Cinematic Arts

Interim Chair
• Steven R. Ungar

Undergraduate major: cinema (B.A.)
Undergraduate minor: cinema
Graduate degrees: M.A. in film studies; M.F.A. in film and video production; Ph.D. in film studies
Faculty: https://clas.uiowa.edu/cinematic-arts/people/faculty
Website: https://clas.uiowa.edu/cinematic-arts/

The Department of Cinematic Arts provides students with opportunities to explore and gain insight into cinema as a subject of international and interdisciplinary study as well as creative practice. The curriculum emphasizes film and related media in their historical and cultural contexts as well as film and video production in a variety of modes.

The department’s faculty offer expertise in film and video production; film history and theory, with emphasis on international film cultures; and the history, theory, and production of documentary media. Students conduct projects using state-of-the-art equipment and software that is updated regularly.

The department offers an undergraduate degree (B.A.), an undergraduate minor, and three graduate degree programs (M.A., M.F.A., and Ph.D.). It also offers courses for all interested students under the Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts area of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

Resources

The Department of Cinematic Arts maintains up-to-date film and video equipment and facilities that allow students to acquire professional skills in a range of technical and creative areas, including cinematography, editing, sound design, screenwriting, and animation. The program also draws upon the extensive media holdings, and scholarly and archival resources relevant to the study of cinema held by the University of Iowa Libraries. The department regularly sponsors events, including film screenings, festivals, symposia, and presentations by notable visiting scholars and artists, that extend the study of film beyond the classroom and regular curriculum. Collaborations with Iowa City’s independent cinema, FilmScene, and the Bijou, the University of Iowa’s long-running student film society, also enhance local opportunities for students to view films outside of the classroom and mainstream venues.

Programs

Undergraduate Programs of Study

Major
• Major in Cinema (Bachelor of Arts)

Minor
• Minor in Cinema

Graduate Programs of Study

Majors
• Master of Arts in Film Studies
• Master of Fine Arts in Film and Video Production
• Doctor of Philosophy in Film Studies

Courses

Cinematic Arts Courses

CINE:1000 First-Year Seminar 1 s.h.
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities, field trips). Requirements: first- or second-semester standing.

CINE:1100 The Art of Smartphone Filmmaking 3 s.h.
Introduction to filmmaking principles; how to shoot and edit short videos utilizing smartphone technology; methods to produce high-quality work without professional equipment. GE: Engineering Be Creative; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

CINE:1185 Internship arr.
Opportunity to apply skills; faculty supervision, on or off campus. Requirements: cinema major.

CINE:1195 Video Games and Identity 3 s.h.
Structural and historical problems of representation and inclusion in video games (as text, industry, and culture) along lines of race, gender, sexuality, age, class, and ability; introduction to game studies as a discipline; guidance in learning college-level reading and writing. GE: Diversity and Inclusion.

CINE:1200 Screenwriting Fundamentals 3 s.h.
Introduction to basic storytelling strategies and principles; writing film treatments; adapting prose to professional screenplay format; story structure for features and short films; workshop original screenplays and critique student work; analyze professional screenplays.

CINE:1601 Introduction to Film Analysis 3 s.h.
Formal analysis of film; narrative cinema and approaches to narrative structure; authorship and genre issues, other major topics.

CINE:1602 Introduction to Film Studies 3 s.h.
Film history, theory, criticism; issues of form, technologies, and cultural functions of cinema; screenings of narrative, documentary, experimental films from varied periods and nations. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

CINE:1610 Contemporary Cinema 3 s.h.
Current cinema; key genres, movements, filmmakers, technological changes; recent cultural contexts, industrial and economic factors, changes in the film viewing experience. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

CINE:1620 Writing Film Reviews and Criticism 3 s.h.
Evaluation and analysis of film, from journalistic reviews to academic scholarship; principles and theoretical positions.

CINE:1625 Race, Gender, and Sexuality on Screen 3 s.h.
Introduction to key issues and debates regarding the representation of gender, race, and sexuality in cinema. GE: Diversity and Inclusion.

CINE:1635 Styles and Genres 3 s.h.
Major film types (musicals, science fiction, westerns, film noir) and their cultural significance.

CINE:1640 Film Authors 3 s.h.
A major director or comparison of directors; director’s role in industrial and collaborative contexts, relations between biography and criticism, function of individual styles.
CINE:1645 Film and Literature 3 s.h.
Relationships among films, novels, plays, adaptations; shared and distinct formal elements of cinematic and literary texts, their cultural functions.

