Graduate Student Handbook

2019-2020
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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is the official guide to the policies and procedures that structure graduate study and graduate teaching appointments in the Department of Cinematic Arts at the University of Iowa. All students are responsible for making certain that the various deadlines, requirements, and policies described here are met. You should talk with your advisor if you are unclear about what something means. If your advisor is unable to answer your questions, ask the DGS. If clarity is still needed, contact the DEO. The Graduate College is the next authority in the chain of command with respect to policies that structure graduate study at UI.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

Local Resources: A new student's first semester in Iowa City and at the University of Iowa is an ideal time to discover the various opportunities offered by this extremely rich intellectual and artistic community. These include not only courses in a wide spectrum of departments, but also academic lectures and discussions, campus art events, or off-campus opportunities.

Lectures and Special Events: The department regularly sponsors lectures and screenings by local and visiting scholars and filmmakers. These offer an exciting opportunity to find out what is going on in the field and provide important contributions to your graduate education and professional development. The department expects you to attend these special events as often as possible.

Listservs and Official Correspondence: All newly admitted students automatically receive Office 365 email accounts. The ASC will add your name to relevant listservs. The Cinematic Arts graduate student listserv is (cinegrads@list.uiowa.edu). You should rely on UI e-mail for all official UI and department correspondence.

Fellowships/Non-Departmental Funding: All graduate students must meet with the HP prior to applying for a fellowship or any other funding support outside of the department. This step is necessary to confirm your eligibility.

Advising: You will have an advisor throughout your graduate studies at UI. An initial advisor will be appointed by the HP. With the agreement of your current advisor, you may change advisors or committee members at any point by completing the Committee Change Form. You are expected to meet with your advisor at least once
each semester to ensure proper registration in graduate level coursework, including relevant course offerings in areas outside your program of study.

**Academic Registration Requirements:** Your registration should reflect accurately the amount and kind of work undertaken in the Graduate College. The purpose of the registration requirement is to promote a high level of intellectual and scholarly activity. These requirements foster intensive, concentrated engagement over an extended period of time with the faculty members and graduate students in your program of study.

**MA/MFA Policy:**
Of the minimum semester hours required for the degree (36 for MA in Film Studies; 54 for MFA in Film & Video Production), at least 24 semester hours must be completed under the auspices of The University of Iowa after admission to a graduate department/program, regardless of allowed transfer credits.

**PhD Policy:**
All doctoral programs will contain a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate work. Of those 72 semester hours, at least 39 must be earned while registered in The University of Iowa Graduate College, and after admission to a graduate department/program, regardless of allowed transfer credits.

**Registering for Graduate Coursework:** You must get “Registration Authorization” from your advisor. If your advisor is unavailable, contact the HP or DGS. They will also help you with registration questions.

Contact your advisor before Early Registration to discuss course selection. It is important that you register during Early Registration because enrollments at the end of Early Registration can determine whether a course will be offered.

The Department and College recommend that Teaching Assistants reappointed for the fall semester register for fall classes earlier than required to facilitate the scheduling of courses. All Teaching Assistants must be registered for the fall semester by June 1st. Teaching Assistants reappointed for the spring semester are required to register for spring classes by the end of the preceding fall semester, and in no case by no later than December 31st.

Students cannot register in MyUI after the first week of classes when MyUI is closed. If you do register after the first week of classes, contact your advisor for assistance with submitting a Change of Registration Form (i.e., drop/add form). If additional assistance is needed, contact the ACGP.

If you have questions regarding continuous registration or registering for your final semester, contact the ACGP. If a Short Hours Form is needed, contact the ACGP for completion and submission to the Registrar to certify that you should be considered either a half-time or full-time student even though your registration does not show such status. The form can cover one semester, a calendar year (January through December), or an academic year (Summer Session through Spring Semester).

**Course Offerings:** Courses at several levels are offered each semester. Courses numbered 5000 and above are restricted to graduate students. Graduate credit is not given for courses numbered under 3000. Note that some courses open to graduate students are offered during the summer and other sessions, including courses in languages and literatures other than English and other areas of interest to graduate students.

**Graduate Independent Study:** You may request to take an independent study for course credit with an appropriate faculty member when regular course offerings do not address a desired topic, or if you wish to pursue focused and guided study of a specific topic that regular coursework does not allow or facilitate. Since
faculty members rarely agree to conduct independent study courses unless they are already familiar with a student's skills, work habits, and interests, you should request an independent study only when you have already worked successfully with a professor in at least one previous course. Independent studies are often restricted to one credit (for substantial reading, viewing, or research) or two credits (when, additionally, substantial written work is included) and are normally (though not always) graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. There are restrictions as to the number of credit hours of Independent Study allowed towards the degree.

After a faculty member agrees to work with you in an independent study, an Independent Study Agreement must be prepared. This should be done in the semester before the independent study will take place. This written agreement should provide justification for undertaking an independent study, a summary of the work to be performed, a semester schedule, and clarification of the basis for determining a final grade. Once approved, you will register for the course and a copy of the signed agreement will be placed into your academic file.

Incompletes: Grades of Incomplete are granted only in exceptional cases and only under the condition that a clear, signed contract between you and the instructor be completed and deposited in your academic file. The contract must stipulate the work to be completed, the length of the extension granted, and the sanctions for not meeting the new deadline. The due dates for making up incompletes may not exceed College limits, which require submission of work three and one-half weeks prior to the close of finals week of the next semester. Individual faculty often contract for shorter extensions only.

