Our interdisciplinary program is designed for students with diverse academic backgrounds who wish to pursue a graduate degree focused on the social and cultural production of human vision and on the distinctive roles played by art and artifacts. We encourage students to examine a range of visual evidence; fine arts, architecture, photography, film, performance, ritual objects, and popular entertainments are all primary source material for scholars in the field. Our faculty study cultures of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific Islands and we welcome students interested in cross cultural perspectives and new theoretical paradigms.

Tell us what a first-year student can expect in the Visual Studies Graduate Program.
Students take a 3-course introductory series of classes that engage with issues of critical theory, research method, and faculty research areas, plus 3 electives and attend a colloquium series.

Do you have any fellowships or other opportunities specific to your program for minority students?
Our department nominates students for the Cota-Robles Fellowship (a UCSC wide diversity fellowship) and the Chancellor’s Fellowship upon admission to the program.

What support do first-year Graduate Students receive?
Fee and tuition fellowships or teaching assistantships, travel and research grants.

When are graduate applications due for your program?
December 15

Who can I contact for more information?
Ruby Lipsenthal,
Graduate Program Coordinator
(831) 459.2408, rubyl@ucsc.edu
Core Faculty

Martin Berger gender, race and representation in U.S. culture
Raoul Bimbaum Buddhist approaches to human vision, especially Chinese Buddhist representations and practices
Elisabeth Cameron gender, performance, play and iconoclasm in Central Africa
Carolyn Dean performance, costume and nonresemblant artifacts in Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Spanish America
Maria Evangelatou gender, politics and religion in ancient Greek and Byzantine art and visual culture
Jennifer González installation and activist art, theories of race and representation, digital art
Donna Hunter national identity in western Europe and America since 1750
Stacy Kamehiro identity politics and colonial histories in Oceania
Boreth Ly trauma, gender and sexuality in Southeast Asia and its Diaspora
Derek Conrad Murray theory and criticism of contemporary art, cultural theory, identity and representation, art of the African diaspora, popular visual culture
Albert Narath Modern and contemporary architecture and design, environmental history, theories of technology, historiography of modernism, anthropology and architecture

Affiliated Faculty

Noriko Aso (History) Japanese history, cultural studies, gender and history, race and ethnicity, colonialism, nationalism, Korean history, and popular culture
Karen Bassi (Literature) Greek and Latin literatures; gender; literary and cultural theory; pre- and early modern studies; historiography; visual and performance studies
Hunter Bivens (Literature), twentieth and twenty-first century German literature, culture, and film, Marxism and critical theory, socialist realism and proletarian literature, modernism and left avant-gardes, novel theory
James Clifford (History of Consciousness, Emeritus), anthropology, indigeneity, museum studies, exoticism
Kathy Foley (Theater Arts) Southeast Asian drama and dance; puppetry
Dianne Gifford-Gonzalez (Anthropology), zooarchaeology, African archaeology, pastoralism, colonial New Mexico, interpretive theory, visual anthropology, emergence of pastoralism in East Africa; foodways as cultural practices in colonial encounters
Irene Gustafson (Film and Digital Media), producing across the boundaries between “theory” and “practice,” non-fiction, gender and queers, production design
Christine Hong (Literature), Asian American literature and cultural criticism; African American literature and black freedom studies; Korean diasporic cultural production; Pacific Rim studies; postcolonial theory; critical race theory; human rights discourse; law and literature; narrative theory; film and visual studies
Peter Limbrick (Film and Digital Media), postcolonial and transnational cinemas, race, gender, sexuality, queer theory
David Marriott (History of Consciousness), literary theory, psychoanalysis, black cultural theory and philosophies of race, literary and visual cultures of modernism
Soraya Murray (Film and Digital Media), new media art, theory, and criticism; visual culture including digital, film, video, and electronic games; theories of technology and globalization; media representations of technological and scientific advancement; representations of otherness, migration, citizenship
Warren Sack (Film and Digital Media), theory and practice of digital media, software design and media theory
Shelley Stamp (Film and Digital Media), silent cinema, female filmmakers, film censorship, histories of moviegoing, early Hollywood