CINEMA STUDIES

Director, Associate Professor Audrey Brunetaux

Advisory Committee and Faculty: Professor Margaret McFadden (American Studies); Associate Professor Laura Saltz (American Studies); Assistant Professors Dean Allbritton (Spanish) and Elena Morastireva-Ansdell (Russian)

Program Affiliated Faculty: Professors Arthur Greenspan (French) and Laurie Osborne (English); Associate Professors Audrey Brunetaux (French), Arne Koch (German), and Maple Razsa (Anthropology); Assistant Professor Cyrus Shahan (German); Visiting Assistant Professor Chelsea Wessels (Cinema Studies)

Few art forms have had a greater impact on modern culture than cinema. Over the course of cinema’s relatively brief history, film criticism and theory have grappled with some of the issues most central to the humanities, including how to represent and transform the world and how technological changes have affected the production and consumption of images. As an academic discipline, cinema studies has addressed these and attendant issues through a range of strategies, directing attention both to the highest form of rarified art practice and to the most popular forms of entertainment and diversion.

The minor in cinema studies focuses on the history, theory, and culture of film and related media such as digital media and photography. It makes coherent both the historical and aesthetic dimensions of cinema, including the mutual influence of cinema with its cultural, technological, national, and transnational contexts. As a distinct field of study influenced by a range of disciplines—among them art history, English, and the sciences—the minor draws its strength from connections among departments, while at the same time providing a core of courses foundational to the discipline of cinema studies itself.

Requirements for the Minor in Cinema Studies

Six courses, including Cinema Studies 142, 251 or 252, 321, one non-U.S. cinema studies course, and two electives selected from the list of courses approved for the minor or approved by the director. No more than two courses can count toward both the cinema studies minor and another minor or major.

Courses Approved for the Minor in Cinema Studies

American Studies
- 243 Introduction to Television Studies: The L Word
- 334 Film and Society: Films of the 1940s
- 364: Spike Lee’s United States

Art
- 285 History of Photography

East Asian Studies
- 240 Japanese Animation: Sensitivity to Differences

English
- 386C Special Topics: Documentary Radio
- 412 Global Shakespeares
- 493 Seminar: Literature and Film Adaptation

French
- 237 Francophone African Cinema
- 323 Holocaust in French Cinema

German
- 234 German Culture through Film

Global Studies
- 437 Media, Culture, and the Political Imagination

Religious Studies
- 319 Bollywood and Beyond: South Asian Religions through Film

Russian
- 242 Russian Cinema from Lenin to Putin
Course Offerings

CI142s  Introduction to Cinema Studies  An introduction to the discipline of cinema studies, its history, and dominant approaches. Functions as a gateway to the minor and serves as a prerequisite for the required film theory course.  Four credit hours.  A.  WESSELS

CI215j  The Image of Women and Men in American Film  How Hollywood films of “the Sixties” (1958-1978) reflected and helped determine the vast social and psychological changes that women, men, and the country were experiencing—or were denying experiencing—during a tumultuous period of U.S. history. Topics include gender roles, genre, directorial style, historical background, the effects of camera placement, movement and lighting, and the function of narrative—how to “read” a film. A few additional required screenings will be scheduled and some class meetings may be extended for longer films or double features. Previously offered as American Studies 115 and 215.  Three credit hours.  EISEN

CI243j  Narrative Film Production  Students will learn the essential skills required to produce a compelling narrative short film through development of preproduction skills from initial idea, to writing a script, to storyboarding, to creating a shot list. We will learn the basics of cinematography, casting, and directing. Finally, students will learn how to edit and manage a postproduction workflow. Previously offered as Cinema Studies 297 (2014).  Three credit hours.  MURPHY

CI245f  Documentary Video Production: An Editor’s Perspective  Students will produce and edit short documentaries about Allen Island and mid-coast Maine which will be included in the Maine Food documentary series. Topics may include lobstering, aquaponics, food co-ops, and food education. Students will learn the basics of video production, although the focus will be on video editing. Students will learn the art of revision, as well as technical skills such as using a camera, shooting a scene, and interviewing subjects. Students’ videos will be informed by best practices in the documentary genre. One overnight trip to Allen Island is required. Previously listed as Cinema Studies 297 (Fall 2014).  Four credit hours.  MURPHY

