printmaking. Similar to the BXA program at Carnegie Mellon or our dual degree program.

MODEL 1



MODEL 2

Alternate — University Model



Financial sustainability is a major force in the viability of our proposal. Whereas we would love to see SFAI remain an independent institution, it has become increasingly difficult to fundraise sufficiently to create an endowment. To provide free education—one that would allow for people of diverse backgrounds to come together—for which we are committed, we would need an endowment of hundreds of millions of dollars (approx. 400 million for an annual 19 million budget).

The university model is one which offers financial stability. In the university model, the humanities are supported by other parts of the university, such as Law and Business. This model can be implemented over time, in a tiered solution:

Stage 1: Year 1-3 SFAI at the current tuition rate and increased fundraising/grant writing efforts, the school becomes financially stable, no accumulated end of year debt.

Stage 2: Year 4, begin partnership talks with Stanford or UC

Stage 3: Year 5-6 merger implementation, SFAI remains at the historic Russian Hill location

Stage 4: Year 7-8 Admin offices move to the university, skeleton staff at Russian Hill

New Offerings

Three Brand New Curriculums have launched recently and responded to important issues and art practices today:

Art, Place, and Public Studies in BA and MA Programs

blend scholarship, artmaking, and activism while being at the forefront of debates about art in the public sphere.

Art and Technology BFA Curriculum where students learn by hacking, modifying, mixing, re-mixing, and re-cycling electronic and non-electronic technologies. A program is a place where students express ideas via algorithms and data as art material.

Faculty:

Hire faculty and staff from a **variety of backgrounds, diversity, and experiences** and work to retain them once hired

Cluster hires

Path of advancement for adjunct faculty into tenure-track faculty positions.

Living wages and **benefits** for all faculty

Reestablish **endowed distinguished visiting fellowships**

Addressing how to support students, faculty, and staff from the ground up

Robust professional development workshops:

- **DEI/Anti Racist Trainings**
- **Becoming active members of the Truth and Reconciliation process and reading group**
- **Supporting ESL/ELL students**
- **Cultural Fluency Training**
- **Universal Design Learning Training:** learning how to build an educational framework to improve learning conditions for all learners. **Accommodating for all students' needs** makes a better classroom for everyone.

Support Structures for both—BA/BFA and MA/MFA

All student pathways should have leadership

Curriculum Committee of students, faculty, staff, and one outside community member—dialogue around course offerings

Access SFAI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion roll out

Access 50: continue the fundraising efforts to bring 50 free BIPOC students a year

Faculty working together across departments and on review committees

Faculty as Advisors—throughout one's study

Center for Research: where students can learn more about travel grants, project grants, finances i.e. taxes, loans etc., internships, labor rights, legal skills for artists

Mentorship Programs: from Teaching Practicums, planning a Film Festival, to running gallery spaces, etc. real experiences that give students professional experience.

Classes that offer more **collaborative art making opportunities**

TA-ships for Pre College

Teaching opportunities through Young Artist Program and City Studio

Graduate mentors for undergraduate students

Faculty Involvement with the recruitment and admissions process while setting higher standards in quality and diversity

Curriculum Adjustments for both—BFA/BA and MA/MFA

Centralize BIPOC, LGBTQAI+ artists and thinkers of all abilities in curriculum

Writing components through thesis papers

Interdisciplinary faculty committees that review/mentor students in Junior and Senior Reviews. This will create ongoing connections with faculty and prevent students from falling through the cracks

Digital Literacy for students to navigate their own work and professional life after graduation

Offer **broader skill set** through **weekend workshops or intensives** in Adobe Suite, wood shop, metal shop, web design, finance, and professional practices to support life after graduation

Exhibition and Museum Studies courses for undergraduates too

Consider **getting rid of large survey courses**

Consider a **degree in Creative/Critical Writing**

BFA/BA Curriculum:

BFA Studio Arts with an optional concentration—curriculum will offer students a greater sense of independence, agency and voice in their education building students investment from the ground up.

BA programs will continue as currently organized. BFA Studio Arts with optional concentration.

Student will be able to satisfy an emphasis/focus through similar credit requirements to receive a minor.

- More freedom for transfer students
- Flexibility with their transfer credits
- Save students money

Faculty advisors—support the student in their navigation of the school, their artwork, and problem solve an ongoing issue with student retention.

