

ART HISTORY



Laura Reece looked at a number of schools before deciding on the College of Charleston. She is from Ohio, so it took her high school counselor – who was aware of the College’s strong reputation in the arts – to point her in this direction. Laura acknowledges that it’s been the best decision she ever made.

“I find the College of Charleston interesting,” Laura says, “because professors are so involved with their students that they sometimes play down their own accomplishments. Once you start to work with them, you learn about their achievements and all the people they know. They can open so many doors for you. In my experience, these professors will stop at nothing to help you accomplish your goals.”

This became clear to Laura when she applied for an internship at the Gibbes Museum of Art in downtown Charleston. One of her professors made a phone call, and soon she was spending time at the museum, cataloging and photographing new acquisitions, entering information in the collections database, conducting research on artists and assisting with the installation of exhibitions.

“I loved that experience. It was so much fun and it really complemented my art history classes. I worked with the cased photograph collection, which includes daguerreotypes and tintypes. It

was a really interesting experience.” As it turns out, Laura decided to write her senior thesis on that particular area of art.

Of course, much of what art history majors do takes place in the classroom. One particular semester, Laura took the following courses: Fakes and Forgeries, The Art of Ancient Near East and Egypt, and the History of Renaissance Painting, along with a few other electives. “That was definitely a full semester – not an easy workload – but it kept my life interesting.”

Somehow, Laura found the time and energy to serve as executive director for Dance Marathon, the College’s biggest fundraising event, which benefits a local children’s hospital. She also participated in every session offered by the on-campus leadership center. After she graduates, she may go into development in the arts, or perhaps work with a company that specializes in placing art in hospitals. “Either way, I think my degree and my time at the College will have prepared me for almost anything.”

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

Ours is one of the largest independent art history departments in the Southeast and among only a few in the U.S. that specialize in undergraduate education. Taught by a faculty of highly trained and published scholars and professors, our curriculum prepares students for multiple careers, including gallery/museum positions, arts administration, preservation planning, as well as graduate school. The department offers a wide variety of internship positions at Charleston’s many museums, historical societies, preservation projects and community arts and preservation organizations.

Facts

Our faculty members’ expertise ranges broadly from ancient art to Asian art to film.

The department encourages internships and has an internship coordinator to help find placements that match students’ areas of interest.

Recent graduates have gone on to graduate school in art history, architecture, film studies, law and medicine, and to careers in museums and galleries.

Opportunities

We also offer a unique degree in historic preservation and community planning.

The department regularly stages lectures and colloquia for students and faculty. (The schedule can be found on the department’s website.)

The department strongly encourages and supports study abroad experiences for its students. (Some scholarships are available.)