

School of Arts and Sciences



FILM STUDIES

www.pitt.edu/~filmst

Film is one of the major cultural forms of the twentieth century, and its study has become an important part of a modern humanities education. Cinema is one of the most exciting and vital art forms of the present day, and it is crucial for an educated person to appreciate and comprehend it. Film Studies examines cinema as an art form, a social force, a technological system, an industry, and a communication medium. In addition to cinema, the program also considers video, television, and photography.

At the University of Pittsburgh, the Film Studies Program offers a series of interdisciplinary courses concerning the history, aesthetics, theory, and production of cinema. The program provides courses in critical studies, and by special arrangement with Pittsburgh Filmmakers in Oakland, courses in film, photography, and video production. Pittsburgh is a great place for studying film for many reasons: the high quality facilities at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, an active city film community, a great combination of film production and critical studies, and internship opportunities.

Pittsburgh is also a great place for film students interested in someday working on Hollywood productions. The city has been a location for Hollywood film shoots, which often need help, extras, or interns. *Wonder Boys*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Striking Distance*, *Dogma*, and, most recently, *Mothman Prophecies* are just a few of the movies that have been made in Pittsburgh.

A film major is appropriate for students who wish to pursue careers in film teaching, film journalism, film museum curatorial work, film library and archival work, and film and television production. As part of the Film Studies Program, internships are made available to students in many of these fields. Students have interned at the Pittsburgh Film Office, Pittsburgh Filmmakers, the Carnegie Museum of Art, television studios around the area, and the sites of feature films shot in Pittsburgh.

Various options are available to the student interested in film studies. For those students who wish to make film studies the primary focus of their undergraduate program, it is possible to pursue an interdisciplinary major in film studies. For those students who wish to major in another area but desire a concentration in film studies, a certificate program is available. In addition, many students choose to take elective courses in film studies as part of their undergraduate curriculum.

Required Courses for Film Studies Majors

The major in film studies requires 12 courses (36 credits), distributed as follows:

1. **Three critical studies course (9 cr.)**

ENGLIT 0540 or HA&A 0820 World Film History

This is an introductory course that introduces you to film analysis techniques, and acquaints you with some major works and movements in international cinema from 1895 to the present. You will discuss the development of genres, the evolution of film narrative and visual style, the rise of avant-garde film, impressionistic and revolutionary film, and the features of classical cinema.

ENGLIT 0530 or HA&A 0801 Film Analysis

This course will introduce you to the critical evaluation of film as an art form, cultural form, and medium of communication. You will focus on specific elements common to most films (the shot, editing, the soundtrack) and on the relationship between those elements and a variety of film forms.

ENGLIT 1920 Advanced Seminar in Film Studies

2. **One production course (3 cr.) chosen from:**

FILMST 0100 Filmmaking 1

This is a workshop course for beginners in filmmaking. You will make films, both narrative and non-narrative, that deal with issues of composition, camera movement, editing, time/space manipulation, etc. During the course, you will produce two or three short super-8mm films.

FILMST 0200 Black and White Photography 1

This course addresses both the practical and theoretical and is designed to give you an awareness and understanding of the technical and aesthetic implications of photography. You will learn how to make exposures and how to make photographic prints.

FILMST 0400 Introduction to Digital

This course introduces beginners to the Macintosh operating system and familiarizes them with some of the possibilities digital technology offers for the manipulation of still images, sound and motion pictures. Students will become proficient with the Macintosh and will make use of simple word processing programs as well as programs like Premiere, FreeHand, PageMaker, and Photoshop as they discover how computers are radically changing the way imagemakers create and present their work.

3. Two courses (6 cr.) in National Cinema/Filmmakers, some examples of which are:**ENGLIT 1472 Hitchcock's Films**

You will examine the development of Hitchcock's cinema as a way of touching upon issues central to the study of film as a cultural force: the relationship between art and entertainment; the social origins of suspense and fear, the role of the director in creating a film's meaning, and the role and function of genre and cross-genre influence. All phases of his films will be studied and examined for what their style, tone, and subject matter reveal about the powers of cinema.

ENGLIT 1390 Contemporary Film

During this course, you will concentrate on forms of international filmmaking from the 1980s and the 1990s. You will screen examples of Hollywood filmmaking, but the film texts for the course will also focus on other imitative, alternative, or oppositional forms of filmmaking as seen in the cinema of Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

GER 1384 Fascism and Film

The complicated and problematic connections between film and propaganda, history and narrative, memory and representation are examined during this course. It includes an overview of the historical relationship between film and fascism, as well as close readings of a representative group of American and European films from the '40s to the present.