Grading Practices: Most University of Iowa courses are graded on an A-B-C-D-F scale; + and - grades are regularly used. Anything below a B is an inadequate grade for graduate work. A few courses are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory; these S/U courses do not figure in the calculation of your grade point average, and thus should not take up too large a proportion of your overall curriculum.

Normal Progress: To hold a teaching assistantship or fellowship, you must be making normal progress in your program of study (see requirements for each Program of Study below). This includes completing the required coursework, maintaining the required cumulative GPA on graduate work taken at the University of Iowa, and performing assigned assistantship duties satisfactorily. Courses graded Incomplete are not counted. Failure to meet these requirements may result in non-renewal or cancellation of an assistantship or fellowship. In the spring semester each year, faculty meet to review the progress of all graduate students. In preparation for this meeting, you are expected to contact your advisor to report on your academic progress and to announce significant achievements (publications, conferences, film and video productions, etc.) for the previous academic year.

Scheduling Meetings and Exams: It is your responsibility to schedule committee meetings and final exams/screenings/dissertation defenses after consulting with your advisor. In the event that a committee member is not able to attend an exam in person, prior arrangements must be made. The Graduate College has specific rules regarding this.

Committee meetings (including but not limited to Plan of Study meetings, Comprehensive Exam meetings, Prospectus meetings, and MFA and PhD Dissertation defenses) must adhere to the typical nine-month faculty teaching and service calendar. Dates available for committee meetings during the fall semester are: Three working days prior to the opening day of classes through the closing day of final exam week, excluding University Holidays and Recesses. Dates available for the spring semester are: Opening day of classes through the closing day of final exam week, excluding University Holidays and Recesses. Faculty are not expected to meet for official graduate student committee business between the closing day of final exam week of the spring semester and three days prior to the opening day of classes fall semester.

Contact the ACGP for assistance with scheduling and help with coordination, including required paperwork.
Academic and Employment Files: After receiving permission from the ACGP, you may look at your files but you cannot take them out of the SSC.

Postponing Studies: The department adheres to the Graduate College rules related to the postponement of studies. There are certain circumstances in which you can delay your registration or put things on hold. There are other circumstances in which you cannot hold back the clock. For example, after you have passed the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam, you have five years in which to make a successful defense of your dissertation, with no exceptions. If you do not meet that deadline then you will have to petition for re-instatement, which may or may not entail retaking your Doctoral Comprehensive Exam (and possibly also retaking at least some coursework) before you can submit a dissertation.

As noted in an earlier section, you may request up to one year’s leave of absence for medical cause without loss of normal progress status. Reasons for leaves of absence other than medical will result in a failure to maintain normal progress. Failure to maintain normal progress jeopardizes your TA funding eligibility should you decide to return to the program at a later date.

Dismissal from the Program: Refer to the Graduate College’s Manual of Rules and Regulations Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal.

Appeals: Refer to the Graduate College’s Manual of Rules and Regulations Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal.

Ombudsperson: The office of the Ombudsperson responds to questions or problems presented by any member of the University community – students, faculty, and staff. The Ombudsperson serves as a confidential, neutral, independent resource person who listens, provides information, advises, and sometimes mediates. All requests and consultations are treated in the strictest confidence. You should observe procedures outlined in the University document, “Policies & Regulations Affecting Students.” Your academic advisor, HP, supervisor, DEO, dean or other administrator should normally be consulted before contacting the Ombudsperson. Where the use of official channels would mean lengthy and damaging delays or involve a lack of confidentiality and/or impartiality, it may be appropriate to consult the Ombudsperson early in the process.

The Office of the Ombudsperson is located on the third floor of the Jefferson Building, 129 E. Washington Street. Appointments can be made by email (ombudsperson@uiowa.edu) or by telephone (319-335-3608). More information can be found here.

MA IN FILM STUDIES

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MA DEGREE IN FILM STUDIES
This section outlines the rules and practices that apply to candidates for the Master of Arts in Film Studies. In addition, Graduate College rules apply to all students enrolled in a Graduate College program, including those in Film Studies.

Under normal circumstances, students who do not already hold an MA in Film Studies or a closely allied discipline are first admitted into the Film Studies MA program, even if they are interested in pursuing a doctorate in Film Studies. This is a two-year program, but in exceptional cases may be completed in three semesters and a summer. No more than six hours of graduate credit for courses taken elsewhere will be accepted toward the Film Studies MA.
The Film Studies MA serves two basic purposes: 1) to give students substantial training in film analysis, history, and theory, and 2) to afford students an opportunity to learn about various film-related disciplines in order to make an informed career choice. Students who complete a UI Film Studies MA may go on to PhD work in Film Studies or another discipline, M.F.A. work in Film & Video Production or another discipline, a Library Science degree, film distribution, film programming, archival work, arts management, and many other disciplines. MA students are encouraged to take advantage of the University's and the program's openness toward interdisciplinary work by taking courses in other departments, by attending lectures throughout the University, and by generally informing themselves about a wide range of disciplines and careers related to Film Studies.

Requirements for students entering the MA program in Film Studies with a B.A. in Film Studies or an MA in an unrelated field: In order to permit breadth within MA programs, the Film Studies MA requirements are few:

Credit Hour Requirement: a total of 36 semester hours of graduate coursework

Required Courses:
- CINE:5673 Advanced Film Theory
- CINE:5675 Advanced Film History

Distribution Requirement: at least 2 credits in each of the following areas:
- U.S. cinema
- European cinema
- World cinemas
- Production, documentary, animation, or experimental film

Note: The Head of Film Studies may waive or adjust the Required Course and Distribution Requirements in specific circumstances.

