

Foundation Program – New Student Guide

Congratulations! You are about to begin your professional training in art & design. The first year (Foundation) program at Otis provides core studies for life-long learning and professional practices in art & design. The program is organized to foster the most growth and success possible within the first year of your art/design school career.

Foundation offers an integrated platform of skills, information, and experience that will support you in the future, both educationally and professionally. It will provide you with an experiential understanding of the rich relationships between all of the art & design disciplines. You will be working alongside future Fashion Design, Interactive Product Design, Digital Media, Architecture/Landscape/Interiors, Communication Arts, Fine Arts, and Toy Design students. Foundation mirrors the future; many of the boundaries between the various fields will overlap, and sometimes, disappear.

When school starts, you will be attending studio classes within a “Section”, or group of students. Your studio classes will meet together as a section group for both semesters of studio in the Foundation year, with the exception of your second semester Elective course. This section grouping provides increased peer support and a more secure setting to work in, as well as better opportunities for developing connections with others creatively, socially, and professionally.

The Foundation program emphasizes “sequential learning”—the taking of incremental steps in order to accumulate the skills, confidence, and understanding needed to reach a higher goal. This starts with activities and problems that focus attention on individual tasks and issues related to the courses. As the year progresses, the coursework evolves along a pathway that leads from activity that is highly defined by your instructors to activity that is increasingly defined by you. This evolution is what allows you to discover and/or exploit a degree of personal vision. By the end of Foundation year, the potential for your individual growth and success in the Art & Design fields will be uncovered. You will be truly prepared to move into your major as a sophomore at Otis.

Below are some questions students frequently ask about the Foundation experience:

What will I learn in Foundation studio?

The Foundation program teaches many skills that are vital in the art and design fields. These include *technical* skills involving media, tools, and materials, *perceptual* skills that allow the eye, hand, heart, and mind to serve well in creative endeavors, and *thinking* skills, used for understanding matters of theory, criteria, and visual quality.

Much of the work in first semester will be *problem-solving* oriented. This means that you will be given instruction and then asked to creatively solve a problem focused on the principles or methods shown. This kind of activity will ask you to devote considerable effort to a particular aspect of the larger art & design challenge. Later, toward the second semester, the activities and project assignments will become more *problem-defining* oriented. This means that in addition to solving a problem given by your instructor, you will also participate in defining the problems themselves. At that point, your creative energy will be called into play in a deeper way, and the work will feel more personal, expressive, and in some ways, more meaningful. With these two kinds of learning models in mind, remember it is very important to invest yourself totally in both

types of work. This will allow you to use the skills and principles you learn in early work again in later work that will be more complex.

The practice of professional discipline is a component of Foundation, as well. For example, the managing of time so that project deadlines and requirements don't overwhelm you is a very useful practice. Participation in critical discussions that facilitate your growth and confidence as an aesthetically aware creative "maker" is a great practice. Working in collaboration with others to achieve even better results is another.

The Foundation Program is about people as well as courses. You will interact often with your faculty and your advisors, who will always support your development.

What studio classes will I be taking in Foundation?

Principles of Design, Connections Through Color & Design, Drawing & Composition, Form & Space, and Life Drawing are the core studio courses (in second semester, you will also take a Foundation Elective, offered by your prospective major department). Each core course runs for two semesters, with the (optional) exception of Life Drawing, which can be taken in semester one only, and complemented with Creative Practices and Responses in second semester. Your section will proceed from the first semester into the second semester as a group, and will continue working with the first semester studio faculty in the second semester.

In **Principles of Design**, and its second semester counterpart, **Connections through Color & Design** (6 hours each semester), you will study the fundamental elements, processes and language of two-dimensional design and its crossover application to real-world experience. Class work involves a range of materials, tools, organizing principles, and ways of thinking. In learning about design, various assignments are undertaken to focus attention and foster skill acquisition related to individual design elements and visual organization. Some of these design elements are the use of line, shape, form, compositional devices, and stylistic attitudes. Since Color & Design is a 6-hour (weekly) class, much of the work is accomplished in class. A wide range of processes are included, such as painting, photography, and digital media. The second semester Connections through Color & Design course introduces several leading models for understanding the interaction of color in pigment-based and digital media, as well providing an integrated learning experience that expands the traditional classroom to include resources and expertise from the larger metropolitan community.

Drawing & Composition is a 3 hour (weekly) class that will provide experience and training in the basics of drawing. The challenge of representing three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional plane has fascinated people for centuries. The tools and devices necessary to do this are taught in a clear sequence. Questions of composition—how information is presented in relation to the picture plane and its boundaries—are also investigated. Drawing media vary, allowing different descriptive and expressive qualities to emerge. You will draw, and draw again—with instruction provided to support and develop the understanding and skill needed to make compelling images and abstractions in a wide range of drawing media. Methods such as the use of perspective, cross-contour, light logic, tonal gradation, and color are all taught in a sequenced progression that leads to an impressive level of mastery.

