

# Instructions for the Portfolio Review for the BFA in Illustration

Application Deadline: Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 5:00 PM

Information Session: Thursday, September 7th, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM.

Zoom link: <https://fullerton.zoom.us/j/88930948007>

Acceptance to the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Illustration is by portfolio review only. Its purpose is to evaluate applicants' proficiency in technical and creative abilities, originality, and academics.

## WHO CAN APPLY?

- Eligible applicants include all B.A. in Art majors who are currently enrolled and who enrolled in CSUF in Fall 2017 forward. This includes transfer students who entered CSUF after Fall 2017 and every first-year student who entered CSUF in Fall 2017 and after.
- Applicants must also have completed a minimum of 30 units and no more than 96 units towards their degree (exceptions may be made for the upper-unit cap; please talk to an Illustration faculty). Among their degree units, students must have passed the four classes listed below, earned a "C" grade or better for each of these four classes, and have a combined 3.0 GPA or better for these four classes:

*ART103 - 2D Design*  
*ART104 - 3D Design*

*ART107A - Beginning Drawing ART*  
*107B - Beginning Painting*

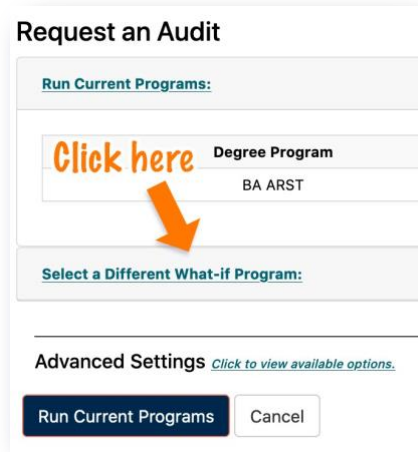
- Additionally, applicants must have completed *ART117 - Life Drawing* with a "C" (2.0) or better grade.
- Students can only apply two (2) times to be admitted to the BFA in Illustration, provided they meet the criteria above (and have not exceeded 96 units toward the degree). If a student submits a portfolio for a second review, it should be within two semesters of the first portfolio review. Applicants who are not accepted after the second attempt will not be admitted into the program.

Note: applicants are encouraged to get advisement from an Illustration faculty to verify their eligibility and unit counts, and to discuss their goals prior to applying to the program.

## WHAT GOES INTO THE APPLICATION?

### 1. TDA

Log in to your CSUF portal. Go to TitanNet to request an audit (TDA). Click the "What-if program" link.



**Request an Audit**

[Run Current Programs:](#)

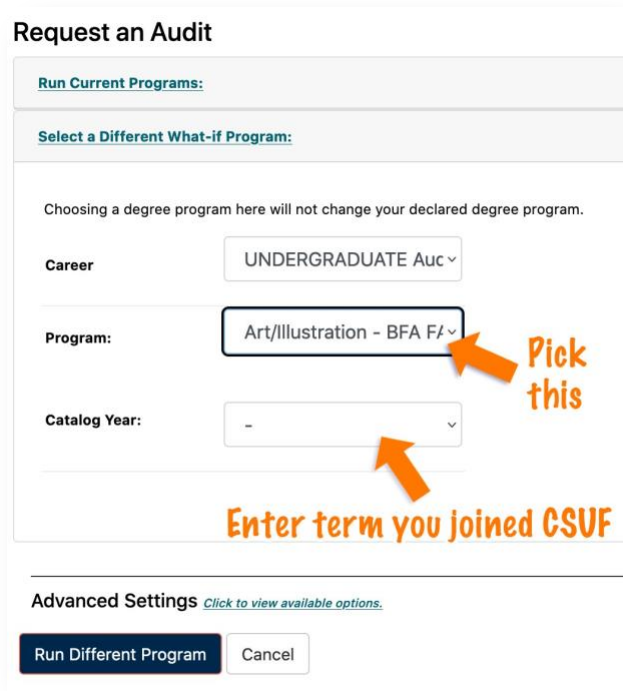
**Click here** Degree Program  
BA ARST

[Select a Different What-if Program:](#)

Advanced Settings [Click to view available options.](#)

Run Current Programs Cancel

Next to "Program," select "Art/Illustration - BFA FAIS", and next to "Catalog Year" choose the semester you joined CSUF.



**Request an Audit**

[Run Current Programs:](#)

[Select a Different What-if Program:](#)

Choosing a degree program here will not change your declared degree program.

