

WUDPAC Admission Requirements - Fall 2022 Revisions

Frequently and Not So Frequently Asked Questions

These questions were gathered through a survey circulated in Fall 2022, when the new requirements were announced. The survey promised to provide answers to all questions. Below is our effort to do so.

If reviewing the [WUDPAC Admissions Website](#) and this document of frequently and not so frequently asked questions still leaves you with questions, email your questions to: art-conservation@udel.edu. Your question will be forwarded to the appropriate faculty member who will respond directly to you. For more information about a particular specialty, reach out to the appropriate faculty member listed on either the [Winterthur Faculty](#) or [UD Faculty](#) pages.

Meeting the requirements:

- What suggestions do you have for gaining experience in places where opportunities are scarce?
Inquire about opportunities at your local historical society, public library, framing shop, or art handling firm that could be focused on object handling and collection care and supplement with some reading and research that starts with the websites of [national and international conservation organizations](#).
- Is there preferred academic background and experience?
Any academic background that results in an applicant meeting the admission requirements will be considered. We are looking for a wide variety of applicants, so no one background or experience is preferred over another.
- Can requirements be taken online?
Yes, as long as the course meets any of the other stipulations (number of credits, includes a lab, etc.)
- Would applicants without undergraduate credits in material culture and sciences be considered, if they have attended relevant bridging courses?
Absolutely! The required courses do not have to have been taken as part of your undergraduate degree.
- How do I ensure I have proper “upper level” course work when my undergrad degree wasn’t in Art?
The upper-level course stipulation refers to some of the material culture course requirements. All six of these courses should not be introductory (typically 100 and 200 level) courses. A degree in Art should not be required to take these upper-level courses.
- Strategies for obtaining the requisite qualifications for older individuals undergoing a mid-career change.
One of our goals was to broaden the requirements enough that many individuals, including those later in life, will find that many of them were met as an undergrad even though the applicant was not pursuing admission to conservation graduate school at that time. We also expect that missing qualifications can be met through evening courses at community colleges and art centers.

- What kind and length of pre-program experience are you looking for?
Our only requirement is the 400 hours of experience described on our [Admissions Requirements](#) page. There is a section in the Applicant Information Form where you are invited to list other experience, and you are welcome to do so. This extra experience will not be evaluated in the process of deciding who is invited to interview. It will be one piece of information that builds your more complete profile for the interview committee.
- What sort of undergraduate degrees do you generally accept?
All BAs, BFAs, or BSs (or the international equivalent, as long as the other prerequisites are met).
- Do you have language requirements?
International students for whom English is not their first language must submit a TOEFL or IELTS score. No other language requirements are required.
- Are there alternatives to pre-program internship hours?
We hope we have made the options diverse enough to allow you to gain these hours of experience as described. If you are still having difficulty finding an experience, contact us through the email at the start of this document.
- Is the 72 hours for a studio art/craft technique course a hard cut off?
72 hours of in-class time is not a hard cut off. Perhaps you have 48 hours of formal class work and then you supplemented that with additional hours at home.
- Would applicants with substantial, on the job, conservation training be considered if they do not meet all the other requirements?
At this point, our system does not allow us to substitute work experience for any of the formal requirements.

Portfolio specific questions:

- Can portfolios be on a website?
Applicants invited to an interview are given specific instructions on how to submit them as PDFs.
- In the conservation portfolio:
 - Could the publication/poster be a past presentation in PowerPoint format?
A PowerPoint with a full written text could work. One that is simply slides would not be acceptable
 - Could the science analysis report address topics not that relevant to art conservation?
Yes, as long as it is a demonstration of your ability to understand, analyze, and communicate scientific information.
 - Can the three examples be from the same project?
Theoretically they could. The question to ask when making this decision is what are you trying to demonstrate to the committee?
- In the art portfolio:
 - Can art created outside the classes taken for the requirement be included in the portfolio?
Yes

Curriculum specific questions:

- How much time is spent in textiles?
All first-year students take 12 full days of Textile Block. Students can then major in textile conservation in their 2nd and 3rd years, at which point all course work can be focused on textiles. This time commitment is similar for all majors.
- Are there opportunities to go abroad?
Yes, many students opt to do an international Summer Work Placement following their second year of study. Occasionally students opt to do this following their first year of study, or more commonly, for a portion of their third year.
- What placement opportunities are there?
The opportunities are too numerous to list here and change yearly, based on availability. All placements are organized in consultation with the student. The process involves matching a student's needs and wishes with what internship sites are able to offer.

Application specific questions:

- How many applications do you usually receive, and do you expect the change in the requirements to change that?
For the last few years, we have received about 60 a year. We hope the change in the requirements will make it possible for a wider variety of people to apply, and subsequently more applications will be received.
- How often do you accept students?
We take 10 students a year.
- Any important information for international students?
We are absolutely interested in having international students. It may be best to contact us through the address at the beginning of this document to discuss your individual situation. Matching your coursework and our requirements can be a challenge.
- If we do "formal studio courses" what sort of confirmation do you require when applying to the program?
You will list your four required courses on Supplemental Form 1. For 2023 applications you will be asked to describe your courses only on this form. If you have taken courses at an institution that provides transcripts, you will upload these with your other transcripts during your application.
- Do applicants declare a specialty on the application?
No. In previous years, Library and Archives Majors were asked to declare at the time of application, due to funding stipulations. This requirement is no longer in place. All First-Year students will be asked to declare their majors at the beginning of May at the end of their first year.
- What are some examples of stand-out features of past applications?
Stand-out applications come in a wide variety of forms. The uniting factor is that they seem to be submitted by applicants who have found a way to communicate their genuine interest in the field of cultural heritage conservation and provide

evidence that their interest has grown through active engagement with cultural heritage.

