The Department of Contemporary Art and Theater is a dynamic program with a cross-disciplinary approach to learning. Students are challenged and encouraged to grow creatively and professionally. They progress through a carefully developed series of courses mixing the development of technical skills, language, and theories of the visual and performing arts with the broad-based knowledge of the liberal arts essential to artists in the contemporary world.

The Department offers three degree programs; the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Art Education, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Contemporary Theater Studies, and the Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) with five concentration areas including graphic design, non-toxic printmaking, painting and drawing, photography/computer imagery, and sculpture. The Department also offers a minor in Art, Graphic Design, Photography/Computer Imagery, and Theater.

What makes us unique?

First-Year Focus
During the first year, students are introduced to courses in their concentration. They will develop the understanding and vocabulary essential to their continued growth as a creative individual.

Focus on Contemporary Art and Theater
The Department of Contemporary Art and Theater has a contemporary approach to teaching and is constantly evolving to accurately reflect various contemporary practices.

Professional Core
At each level, there are courses that focus on professional development, including self promotion and career advancement opportunities, mentorships, internships and collaborative affiliations with working professionals.

Local and Global Experiences
The Department of Contemporary Art and Theater travels extensively, providing students the opportunity to experience art in the U.S. and abroad.

Dedicated Faculty
Faculty are all exhibiting, performing, or working professionals in their respective fields and are dedicated teachers who endeavor to ensure that all students reach their full potential.
Enjoying an excellent reputation nationally, the Teacher Education Program is designed to lead to K–12 teaching certification. Coursework offered through the Department of Education presents students with multiple opportunities to work in and observe K–12 grade school settings.

The program supports the theme of “Teacher as a Reflective Problem Solver.” Consistent with this theme, courses in art, art education, and professional education are sequenced to enable students to critically examine, interpret, and evaluate their own educational behaviors as preparation for a career in art education. As well, the program prepares students to research, plan for and implement curriculum that meets the standards indicated by the 21st Century Visual Arts Standards and Objectives for West Virginia Schools.

The main purposes of the Art Education Program are to prepare future art educators for successful art instruction in the public school system, and as artist/scholars for future graduate studies.

As its name suggests, art education is a hybrid discipline, bridging the fields of visual art and education. As such, art education majors receive significant training from two departments. The function of the Art Education Program is to meaningfully connect these two arenas of inquiry so as to enable students to synthesize knowledge that will serve them as effective art makers, art researchers, and art educators.

Art education courses introduce majors to the historical and philosophical foundations, as well as to the methodologies of art education. In keeping with the Department of Art’s emphasis on contemporary practice, the Art Education Program emphasizes recent research and scholarship in the field, as practiced by today’s in-service art educators. Rather than adhering to any one educational philosophy, the art education program seeks to expose students to a diverse array of contemporary educational practices (including Discipline-Based Art Education, Community-Based Art Education, Choice-based Art Education, Critical Pedagogy and Visual Culture), so that individual students may draw the best from each as they begin to locate a unique voice as teachers.

Concurrently, in keeping with the Department of Education’s theme of “Teacher as a Reflective Problem Solver,” the art education program is devoted to developing a community of original and critical thinkers. The intimate size of the program, with its seminar-sized discussion classes in its own permanent space, aims to foster such an intellectually and creatively stimulating community.

For more info about the Art Education program visit www.shepherd.edu/art
Successful design students in our program share an interest in the visual world, a curiosity about communication in all of its forms, and a passion for the visual interpretation of abstract ideas. They are aware of the client-driven focus of design and develop the maturity and perspective to separate work from self. They enjoy working both in teams and individually, and have excellent written and verbal communication skills.

The B.F.A. Graphic Design program aims to provide students with a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline, practice, and profession—as well as its inherent problems and possibilities. First-year students develop visual literacy by exploring the elements and principles of design. Assignments encourage conceptual thinking and provide opportunities for gaining technical skill and attention to craft. Upper level coursework and projects integrate design process, theory, and interdisciplinary thinking and offer the occasion to use research, writing, and presentation skills.

Guided by a professionally active and accomplished faculty, the graphic design program offers instruction in typography, digital illustration, brand identity, editorial, packaging, and user interface (UI)/user experience (UX) design. The breadth and depth of the faculty’s collective expertise provides students the support to explore the field’s many diverse disciplines. Off-site internships provide additional learning experiences where students gain real-world experience, make contacts, and refine their professional portfolios.

