Proposal for a Non-Thesis MA Degree Option in the Art History Graduate Program

May 22, 2013

The Art History Department requests Senate approval for a change in their MA degree Program. An option for a non-thesis MA degree is requested to augment the existing MA and Ph.D. graduate programs. The Department already confers an MA for attainment of candidacy en route to the Ph.D and offers a thesis MA, which requires 36 hours of course credit plus a thesis.

The requirements for the proposed degree would be:

For a non-thesis MA, the candidate must satisfy the following requirements:

- Complete at least two semesters in residence at Rice University.
- Complete the Graduate Methods course (HART 590)
- Complete 30 hours of courses approved for graduate credit at Rice University.
- Complete at least 24 hours of coursework for graduate credit in the art history department.
- Accumulate an overall GPA of at least 3.0.
- Complete HART 502 and 503 and have qualifying paper accepted.
- Half of the classes are seminars
- Satisfactorily complete departmental duties.
- Pass at least 1 foreign language reading exam.
- File a petition for M.A. Candidacy.

This petition can be obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies and must be approved and signed by the Department Chair and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. Approval must be obtained by FEBRUARY 28 for conferral of a May degree and by OCTOBER 31 for conferral of a December degree.

Benefits of the addition of non-thesis MA degree option: After their first and during their second year, students are evaluated carefully and some may be advised that their prospects of completing a doctorate are poor. The non-thesis MA option allows the department to advise students not to advance to the doctoral stage, while giving them a tangible achievement for the work they have completed.

The non-thesis allows the department to maintain control over the quality of work being done at the doctoral level, while making certain that students are credited with the work they have achieved. It also allows students to make a decision that they feel is in their best interest if they decide they do not want to proceed to the Ph.D., without feeling that their previous two years have been wasted. As such, the
department views the availability of a non-thesis MA as important to maintaining the standards and integrity of the program as a whole.

A non-thesis Masters degree in art history is a well-established degree. Many of the top Ph.D. programs in art history offer such a degree, including:
Duke University
Washington University
Harvard University
Bryn Mawr College
University of Delaware
University of Pennsylvania
University of North Carolina
Stanford University
UC Irvine
Pennsylvania State University
Temple University

**Comparable programs** A non-thesis MA degree is offered along with a thesis MA in the History department at Rice University. A similar non-thesis MA degrees are offered as an exit degree in English, History and Philosophy. Thus, there is already a precedent at Rice for the proposed change in the Art History Graduate program.

**Resources:** No new resources would be required for this program, as the students would already be taking existing courses from current faculty (Appendix 1). All the courses for this program are existing courses (Appendix 2). No new funds or library or IT resources would be required. There are no startup costs. Some funds will be saved if this degree program is adopted and those resources will be reallocated to promising doctoral candidates.

**SACS requirements:** Because no students are admitted specifically to this program, it is our understanding that the program need not conform to SACS requirements.

**Admission:** No students would be admitted to Rice University to enter this program; the only students awarded the non-thesis MA degree would be those who have been admitted previously to the doctoral program, but who chose not to continue, or who were not awarded doctoral candidacy. All graduate students are evaluated every year and given feedback on their progress in the program and advice about the options available.

**Intellectual rigor:** With the Methods (HART 590) and course work requirements, qualifying paper and language requirements, we believe that this is very comparable to, or exceeds in its rigor, most of the 20 extant non-thesis MA programs at Rice University, as well as similar programs at peer institutions.
**Time Line for Adoption:** Since no new faculty, courses, funds or resources are required, and since no students are directly admitted to the program, if the program is approved we would adopt it as soon as permissible under University regulations.

**Appendix 1: Art History tenure and tenure-track faculty teaching courses for the non-thesis MA students:**
- Graham Bader
- Leo Costello
- Shirine Hamedeh
- Susan Shih-shan Huang
- Gordon Hughes
- Fabiola Lopez-Duran
- Joseph Manca
- Linda Neagley
- Lida Oukaderova
- Diane Wolfthal

**Appendix 2: Graduate Courses offered for non-thesis MA students:**
- 502 Qualifying Paper
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- 505 Avant-Garde and After: Art in Europe 1900-45
- 508 Living in the City in the Ottoman Empire
- 515 Ottoman Modern
- 521 Imperial City: Istanbul 1453-1922
- 522 Jerusalem to Isfahan
- 523 The Mediterranean World
- 528 Middle Eastern Cities
- 529 Streets and Urban Life: Paris to Istanbul
- 530 Early Medieval Art
- 532 Art of the Courts
- 534 Seeing Sex in European Art
- 535 Multicultural Europe, 1400-1700
- 536 Cinema and the City
- 537 Visual Culture of Medieval Pilgrimage
- 541 Early Renaissance Art in Italy
- 542 High Renaissance and Mannerism in Italy
- 543 Masters of the Baroque Era
- 552 Manet(s) and Modernism(s)
- 553 Turner and Constable
- 554 The Age of Romanticism in Europe
- 555 Jacques-Louis David
- 556 Art in the Vanguard: Art and Radical Politics 1750-Present
- 558 Impressionism and Post-Impressionism
- 560 American Architecture and Decorative Arts before 1900
- 562 Late Modern Art: 1945-Present
- 563 Practicing Utopia: Art, Architecture, Eugenics and the Modern Latin City
565 Contemporary Cuban Culture
566 Latin American Bodies
567 Nature In-Vitro: Bodies, Gardens and Built Forms
568 From the Sublime to the Sustainable: Art, Architecture and Nature
571 Chinese Painting
572 Chinese Art and Visual Culture
576 East & West: Medieval Visual Culture in China and Northern Europe
578 Age of Rembrandt
579 Japanese Art and Architecture
586 Dada
588 Post War European Cinema
589 Film Melodrama
590 Methods in Art History
593 Walter Benjamin, Media and Modernity
596 From Expressionism to Fascism
625 Architectural History and Theory II