FR 0085 French Film 1930-1960

You will study French sound film during this course. All films will be shown with English subtitles, and no knowledge of French is necessary.

4. Two courses (6 cr.) in Themes/Genres/Theory, some examples of which are:**ENGLIT 1685 Film Musical**

This course provides a historical survey of the American film musical from 1927 to the present, as well as teaching you how to analyze musicals as a film genre. The primary focus of the class will be on the golden age of the MGM musicals of the 1940s and 1950s.

ENGLIT 1790 Film and Literature

In an attempt to understand film's debt to literary models, as well as its own unique and innovative contributions to narrative, poetic, and essay form, you will examine film's convergence with, and divergence from, the literary arts.

ENGLIT 1485 Film and Politics

This course examines film production, economics, and forms of representation as reflections of political attitudes. We will study a variety of narrative and non-fiction films which reveal differing political points of view, ranging from those that legitimize the dominant culture to those which criticize, if not challenge, dominant attitudes. Films to be screened include European, U.S., Soviet, and Third World cinema.

JPNSE 1058 Westerns & Samurai Films

The main focus of this course is a cross-cultural study of the major works that represent the rich cinematic heritage of Japan and the U.S.: the Samurai and the Western. You will examine how the films explain the socio-cultural environment of their respective countries, share similarities in narrative, character types, and world view, and how filmmakers borrow from each other.

HA&A 0470 Photography and Art

You will be provided with a thorough familiarity with the history of photography from its development in the 19th century to the present day, and to link that history to major trends in the history of modern art, such as realism, impressionism, cubism, surrealism, abstract, etc.

5. Electives (Four courses [12 cr.] selected from all Film Studies offerings), examples of which are:**A&S 1900 Internship****FILMST 0121 Animation**

The beginning animator would be interested in this comprehensive workshop. You will work on individual projects using techniques such as drawing, clay, collage, time-lapse, etc. You will be exposed to a variety of media/techniques through screenings and practical exercises. As a major course project, you will produce one short animated film.

FILMST 1140 Acting for the Camera

Actors interested in improving their craft by better understanding the differences between acting for the stage and acting for the camera should take this class. The course will describe and demonstrate the contrasts between stage and screen acting in specific shooting scripts and follow that with appropriate script study, character analysis, and exercises in film acting techniques.

ENGLIT 1482 The Star System

This course deals with all aspects of the phenomenon of stardom in film: production of stars, film acting and fandom. You will use case studies of individual stars to study each weekly topic. The course will emphasize the differences between male and female star images.

* No more than five film production courses may be counted towards the major (including the required course), although production courses can be taken as Electives. Five courses (15 cr.) within the major must be at the 1000 level.

Related Area

In addition to the 36 credits in film studies courses, the major requires 12 credits of related area courses to be determined by the student in consultation with his/her advisor. Common related areas for film studies majors are English writing, English or foreign-language literature, fine arts, history, etc.

Requirements for Certificate Program

The Film Studies Certificate is designed for the student who is majoring in another field, but wishes to do some concentrated work in film studies. The certificate program provides a planned, interdisciplinary sequence of six courses (18 cr.), which gives the student a broad introduction to the field of film studies.

1. Required courses (2 courses/6 cr.)

ENGLIT 0540 or HA&A 0820 World Film History (3 cr.)

ENGLIT 0530 or HA&A 0801 Film Analysis (3 cr.)

2. Film Studies Electives (4 courses/12 cr.)

The four remaining courses can be chosen from the three broad curricular areas: National Cinemas and Filmmakers, Themes/Genres/Theory, and Film Production. A maximum of two courses in film production can be counted toward the certificate. However, students should not choose all the remaining courses from the first two areas.