For more info about the Graphic Design program visit www.shepherd.edu/art
The **B.F.A. Non-Toxic Printmaking program** gives students the opportunity to explore lithography, intaglio, relief, and monoprint processes. The first two years of the program provide an introduction to printmaking and to fine art theory and practice. Students are encouraged to develop compositional skills in printmaking classes as well as in all studio art classes. The last two years students will develop a personal style and explore contemporary applications of print media, creating their own unique methods and visual vocabulary.

Printmaking makes use of skills and talents utilized in both painting and drawing for the creation of multiple images. In drawing or painting, the student produces only one original work of art, whereas in printmaking the student has the ability to produce as many identical images as he or she desires. Printmaking is an old and honored method of creating original works of art. There are many methods and ways of generating images. At Shepherd the faculty enjoy assisting students as they learn new and exciting ways to create printed images.

Printmaking graduates have successfully pursued graduate degrees, opened their own printshops, teach college-level printmaking, sell their work at craft shows, galleries, and other venues, work in museums with print collections, or as exhibition curators. Shepherd University is lucky to be located near Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC. Both of these cities are home to reputable studio printshops willing to engage interns. Pyramid Atlantic in Silver Spring, MD, and Goya Girl Press, Baltimore, have excellent national reputations and offer internships. The Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, VA, has a teaching printshop with internship opportunities in both the shop and the gallery. The Smithsonian Institute has print-related opportunities for archival and curatorial work with paper, prints and drawings.

For more info about the **Printmaking program** visit [www.shepherd.edu/art](http://www.shepherd.edu/art)

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**Concentration Requirements**
*(in addition to the Fine Art Core)*

- Printmaking I & II
- Drawing I & II
- Art Criticism
- Advanced Printmaking Studio (x2)
- Advanced Drawing
- Capstone Printmaking
- Interdisciplinary Studio (x2)
- +2 Printmaking Electives

**Printmaking Faculty**

- Rhonda Smith
  Master Faculty

In addition to full-time faculty, courses are taught by professional printmakers on a rotating basis.

**For information contact:**
Christian Benefiel, Advisor
cbenefiel@shepherd.edu
The B.F.A. Painting and Drawing program offers students an excellent education, superb faculty, and a thorough grounding in historical and contemporary art. Students will have time to explore and develop a personal style, numerous opportunities to exhibit work and travel, and an invitation to work with a community of artists in well-equipped studios.

The Department of Contemporary Art is committed to encouraging students to work conceptually and visually. To accomplish this, students will progress through a carefully developed series of courses mixing the development of technical skills, language and theories of the visual arts with the broad based knowledge of liberal arts, essential to artists in the complex contemporary world. Within the first two years students will enroll in Painting and Drawing classes, with a focus on traditional art skills and experimentation with many styles and media of painting. During the last two years students focus on developing an individual style and personal portfolio. The senior year culminates with an exhibition in which students organize, create, curate, install and publicize their work.

Because of our cross-disciplinary approach, a painting student may do mixed media work, installations, drawings, or work with whatever media and format best portrays their concepts and style.

Individual and peer critiques assist students in evaluating work and its relationship to past art and the contemporary art world. The Interdisciplinary Studio courses will focus on students developing a significant body of work while reading, writing and participating in discussions about contemporary art and culture.

In preparation for a career as an artist, portfolio and Business of Art courses are part of the curriculum to prepare students to approach galleries, to obtain commissions, to have exhibitions of their work, or to apply for graduate school. Elective courses and internships are offered to personalize your individual course of study.

Painting students can be gallery owners or operators, art administrators, set designers, muralists, illustrators of books and print, exhibition curators, frame shop technicians, or practice in their own studios to produce work for clients or galleries.

For more info about the Painting program visit www.shepherd.edu/art
The B.F.A. Photography/Computer Imagery program offers students a professional degree with an emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, and practical application, in terms of both digital and traditional photographic processes. The photography/computer imagery program allows each student to develop a personal style, informed through the study of photography as an art form, the historical context from which it emerged, and its role within contemporary art and culture.