Grade Point Average: A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.25 for graduate work taken at the University of Iowa.

Language Study: Given the program’s emphasis upon the study of film in an international context, foreign language acquisition is considered to be highly advantageous. Up to six hours of study in languages and literatures other than English (in courses numbered 3000 or above, as per Grad College regulations) may be counted toward the FS MA degree.

MA FINAL EXAMINATION
The MA examination (two four-hour written exams in Film Theory and Film History taken in January of the second year), followed by a one-hour oral examination conducted by the MA Examination Committee in early February.

For the MA exam, students choose one area from each list:

FILM THEORY
- Feminist Film Theory
- Film, Technology, and New Media
- Film Theory, origins to 1965
• Film Theory, 1965 to 1990
• Film Theory, 1990 to the present
• Film Theory and Postcolonial Studies
• Genre Theory
• Marxist Film Theory
• Narrative Theory
• Psychoanalytic Film Theory
• Queer Film Theory
• Spectatorship and Reception
• Third Cinema

FILM HISTORY

• Animation
• Documentary Cinema
• East Asian Cinemas (including Australia and New Zealand)
• (film production in at least 2 countries, studied comparatively)
• European Cinema, origins to 1930
• (film production in at least 3 countries, studied comparatively)
• European Cinema, 1930 to 1960
• (film production in at least 3 countries, studied comparatively)
• European Cinema, 1960 to the present
• (film production in at least 3 countries, studied comparatively)
• Experimental Cinema
• South Asian Cinema
• Latin American Cinema, origins to 1960
• Latin American Cinema, 1950 to the present
• North African and Middle Eastern Cinema
• Sub-Saharan African Cinema
• U.S. Cinema, origins to 1930
• U.S. Cinema, 1925 to 1960
• U.S. Cinema, 1960 to the present

The first exam is given on the Thursday before the start of the spring semester, and the second exam is given on the following day. Each exam takes four hours, with three hours for writing, and an hour designated for outlining, revision, and proofreading. All students take the exams using a University computer. Students are expected to be familiar with the full range of material implied by their chosen areas and approved reading/viewing lists. Exams typically include both required questions and a choice among offered questions. The best answers reveal specific knowledge, broad conceptualization, lucid organization, and clear prose.

MA TIMETABLE
Following are schematic timelines of typical two-year Film Studies MA programs (one for a terminal MA program, the other for an MA student applying to the PhD program in year 2).

STANDARD TWO-YEAR MA TIMELINE

YEAR 1
• Mid-August: All incoming graduate students are assigned a faculty advisor. Plan to meet with that advisor during the latter part of the week preceding the start of classes. The advisor can inform you of
program rules and practices, discuss your first-semester course selection and long-term aspirations, and field your questions.

- **Thursday or Friday before the first day of classes of the fall semester:** Combined Film Studies and Film & Video Production orientation meetings. (Students with a teaching assistantship should also expect to meet with their course supervisor on one of these days and to attend basic training sessions.)
- **October/November:** Prior to early registration, make an appointment with your advisor to discuss course selection for the spring, along with tentative decisions regarding your examination areas.
- **January:** Meet with your advisor to prepare for the spring review of graduate students.
- **March/April:** Prior to early registration, make an appointment with your advisor to discuss course selection for the fall, coverage of MA requirements, and your choice of examination areas (along with appropriate faculty to consult regarding the development of your exam reading lists). Work with your advisor to set an appropriate deadline for approved reading list to be sent to the ACGP.
- **May:** Submit a draft of your exam reading/viewing lists to faculty members knowledgeable in each area.
- **Summer:** Consider taking Film Studies or language courses, and/or working on the exam list.

**YEAR 2**

- **By September 30:** Submit to the MA Examination Coordinator/your advisor (and a copy to the ACGP) a list of the equivalent of 15-20 books (1 book = 3 or 4 articles), and 20-30 films for each of your chosen examination areas. These lists will be examined and commented on by the faculty, then returned to you in October.
- **October/November:** Meet with your advisor (and other faculty) to discuss your choice of spring courses, and possible application to PhD or other academic programs (whose deadlines typically fall in December or early January). Note that if you apply for and are accepted into the UI Film Studies PhD program, you are subject to a special timeline in the spring of your second year (detailed at the end of this section).
- **By October 31:** Submit to the MA Exam Coordinator/your advisor (and a copy to the ACGP) the final version of your exam lists. Students who fail to submit acceptable exam lists within the prescribed time frame will not be allowed to take the exam.
- **Thursday and Friday immediately preceding the start of the spring semester:** The four-hour written exam in Film Theory is administered on Thursday and the four-hour written exam in Film History is administered on Friday.
- **January:** Meet with your advisor to prepare for the spring review of graduate students.
- **Mid-February:** One-hour oral examinations with MA examination committee.
- **By the announced Graduate College deadlines:** Signify your intention to graduate (i.e., receive your MA degree) in May by filing the appropriate papers with the departmental office (meet with the ACGP) and with the Registrar.
- **May:** Graduate!