Form & Space is a three-dimensional design class. It meets for 3 hours each week. We often think of art and design in terms of two-dimensional skills—drawing and picture-making. But the "real" world is three-dimensional—nature, buildings, our bodies, and even space itself. Knowing how the complex 3-D visual experience works is vital in all aspects of visual art and/or

design. Focusing on the unique problem of invention in form, the Form & Space curriculum teaches the process of imagining, planning, constructing, and visually resolving your own three-dimensional inventions. Throughout the year, activity progresses from the simple to the complex, from the directed to the self-directed. Designing and constructing three-dimensional form is a challenging and gratifying process. By the end of the year in Form & Space, you be capable of handling materials, using tools, thinking in the round, and solving 3-D problems of both a visual and constructional nature.

In **Life Drawing**, you will receive 6 hours per week of sequenced instruction in one of the most challenging and compelling of all Western art traditions—structural drawing focused on the human figure. The figure is one of the most complex natural forms, and serves well as a model of nature itself in drawing. This course provides instruction in structure, visual relationships, and mark-making. You will draw from the live model each week. Traditional methods of analytical figure drawing are taught—gesture, anatomy, measurement and transparency. You will learn to use devices for perceptual development like axis lines, the plumb line, head counts, surface landmarks, planar analysis, and ellipses. Throughout the year, this will all accumulate to provide the perceptual, intellectual, and manual skills needed to make strong, lifelike figure drawings that embody a sense of personal vision. Students have the option of taking Creative Practices and Responses in second semester, in place of Life Drawing II.

The **Creative Practices and Responses** course (available in second semester) focuses on studying, researching, and exploring practices of creativity that bridge art/design disciplines. Students are exposed to a diverse range of concepts, materials, and methods for thinking and working creatively. In-class activities promote the documentation of individual creative processes and the synthesis of intuitive, culturally-constructed, and personal impulses into inventive visual responses.

What can I do this summer to prepare for my studio classes?

The summer is a good time to prepare for the school year by finding some experiences that will help to slow down and focus your attention on something aesthetically enriching. In Foundation, you will often be asked to focus your attention, entertain possibilities, and produce a lot of work. Before you arrive in the Fall, a great way to prepare is to get as much exposure to “aesthetic experience” as possible.

For example, go to the museums wherever you live—move slowly and look closely at work that attracts you. Think less in terms of what you like, and more about *how* things were done. When we see an old painting of a battle scene or a mythological subject, we might feel distanced from it because of how different our time is from the time in which that work was produced. Looking more closely can put you in mind of the incredible human investment present in the work. You can connect with how much knowledge went into even the smallest part of that whole.

Go to a concert, a dance recital, or a beautiful garden. Read an inspiring novel, or see a special film. By giving yourself aesthetically enriching experiences, you allow yourself to slow down, open up, and take in something of the potential for human achievement in the arts that is within your power to achieve as well.

The pace of contemporary experience, from MTV to life on the freeways, is incredibly fast. This rapid pace is increasing all the time. It divides our attention into tiny pieces—we don’t stay focused on any one set of sensory inputs for more than seconds or minutes at a time. As an artist and/or designer, it may become your job to produce more fuel for that rapid-fire culture, but to do

that you will yourself need to *slow down*. This is necessary because of how much time, skill, sensitivity and understanding it takes to invest what we make with the kind of compelling quality it needs to compete in the world of art and design product. In other words, the more you slow down and focus your attention, the more successful you can be at stimulating others' need for ever-more interesting and inventive images, forms, and products.

Give yourself access to as many aesthetic experiences as you can this summer.

I've heard Foundation is tough. Is that true? If so, why?

It is true that Foundation at Otis is a challenging, stimulating, and rigorous program. As such, it can be perceived as tough. There are some good reasons why students view the program this way. One is that starting a college career, the first step in what will become a professional career, is perhaps tough in itself. After all, coming to Otis from high school or a junior college, you might not have worked on a professional level before. Another factor is that Foundation moves you into a professional mode, and for some that transition can be challenging, or can just take some time. The great thing is that your department administrators, faculty advisors, classroom instructors and other students around you are all prepared to help. One point that is easy to forget is that your instructors are here for you—they teach because they understand. So, while standards exist and they are maintained, lots of help is available in meeting them.

How do I order course readers and/or textbooks?

All of your required course books are purchased online **AFTER** you have registered. You will need to check both MBS Direct and University Readers to see what is required and look for your courses listed on each site. Course packs are custom published packs compiled by your professor with materials that are relevant to the course. Course packs allow professors to include up-to-date articles and readings and are customized for each class. Usually, an instructor will choose to use a course reader when there are multiple readings they wish to use for class and it becomes too costly to have students purchase all the books. Course readers must be purchased through University Readers and cannot be purchased through other vendors.