Career: UNDERGRADUATE Auc ▾

Program: Art/Illustration - BFA F/ ▾ **Pick this**

Catalog Year: - ▾ **Enter term you joined CSUF**

Advanced Settings [Click to view available options.](#)

Run Different Program Cancel

Once the browser finishes generating your TDA, save it as a .pdf. On most computers, you can choose FILE > PRINT and find the option to save as a PDF. Title the file with your name using

this file-naming convention: LastnameFirstname-Portfolio.pdf (example: RockwellNorman-Portfolio.pdf).

## 2. Portfolio Pieces

Select your best 20 artworks (10 finished personal artworks and 10 sketchbook pages). Assemble them in a .pdf file titled LastnameFirstname-Portfolio.pdf (example: RockwellNorman-Portfolio.pdf). That file must be less than 10MB. For more information, see "How to prepare your portfolio?"

## 3. Online Application Form

To complete the application form, log into your CSUF portal (be sure to use the new portal). On the left are the Apps links, and click on the More App, then "Scholarships" link, then "Open Scholarship Application," select "Portfolio Review for the BFA in Illustration" START APPLICATION button. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete this online application form. You will answer the interest survey and upload the PDFs of your TDA and Portfolio there.

## 4. In-Class Assessment

Every applicant to the Illustration BFA program must take an in-class assessment in order to be considered. Twice, each semester, the Illustration faculty will hold in-class artistic assessments that lasts about 60-minutes. (To be clear, each applicant only needs to attend one assessment). The assessment consists of drawing exercises involving anatomy and perspective sketching, thumbnailing, composition, rendering, observational drawing, creative design, and more. When filling out the online application form, sign up for one of the two listed dates. You will receive a confirmation of the days and times selected after completing the online application. All you will need to bring is a set of pencils. Paper will be provided. Do not bring sketchbooks, artbooks, or art references.

Thursday Oct. 5 - MOD 108, 11:50am-12:50pm

Friday Oct. 6 - MOD 108, 11:50am-12:50pm

## HOW TO PREPARE THE PORTFOLIO?

The portfolio will include 20 examples of your artwork: 10 finished personal artworks and 10 sketchbook pages. Digitally format the 20 examples and assemble them in one .pdf document (under 10 MB) to upload to the online application.

The portfolio is representative of your original work and should include the following:

### 1. Finished Artwork (10 examples)

First and foremost, select examples of your best work. The portfolio is representative of your original work (no fan art, no master copy). In this same spirit, you are discouraged from selecting collaborative artworks; however, if you pick any, make sure you clearly describe your role in their creation. When picking from your best artworks, give preference to those that demonstrate your abilities in:

- anatomy drawing
- perspective
- design (and a little bit of calligraphy is OK but not required)

- black and white (or grayscale) art
- color art
- observational art (images you produced from looking at real-life people, animals, objects, or places)
- imaginative art (images you created from your imagination).

Any form and medium that may be broadly found in illustration is acceptable. Do not include three-dimensional art unless it is part of your illustration approach (for example, some illustrators create scenes in paper maché with puppets and then photograph those; other illustrators use software such as Maya to create 3D environments or characters for their 2D illustrations – those would be relevant and valuable examples of your work).

## 2. Sketchbook Artwork (10 examples)

Select those sketchbook pages that excite you the most. Select examples that provide insight into the kind of art you love creating, show your interests, and showcase some of your best sketching and creative abilities.

## HOW TO PREPARE THE INTEREST SURVEY?

The survey list will include illustration fields to check as your primary interests in illustration.

In addition, you will typically be asked to provide short answers to the following questions:

- Briefly explain your professional dreams and your post-graduation plans.
- Briefly describe all significant professional or volunteer experiences you have had as an artist.
- Pick five adjectives that best describe your personality.

## Q&A

- When does the faculty review portfolios and applications?

Once per semester in the fall and spring. Usually, the deadlines are October 1st (fall) and March 1st. If the dates occur on a weekend, the deadline is the Monday immediately after.

- What if I am already a BFA student in this concentration?

If you were already approved & processed by Admissions and Records prior to August 20, 2018, and are currently a BFA student in the Illustration concentration, then you do not have to apply AGAIN to the BFA concentration in which you are currently registered.

- What if I want to be in two concentrations?