**SPECIAL TIMELINE FOR UI MA FILM STUDIES STUDENTS APPLYING TO THE UI PHD PROGRAM IN FILM STUDIES**

- **November of Year 2:** Consult the ACGP about which elements of your MA original application may be used as part of your PhD application. If necessary, provide updated materials or request additional letters of recommendation prior to the due date.
- **December of Year 2:** Submit PhD application.
- **Late February of Year 2:** The PhD admission decision is reported. If you are not admitted, you continue on the normal MA timeline.
**PHD IN FILM STUDIES**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PHD DEGREE IN FILM STUDIES**
This section outlines the rules and practices that apply to candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy in Film Studies. In addition, [Graduate College rules and deadlines](#) apply to all students enrolled in a Graduate College program, including those in Film Studies.

If the MA degree may be characterized as a learning experience, a process in which interested students visit major sections of a film territory that has already been mapped, the PhD may best be understood as a voyage of discovery, in which talented and dedicated students set off to chart unknown regions. The MA involves, primarily, the dissemination of existing knowledge; the PhD, at its best, aims at the creation of new knowledge. The UI Film Studies PhD has several traditions and goals with which all candidates should be familiar. This program is dedicated to the questioning of received knowledge and the creation of new knowledge about film, defined in the broadest possible way. Understanding film, we are convinced, depends on an ability to chart the ways in which film shares (or challenges) devices, processes, and situations with other forms of art, communication, and culture. It also depends on an ability to share insights with scholars and practitioners around the world. The UI Film Studies program, particularly at the PhD level, thus actively encourages students to be independent, interdisciplinary, and international.

Students are encouraged throughout their program of study to consult faculty and students across the University in search of ideas and advice regarding diverse and rewarding intellectual opportunities. In developing an appropriate plan of study, students should consult their advisor and committee members regularly.

Following are the provisions governing the PhD in Film Studies:

**Students entering the PhD program in Film Studies with a BA (exceptional cases) must complete all of the requirements for the UI MA in Film Studies.**

**Requirements for students entering the PhD program in Film Studies with an MA in Film Studies or a closely related field, including an MA in Film Studies from the University of Iowa:**

**General Requirements:**
- Adherence to all applicable Graduate College rules.
- A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.25 for graduate coursework taken at the University of Iowa.
- At least one year of supervised teaching or independent research.
- A minimum of 72 hours of graduate courses and seminars relevant to major areas of interest, at least 39 of which must be post-MA coursework. No more than 33 s.h. of MA transfer credit can be applied to the 72 s.h.
- At least 4 hours of dissertation credit to be taken no earlier than the semester when the student takes the Comprehensive Examination.
- Presentation of an acceptable Plan of Study in the first semester of the first year in the PhD Program.
- Development of a research tool or skill chosen in consultation with the candidate's committee (see information on Language Study – MA in Film Studies).
- Successful completion of the written and oral Comprehensive Examination, following committee approval of submitted reading lists and filmographies for the three areas.
- The writing and approval, following a meeting with a dissertation committee, of a Dissertation Prospectus.
- The writing and satisfactory oral defense and final deposit of a Dissertation.
PhD Distribution Requirements *(may be satisfied by previous coursework)*:

At least 2 credits in each of the following areas:

- U.S. cinema
- European cinemas
- World cinemas
- Production or documentary or animation or experimental film

PhD Required Courses *(must be satisfied at the UI)*:

- CINE:5673 Advanced Film Theory (taken at least twice)
- CINE:5675 Advanced Film History (taken at least twice)
- A 7000-level seminar (taken at least once post-MA): 7615 Seminar: Film Theory or 7616 Seminar: Film History

Note: The Head of Film Studies may waive or adjust the Required Course and Distribution Requirements in specific circumstances.

**PLAN OF STUDY**

In the first semester of the first year, students should identify and meet with the Head of Film Studies. Students should submit a draft, based on the provided template, of their Plan of Study to the Head of Film Studies by the middle of the semester. During the Plan of Study meeting in the latter half of the semester, the Film Studies faculty will evaluate questions of transfer credit, total credits required, and research skills. The final Plan of Study document serves as an agreement between the candidate and the Department, guiding future expectations of both. Copies of the final document, approved by all members of the Film Studies faculty, will be placed in the candidate's academic file.

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to assess each candidate’s mastery of the major areas of learning designated by the Plan of Study, and other knowledge and skills important for research in their particular fields. The Plan of Study committee determines at the Plan of Study meeting when the Comprehensive Examination will take place. The Comprehensive Examination consists of a four-hour written examination on each of the three major Plan of Study areas.

In a two hour meeting with the candidate at least one week after the last written exam question, and within two weeks after the written examination, the committee will report one of the following possible outcomes: Satisfactory, Reservations (requiring successful completion of a specific task set by the examining committee in order to officially lift the reservations to make the exam Satisfactory), or Unsatisfactory (two unsatisfactory votes make the report unsatisfactory and it would be considered a first failure). In the case of a report of unsatisfactory on a comprehensive examination, the committee may grant the candidate permission to attempt a reexamination not sooner than four months after the first examination. The examination may be repeated only once, at the option of the department.

Within one week following the committee meeting, the Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair will summarize in writing the collective judgment of the committee concerning the candidate's examination performance. Copies of this document will be given to the candidate and placed in the candidate's academic file along with the Report of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam.
**DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS**

After successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam, the candidate chooses a Dissertation Advisor, in consultation with the candidate’s selected Dissertation Committee that is made up of a minimum of four other faculty, which may include one faculty member from outside the Department, including faculty with 0% appointments in Cinematic Arts. No later than the semester following successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam, the candidate submits to all members of the Dissertation Committee a Prospectus that has been developed in consultation with the Dissertation Advisor. A committee meeting will be held to assess the significance of the proposed dissertation, the reasonableness of its scope and approach, and the candidate's methodological and substantive preparation to carry out the work. Three outcomes of this meeting are possible: 1) Approval of the Prospectus; 2) Conditional Approval subject to needed adjustments in scope, direction, or method; and 3) Rejection. At the prospectus meeting, the faculty and candidate agree on the respective roles that the Dissertation Advisor and each committee member will play in advising the candidate and reading drafts of the dissertation.