How do I order required Textbooks?

The online bookstore is accessible via the link, direct.mbsbooks.com, or through the Otis website, and can be used after you are registered. You will need the Student Schedule printout (sample below) that was provided by the Registrar.

1) From the Otis main page, click My Otis, then Students, then Books and Readers (under My Stuff).

2) From the Bookstore Welcome page, click on the blue link next to textbooks and wait for the page to load.

3) Click Order My Books, select the Term and Year (i.e. Fall, 09), and Continue to access the course list.

4) Using the SUBJ, CRSE, SEC, and TITLE information from your Student Schedule printout (see example, below), find each course on the online list, and select each using the check boxes.

5) Then click Submit Course ID Selections (If you do not see a course listed, it means no books are required for that course).

6) The next page will display textbooks and/or Readers required for each course selected, and you can Add them to your Cart.

7) Follow the directions according to [how you will pay for them](#).

Sample Student Schedule Printout

CRN	SUBJ	CRSE	SEC	CMP	TITLE	CREDITS
30396	FNDT	110	A	G	Form and Space I	2.0
30425	FNDT	180	A	G	Life Drawing I	3.0
30090	AHCS	120	C	G	Visual Culture	3.0

CRN – a number you use to register online

SUBJ – stands for subject

CRSE – stands for course

SEC – stands for section

CMP – stands for campus (G is the Goldsmith Campus on Lincoln)

TITLE – course title

CREDIST – number of credits or units course is worth

NOTE: You may begin purchasing your books in July. If you register in June or July, you may order your books as of August 5th, and have them in time for the first class meeting. If you register in August, you must order your books immediately upon completing registration, so they will arrive in time for you to bring them to classes in the first week of school. If you delay you may have to pay additional shipping charges!

How do I order required Course Readers?

Students order online at www.universityreaders.com and follow these exact steps:

1. Click the GOLD Students "BUY HERE" button on the top right side of our home page
2. Click the "Create New Account" button (or enter your existing login information and skip to step 6)
3. Select your State from the dropdown menu.
4. Select your University from the resulting dropdown menu.
5. Enter the fields on the page such as a "login/password" you'd like to use and all applicable "address" info.
6. Click the "Save" button to create your account, and you'll automatically be taken to your university page.
7. At your university page, click the "Add to Cart" button to the right of the course pack you want to purchase.
8. Click on the "Checkout" button on the next page.

9. Review your address info and click on the "Continue" button on the next page.
10. Review our service agreement page and click the "I Agree – Continue Checkout" button on the next page.
11. Select shipping and payment preferences from the dropdown menus. Click the "Continue" button.
12. Enter payment details and click the "Place Order" button to finalize your order. The authorization will take about 5-10 seconds. You'll be prompted with an Invoice screen once your order has been authorized and completed. You will also receive confirmation via email regarding your order.

Please direct all ordering questions to webmaster@universityreaders.com or call **800.200.3908**.
NOTE: When you purchase a course reader, you will automatically be able to download the first 20% for free. This will ensure you have the necessary material for your course WEEK 1 while you wait for the reader to ship.

Why are there two different websites for ordering?

The college looked at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Borders, and other online text book suppliers and found MBS to have the overall best service and the cheapest prices for textbooks. University Readers offered low pricing and quick turn around time for students ordering course readers.

How do I return an item or request a refund?

Textbooks: Certain conditions apply to returning your materials for a full refund. **BEFORE** you open or write in anything, please check the [Returns FAQ](#) for refund policies and restrictions.

Course Readers: Please see the [Student Help FAQ](#) section on University Readers website.

Can I have my books and readers delivered to Otis?

If you will be in transit when your course materials are going to be delivered, have not established a residence, or if you are in the Otis Housing program, you may qualify to have your orders shipped to the college. To see if you qualify and find out the procedure, please contact the office of Student Affairs at 1-310- 665-6960 or ask to talk someone in the Student Affairs office, located in the student lounge.

Can I sell my book once the semester is over?

To sell your book back to MBS, go to the MBS Direct site and click on Sell Your Books for information and shipping directions.

To sell your course reader, contact the department representative for the course to see if the reader will be used again next semester.

I need more help...

For questions concerning availability and shipping, call MBS Direct at 1-800-325-3252 or email them at vb@mbsdirect.net. Check the FAQ on the MBS Direct Online Bookstore. The FAQ button

appears in the grey header on every page. Check the [Help & FAQs](#) on University Readers website.

If you have questions about the courses or required course materials, contact the Foundation Office at (310) 665-6900. For non-studio courses, please contact the Liberal Studies Office at (310) 665-6920.

Remember . . .

The reason you were admitted to the College is that you have distinguished yourself. Foundation is happy to have you, and wants to be a part of your success. The program sees every student as an individual, and will recognize your individual development throughout the year.