CI248f  Digital Publishing: Telling Stories Online  Explores the many methods and tools available for creating digital stories. Students learn the basic skills of multimedia production and develop strategies for conceiving original and creative projects. They explore the potential uses of digital storytelling, including promoting nonprofits, marketing a new business, and developing social justice campaigns. Projects include the creation of animated .gifs, photo manipulations, audio soundscapes, digital video mash-ups, and promotional web videos. Students also become fluent in a variety of programs, including Photoshop, Audacity, and Final Cut X, and engage with a variety of publishing platforms including Vine, Flickr, WordPress, Vimeo, and Tumblr. Previously listed as Cinema Studies 298.  Four credit hours.  A.  MURPHY

CI251f  History of International Cinema I  The first of a two-semester survey of the history of global cinema, providing a broad overview of the development of cinema as an art form from the beginning of cinema (c. 1890) to 1945. Students will develop an understanding of the historical, national, economic, aesthetic, and cultural contexts of films produced and received by international audiences in the first half of cinema history. They will also gain proficiency in written and oral communication and develop their skills in critical thinking.  Four credit hours.  A.  WESSELS

CI252f  History of International Cinema II  The second of a two-semester survey of the history of global cinema. Provides students with a broad overview of the development of cinema as an art form from the midpoint of cinema’s history (1945) to the present. Students will develop an understanding of the historical, national, economic, aesthetic, and cultural contexts of films produced and received by international audiences in the second half of cinema history. They will also gain proficiency in written and oral communication and develop skills in critical thinking.  Four credit hours.  A.

CI280s  Topics in Global Cinema: The Global Western  Examines the western genre from a global perspective in order to consider how ideas of space, violence, and politics are reconfigured in different contexts. Beginning with questions of genre more broadly, the course will trace the evolution of a global genre from early cinema to contemporary examples. Through screening films and reading texts drawn from Latin America, Europe, Australia, and East Asia, we will consider the interrelation of national and global factors that have led to the emergence and the adoption of the western as a popular genre.  Prerequisite: Cinema Studies 142 or English 142.  Four credit hours.  WESSELS

CI297f  Introduction to Music in American Cinema  An introduction to the practice and criticism of music in cinema from 1927 to the end of the 20th century. Explores the complexity of music’s interaction with the visual, narrative, dramatic, and other sonic aspects of 20th-
century cinema, from particular moments and scenes to a broader consideration of how music may create meaning across an entire film. Encompasses both technical and critical aspects, including the development of character and subjectivity; voice; representations of gender and body; representations of ethnicity, class, and youth; music as ironic commentary; and audience manipulation. 

Three credit hours.

CI321Af  Topics in Film Theory: Cinema/Landscape  Individual courses offered under the rubric of Topics in Film Theory will change in specific focus but keep consistent the rigorous engagement with a theoretical issue central to cinema studies. Students collaboratively engage with a set of questions regarding the nature of cinema and its relationships with power. Through both informal and formal analytical writing as well as class discussions and formal presentations, students not only develop a greater understanding of cinema but also enhance their written, critical, and verbal skills. Prerequisite: Cinema Studies 142 or equivalent. Four credit hours. WESSELS

[CI321B]  Topics in Film Theory  Individual courses offered under the rubric of Topics in Film Theory will change in specific focus but keep consistent the rigorous engagement with a theoretical issue central to cinema studies. Students collaboratively engage with a set of questions regarding the nature of cinema and its relationships with power. Through both informal and formal analytical writing as well as class discussions and formal presentations, students not only develop a greater understanding of cinema but also enhance their written, critical, and verbal skills. Prerequisite: Cinema Studies 142 or equivalent. Four credit hours.

CI491f, 492s  Independent Study  Individual topics in areas where the student has demonstrated the interest and competence necessary for independent work. One to four credit hours. FACULTY