**DISSERTATION**

In consultation with the Dissertation Advisor and other committee members designated during the prospectus meeting, the candidate drafts and revises a Dissertation. With the Advisor's approval, a Final Examination (Oral Defense) is scheduled. At least two weeks prior to the Defense, a copy of the dissertation to be defended must be distributed to each member of the Dissertation Committee. According to Graduate College regulations, the Defense will be publicly announced and is open to the public. The Final Examination and Dissertation are evaluated separately. Possible outcomes for the Final Examination are Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Dissertation itself may be Approved, Conditionally Approved (with specification of changes to be made before final approval is granted), or Failed. The Final Examination (Oral Defense) may be repeated once at the option of the Committee.

**CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION POLICY**

Regardless of location of residence, all doctoral students must maintain continuous registration until the completion of their degree. All doctoral students are considered to be "under instruction" and are thus considered to be accessing University of Iowa faculty and staff time, and University facilities. Tuition is to be paid for such access. Doctoral students will be required to register for course work by their department and pay the appropriate tuition OR for PhD Dissertation (CINE:7992:01ND) and pay 1 sh tuition. This requirement applies to students conducting research, fieldwork or other scholarly activities related to their graduate programs of study including the writing of the thesis or dissertation and consultation with faculty, as well as students taking UI courses.

Using a form available in the Graduate College, students may petition the Graduate College for the privilege of paying a special Post-Comprehensive Registration only when extenuating circumstances arise that require a temporary lapse in their academic program. Such circumstances could include, but are not limited to, medical or maternity leaves, personal or family situations, military obligations, etc. The Graduate College will consult with the student's department regarding the petition, prior to making a decision to grant or deny the petition for the special Post-Comprehensive Registration. Post-Comprehensive Registration is not to be used for final registration in a doctoral program.

When doctoral students plan to defend their dissertations, they will register for "Doctoral Final Registration" (GRAD:6003:0001). During this final registration, the student will be required to pay the 1 sh tuition. The final registration may be repeated if the degree requirements are not completed in this session.
PHD TIMETABLE

YEAR 1:

- Coursework (minimum of 18 semester hours)
- Mid-August: All incoming graduate students are assigned an initial faculty advisor. Plan to meet with that advisor during the latter part of the week preceding the start of classes. The advisor can inform you of program rules and practices, discuss your first-semester course selection and long-term aspirations, and field your questions.
- Thursday or Friday before the first day of classes: Combined Film Studies and Film & Video Production orientation meetings. (Students with a teaching assistantship should also expect to meet with their course supervisor on one of these days and to attend basic training sessions.)
- August-December: Get to know faculty members who might eventually sit on your committee. Your advisor, the Department web site, and graduate student recommendations are good sources of information about which faculty work on which topics.
- Fall: Incoming students will meet with a Plan of Study committee (consisting of all Film Studies faculty) to determine a) if previous coursework satisfies distribution requirements and b) to plan a course of study for the next two years, leading to the Comprehensive Examination.
- January: Meet with your advisor to prepare for the spring review of graduate students.

YEAR 2:

- Coursework (minimum of 18 semester hours)
- Early Fall: Confer with your advisor regarding the Comprehensive Examination.
- Late Fall: Approval of reading lists and filmographies for the PhD Comprehensive Examination.
- Late Spring of Year 2 (or early Fall of Year 3): PhD Comprehensive Examination.
- Spring: Select a dissertation advisor, in consultation with whom you will develop a Prospectus and constitute a dissertation committee. The Prospectus should be presented to the full committee no later than the following fall.

YEAR 3:

- Additional Coursework (if required)
- Fall: Dissertation Prospectus Meeting (note: some dissertation research grants require approval of a prospectus by October or November for research in the following year).

YEAR 4:

- Spring: First Deposit, Defense, and Final Deposit of Dissertation (according to Graduate College deadlines).

MFA IN FILM AND VIDEO PRODUCTION

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MFA DEGREE IN FILM AND VIDEO PRODUCTION

This program combines creative and scholarly coursework aimed at developing the candidate’s ability to produce effective artistic work in film and video. This study takes place within a strong scholarly environment and candidates should expect to spend at least one third of their time in non-production courses building historical, critical and theoretical approaches that both inform their work and prepare them for creative and academic career paths. Initially, students work through class assignments designed to ensure exposure to a
variety of forms and techniques; at the more advanced levels, matters of content and approach are determined largely by the candidate.

The MFA program is designed as a three-year experience, averaging 9 credits per semester. Degree requirements include advanced coursework in film/media theory or history, annual public presentations and critiques, the development of an artist statement, a thesis paper, and a creative thesis project. Each student will be assigned an advisor from the production faculty; the student and advisor will develop a schedule to meet regularly to discuss work and track creative progress through the program.

Requirements: 54 hours of graduate credit, including:

**TAKEN BEFORE CLEARANCE (36 s.h.)**
- Two courses from related areas outside department 6 s.h.
- Two mid-level graduate courses in film theory/history 6 s.h.
- Participation in the Graduate Production Colloquium 6 s.h.
- Advanced production courses 9-12 s.h.
- Media Production Workshop (taken once) 4 s.h.
- Electives 2-5 s.h.