The first two years of courses have been designed to provide a strong foundation for technique and professional application, while encouraging an exploration of a variety of media, processes, and visual approaches. The last two years of courses have been designed to emphasize an individual direction, culminating with an exhibition that the student creates, organizes, and promotes. To prepare for a career in the field of photography, a series of Professional Practice courses have been designed to teach students how to prepare a portfolio, which includes a résumé, artist statement, and samples of work.

The photography/computer imagery program offers related internships, along with the opportunity to produce highly visible work for local and regional clients.

For more info about the Photography/Computer Imagery program visit www.shepherd.edu/art

**Concentration Requirements**
*in addition to the Fine Art Core*

- History of Photography
- Digital Photography
- Darkroom Photography
- Studio Photography
- Color Light in Photography
- Digital Imagery Manipulation
- Image and Meaning
- Research in Photography
- Advanced Print Portfolio
- + 4 Photo Electives

**Photography/Computer Imagery Faculty**

- **Rick Bruner**  
  Coordinator of Photography/Computer Imagery Program  
  Professor of Art  
  rbruner@shepherd.edu

- **Erin Neve**  
  Assistant Professor of Art  
  eneve@shepherd.edu

- **Mike Mendez**  
  Adjunct Professor of Art

In addition to full-time faculty, courses are taught by professional photographers on a rotating basis.
The B.F.A. Sculpture program at Shepherd gives students an opportunity to learn contemporary and traditional sculptural techniques while exploring the relationship between media, concept and spatial perception. The first two years of the program provide an introduction to basic sculptural processes and visual language as it applies to 3-dimensional and time based work. Students are encouraged to develop an awareness of how art and designed objects impact the spaces they inhabit, how scale affects response, and how the materials themselves communicate ideas. Problem-solving techniques and exposure to different materials and processes are encouraged and developed during the first year. The upper level curriculum is more open-ended, allowing students to find a balance in work between media, form and function. They develop their own unique methods and visual vocabulary, a personal style through a balance of theory and practice.

Our sculpture program places a strong emphasis on the importance of learning outside of the classroom, as demonstrated in our numerous travel opportunities. Students will explore contemporary approaches to sculpture through exposure to current working artists. Departmental field trips to museums, galleries, and studios are offered many times throughout the year to provide this first-hand experience. A well-established travel program to New York City is offered annually. Our travel abroad program allows students to travel with the faculty to study and experience the best museums and cultural centers in the world. A gallery and visiting artist program brings contemporary art and artists directly to you. The department also capitalizes on the surrounding Mid-Atlantic region to take students to conferences, exhibitions, and other professional events.

The facility hosts a variety of wood, metal, plastic, mold-making and foundry, and electronic tools for students to use and is connected to the SU FASTEnER Lab, for digital tooling such as 3D printing, laser cutting, and CNC cutting processes. Design and interdisciplinary integration is paramount in this space and students are encouraged to work across disciplines.

For more info about the Sculpture program visit www.shepherd.edu/art
For more info about SU FASTEnER Lab please visit www.sufastenerlab.org
The Contemporary Theater Studies (CTS) B.A. program at Shepherd provides an innovative plan of study connected to Shepherd’s professional theater company, The Contemporary American Theater Festival (CATF). The program engages students as theater generalists and then encourages students to devise or create an emphasis that reflects their own passions. CTS artists maintain a connection to the core curriculum that includes course work in English, Art, Music, History, Shakespeare and many other disciplines. The program connects scholarship and theater practice within the context of contemporary American culture and society, indeed global culture and society as perceived through the theater arts and new play development.

Students learn about history, literature, writing/storytelling and the visual dialogue of the theater and specifically the impact of the theater in contemporary terms — new plays. Regular classroom study is enhanced by the internship experiences with CATF where students work with the most talented new play professionals in the country. The degree can be the precursor to graduate work in any number of advanced study programs. The degree also provides early career entry into the creative industry, arts, administration, and a range of associated professions. Students in the program will attach a minor and take twelve hours of foreign languages.

The CTS faculty include outstanding Shepherd instructors; exceptional staff members from CATF, and working theater professionals who are in residence on the campus of Shepherd University. The students also learn in a multi-theater arts complex that is both “green” and a state-of-the-art facility with the latest equipment.

The Shepherd University Contemporary Theater Studies B.A. partnered with an internship at Contemporary American Theater Festival is the bold, new approach to learning about and making theater today.

For more info about the CTS program visit www.shepherd.edu/art