CINE:1834 Modes of Film and Video Production 4 s.h.
Introduction to filmmaking; how to shoot and edit short works of cinematic art; exposure to various working methods including nonfiction, fiction, and experimental modes of video production. Corequisites: for CINE:1834—CINE:1601, if not taken as a prerequisite. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as THTR:1834.

CINE:2195 Individual Study arr.
CINE:2198 Honors Tutorial arr.
CINE:2199 Honors Project II 3 s.h.
Completion of honors project, working with a designated cinematic arts faculty member; content varies depending on specific projects proposed by the student, approved by the faculty member, in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies and any additional cinematic arts faculty members relevant to the project. Prerequisites: CINE:2198. Requirements: standards met for honors in the major for the B.A. in cinema.

CINE:2200 Film/Video Production: The Business of Filmmaking 3 s.h.
Introduction to business-related arts production techniques and strategies; budgeting and basic accounting skills, grant writing, project conceptualization and planning, film producing and location scouting, distribution models, film festival submission, project summation.

CINE:2615 Introduction to Film Theory 3 s.h.
Classical film theory—formalist and realist theories, authorship, genre; contemporary film theory—semiotics, feminism, psychoanalysis, ideological criticism, postmodernism, queer theory.

CINE:2620 U.S. Film 3 s.h.
American film industry; social and artistic perspectives.

CINE:2622 Introduction to World Film 3 s.h.
Introduction to key movements, figures, and topics in international cinema.

CINE:2623 Introduction to Documentary Film 3 s.h.
Introduction to key issues and topics in the history and practice of nonfiction filmmaking.

CINE:2627 Film Club 1 s.h.
Theme-based film program comprising a weekly film screening followed by a guided group discussion intended to inspire debate and film literacy.

CINE:2800 Digital Arts: An Introduction 3 s.h.
Introduction to potential of integrating art with technology to provide a foundation of skills and concepts through hands-on experimentation; lectures and demonstrations introduce key concepts and ideas as well as the history of digital arts; students develop skills that form a foundation for future investigation through labs; work may include using an Arduino, programming, and developing an interface to control a software project; final project is shared with the public in some way; critical discourse in the form of writing assignments allows for reflection and evaluation. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as ARTS:2800, CS:2800, DANC:2800, MUS:2800, THTR:2800.

CINE:2861 Screenwriting: Short Form 3 s.h.
Introduction to basic principles of screenwriting; develop, write, and workshop screenplays for short film/video projects including fiction, nonfiction, and experimental work. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2863 Film/Video Production: Film Festival 3 s.h.
How to run a film festival; management and orchestration of annual Iowa City International Documentary Festival. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2864 Film/Video Production: Alternative Forms 3 s.h.
Alternative or innovative video/film practices and technologies; varied topics. Prerequisites: INTM:2710 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C. Same as INTM:2864.

CINE:2865 Film/Video Production: Material of 16mm Filmmaking 3 s.h.
Individual and small-group work to create projects using 16mm filmmaking techniques including camera operation, editing, lighting, and sound production; intermediate production course. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2866 Film/Video Production: Nonfiction 3 s.h.
Individual and small group work to create video projects using nonfiction filmmaking techniques, from camera and lighting to postproduction. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2867 Screenwriting: Long Form 3 s.h.
Introduction to basic principles of screenwriting; develop, write, and workshop screenplays for longer form film/video projects including fiction, nonfiction, and experimental work. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2868 Film/Video Production: Fiction 3 s.h.
Individual and small group work to create video projects using fiction filmmaking techniques, from camera and lighting to postproduction. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:2869 Introduction to Intermedia 3 s.h.
Interdisciplinary focus; emphasis on conceptual, installation, video, time-based media, performance art. Prerequisites: (ARTS:1510 and ARTS:1520) or CINE:1834. Requirements: for CINE:2869—grade of C or higher in CINE:1834. Same as INTM:2710.

CINE:3195 Undergraduate Seminar 3 s.h.
Focus on a significant text or critical problem. Requirements: cinema major, and junior or senior standing.

CINE:3750 Topics in Cinema and Culture 3 s.h.
One or more national cinemas in relation to social, historical, and cultural contexts. Prerequisites: CINE:1601.