**TAKEN AFTER CLEARANCE (18 s.h.)**
- MFA thesis project 12 s.h.
- Additional elective courses 6 s.h.

The candidate should count on one production course and at least one scholarly course per semester.

Clearance Review: Looking forward to the final year, the committee reviews the candidate’s work to date along with a written proposal for the MFA Thesis project. This year-long project should both extend the candidate’s artistic concerns and contribute to a coherent body of work.

MFA TIMELINE
This document outlines the course loads and academic expectations for the MFA Candidate in Film and Video Production (FVP). The document is in a timeline format, charting academic commitments from first year to third year and thesis. In addition to course work and academic expectations outlined in this document, self-directed development of creative practice and projects will be expected.

**FIRST YEAR SEMESTER 1 (Fall)**
Course load:
- Graduate Colloquium (required)
- FVP class (required)
- Film Studies class (recommended) or elective

Other academic expectations:
- First Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- First Year MFA candidates complete Plans of Study forms.
- First Year MFA candidates participate in an end-of-semester critique. All FVP faculty and MFA’s are required to attend.

**FIRST YEAR SEMESTER 2 (Spring):**
Course load:
- FVP class (required)
- Film Studies class (strongly recommended)
- Elective outside of the department (recommended)

Other academic expectations:
- First Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- First Year MFA candidates participate in an end-of-semester critique. All FVP faculty and MFA’s are required to attend.

SECOND YEAR SEMESTER 3 (Fall):
Course load:
- Graduate Colloquium (required)
- Film Studies class (strongly recommended if you have not already taken two)
- Elective outside of the dept. or another FVP class

Other academic expectations:
- Second Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- Second year MFA candidates select Written Comprehensive exam committee.
- Second year MFA candidates submit an abstract that summarizes the subject and/or focus of the written comprehensive exam, and a 10-20 bibliography and 10-15 filmography of sources to be used for a written comprehensive exam.
- Second year MFA candidates submit five potential questions for written comprehensive exam. From these five questions, the comprehensive exam committee will select one and the MFA candidate will be expected to write an approximately ten-page paper (double-spaced) in response. The comprehensive written exam is a take-home exam, and will be completed early in the spring semester.
- Second year MFA candidates participate in an end-of-semester critique. All FVP faculty and MFA’s are required to attend.

SECOND YEAR SEMESTER 4 (Spring)
Course load:
- Media Production Workshop (required)
- Elective outside of the dept. or another FVP class
- Elective or another FVP class

Other academic expectations:
- Second Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- Second year MFA candidates submit written comprehensive exams in early spring semester.
- Second year MFA candidates must submit an artist statement that outlines creative and research interests. This statement will be submitted to the comprehensive exam committee members in advance of the Oral Comprehensive exam.
- Oral Comprehensive Exam: Second year MFA candidates meet with the Comps committee for approximately one hour to present work generated over the first and second year, contextualizing the work as it relates to research interests. The artist statement will also be discussed.
- Second year MFA candidates select their graduate thesis committee.
- Second year MFA candidates submit a proposal for a thesis project. Proposal includes abstract, timeline of production and estimated budget for production.
- Second year MFA candidates schedule 30 min. MFA Clearance meeting with thesis committee to discuss thesis proposal.
- Second year MFA candidates participate in an end-of-semester critique. All FVP faculty and MFA’s are required to attend.

SEMESTER 5 (Fall)
Course load:
- Thesis – register for 6 sh with your Advisor
- Elective

Other academic expectations:
- Third Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- Third year MFA candidates must meet with the thesis committee once during the semester to discuss and view thesis production/progress.
- Thesis Workshop: Third-year MFA students will participate in an end-of-semester critique to chart his/her thesis progress. All FVP Faculty and all FVP MFA’s are required to attend. External thesis committee members are welcome but not required to attend.

**SEMESTER 6 (Spring)**

Course load:
- Thesis – register for 6 sh with your Advisor
- Elective

Other academic expectations:
- Third Year MFA candidates meet with Advisor regularly throughout the semester.
- Third year MFA candidates must meet with thesis committee at least once during the semester (before Spring Break) to view and discuss the thesis project. A rough draft of the written thesis must be submitted in advance of this meeting.
- Third year MFA candidates are expected to screen and defend their thesis projects in late April of the sixth semester of study for a May graduation date. A written thesis of approximately twenty pages must also accompany the thesis moving image work.
- Third year MFA submits application to graduate
- First Deposit (written thesis only) due to Graduate College (follow GC deadlines)
- Third year student completes thesis screening and defense.
- Final Exam report due to Graduate College (follow GC deadlines)
- Final Deposit (written thesis & thesis film) due to Graduate College (follow GC deadlines)
- Third year MFA candidates are expected to attend the end-of-semester critique, though they are not required to show work.

**SUMMER EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT POLICY**

Checkout is closed during the summer. For summer production, first and second year MFA students must check out production equipment no later than finals week of spring semester and return it no later than the week before the first day of fall semester classes. Graduating third years students must return all equipment no later than June 1st. Late returns are subject to standard fines.

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

**TEACHING RESOURCES:**

*The Center for Teaching Handbook for Teaching Excellence*

*College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Academic Policies Handbook*
TA OFFICES
The DA will make office assignments annually prior to the start of the fall semester. Offices are a shared space and are to be used for office hours and other TA responsibilities.

