

Film Studies Minor

The Film Studies Minor is an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental program administered through the School of Arts and Humanities. It is designed for students interested in the art of film, its history and criticism, and for students who would like to combine film studies with their studies in other fields. Students will examine a broad range of films from the classic narrative to experimental texts, and learn to appreciate the aesthetics and filmmaking practices of both western and nonwestern cultures. While exploring the medium's connection with several other disciplines and art forms, students will also become familiar with the process of film production and learn to approach film in a critical and analytic manner.

The Film Studies Minor offers students a flexible curriculum which complements several existing major degree programs and provides excellent preparation for a number of careers. In consultation with the Program Coordinator, the individual student is able to design a Film Studies Minor with an emphasis relevant to his or her academic and career objectives.

The program is made up of two parts. The first is a core program (9 units) which teaches the fundamentals of film history and analysis. The second is a group of elective courses (at least 9 units), chosen by the student through consultation with the Film Studies Coordinator from among film courses offered in one or several departments. Thus, the core program gives the student a foundation in film studies while the elective options allow the student to develop an individualized approach to the medium.

Departments offering courses applicable to the minor include American Multicultural Studies, Art, Communication Studies, English, Chicano and Latino Studies, Native American Studies, Hutchins School of Liberal Studies, Philosophy, Sociology, and Theatre Arts. Each department represents a specific approach to the film medium:

- Art addresses the question of film as an artistic practice, analyzes the formal and plastic qualities of film, and places film in the history of the fine arts.
- Literature, in English or Foreign Languages, approaches the medium with the resources of literary analysis, studies literary sources and the transposition from the written text to the image and sound of film. The English Department also offers courses in the creative skills of script writing.
- Philosophy raises ontological questions about the film medium, studies aesthetic and ethical problems concerning film art, and analyzes films as philosophical texts.
- Foreign Languages and American Multicultural Studies analyze the ways in which films represent diverse cultures and study the aesthetics and filmmaking practices of different national and ethnic groups.
- Sociology studies social relations and social change as portrayed in film, as well as the norms and social structures of the cinematic institution itself.
- Theatre Arts offers courses in directing, acting, and production design which illuminate features of film production.
- Already interdisciplinary, Communication Studies places film in the context of the study of the media in general.

The following faculty members are active participants in the program:

James E. Gray, *Associate Professor of American Multicultural Studies*

William Guynn, *Professor of Art*

Michael G. Litle, *Assistant Professor of Communication Studies*

Robert Coleman-Senghor, *Professor of English*

Michael Schwager, *Associate Professor of Art*

Roger Bell, *Associate Professor of Philosophy*

Career Alternatives

The Film Studies Minor offers students an attractive and flexible program which provides excellent supplementary preparation for a number of careers: a practical minor for students majoring in Communication Studies or preparing to enter the media; relevant training for English majors with an emphasis in creative writing, a valuable second area of expertise for students preparing for the teaching profession in several subject areas; relevant preparation for an advanced degree in library sciences (e.g., archival management); good supplementary preparation for graduate school in literature, where the study of film narrative is increasingly important.

Film Studies Coordinator

Bill Guynn, Art Department, Art 128, 707 664-2151

Core Requirements (9 units)

ArtH 212 A or B: Introduction to World Film History (3)

See SSU Catalog for course description.

ArtH 361: The Classic Narrative Film (3)

Theory and analysis of the classic narrative film. This course will emphasize the evolution of the classic narrative system, particularly in Hollywood, the construction of visual and auditory space, the art of editing, the history of American genre filmmaking, and the spectator in the classic fiction film. Various critical approaches and methodologies will be studied. Students will be involved in close readings of film texts and will submit an original analytic or creative film project.

ArtH 363 Other Cinemas (3) (selected topics)

Film theory and practice in cinemas other than classic narrative. Experimental film includes several schools and movements: expressionism, abstractionist tendencies, Soviet montage surrealism classic and recent schools of documentary, etc. This course will also examine the aesthetics of nonwestern filmmakers, from the Japanese and Indian cinemas in particular; as well as currents of opposition in western filmmaking, e.g., Italian neorealism, French New Wave, etc. Students will be involved in close readings of films and present an original analytic or creative final project.

Elective Options

Students may complete the Film Studies Minor either by choosing three courses within any of the following groups or by devising a set of complementary courses selected from two or more groups in consultation with the Film Studies Coordinator:

Film and Literature

These courses study different aspects of the complex relationship between film and literature: the role of screen writing in the process of film production; the problems of adaptation; the comparative study of literary and filmic texts, and the special contribution that literary analysis has made to the study of film.

ArtH 461 Selected Topics in Film (Film and Literature)

ENGL 377 Film and Literature

ENGL 430 Creative Writing: Selective Genres
(Screen/Script Writing)

Critical Perspectives:

Each of the following courses brings a specific disciplinary approach to bear on the study of film, drawing on perspectives from the humanities and social sciences: aesthetics, ethics, structuralism, semiology, political and sociological analysis.

ArtH 461 Selected Topics (as applicable)

ArtH 490 F Theory and Methods of Film Criticism

COMS 202/402 Media Criticism

PHIL 368 Philosophy and Film

SOC 434 Cinema and Society

Film and the Fine Arts

This group of courses studies the relationship of film to artistic and theatrical traditions and practices: film analysis and theories of visual aesthetics; film and artistic movements in the twentieth century; film and production design and performance in theater and television.

ArtS 208 Basic Black and White Photography

ArtH 464 Modern Art from 1850 to 1945

ArtH 465 Modern Art from 1945 to 1979

ArtH 456 The History of Photography

ArtH 466 Contemporary Art

COMS 201 Introduction to Media Arts

COMS 325 Media Lab: Video

THAR 120 Beginning Acting

THAR 130 Scene Design

or

THAR 132 Stage Lighting

THAR 350 Directing Workshop

International and Crosscultural Perspectives

These courses are designed to develop an understanding of aesthetics and filmmaking practices which stand outside the dominant model of the classic narrative film and the representation of the cultural "other" within the dominant western tradition.

AMCS 392 Images in Film

ArtH 363 Other Cinemas (selected topics)

CALS 393 Chicana/Latino Cinema

NAMS 338 Native Americans and the Cinema

ArtH 363 Other Cinemas (repeatable)

No more than 6 units of work in the student's major may be counted toward the Film Studies Minor. Students are encouraged to take at least one elective course with a regional or intercultural perspective.

We hope this information will be helpful. Official requirements of all majors and programs are published in the Sonoma State University catalog. Sonoma State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution and has a strong commitment to the principal of diversity. A member of the California State University

