



COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION

August 28, 2009

Professor Richard Lubben, Chairperson
Communication & Creative Arts
South Texas College
Building G, Suite 253
3201 West Pecan
McAllen, Texas 78501

Dear Professor Lubben:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the Master of Fine Arts degree. As you know, College Art Association is the leading learned society for academic visual arts internationally and the largest -- with 16,000 members. Its Standards and Guidelines have been carefully researched and crafted to provide the best practices of the profession, and we are happy to share our information with you.

The M.F.A. Standards adopted by CAA Board of Directors, April 16, 1977 (revised October 12, 1991) state, in part, under "Definition and Purpose":

"The M.F.A., unlike most master's degrees, is used as a *guarantee* of a high level of professional competence in the visual arts. It is also accepted as an indication that the recipient has reached the end of the *formal* aspects of his/her education in the making of art, that is to say, it is the terminal degree in visual arts education and thus equivalent to terminal degrees in other fields, such as the Ph.D. or Ed.D."

In other words, the MFA is considered the terminal degree in studio art and is generally treated as such in regard to rank and salary at most colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Please see the CAA website: <http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/mfa.html> for the full description of the M.F.A. Standards. Let us know if you need further information regarding this Standard. We appreciate your interest in CAA and in the state of the field.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Jaskot'.

Paul Jaskot, President & CEO
Associate Professor
Department of Art and Art History
DePaul University