

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The CU Denver Photography program is a Fine Arts photography program, allowing students to learn and build upon visual arts foundations – including drawing and two-dimensional design, among others – to study both traditional and contemporary photographic techniques. Studio work is complemented by theory and history courses, as well as by instruction on how to promote oneself as an artist. Faculty focus on personal artistic expression, broad conceptual concerns, and nurturing the creative process. Students enjoy small classes with instructors who are successful, practicing artists. Unlike many other programs, we explore the potential of not only contemporary digital photography but also of traditional film photography to combine a range of specific techniques with broad artistic concepts and theory. We also offer the opportunity to study and earn credit abroad. Moreover, students find a close-knit and supportive community of fellow artists with whom to share ideas and critiques – in the classroom and in the lab. This community proves invaluable as long-term projects are developed with faculty and peer feedback, culminating in a final senior show and an individualized, professional-level portfolio.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Freshmen with fewer than 30 credits and/or CAM students who are Undeclared are assigned to the Center for Undergraduate Exploration and Advising (CUE&A). All other College of Arts & Media (CAM) students with more than 30 credits who have declared CAM majors are assigned to the CAM Office of Advising and Student Services.

Students can connect with the internal CAM admissions team to learn more about the program, additional admission requirements, spaces, equipment and technology.

Students with a declared CAM major that have more than 30 credits are encouraged to meet with a CAM advisor every semester prior to registration.

Freshmen with fewer than 30 credits and/or CAM students that are Undeclared students are assigned to the Center for Undergraduate Exploration and Advising. These students are required to meet with an advisor every semester prior to registration.

CAM Recruitment and Enrollment

CAMinfo@ucdenver.edu

Visit the CAM website [here](#)

Arts Building, Suite 177

303-315-7400 (option 1)

CAM Office of Advising and Student Services

CAMadvising@ucdenver.edu

Visit the CAM website [here](#)

Arts Building, Suite 177

303-315-7400 (option 1)

Center for Undergraduate Exploration and Advising (CUEA)

CUEA@ucdenver.edu

Visit the CUEA website [here](#)

Student Commons 1113

303-315-1940

GENERAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

All CU Denver CAM students are required to complete the following minimum general graduation requirements:

1. Complete a minimum of 120 semester hours.
2. Achieve a minimum 2.0 CU cumulative grade point average (GPA).
3. Complete a minimum of 45 upper division (3000/4000 level) credits.
4. Complete all college and major requirements.
5. Residency: complete a minimum of 30 CU Denver hours in good standing at CU Denver.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

Photography is a rigorous program with high standards. Students should expect each studio course to require six hours of out-of-classroom work per week. Skills and a portfolio are developed progressively throughout the degree; it takes at least three years to complete all art course sequences, even if the non-art, general education requirements have already been fulfilled. Photographic processing materials are expensive, and students must provide their own digital single-lens-reflex (SLR) film camera.

Students are encouraged to complete (or be enrolled in) specific visual arts courses before declaring a major in Photography, specifically: FINE 1100 Drawing I, FINE 1400 2-D Design, FINE 1150 Intro to Darkroom Photo, FINE 2155 Intro to Digital Photo, and FINE 2600 Art History Survey I. Students must also earn a minimum cumulative 2.75 GPA for all their Fine Art courses.

Students are responsible for meeting with a CAM advisor to confirm degree progress. Students completing the Fine Arts BFA Degree with an emphasis in Photography are required to complete the following minimum program requirements:

1. Complete 34 semester hours of **CU Denver Core Curriculum coursework**.
2. Complete a minimum of 77 semester hours of **major-area coursework** with a grade of C (2.0) or better in each course.
3. Complete a 3-credit College of Arts & Media graduation requirement.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) – Catalog Year 2026-2027

