MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CINEMA

The 60 unit M.F.A. program is divided into three distinct parts and is designed to be completed in three years. During the first year, students build a foundation through the study of technical crafts, aesthetics, and theory, develop their creative process, and begin to integrate conceptual frameworks into their creative work. This work culminates with the completion of an individual film project.

In the second year, this foundation is broadened through advanced courses that lead to the production of short film projects demonstrating original thinking, conceptual clarity, technical skill, and the refinement of a personal aesthetic. Second-year work also is geared to prepare each student to successfully complete the thesis proposal.

In the third part of the program, students complete a thesis that is a culmination of previous work and a reflection of the development of the student’s creative voice. M.F.A. students are also required to gain teaching experience as graduate assistants and may subsequently apply for appointments as teaching associates in the School of Cinema.

Admission to the Program

The School of Cinema accepts new M.F.A. students for the fall term only.

Application for admission requires two distinct processes:

The graduate admission application to San Francisco State is a two-part process. Part One is the university application, which should be submitted through CSU Mentor and which is administered by the Division of Graduate Studies. Part Two is the academic department application, details of which can be found on the Masters of Fine Arts page on the School of Cinema website. You must submit Part One and Part Two of your graduate admission application simultaneously by the deadline to be considered for admission. Applicants may only apply to a single graduate program per application term.

Part One:

1. Apply online through CSU Mentor for a Graduate Program (http://www.csumentor.edu/AdmissionApp/grad_apply.asp). The Office of Graduate Admissions no longer accepts paper applications to graduate programs.
2. Pay the $55.00 USD application fee. We recommend that you pay online by credit card at the moment you submit your application. If you selected the option to pay the application fee by check or money order, make the check payable to “San Francisco State University.”
3. Send all required documents noted on your online SF Gateway Portal “To Do List” to the Division of Graduate Studies:

   Graduate Admissions
   San Francisco State University
   1600 Holloway Ave., ADM 250
   San Francisco, CA 94132

Part Two:

Apply to the School of Cinema’s M.F.A. Program. The application link/form can be found on the Masters of Fine Arts page of the School of Cinema website.

Applicants must have a GPA of 3.0 or better in the last two years of undergraduate study. Applicants with degrees in areas other than film who show exceptional potential will be considered for admission to the program.

Prior to admission, all candidates must have completed two courses in cinema studies beyond the introductory level. One of these courses must be in critical theory, stressing critical approach or methodology; the other must be in cinema history. One introductory course in film production and a basic course in non-linear digital editing, or equivalent experience, are also required. Students will be expected to be familiar with Adobe’s Premiere Pro for initial course work.

The application materials specifically requested by the School of Cinema include:

- A one to two-page Résumé or Curriculum Vitae summarizing the applicant’s education, awards or recognition, work experience, travel, languages, and special skills.
- A Personal Statement (three pages maximum) discussing aesthetic influences, creative interests, and professional objectives as a filmmaker, including comments on: the areas of film on which the applicant would like to concentrate, how theory informs his/her work as a filmmaker, and the goals he/she intends to pursue upon completion of the M.F.A.
- An example of academic writing (7 to 12 pages) that illustrates the applicant’s ability to make and support a thesis as well as demonstrating familiarity with scholarly form and expository style. Papers from the film and media disciplines are preferred, but other academic work is acceptable. No journalistic “review” essays or scripts are accepted as supplementary materials.
- An example of moving image work is required. In addition to film/video work, examples of other creative work, such as photographs, paintings, or creative writing are also accepted.
- At least two letters of recommendation from individuals who can attest to the applicant’s creativity and aptitude for graduate work as well as to the quality of past work and potential for future achievement. At least one letter from a former professor is recommended. (Note: the School does not provide an official recommendation form.)
- Unofficial transcripts.
- The GRE is NOT required.

For further information about the M.F.A., School of Cinema procedures and activities, production costs, and other advising matters, write:

Graduate Assistant
School of Cinema
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco CA 94132
Email: cinegrad@sfsu.edu

Additional information about submitting application materials is available on the Cinema Department website: www.cinema.sfsu.edu. (http://www.cinema.sfsu.edu)

Completion of the Degree

In addition to successful completion of the course of study, each student must meet School requirements that include a formal script review at the end of the first semester, a formal progress review at the end of the first year, a formal presentation and faculty evaluation of the creative work project proposal at the end of the second year (upon which advancement
to candidacy is contingent) and a documented public screening of the student's creative thesis project.

Under certain circumstances, up to 24 units of graduate credit from an M.A. program in film production may be applied toward the M.F.A. Before any such request is considered, all admission requirements must be met and all previous course work must be reviewed and approved by the Cinema graduate committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Enrollment in an upper division or graduate-level cinema course must be continuous until graduation. Registration may be in a regular university course, summer session course, or College of Extended Learning’s LCA 499, which satisfies the University’s continuous enrollment requirement for graduate students.

Written English Proficiency Requirement

Level One
First level proficiency is assessed by means of written work completed in the critical theory course taken in the first semester in the M.F.A. program. This course must be completed with an overall grade of B or better.

Level Two
Second level proficiency is assessed by means of the creative work proposal normally prepared in CINE 770.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students must meet all general University requirements for advancement to candidacy, and receive a B or better in all required courses for the M.F.A. degree, as well as successfully pass all formal reviews (first-year script review, first-year progress review, thesis proposal review, and thesis committee review).

Required Courses

All M.F.A. students must complete 42 units of required classes and 18 units of electives. First and second-year required courses must be taken in sequence. Advancement to the second and third year of the program is contingent on faculty review and approval by the M.F.A. Coordinator.

Cinema (M.F.A.) — 60 units

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<td>CINE 710</td>
<td>Production Practice I</td>
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<td>CINE 711</td>
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<td>CINE 712</td>
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<td>Select two of the following in the second or third year</td>
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Elective Units (18 units)

Elective units chosen upon consultation with the graduate advisor from upper division production courses (up to 6 units), animation courses, graduate film studies seminars, and approved courses from related disciplines. May be taken in any year.

M.F.A. Critical Theory Requirements

M.F.A. students must take a total of four critical theory graduate-level courses, according to the following guidelines:

- Students must complete three critical theory courses in the first two years.
- Students must take CINE 726 during the spring semester of their second year.

Not all courses will be offered each semester; please check the class schedule information for the relevant semester for availability.