

# History of Art and Visual Culture Department

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## Helpful Hints for Frosh

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. The UCSC General Catalog (available online at: <http://registrar.ucsc.edu/catalog/index.html>) is an incredible resource. The quarterly schedule of classes and the campus handbook, The Navigator: Undergraduate Handbook of Academic & Student Affairs, are available on-line most of the year. Read these materials thoroughly, they are full of valuable information. Pay close attention to requirements and deadlines as students are ultimately responsible for adhering to University policy.
2. Come by the History of Art and Visual Culture (HAVC) office for information and materials on the major and minor (also available online at: <http://havic.ucsc.edu>). The department is a great place to find guidelines on things like how to write HAVC papers, information about internships and graduate programs, a directory of Bay Area museums, and other publications and handbooks.
3. All students must declare a major by the third quarter of their sophomore year. Start the major by taking lower division HAVC courses in different geographic regions. To declare, students need to complete two lower division HAVC courses from different regions.
4. It's highly recommended that students concentrate on fulfilling general education (GE) requirements and strengthening their writing skills during the first two years. These requirements are the foundation of a liberal arts education and allow students to explore several disciplines before deciding on a major. The broad concepts learned in lower-division courses provide the groundwork for materials studied at the upper-division level. Upper-division courses are more focused and form the heart of academic majors.
5. Get in the habit of consulting with the HAVC undergraduate adviser as well as HAVC faculty. Consulting with your department and faculty advisers is a great way to determine which classes are appropriate for your course of study. The HAVC faculty directory is available online and in hardcopy at HAVC.
6. Show up for the first day of class! Showing up is the first step to success. When students don't show up on the first day, they may be dropped from the class in order to make room for students trying to add the class. Always double and triple check enrollment each quarter to make sure that you're registered in the classes that you're planning to attend.
7. Buying books before the first day of class gives students the opportunity to become familiar with the material before the course begins. Many courses have readers (selected articles bound in book format; usually not available until the class meets) or a series of short books rather than textbooks. Read the syllabus carefully and attend all scheduled exams and required activities (e.g. field trips, film screenings, etc.). Mark the due dates for papers, exams, and assignments on your calendar at the beginning of the quarter. In case the big snow storm in Tahoe happens to be the day before a big paper is due, it's important to remember that school is the highest priority.
8. Familiarity with the locations of computer services and labs on campus is extremely helpful. Check The Navigator for information on how to set up an account to use University computer services.

9. Where a student sits in class has impact on how the instructor perceives them. Sitting in the front rows of the classroom and participating in discussion (both in class and in section) gives instructors a good impression. Get feedback on assignments and attend office hours. (Getting to know faculty is important, especially when one inevitably needs a letter of recommendation or advice).
10. Some of the most valuable sources of information on campus are the libraries. Learn how to access the Melvyl catalog for research projects. In addition to using Melvyl for general papers and projects, try using current contents and the art index. Learn to use the reference areas, ArtStor databases, and the slide library.
11. The quarter system is fast. It's important to keep on top of the standard workload (3 5-credit courses) because the quarter goes by much faster than anything in high school. Many classes require midterms or have papers due as early as the third week of class. Taking one HAVC class each quarter for the first year is usually plenty to get started.
12. Colleges and some departments offer 2- and 3-credit courses on interesting topics. Although these classes cannot be counted toward the HAVC major or minor, this is a good way to increase ones course load without adding another full-credit course.
13. UCSC courses are different than ones offered in high school. History of Art and Visual Culture classes offer critical and analytical accounts of the subject matter and require critical writing to develop critical thinking – an invaluable life-long skill.
14. It can be easy to feel lost in the shuffle, so try to get to know other students in your courses. Form study groups to share insights, perspectives, and approaches to the course material.
15. Don't be afraid to ask for help. There are many resources available: faculty, your college, HAVC staff, TAs, various campus support services, writing tutors, other students, etc.
16. All students should have a writing or style manual such as
  - Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*
  - Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*
  - Blanche Ellsworth and John A. Higgins, *English Simplified*
17. Many students are interested in internships, EAP (UC study-abroad program) and other study-abroad programs, the UC/DC program (UC campus in Washington DC), inter-campus exchange programs (at other UC campuses) or domestic exchange programs (at the Universities of New Hampshire or New Mexico). There are websites for all of these programs through the UCSC website, [www.ucsc.edu](http://www.ucsc.edu)
18. Graduate and some EAP programs have a language requirement. In fact, most related graduate programs require proficiency in German and/or French, so it's a good idea to start taking languages early.
19. Other resources: Check in with your college and department advisers, faculty, and TAs; Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP); Graduate Information Program (GIP); the UCSC Career Center.