

Advanced Certificate in Conservation

The Institute's Conservation Center, located in the Stephen Chan House, is dedicated to the study of the technology and conservation of works of art and historic artifacts. The Center prepares students for careers in conservation through a four year program that combines practical experience in conservation with art historical, archaeological, curatorial, and scientific studies of the materials and construction of works of art. Students enroll in the MA program in art history and at the same time undertake research projects, laboratory work, and seminars in special areas of conservation, such as advanced x-ray techniques or the treatment of modern and contemporary paintings.

Students gain intensive conservation experience through advanced fieldwork and a nine-month internship. They are encouraged to obtain additional conservation experience during summer archaeological excavations or other formal work projects. The Center also provides courses in connoisseurship and technical art history for students pursuing studies in art history, archaeology, and curatorial studies, which are intended to acquaint them with the physical structure of works of art, the need for preservation, and the possibilities and limitations of conservation. Classes are taught by the Center's distinguished full and part-time faculty, many of whom serve as conservators and scientists at New York City's prestigious museums.

In addition to their teaching responsibilities, the Center's faculty are active in research and other professional activities in the United States and abroad.

Course of Study

Sixty-nine (69) points are required for the combined MA degree in art history and Advanced Certificate in conservation. Six art history courses (24 points) in three major areas are taken, including at least two seminars that must be in two different areas. Foundations I and Foundations II (Technology & Structure of Works of Art I) are taken the first semester of the first year.

Fifteen conservation courses (45 points) are taken, beginning with a two-year cycle of core classes that introduce students to the fundamentals of material science, conservation and preventive care. These core conservation courses are: Technology & Structure I and II, Material Science of Art & Archaeology I and II, Principles of Conservation, Instrumental Analysis I and II, and Preventive Conservation. With their second year of study, students choose to specialize in one of the following primary areas of study: conservation of paintings, objects, paper, photographs, or textiles. Students may additionally declare a special interest in modern and contemporary art conservation and take course work towards this specialty. Upper-level courses in each of these areas, as well as individualized instruction from conservators in the New York City area, are available.

The Internship is completed over two semesters in the fourth year in a conservation establishment either in this country or abroad, selected to afford the best possible training in the student's area of specialization. Arrangements are made in consultation with the Chairman of the Conservation Center and the student's primary advisor.

All requirements for the Institute's MA degree, including language, academic standards, timing, and the Master's Thesis apply equally to the students in the conservation training program.



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A typical course schedule follows:

- Year One: Foundations I (counts as art history course)
 Foundations II: Technology & Structure of Works of Art I
 Technology & Structure of Works of Art II
 Material Science of Art & Archaeology I and II
 Principles of Conservation
 2 art history courses
- Year Two: Instrumental Analysis I and II
 Preventive Conservation
 2 art history courses
 3 advanced conservation courses
 Pass language exam
- Year Three: 1 art history course
 Directed Research Towards the MA Thesis
 1 conservation science elective
 3 advanced conservation courses
 Complete MA Thesis
- Year Four: 9-month Internship