COMPUTERS IN TA OFFICES
- If a computer is not working, contact our computer consultant, mike-hendrickson@uiowa.edu.
- Do not remove the computers from the offices.
- Always keep a backup of your data. Data stored on your home drive (H Drive) is actively backed up.
- The computers are not assigned to individuals so please share them.
- The computers should be used for teaching purposes only.

BOOK ORDERS
If you need assistance ordering textbooks, contact your course supervisor.

TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES
TAs assigned to teach stand-alone courses will receive information about this from the ASC before early registration begins for each semester. Faculty instructors take care of this for lecture/discussion courses. More information can be found here.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
TAs assigned to teach stand-alone courses should work closely with their course supervisor to craft course descriptions. Faculty instructors take care of this for lecture/discussion courses.

REQUIRED SYLLABUS
TAs assigned to teach stand-alone courses should work with their course supervisor to create a syllabus. Faculty instructors usually create syllabi for lecture/discussion courses. However, sometimes the faculty instructor will ask the TAs who teach the discussion sections to create an addendum for their section. Additional information can be found here. Contact the ASC if you have questions.

OFFICE HOURS
Instructors are required to e-mail their office hours to the ASC no later than the end of the first week of classes. Required under College policy, every member of the instructional staff is expected to keep at least three scheduled office hours (60 minutes each per week and be available before and after class and at other times by appointment for a reasonable amount of time.

DROP/ADD (Changes in Registration)
Important info can be found here. If you receive requests from students who want to either ADD or CHANGE discussion sections or courses, tell them you are unable to assist them because CINE uses waitlists.

Students are able to add themselves to a waitlist for a class. We cannot just add students to a section that is already full, sometimes due to room capacities, but mostly because it would not be fair to others that have already added themselves to the waitlist.

For the fall and spring semesters, MyUI remains open for the first week of classes, and the waitlist is still the fairest system to use. After MyUI closes and students are not able to make changes by themselves, they need to contact the UAA for assistance. The ACC will give you more information about this before classes start each semester.
INSTRUCTOR'S OPTION TO DROP FOR NONATTENDANCE (8-DAY DROP RULE)

Read: Instructor's option to drop for nonattendance

The instructor needs to fill out a Drop form with the student's name, id#, and course information and then sign it as the instructor of the course being dropped. Instructors should write “Instructor’s Option to Drop for Nonattendance” across the top of the drop slip and immediately submit it to the UI Service Center, 2700 UCC. They will notify the students and their advisors that they have been dropped from the course. Contact the UAA if you have questions about this.

CANCELING A CLASS

If you cancel a class and want a sign posted on the classroom door, contact the SSC (335-0330) at least two hours before the class begins to give the staff time to post the sign. You should also follow with an e-mail and include your course supervisor. It is very important that the subject line of the e-mail message is CANCEL MY CLASS to alert the staff to take immediate action. The message should include the time the class meets, course number and title, room #, and building. Also, you are required to e-mail your students when a class is canceled.

EMAILING STUDENTS IN A CLASS YOU ARE TEACHING

Faculty and staff utilizing e-mail correspondence with more than one student are responsible for restricting access to a student’s e-mail address if the student has requested non-disclosure of directory information. In 2009 FERPA was modified to state that a student may not be anonymous in a class even if they have restricted their data. The sharing of this information with other members of the class is at the instructor’s discretion, provided it is deemed appropriate for the success of the class. Students participating in such classes should be notified of this. An example of this might be the need to share email addresses in order to facilitate classroom interactions/discussions.

FINAL EXAMS AND EXAMINATION POLICIES

Information can be found here and here. You will receive more information about this from the UCC.

OFFICIAL CLASS LISTS, GRADING, AND GRADE CHANGES

Instructions can be found here in MAUI. Important information can be found here. The DA will give you more information about grades each semester.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING

All courses with their administrative home in CLAS must use the ACE (Assessing the Classroom Environment) online forms. Important information can be found here and here. FAQs can be found here. ACE best practices for instructors can be found here.

EXAM BOOKS

Instructors who use exam books should contact the ASC at least a week in advance so that more can be ordered, if necessary.

TURNITIN, PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOL

The University invites all interested instructors to utilize this tool. Information can be found here.

COPYING

Instructors will not be reimbursed for copies made outside of the department. Copy allocations support the courses you teach—not the courses you take and not personal copies.
You will have access to the copier two weeks before classes begin each semester. Access is removed the last day of finals week each semester. Your access code is the last four digits of your UID. Contact the ASC if you have questions.

PRINTING
If you need course materials printed for a Cinematic Arts course that you are teaching (so that you can make copies for your class), you can email them to the ASC to print. You can also ask your course supervisor to print course materials for you. **The printer/copier in the work room should never be used to print or copy materials for the courses that you are taking or for personal documents.**

CLASSROOM RESERVATION FOR AN EXTENDED CLASS PERIOD OR AN EXTRA CLASS MEETING
Instructors who want to use a classroom for an extended class period need to receive prior approval from Classrooms by completing the Room Reservation Form. Do not assume that you can use a classroom before or after class even though it is usually vacant.

The Room Reservation Form should also be used for extra class meetings like workshops, screenings, etc. Be sure to get your course supervisor’s approval prior to making the reservation.

REQUESTING A CLASSROOM CHANGE
E-mail the request to the ACC. Do not contact Classroom Scheduling or the Registration Center. Because of Registrar policies and deadlines, requests must be emailed to the ACC by December 15 for spring classes and July 15 for fall classes.

