MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CINEMA

The M.F.A. in Cinema is intended for individuals who wish to pursue independent film and media production. A 60-unit terminal degree, the program offers students the opportunity to focus on any/all of the following areas: documentary, experimental and/or fiction.

Applicants must have a GPA of 3.0 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.

Applicants must meet all general university requirements for admission. 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 is required. Students will be expected to use Adobe's Premiere Pro for initial coursework.

Questions about the application process and materials can be directed to the School of Cinema graduate advisor at cinegrad@sfsu.edu and/or to the Division of Graduate Studies: Domestic applicants: gradstdy@sfsu.edu or International applicants: intlgrad@sfsu.edu.

Application Procedures

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

To apply to the M.F.A. in Cinema, you must complete the Cal State Apply application for graduate admission and upload your unofficial transcripts and application documents to the Program Materials section of Cal State Apply. You must complete the entire graduate admission by the deadline to be considered for admission. Applicants may only apply to a single graduate program per application term. Pay the $55 application fee.

Application for admission requires two distinct processes:

1. **A personal statement** (3 page maximum) discussing aesthetic influences, creative interests, and professional aspirations 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.

2. **Two letters of recommendation** from individuals who can attest to the applicant's creativity and aptitude as well as to the quality of past work and potential of future achievements. One letter from a former professor is recommended. The department does not provide official recommendation forms. Your recommender will receive an email.

3. **Academic writing (7-12 pages)** which illustrates the applicant's ability to make and support a thesis as well as familiarity with scholarly form and expository style. Papers from the film discipline are most useful, but other academic work is acceptable. No journalistic "review" essays or scripts are accepted.

4. **An example of creative moving image work** submitted on VIMEO, YouTube or other online link is required (five minutes maximum). One example of moving image work is required. This sample can be a single work, or excerpts of several of your works, whichever you feel best represents your creative vision. If a sample of work submitted is longer than the five minute, it may not be viewed in its entirety. Please do not submit trailers. Examples of other creative work, such as photographs, paintings, or creative writing are accepted. Please email the Cinema Department office with any questions at cinedept@sfsu.edu.

5. **Materials Needed to Apply**

Prepare application materials in advance before starting the online Cal State Apply application. Please note that the School of Cinema Application Materials can be submitted on the Cal State Apply Application in the “Program Materials” section of the application. Please be aware that there are four tabs in this section of the application, Home, Documents, Evaluations, and Questions. Your Program Materials for the School of Cinema will be submitted within these tabs of the application.

Required Application Documents Breakdown

1. **A resume** (1-2 pages) summarizing the applicant's education, awards or recognition, work experience, travel, languages, and special skills.

2. **A personal statement** (3 page maximum) discussing aesthetic influences, creative interests, and professional aspirations 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.

3. **An example of academic writing** (7-12 pages) which illustrates the applicant’s ability to make and support a thesis as well as familiarity with scholarly form and expository style. Papers from the film discipline are most useful, but other academic work is acceptable. No journalistic “review” essays or scripts are accepted.

4. **An example of creative moving image work** submitted on VIMEO, YouTube or other online link is required (five minutes maximum). One example of moving image work is required. This sample can be a single work, or excerpts of several of your works, whichever you feel best represents your creative vision. If a sample of work submitted is longer than the five minute, it may not be viewed in its entirety. Please do not submit trailers. Examples of other creative work, such as photographs, paintings, or creative writing are accepted. Please email the Cinema Department office with any questions at cinedept@sfsu.edu.

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with a link to upload a reference letter once the School of Cinema Application letter has been completed.

6. **Unofficial transcripts:** Upload two unofficial transcripts to the Cal State Apply application.

In addition to any documents required by your program, you are also required to upload legible unofficial copies of transcripts from each college or university attended. Including study abroad coursework or community college coursework, even if this coursework appears as transfer credit appears on your degree transcript. Full academic disclosure is required. Photographs or screenshots of transcripts will be rejected. An incomplete academic history will significantly delay review of your application. The Division of Graduate Studies may request official transcripts from you at any point during the application review process.

If selected for admission, you will be required to submit official transcripts to the Division of Graduate Studies to secure your offer of admission.

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**

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 coursework 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, receive a “B” or better in all required courses for the M.F.A. degree, and successfully pass all formal reviews (first-year script review, first-year progress review, thesis proposal review and thesis committee review) for advancement to candidacy.

- Produce individual creative film works utilizing techniques that span a range of genres.
- Demonstrate mastery of technical skills necessary to express themselves cinematically.
- Demonstrate the realization of a personal creative vision in the medium of film.
• 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.