Students electing this program through partnering departments earn a
degree with a dual-title at the Ph.D. level, i.e. Ph.D. in (graduate program
name) and Visual Studies.

The dual-title Ph.D. in Visual Studies fosters an interdisciplinary approach
to humanistic study, which, spurred by technological dynamics that
increasingly integrate text and image, engages analysis of specific
images, physical and virtual environments, and visual sign systems;
histories of visual modes of communication, apprehension, and aesthetic
pleasure; and conceptions of the nature of visuality itself. Students in this
program analyze and assess visual media that, integrated with texts, are
integral to humanistic scholarship and pedagogy today. Dual-title degree
programs increase the intellectual rigor and breadth of graduate work
and provide a context in which students learn to synthesize knowledge
within and across disciplinary boundaries in both scholarship and
teaching. Drawing from knowledge and practices produced across
the humanistic disciplines while responding to ongoing challenges to
conventional disciplinary boundaries, this degree highlights existing
strengths of graduate training in the humanities at Penn State, structures
the continuing development of these programs, and credentials our
graduates’ training and work with visual forms, environments, and media.