

# FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

**Director of undergraduate studies:** Marta Figlerowicz ([marta.figlerowicz@yale.edu](mailto:marta.figlerowicz@yale.edu)); [filmstudies.yale.edu/undergraduate](http://filmstudies.yale.edu/undergraduate)

The major in Film and Media Studies focuses on the history, theory, criticism, and production of cinema and other moving-image media. Courses examine cinema and the broader landscape of audiovisual media as significant modern art forms, and the contributions of moving-image media as cultural and communicative practices of enduring social significance. As an interdisciplinary program centered in the humanities, Film and Media Studies offers students latitude in defining their course of study within the framework established by the Film and Media Studies Committee. With this freedom comes the responsibility of carefully planning a coherent and well-focused program. Because of the special demands of Film and Media Studies and the diversity of its offerings, potential majors are encouraged to consult the director of undergraduate studies (DUS) early in their academic careers.

## PREREQUISITE

Students normally take FILM 150 in their first or second year. This course is useful preparation, and in some cases a prerequisite for other courses in the major.

## REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The Film and Media Studies major consists of twelve term courses, including the prerequisite and the senior requirement. Students are required to take FILM 160 and FILM 320, preferably by the end of their sophomore year. In addition, students are required to take one upper-level course in the study of representative films from a non-American national cinema (e.g. German expressionist cinema, Italian cinema, or world cinema) and one upper-level course in critical studies: these are designated by attributes (YC FILM: World Cinema, YC FILM: Critical Studies) in Yale Course Search. Students also must take at least one course on the creative process in film, designated by the attribute YC FILM: Production in Yale Course Search. Courses taken outside the Film and Media Studies department do not count toward the major without the permission of the DUS. Admission to senior-level seminars is at the instructor's discretion, but the Film and Media Studies program ensures that every senior major gains admission to the required number of seminars.

**The intensive major** Students of substantial accomplishment and commitment to film and media studies are encouraged to pursue the intensive major. Students in the intensive major complete a senior project in production and also write a senior essay. The intensive major in Film and Media Studies is intended for students who are not pursuing two majors. Students must request approval from the Film and Media Studies Committee at the end of their junior year by submitting a proposal that outlines their objectives and general area of study.

**Credit/D/Fail** No more than one course taken Credit/D/Fail may be counted toward the major with permission of the DUS.

## SENIOR REQUIREMENT

During the senior year, each student takes one or two senior-level seminars or the equivalent and submits a senior essay or senior project, which should represent a culmination of work in the major and in Yale College. The senior requirement requires both critical writing and writing in images. Those undertaking creative senior projects should be expected to produce a paper of approximately fifteen pages in which the student discusses such questions as the genre to be used in the project, existing precedents for the topic, and his or her strategy in working on the project. Those undertaking to fulfill the senior requirement by writing a senior essay should additionally take a course in which they are expected to do, minimally, a small production assignment.

Majors graduating in December must submit their senior essays or senior projects to the DUS by Friday, December 8, 2023; those graduating in May, by Friday, April 26, 2024. A second reader assigned by the DUS participates in evaluating the essays and/or projects.

**Preparation for a senior project** Those students hoping to produce a film script or video as their senior project should make sure that they have taken enough courses in video production and screenwriting to be accepted into an advanced course in screenwriting or production. Senior creative projects in Film and Media Studies must be produced in conjunction with one such upper-level course. Students often start by completing FILM 161, 162 by the end of their sophomore year, and continue with FILM 355, 356 by the end of their junior year, to prepare for FILM 455, 456 or FILM 483, 484 in their senior year. Those students interested in screenwriting often begin with FILM 350. Students interested in filmmaking should also take courses in screenwriting, and vice versa. Some production courses are available in the summer program in Prague.

**Senior project** Students who wish to complete a senior project as an alternative to an essay must petition the Film and Media Studies Committee for approval of their project at the end of the junior year. Projects might include writing a screenplay in Advanced Screenwriting (FILM 487, 488) or producing a video. Students electing such an alternative should note that the project must be undertaken and accomplished over two terms. A limited number of students making films or videos are admitted to either the Advanced Fiction Film Workshop (FILM 483, 484) or the Documentary Film Workshop (FILM 455, 456), and receive three credits for their projects (two credits for FILM 483, 484 or FILM 455, 456, and one for FILM 493 or 494). Such a choice effectively commits students to one extra course in addition to the twelve courses required for the major, because FILM 493 or 494 does not count toward the twelve required courses when taken in conjunction with FILM 483, 484 or FILM 455, 456. Students may undertake a production project outside the workshops if (1) the Film and Media Studies Committee approves their petition, (2) they have found a primary adviser *qualified* and willing to provide the necessary supervision, and (3) they have identified the equipment necessary to execute the project. Such students may count FILM 493 and 494 toward the twelve courses required for the major.

**Preparation for a senior essay** Students in their senior year may prefer to write a senior essay rather than work on a creative project. To prepare, they should take advantage of the variety of courses in film and media history, criticism and theory offered by the

program, including such topics as American independent cinema, film theory, and African American cinema.

**Senior essay** For the student writing a senior essay, several options are possible. First, the student may enroll in two terms of relevant senior-level seminars (usually courses numbered in the 400s) and write a substantial term paper of twenty-five pages, double-spaced, for one of these courses. Second, the student may do independent research on a yearlong senior essay (FILM 491, 492). This option is intended for students with clearly defined topics that do not relate closely to a senior-level seminar. Such research receives two terms of credit; the product of a two-term research essay is a work of at least fifty pages. Third, the senior requirement may be completed by combining one single-term senior-level seminar with one term of an independent research project (FILM 491 or 492), resulting in a paper of thirty-five pages. Whichever option is chosen, the essay should be written on a topic informed by the student's previous coursework at Yale College. The student intending to write a senior essay should submit a brief prospectus, approved by the proposed faculty adviser, to the DUS by the end of reading week in their junior year. If this petition is approved, the student should plan to submit an updated and elaborated prospectus for final approval by the DUS during the first two weeks of the first term of senior year. In researching and writing the essay, the student should consult regularly with the seminar instructor or adviser, supplying preliminary drafts as appropriate, and may consult with other faculty members as well.

#### ADVISING

**Foreign languages** Study of relevant languages is urged for all Film and Media Studies majors. Students considering graduate work should become proficient in French or another modern language. Those choosing to study film in relation to a foreign culture must have good listening and reading abilities in that language.

#### SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

**Prerequisite** FILM 150

**Number of courses** 12 term courses (incl prereq and senior req)

**Specific courses required** FILM 160 and FILM 320

**Distribution of courses** 1 upper-level national or world cinema course as specified; 1 upper level critical studies course; 1 production course

**Senior requirement** *For senior essay*— 2 terms of senior-level seminars, or 2 terms of senior essay (FILM 491, 492), or 1 term of a senior-level seminar and one term of FILM 491 or 492; *for senior project*— 2 terms of senior project in FILM 455, 456, or FILM 483, 484, and either FILM 493 or 494, for a total of 13 term courses; or 2 terms of senior project in FILM 487, 488; or 2 terms of senior project in FILM 493, 494 *with approved petition*

**Intensive major** Both senior project in production and senior essay