Definitions and Purposes of the BA/BS and BFA Degrees in the Visual Arts (Studio)

The **BA** or **BS** degree in art, normally awarded by art departments in colleges and universities, certifies the completion of major study in the visual arts, which has been undertaken as an integral part of a general liberal-arts degree program. The degree normally implies study in some depth in a number of studio and art-historical disciplines. Such study may or may not prepare students for careers as art professionals. Career preparation is not a primary objective in programs leading to the BA or BS. A major part (over 50%) of a student's education is in areas outside art, with substantial coverage in the humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences.

The primary objective at institutions offering the **BFA**, usually university and independent schools of art, is to provide professional education in art and design at the undergraduate level, to enable graduates to enter professional careers in such fields as design, painting, and sculpture after the award of the degree. Students concentrate in relevant technical and aesthetic studies, which are a major portion of the program. There is a basic assumption that BFA graduates shall have developed technical competence, aesthetic judgment, and a strong commitment to artistic quality. It is also assumed that the holder of the BFA has had sound instruction beyond the high school level in certain fundamental academic disciplines, especially in English, the humanities, social sciences, and the physical sciences.

For more information, please visit the College Art Association's website:
http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/bfa.html