CINE:3876 Video for Performance 3 s.h.
Introduction to aesthetics and practical applications of digital media and video design for live performance including content creation, system design, and content optimization for media servers; students create digital video and animations and integrate them into live performance and entertainment events via projections, media servers, and digital displays using QLab Media Server and Adobe Creative Cloud (e.g., Illustrator, Photoshop, Premiere Pro, Audition, After Effects); for those with an interest in designing, creating, and displaying digital media for theatre, dance, concerts, corporate events, gallery installations, VR sets, and architectural projections. Prerequisites: THTR:3890 or CINE:1834 or CINE:1834. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as DANC:3876, INTM:3876, THTR:3876.
CINE:3877 Advanced Screenwriting: Short Form  4 s.h.
Developing, writing, and workshopping screenplays for short film/video projects including fiction, nonfiction, and experimental work; introduction to preproduction activities; exercises and journal assignments. Prerequisites: CINE:2861 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2867 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2868 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:3878 Film and Media Practicum  1 s.h.
Research and production-oriented film and media practicum; individual and small-group work on a single film, video, or media production as determined by instructor; independent library and web-based research, group presentations, readings. Requirements: junior or senior standing.

CINE:4606 Topics in Asian Cinema  3 s.h.
Issues or topics in East or South Asian cinemas. Prerequisites: CINE:1601. Same as ASIA:4606.

CINE:4608 Topics in Documentary Film  3 s.h.
A period, type, or concern of nonfiction filmmaking. Prerequisites: CINE:1601.

CINE:4618 Topics in World Cinemas  3 s.h.
Issues in international film history and film theory. Prerequisites: CINE:1601.

CINE:4620 Topics in Film Form, Style, and Theory  3 s.h.
Special issues and topics relevant to film form, style, and/or theory. Prerequisites: CINE:1601.

CINE:4678 Topics in Latin American Cinema  3 s.h.
Taught in English. Prerequisites: CINE:1601. Requirements: one Spanish literature or culture course numbered above SPAN:3200 or one film studies course. Same as LAS:4678, SPAN:4810.

CINE:4821 Film/Video Production: Selected Topics  4 s.h.
Exploration of a particular genre, issue, or process; varied topics; individual work on several video projects. Prerequisites: CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2868 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4845 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4848 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4825 Digital Production: Animation  4 s.h.
Intermediate 3-D modeling, motion graphics; student projects culminating in CDR or video presentation. Prerequisites: CINE:1834 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4836 Advanced Screenwriting: Long Form  4 s.h.
Write a feature screenplay (105-115 pages) within the industry standard contract guidelines for independent and studio projects; completion of outline, beat sheet, treatment, first draft; one rewrite. Prerequisites: CINE:2861 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2867 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4841 Film/Video Production: Sound Design  4 s.h.
Exploration of sound design for film and video, from recording to editing and mixing; individual work on several audio and video projects. Prerequisites: CINE:4821 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4862 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2868 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4841 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4845 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4843 Film/Video Production: Image Design  4 s.h.
Lighting strategies and techniques, camera work, composition, and postproduction; individual work on several video projects. Prerequisites: CINE:2863 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2868 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2869 with a minimum grade of C or THTR:3876 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4845 Film/Video Production: Editing  4 s.h.
Development of editing techniques and strategies; editing for impact, mood, story; individual work on several video projects. Prerequisites: CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or THTR:3876 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4841 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4862 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4862 Film/Video Production: Advanced Video  4 s.h.
Expanded narrative or nonfiction/documentary topics; individual work on several video projects. Prerequisites: CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or THTR:3876 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4821 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4841 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4845 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4864 Film Production: Advanced 16mm  4 s.h.
Processes and approaches to short 16mm film; advanced cameras; sync-sound techniques; individual work on several projects. Prerequisites: CINE:2864 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2865 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:2866 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4845 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4848 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4862 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:4890 Media Production Workshop  4 s.h.
Development, production, and realization of a self-directed project; methods and projects may include film, video, screenwriting, or hybrid forms. Prerequisites: THTR:3876 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4821 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4841 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4843 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4845 with a minimum grade of C or CINE:4862 with a minimum grade of C.

CINE:5673 Advanced Film Theory  3 s.h.
A major figure, issue, or approach in film theory.

CINE:5675 Advanced Film History  3 s.h.
A major period or topic in film history; issues in film historiography, research.

CINE:5677 Studies in Sound and Image  3 s.h.
Theoretical and historical approaches to film sound, technology, style.

CINE:5890 Colloquium in Film and Video Production  4 s.h.
Projects and critical studies; focus on varied topics including process and theoretical issues; workshop, readings, production. Recommendations: previous experience with video production; prior cinema courses or filmmaking experience helpful, but not required.

CINE:6605 Special Topics in European Film  3 s.h.
Key issues, movements, periods, or figures in European film.
CINE:6635 Crossing Borders Seminar 2-3 s.h.  

CINE:6992 Individual Study arr.  

CINE:7615 Seminar: Film Theory 3 s.h.  
A major figure, issue, or approach in film theory.

CINE:7616 Seminar: Film History 3 s.h.  
A major period or topic in film history; issues in film historiography, research.

CINE:7992 Thesis arr.