If you are already an approved BFA student currently within a concentration, AND also want to apply to the Illustration (or Computer Animation & Game Art or Entertainment Art/Animation) concentration as your second area of study (for a dual focus), then YES you must complete the Portfolio Review process to apply for the second concentration. Please note: For clarity, if you are currently a BFA major who wants to be in another concentration, then YES you must still apply for the concentration not currently showing on your TDA.

- Does everyone need to do a Portfolio Review?

No. Currently, there are no Portfolio Reviews for the following undergraduate concentrations in the BA: Art History, General Studio, Teaching (Art Education); and the BFA: Ceramics, Creative Photography and Experimental Media, Drawing and Painting, Graphic and Interactive Design, Jewelry and Metals, and Sculpture. Students must still complete the BFA prerequisites with a 3.0 GPA or better.

- What is my current degree and concentration?

Please check your TDA for your specific degree and listed concentration. All art students enter CSUF as BA in ART majors.

- What is the degree or concentration for first-year and transfer students?

All students enter the university as BA in Art majors and must apply for their specific concentrations in the BA and BFA degrees. The application for all majors, except for the Computer Animation & Game Art, Entertainment Art/Animation, and Illustration concentrations, is completed by filling out a Change of Major form once students have completed the prerequisites for their degrees--usually done after the first year of study. Computer Animation & Game Art, Entertainment Art/ Animation, and Illustration have Portfolio Reviews for their BFA programs.

- Can I use class projects as portfolio pieces?

Of course.

- Can I use personal work (art not created for classes) as portfolio pieces?

Of course. Whether it's created for a class or not matters less than the quality of the illustration.

- Is fan art to be avoided in the portfolio?

Generally, yes. The exceptions are if you create *very* original fan art (not art closely based on another artist's style, a derivative style) or if you create a very original take on the intellectual property (IP). Even so, limit fan art pieces to one or two at the very most, and only if they are very strong and creative.

- Does the filenames of the TDA and Portfolio matter?

Yes, very much. When reviewing your submissions, that is how the faculty finds them. Remember to use those conventions:

- TDA file:

    LastnameFirstname-TDA.pdf

    Example: RockwellNorman-TDA.pdf

- Portfolio file (under 10MB):

    LastnameFirstname-Portfolio.pdf Example: RockwellNorman-Portfolio.pdf

- Can I upload my portfolio images as separate files, say inside a folder?

Please don't. Combine all your images in one PDF (you can use Adobe Acrobat, with FILE > CREATE > Combine files into a single PDF).

- Should I label the artwork in my portfolio (PDF)?

No. The only text for the portfolio that helps is your name in the filename (LastnameFirstname-Portfolio.pdf), your name on the very first page of the PDF, and maybe, if it's not clear visually, a header before the "finished artworks" section and before the "sketches" section.

- Does the PDF of the portfolio have a size limit?

Yes, 10MB. If you the PDF of your portfolio is just a little above 10MB, it will still be reviewed. Keep in mind that big files take long to open, and when looking at many portfolios, large files are not practical.

- What is the distinction between finished artwork and sketches, especially with digital sketches?

If it looks finished, if it's at a point where you would be confident to turn in the artwork to your professor for a grade or as a commission to a client for payment, it is probably "finished." If it looks unfinished (and not purposefully so), then it's probably in the "sketches" category. If you do roughs, café sketches, explorations, quick-draws on a tablet or computer, if those images took you less than 30 minutes (maybe much less), and if they look and feel like they're "sketches," they are probably suited for "sketches" category. On the other hand, when applicants try to include many overly worked or mostly finished art in the "sketches" category, the reviewers question if you can tell the difference between finished art and sketches, and usually, it's a pretty clear difference.

- What if I do my sketches on a screen such as an iPad (as opposed to a sketching on a sketchbook or on paper)?

"Digital sketches" count and we will review them. Just make sure they look like sketches, not like final art. If your sketches are too polished and look like final (clearly finished) art, we may have questions about your spontaneous sketching skills.

- Can I cut-and-paste or collage several sketches into one page of sketches?

We don't encourage that too much. Ten amazing sketches will make a stronger impression than 25 sketches made of ten amazing sketches and fifteen not as amazing that you would re-layout on ten pages. Only show your very best, and no more, because then you risk introducing weaker art into the mix and making a weaker impression.

## MORE QUESTIONS?

For questions about the portfolio, please contact the faculty in your area of concentration. If you need procedural help, then please contact the Art Office at [artdept@fullerton.edu](mailto:artdept@fullerton.edu).