Courses	Credits	Notes
Required CU Denver Core Curriculum Coursework	34	CU Denver Core Curriculum
Required College of Arts & Media graduation requirement Non-Major Arts (Theatre, Film, or Music)	3	
General Elective	2	
Foundation Courses	15	
FINE 1100 Drawing I	3	
FINE 1150 Intro to Darkroom Photo	3	
FINE 2155 Intro to Digital Photography	3	
FINE 2600 Art History Survey I	3	
Photography Emphasis Courses	27	
FINE 3156 Photo Studio and Lighting	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 2155.
FINE 3160 Color/Constructed Image	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 1150.
FINE 3161 Silver Fine Print	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 1150.
FINE 3162 Digital Fine Print	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 2155.
FINE 3171 Experimental Photo	3	*Prerequisites: FINE 1150 + 3161.
FINE 3172 Documentary Photo	3	*Prerequisites: FINE 2155 + 3162.
FINE 4195 Photography Portfolio I	3	*Prerequisites: FINE 3171 + 3172.
FINE 4196 Photography Portfolio II	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 4195
FINE 4950 Studio BFA Thesis	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 4195
Additional Required Visual Arts Coursework	39	
FINE 1500 3-Dimensional Design	3	
FINE 2610 Art History II	3	
FINE 3630 History of Photography	3	
FINE 3631 Photo Theory and Criticism	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 3630.
FINE 3635 Photography Now	3	*Prerequisite: FINE 3630.
FINE 4990 Contemporary Art	3	*Prerequisites: FINE 2600 + 2610.
FINE ____ Pre-20 th C Art History Elective	3	*Prerequisites: FINE 2600 + 2610.
FINE ____ Visual Arts Electives (5)	15	
TOTAL PROGRAM HOURS	120	

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) – Catalog Year 2026-2027

SAMPLE ACADEMIC PLAN OF STUDY

The following academic plan is a *sample* pathway to completing degree requirements for this major. The plan below is intended for first-time, First-Year students. This sample schedule can be adjusted to accommodate AP, IB, and/or CLEP credits, as well as courses taken during the summer sessions. In addition, students should tailor this plan based on transfer credit, course availability, and individual preferences related to course load, schedules, or add-on programs such as minors or double-majors. **Students deviating from this plan must fulfill course prerequisites and should meet with an advisor to confirm course sequencing and degree requirements.**

YEAR ONE

Semester 1	CRS
FINE 1100 Drawing I	3
FINE 1150 Intro to Darkroom Photo	3
FINE 2600 Art History I	3
First-Year Seminar (<i>fulfills CU Denver CORE req't</i>)	3
CU Denver CORE Math Requirement	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

Semester 2	CRS
FINE 1400 2-Dimensional Design	3
FINE 2155 Intro to Digital Photography	3
FINE 1500 3D Design or FINE 2610 Art History Survey II	3
ENGL 1020 Core Composition I	3
CU Denver CORE requirement	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

YEAR TWO

Semester 3	CRS
FINE 1500 3D Design or FINE 2610 Art History Survey II	3
FINE 3156 Photo Studio and Lighting ^{PE}	3
FINE 3630 History of Photography	3
ENGL 2030 Core Composition II ^{PR}	3
CU Denver CORE requirement (<i>suggest Lab Science</i>)	4
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	16

Semester 4	CRS
FINE 3631 Photo Theory and Criticism ^{PE}	3
FINE 3160 Color/Constructed Image ^{PE}	3
FINE ____ Visual Art Elective	3
CU Denver CORE requirement	3
CU Denver CORE requirement	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

YEAR THREE

Semester 5	CRS
FINE 3161 Silver Fine Print ^{PE}	3
FINE 3162 Digital Fine Print ^{PE}	3
FINE ____ Visual Art Elective	3
FINE ____ Visual Art Elective	3
CU Denver CORE requirement	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

Semester 6	CRS
FINE 3171 Experimental Photography ^{PE}	3
FINE 3172 Documentary Photography ^{PE}	3
FINE ____ Visual Art Elective	3
FINE ____ Pre-20 th c Art History Elective ^{PE}	3
CU Denver CORE requirement ^M	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

YEAR FOUR

Semester 7	CRS
FINE 3635 Photography Now ^{PE}	3
FINE 4195 Photography Portfolio I ^{PE}	3
FINE 4990 Contemporary Art ^{PE}	3
FINE ____ Visual Art Elective	3
CU Denver CORE Requirement	3
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	15

Semester 8	CRS
FINE 4196 Photography Portfolio II ^{PE}	3
FINE 4950 Studio BFA Thesis	3
Non-Major Arts	3
General Elective (<i>student choice</i>)	3
General Elective (<i>student choice</i>)	2
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	14

^M Major Course Available ^{PE} Prerequisite Enforced ^{PR} Prerequisite Recommended