



Paul Fabozzi

For Art Professor,
New York City Is an Invaluable Teaching Tool

Nearly 20 years ago, Professor of Fine Arts Paul Fabozzi arrived in New York City to immerse himself in the center of the art world. Today, he brings that world to his students, through a robust curriculum that focuses heavily on professional experience.

“One of the things that I take seriously in my teaching is the experiential learning component,” said Fabozzi, who hails from upstate New York. “In the [Department of Fine Arts](#), we’re training our students not just how to see, but how to understand what they’re seeing. Even if they’re just going for a walk around New York, I want them to interact with the world on a richer and more sophisticated level.”

Fabozzi started at St. John’s as an adjunct instructor and became a full-time faculty member in 1998. Today, he works with students at both ends of the curriculum, teaching freshmen and seniors. “With freshmen, I get them early so I can shake the high school out of them and teach them about the rigors of college life,” he said. “As for seniors, I get to introduce them to the professional art world.” The Thesis Seminar he teaches allows upperclassmen to exhibit their work at the [Dorsky Gallery](#), an art gallery in nearby Long Island City.

The department’s small size is a huge benefit for students and faculty alike, according to Fabozzi. About 130 students are enrolled in the fine arts program, which is accredited by the [National Association of Schools of Art and Design](#) (NASAD).

“When I get my roster at the beginning of the year,” he said, “I know I’m going to get to discover a lot about the 15 or 16 individuals in my class and their life experiences. It’s such a dynamic environment to be in, because I’m learning as much as my students.”

Eager to introduce all undergraduates to the wide array of art museums around them, Fabozzi teaches Art in New York City, a course for non-majors offered during the winter session and the pre- and post-summer sessions.

“We travel to a different museum each day during a two-week period,” he said. “There are very few cities in the world where you can offer a course that is this rich. It’s an amazingly eye-opening experience for all participants.”

Fabozzi also coordinates the department’s internship program, and the feedback he gets from employers about student participation is always positive. “They all comment that our students are well-rounded and know how to speak up,” he said. “Unlike an art school, St. John’s offers our students access to all these different opportunities available at a university. A student who really appreciates a broader liberal arts environment will get the most out of being here.”

Introducing students to all the benefits of a St. John’s education is, Fabozzi added, a commitment he shares with his fellow faculty. “We have such an incredible staff of highly-trained people here,” he said. “They all have great careers outside of St. John’s as photographers, illustrators, fine artists, designers, and historians. They are all practicing professionals with a lot of connections in different fields—and they are eager to use those connections to help students.”