Openness of the curriculum will allow for **faculty to collaborate on courses, programs, and share budgetary resources.** This structure will push the capabilities of an interdisciplinary art practice. Studio Art is inclusive—mentally and physically creating more freedom for the student to explore without unnecessary barriers. **SFAI will stand out among AICAD schools for our degree flexibility**, student independence, commitment to community, and continued dedication to fine art curriculum.

Junior Reviews

Prioritize Senior Year: students complete a body of work, have an advising committee, and write a thesis paper to research their work fully (paper can be a piece of creative writing)

Senior Focus Week: a public critique **including the general public**

MFA/MA Curriculum:

Continue MFA Studio Arts with **optional concentration**

Faculty as Advisors, assigned when matriculating and throughout one's study

Interdisciplinary faculty committees review/mentor MFA students through intermediate and final reviews and tutorials.

Potential Idea: Shift to a 3-year program. 15-20 students each year. Lower number of students = improve the program's standing.

MFA Vernissage—20 graduating students more prominently celebrated over 40-50.

MFA/MA Curriculum specific:

Highlight the Dual Degree Program

Faculty advisors will have in-depth knowledge of students' progress

A thesis research paper

MA students collaborate with MFA students on exhibitions and writing, possibly a quarterly/newspaper

Firsthand experiences for MA Exhibition and Museum Studies courses—integrated into the McBean gallery

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Graduate Committee made up of faculty and staff to make decisions together about the program

Guaranteed Paid TA-ships

Expanding our existing Non-Degree Programs

Public Education: *Expand age groups:* Pre College, Young Artist Program, City Studio programs all year round while integrating with degree programs and facilities. This could create a funnel into our degree programs.

Continuing Education: Align more classes with degree program, add more critique opportunities, access to studios i.e. ceramics and DIS, possible summer boot camp of professional practices classes for its graduates or anyone else who wanted to take them, including other schools' new graduates and anyone else who might be interested. Great program to support teaching opportunities for alumni.

Summer Institute instead of Post-Bac certificate: 2-3 months where students have studios with critiques similar to a residency to prepare a portfolio for applying to graduate school. It shouldn't cost the same as the degree programs.

Roving Residency (Low-Res): distant and on campus MFA and MA degrees. Integrate low residency students into regular degree programming.

Intensives: Classes with visiting artists with degree and non-degree seeking students. Could be a revenue opportunity.

Online courses: will happen across degree and non-degree programs. However, we need to spend time as an institution on how to build these out properly with more support and teaching strategies.

Certificate programs could include Teaching Certificates, Figuration and the Body Politic, Curatorial/Art Management, Book Making. However, Certificates could potentially generate revenue in continuing ed and might be a useful way for students to organize curriculum in the degree programs.

Exhibitions, Lectures, Public Events:

Informal and public weekly presentations around the campus. The campus is open, vibrant, and inviting to the general public.

SFAI is a cultural hub and an integral institution to the city's fabric, welcoming dialogue with the general public. This could also be a great job opportunity for student workers in different departments—ambassadors to prospective students

Integrated lectures and exhibitions with curriculum. E.g., we bring in the authors we've been reading in reading groups and classes artists we've been looking at, etc.

Symposiums

SFAI partners with other programs around the city: from Creativity Explored, San Quentin Arts Program, Cinematheque, Cineclub, Exploratorium, etc. to create exhibitions, events, and classes

Artist Committee for programming of faculty, students, staff, alumni, and outside art community—creating exhibitions and public programming together

Annual Faculty and Staff Exhibition to begin the school year honors faculty and staff informs the students about who the faculty and staff are, and helps to create community

Underutilized resources:

Summer classes and programs—could be expanded across the board

Cafe—gathering space + revenue + student work opportunities

Meadow—sustainable food resource

Roof—solar panels to run the school's power + growing food + events

Lecture Hall—SFAI as a cultural hub

Store—teaching resource + gathering place + revenue + student work opportunities

* Allow students, alumni, faculty and staff to use facilities to make work that can be sold through some school storefront (not just the Administrative office). Can be something as simple as ceramic mugs to group art pieces. This can also be a profitable venture for both SFAI and the contributor. **Create an SFAI beer!**

Thank You.

Pedagogy sub-committee members:

Alex, Ana, Brett, Claire, Irene, Jose, Kat, Lex, Lindsey, Nando, Orit, Tom