The Jacob Lawrence Gallery is an inspiring space for exhibitions; a vital center for social interaction and dialog about art, art history, and design; and a critical para-educational resource for students and faculty. The Gallery is also a site of knowledge production dedicated to enhancing the intellectual life on campus by advancing discourses on contemporary exhibition and curatorial practice with its ambitious program of lectures, performances, screenings, discussions, and exhibitions. It is always testing art's capacity to teach and engage the community.

The Gallery is named after one of the School's most renowned faculty members, Jacob Lawrence, who taught here from 1970–1985 and who served as Professor Emeritus until his death in 2000. The Gallery is the living legacy of Lawrence's exemplary life and admirable practice.