The following information must be included in your e-mail to the ACC:
- reason for the room change
- course #, section #, and title
- total # of seats needed
- building and room preference

INFORMATION FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS

MAILBOXES AND OUTGOING MAIL
Mailboxes for on-campus graduate students and the outgoing mailbox are located in the workroom, E210A AJB. The mailboxes are for university-related mail only—no personal mail, please. Check your mailbox regularly. If you leave campus for a semester or during the summer, please do not have the post office forward your personal (home) mail to the department.

E-MAIL
All departmental email messages will be sent to your uiowa.edu address so it is important that you check your email daily. If you are currently using another email service and would like to keep it as your email provider, link the two accounts so that mail sent to your UI email address will be re-routed to your personal email address. Please be aware that if you redirect your uiowa account to another ISP, you may lose your ability to post messages to the listservs.

TIMELY RESPONSE TO DEADLINES
Graduate students should be attentive to and are responsible for deadlines regarding their teaching assistantships and/or fellowships. Messages from the department requesting information or annual applications regarding
these appointments will always provide an explicit and often strict deadline: missing deadlines seriously inconveniences the staff and may result in the loss or delay of anticipated support, so you should make every effort to respond to requests on time.

LISTSERVS
Please use the listservs wisely to ensure that the information you want to share is received by everyone who might be interested. Only members of the following listservs can send messages to them unless otherwise indicated:

- **cinefac@list.uiowa.edu** includes all faculty and staff.
- **cinegrads@list.uiowa.edu** includes all graduate students and staff.
- **cinefacgrad@list.uiowa.edu** includes all faculty, visiting faculty, staff, graduate students, and DEO.
- **cinedgs@list.uiowa.edu** includes the Director of Graduate Studies, DEO, staff, and all graduate students.
  
  (Graduate students cannot post messages to this listserv.)

If you are not a member of a listserv that you would like to send a message to, please send it to **cinematicarts@uiowa.edu** and indicate what listserv(s) it should be forwarded to.

The ASC maintains all of the listservs for Cinematic Arts should you have questions or need help.

TRAVEL
Travel funding is contingent on the departmental budget. Since funding is not guaranteed, students should seek out other funding available through the Graduate Student Senate Travel Award for Research and the Graduate & Professional Student Government. In addition, please refer to the department website for other available funding opportunities. If the department is able to provide funding, it will be communicated by the 1st day of Fall semester. Funding requests for the fall semester need to be made by October 30, spring semester requests need to be made by March 31.

1) Complete the departmental travel form at least TWO WEEKS PRIOR to travel. You must provide documentation of participation, i.e. presenting a paper at a conference or an acceptance of a screening at a festival. The travel form and documentation of acceptance must be submitted to the DA via e-mail.

2) Review UI travel policy. Speak with Jenny Ritchie PRIOR to travel if you are unsure about required documentation for reimbursement.

3) Submit required documentation upon return from travel to Jenny Ritchie (Office E210C AJB; email usscinearts@uiowa.edu) within TWO WEEKS from the end of the trip.

**VERY IMPORTANT!** –All travel must be processed through workflow via ProTrav before the trip begins. A “trip” will be created for you and routed into workflow. You must approve the trip request and continue its routing in workflow. Travelers are also required to read and understand the travel policies. Review the pertinent sections from the column on the left.

The department requires travelers to submit original, itemized receipts for all expenses (including meals), not just expenses of $75 or more. We will not reimburse you without receipts. Meal claims should reflect actual expense not to exceed the maximum daily allowance.

**FACULTY AND TA OFFICE HOURS**
Faculty office hours can be found here. TA office hours can be found here. They are also posted in the glass case outside of E210 AJB, and outside the SSC 105 BCSB.
POSTINGS AND CREATING POSTERS
It is important that you routinely check all of the bulletin boards on the second floor of AJB and in the workroom, E210A. Please make note of the pertinent information, but do not remove materials from it.

If you are creating a poster to publicize a department-sponsored event or screening, you must comply with the University's identity standards and the DA must approve your poster before it is copied and posted.

USE OF DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD
If you are in good standing, you can use the department’s e-letterhead for cover letters when applying for jobs. You should get it from your advisor or the DGS. Please do not forward letterhead to others. We are supposed to limit dissemination to those applying for jobs as much as possible. Remember to save the document as a pdf file before e-mailing to others.

REMINDER: University employees may NOT use letterhead to advertise their own entrepreneurial activities on- or off-campus (e.g., consulting), as this is explicitly prohibited by the policy on Conflict of Interest in the Workplace.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS
Cinematic Arts complies with CLAS practices that recommend using the UI Center for Conferences to plan, organize, and administer all faculty and/or student-initiated conferences or workshops. To this end, the department requires anyone requesting departmental funds for such events to consult with the DEO and with the DA BEFORE submitting proposals for support so that they can advise on the best way to proceed. No department funds will be awarded without this prior consultation, as noted above.

RESERVING THE DEPARTMENT’S CONFERENCE ROOM
Reservations for the department’s conference room, E211 AJB, may be made by contacting the ASC. The department has a phone device (Polycom Soundstation) for conference calls. Arrangements for Skype or videoconference may also be made in advance. Arrangements for either should be made at the time of scheduling the conference room.

EVENT PLANNING, CO-SPONSORSHIPS, INVITATIONS
At the earliest moment possible in your planning for visitor invitations, co-sponsorships, or anything else that might involve the department in paying money for anything, please contact the DA. Also, most internal grant applications require the DEO to sign off on them, but once in a while you might come across one that does not. Please still communicate with the DA and the DEO about your plans.