Pittsburgh Filmmakers

The Pittsburgh Filmmakers was founded in 1971 and is the largest independent media arts center in the country. They are a non-profit, tax exempt organization that offers one of the most complete professional training programs in the media and photographic arts in the United States. Students from area colleges, including Point Park College, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, Carlow College, Robert Morris College, and LaRoche College as well as the University of Pittsburgh, receive professional training as well as opportunities to participate in seminars, workshops, internship programs, screenings, and exhibitions. You will receive access to a complete inventory of production and post-production equipment for super-8 and 16mm film, still photography, video and digital media including a film sound studio, 16mm flatbed editors, and animation studio, VHS, S-VHS and 3/4" video editing suites, Avid non-linear editing suites, two community darkrooms, individual color and black and white labs, a non-silver printing lab, and a digital imaging lab. You will also receive significant film laboratory discounts at labs in Pittsburgh and other cities as well as discounts on seminars, workshops, and events at the Melwood Screening Room and Filmmakers at the Harris Theater. In some cases, you also may be eligible for student production grants offered by Pittsburgh Filmmakers.

For more information on the film studies major, please contact:

Dr. Fiore Pugliano & Dr. Linda Orbach
English/Film Studies Advising Office
University of Pittsburgh
617-B Cathedral of Learning
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-6510
E-mail: fiore@vms.cis.pitt.edu or lbol@pitt.edu
www.pitt.edu/~filmst

For information on other majors, please contact:

Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
Alumni Hall, 4227 Fifth Avenue
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-PITT
E-mail: oafa@pitt.edu
Web site: www.pitt.edu/~oafa

Special Programs and Opportunities

PITT in Hollywood

Pitt in Hollywood is a student organization affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh Film Studies Program, which was formed to encourage interaction between the entertainment industry and the university community. Find more information at www.pittinhollywood.org.

Film Studies Lecture Series

Each year the program brings in renowned film scholars and professors to talk on a variety of topics.

Film Series and Visiting Filmmakers

Each year the program sponsors a film series (e.g. French, Indian, Russian) and talks by people involved in the film and television industries.

The Pittsburgh Film Colloquium

The Pittsburgh Film Colloquium meets on a monthly basis and invites Film Studies faculty and/or graduate students to present some aspect of their current research. A respondent's remarks serve to begin a general discussion of issues with undergraduate and graduate students as well as the faculty.

Undergraduate Film Studies Writing Award

An undergraduate Film Studies Award is granted annually. Information about applying for this award is circulated at the end of the fall term.

Study Abroad

Studying abroad is an exciting way to add an international perspective to your undergraduate education and strengthen your credentials as a graduate. Some examples of study abroad programs of interest to film studies majors are:

Boston University London Internship Program

London is one of the most cosmopolitan and surprising cities in the world, combining the old-fashioned and conservative with the new and innovative. This program offers a semester of living, working, and studying in this historic and vibrant capital. The program combines an internship with coursework that examines a particular academic area in the context of Great Britain's history, culture and society. Courses are all taught by British faculty and you can take courses in journalism, film and television, or the arts as well as other courses.

New York University, Tisch School of the Arts

This summer program takes place in the city that inspired the Renaissance: Florence, Italy. NYU has a year-round center for learning in the city where you can take advantage of La Pietra, a spectacular 57-acre estate that includes five historic villas – two that serve as residence halls and one that is used for classrooms. Here in this breathtaking setting, you can study acting, drama/theater, directing, film studies, and television/video. All classes are taught in English, and students are encouraged to explore Florence and neighboring Tuscany.

American University Semester in Prague

Prague, Czech Republic is the home of this semester program. In this beautiful, remarkable, and free-spirited capital you can study and intern in Film and Visual Media at the world-renowned Prague Film School (FAMU). Seven field trips allow you to explore cities like Moscow, Warsaw, Vienna, and Munich. All courses are taught in English, although all students are required to take an intensive Czech language course. Other courses include directing, screenwriting and film technology. You can also intern at television companies, film studios, or with a filmmaker. You will live in an international student dormitory at Charles University.

Job Opportunities

The possibilities for a career in film involve:

1. Making films commercially for film and television companies or other corporations, making films independently with or without government and grant support, working for film laboratories processing films, or working for publishing houses that make educational films.
2. Teaching film in high school or college.
3. Writing scripts, film titles, or translations for dubbers.
4. Writing film criticism and reviews for magazines and/or newspapers.
5. Curating film collections in museums, archives, or libraries.
6. Administrating film or other arts organizations.
7. Working in related multi-media fields (e.g. DVD production, Internet film sites, videotape sales, etc.).
8. Working in film or media preservation.

Note: The program encourages students to do at least one internship in the film, television, or media field while at the university and provides help in locating internship possibilities.