FILM STUDIES MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The College of Film and the Moving Image (CFILM) encompasses the Film Studies Department, the Center for Film Studies, the Wesleyan Documentary Project, the Student Film Series, and the Ogden and Mary Louise Reid Cinema Archives. CFILM approaches the moving image as an art in all its various forms—fiction, documentary, experimental, live-action, or animated—and in all its various venues: cinemas, television, the internet. The College is designed specifically for liberal arts undergraduates who benefit most from the marriage of image-making, history, and studies.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

The requirements for admission include a minimum overall academic average of B (85.0) and the successful completion of two designated entry-level courses with a grade of B+ or better in each. Entry to the major is possible only after completion of these two courses and application to the film major. To apply, students must meet with one of the Film Department Advisors by the end of the first semester of their sophomore year and place their names on the list of potential majors. The Film Department Advisors are Stephen Collins, Scott Higgins, Anuja Jain, Marc Longenecker, Sadia Shepard, Michael Slowik, and Tracy Strain. Students on this list will receive an application form. Applications will be evaluated based on performance in film studies classes (including but not limited to grades) and any other factors deemed pertinent.

Because of the prerequisites and major requirements, students transferring to Wesleyan after their first semester sophomore year are not eligible to declare the film studies major.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

To fulfill the major, students must satisfactorily complete 10 Film Studies courses, including:

- Two introductory courses—Film 304: History of Global Cinema and Film 307: The Language of Popular Cinema
- One basic production course—Film 450: Sight and Sound Workshop
- A minimum of six Film elective courses and
- FILM 456 (senior thesis) or one additional elective
- Students may count a maximum of 16 credits in any single department toward the 32 credits required for graduation. Credits that exceed this limit will count as oversubscription.
- The film major does not require a senior thesis.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

Please see our departmental website for further information regarding the specifics of our major (wesleyan.edu/cfilm).
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The oversubscription rule limits students to a maximum of 16 credits in a single department before oversubscription occurs, at which point further credits earned in the department cannot count toward the 32 credits required for graduation.

**STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

### MISSION OF THE FILM MAJOR

The mission of the film studies major is to deliver the finest undergraduate film, television, and media education through our distinctive blending of history, analysis, and production. The major explores moving image art and culture by looking at what is on screen using the language of filmmakers. We highlight visual storytelling. No matter the level of the course or the nature of the discussion, we maintain a direct route from our intellectual activity to filmmakers’ choices and audience experiences. In contrast to graduate programs, which separate practice from study or teach methods of scholarship, we teach about the films themselves in a jargon-free classroom.

### MISSION OF THE FILM MINOR

The film studies minor offers the same fundamental orientation as the major, but with fewer requirements and an emphasis on cross-listed classes. Its mission is to deliver an encompassing curriculum in film and media studies through an interdisciplinary approach.

### OUR PEDAGOGICAL GOALS

Our broad goal is to foster the critical understanding of cinema and television as art forms. To all students, both general education and majors, we offer a unified perspective that enables students to think critically about form and the choices that visual storytellers face. No other liberal arts film program features such a broad and deep background in analysis, culture, and history coupled with sensitivity to film and television’s immediate and intimate relationship with audiences.

Our majors develop a critical and creative approach to the medium based on a strong visual vocabulary, extensive viewing, and a grasp of film production. Production and studies are mutually reinforcing in this environment. Our 16mm and digital production courses facilitate deeper comprehension of film and television’s complexities and demand a higher level of critical and analytical thinking. Likewise, students steeped in history and analysis bring a robust visual vocabulary and awareness of form and culture to the tasks of storytelling. Upon graduation, majors know how to make a movie, are experienced in film and television writing, understand film history, can offer original visions, and are capable of extending our knowledge of the moving image.

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Our major demands and rewards critical thinking. We believe that true learning involves synthesis, discovery, and original thought. Our students must face the challenge of defining and resolving artistic, historical, and analytical problems on their own, while also learning to work in collaboration. We encourage students to develop a personal vision, take risks, solve problems, and learn from failure as well as success.

### HONORS

Film studies majors are not required to complete Gen Ed requirements to be Honors Candidates in Film.

Film studies majors are not required to complete senior thesis projects to fulfill their major program of study. However, large percentages of majors do opt for a senior thesis, which can take the form of a written history thesis, a screenplay, a 16mm film, a digital video, an advanced television project, or a film criticism project. Senior theses provide majors with the opportunity to advance what they have learned in their previous coursework through an extended individual...
project. Film Studies maintains a rigorous approach to evaluating theses, but also provides close, one-on-one advising.

Those students wishing to make a senior thesis film, video, or virtual project must complete their introductory production course (Sight and Sound or Introduction to Digital) during their junior year.

**CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE**

The College of Film and the Moving Image provides an array of Capstone Experiences, including:

- Advanced senior 16mm filmed thesis
- Advanced senior digital thesis
- Advanced documentary thesis
- Advanced senior screenplay thesis
- Advanced television thesis
- Advanced film criticism project
- Senior paper
- Senior film board participation
- Senior presentation week participation
- Optional Capstone outside major
- No Capstone