- Will there be ways to show more works of art/craft – such as additional materials?
There are two stages to the application process. Additional materials, outlined on the [Interview and Portfolio](#) page will be requested of those who are granted an interview. No other additional materials are accepted or reviewed.
- How many courses can be in progress at the time of application?
On Supplemental Form 2 you can list up to 4 courses being taken in the spring of the year you apply.

Interview specific questions:

- Can you share more about the online chemistry exam?
It is an applied conservation science assessment, not an exam. You are not graded. There are six questions offered and the applicant answers three of them. After the assessment is completed, the applicant is emailed their answers. The science questions you are asked in your interview are follow-up questions derived from your answers.
- Can you share more details about how the interview is organized?
The interview is typically 55 minutes long and held over Zoom. All 8 members of the admissions committee, and an administrator is present. The interview begins with the applicant's presentation, followed by an object exam (using digital images) that is facilitated by one of the admissions committee members, and closed out with approximately 15 minutes of open questions from the committee. All applicants who are invited to interview will be offered several opportunities to learn more about the process.

Finances:

- Is the program still fully funded?
Yes, all students receive a yearly stipend and full tuition scholarship.
- What are the fees?
There are student fees paid to the university of approximately \$1,000/year. In 2022/23 \$750 of these fees have been paid for through grant funding.
- Are there scholarships for international applicants?
International students receive the same funding as domestic students.
- Is housing provided?
No
- Do students typically work while they are enrolled?
They do not. The program is time and work intensive. Until 2022/23 students were not allowed to work if they were receiving stipends and tuition scholarships. Now students are allowed to work up to 9.5 hours a week, and they are allowed to earn money in June, July and August following their first and second years of study.
- What kind of job opportunities does the program offer students?
We do all that we can to make sure your summer work projects are paid experiences.

- What kind of transportation is needed?
It is very difficult to manage your two years at Winterthur without a car.

Program culture and student support:

- How does WUDPAC support disabled applicants and students?
The modifications to our requirements, making it possible to meet our requirements and interview for admission without leaving communities of support, are one piece of the work we are doing to support those with disabilities. We are continually making improvements to the physical accessibility of our spaces. We are working in the conservation community to reshape the understanding and practice of conservation, so it is accessible to all. The University of Delaware has a Disability Support Services office that is available to all. We welcome any specific questions and guidance on other support we can provide.
- How can I get perspectives from current students?
You can take a tour with one of them. (See the Connecting for Further Questions below). You could connect with them through the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network of the American Institute for Conservation. You could email the address at the start of the document and ask to be put in touch with the Class Leader for the first-, second-, or third-year class.
- What are you doing about the diversity/lack thereof in WUDPACs staff and faculty?
We are very aware of the need to grow a staff that comes from a variety of racial, economic, and ethnic backgrounds and includes people with a variety of physical and intellectual abilities and gender identities, among other things. We have greater agility to do this in our invitations to guest instructors and are actively doing so. Addressing diversity in full-time hiring is a slower process dependent on the availability of positions and funding.
- Is there a diverse group of students, faculty, and administrators?
In some ways yes and in other ways no. Increasing diversity from many perspectives is ongoing work for WUDPAC and the University of Delaware, as it is for the broader conservation profession.
- How are the WUDPAC program and students interacting with local indigenous groups through mutual knowledge exchange, etc?
There is a Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware community about an hour from Winterthur. We have and are working with them in a variety of ways. Small bits of our work are communicated on the cultural mapping page of the [Lenape Union Land Trust](#) site.
- How does the program prepare students for success after graduation?
It is our intention that every part of the program is designed with student success in mind. The curriculum is designed to encourage critical thinking, empower students to develop strong problem-solving skills, and support building a strong professional network. Students have opportunities to conduct meaningful research and give professional presentations. In addition, students are given specific opportunities to develop practical and soft skills, such as:
 - A two-day “How to run a private practice” seminar.

- Sessions attended by both Winterthur Program in American Material Culture and WUDPAC students, to develop sensitivity to both curatorial and conservation concerns and to develop working relationships we hope will last well into the future.
- What sort of help do you provide for future job prospects?
While it is ultimately the fellow's job to apply for and secure a position, we are there beside you in the process. We will meet with you to brainstorm ideas, forward you possible positions as they become known to us, and write letters of recommendation. It is our goal as well as yours that you will be employed in a place and a way that works for you. We will do what we can to help you reach that goal.

Connecting for further questions:

- Who can we talk to to make sure our courses meet the requirements?
Send an email to the address listed at the start of the document, and a faculty member will be in touch with you.
- Is the art conservation department available for in-person visits and consultations?
Yes. See the information about tours near the bottom of our [Welcome Page](#).

How can an undergraduate best prepare themselves to be a strong candidate for this or a related graduate program?

- A few suggestions:
 - Pursue internship hours not only to fulfill the requirement but also to be sure that the real (often tedious and unglamorous) work of conservation is truly the career you want to pursue.
 - Get familiar with the admissions requirements for graduate school as early as possible to build toward meeting those course and experiential requirements in a systematic way.
 - Network with the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network of the American Institute for Conservation.
 - Attend professional conservation talks (many are free and virtual) through various regional, national, and international conservation organizations.
 - Explore multiple conservation specialties to broaden your perspective of the field.
 - Explore multiple preservation specialties (historic preservation, art handling, curatorship, historic interpretation) to understand how conservation fits into this range of professions.
 - Be able to articulate why cultural heritage is important to you and the rest of the world.