

MASTER OF ARTS IN CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES

The Master of Arts in Cinema and Media Studies at SF State offers students the opportunity to pursue graduate research in cinema and media scholarship. We believe that “cinema” refers to all moving image media, from early films to emerging digital media forms. The M.A. program emphasizes not only the study of cinema history, theory and criticism, but of all “cinematic” media and the theories related to them. The curriculum allows students considerable freedom to choose among a wide variety of course offerings, building toward producing a thesis that emphasizes focused research on a specific topic related to their interests.

Professional Outlook

Ph.D. Programs

Graduates of the program have gone on to earn doctoral degrees at prestigious schools such as UCLA, UC Berkeley, Harvard, Glasgow University, Concordia University, UT Austin, Indiana University, University of Iowa and UC Santa Barbara, among others. Some hold tenure-track positions at universities around the world.

Media Arts Management

Graduates have secured successful careers as managers of local and regional media arts organizations, curators at art museums and film festivals and as media archivists and librarians.

Entertainment Industry

Graduates have found work in the entertainment and digital media industries, holding positions as journalists and reviewers, studio archivists, audience analysts, producers and creative executives, among others.

The M.A. in Cinema and Media Studies enables students to:

- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of cinematic theory, history and criticism.
- Conduct close analyses of cinematic texts, including film, television and digital media.
- Craft written arguments and analysis utilizing appropriate source materials.
- Conduct independent research that leads to a thesis project.
- Demonstrate teaching skills appropriate to undergraduate cinema and media studies coursework.

Application Procedures

To apply to the M.A. in Cinema and Media Studies, you must complete the Cal State Apply application for graduate admission.

The School of Cinema accepts new M.A. students for the Fall term only. There is a rolling application deadline. The application opens on October 1. The priority deadline for the M.A. application is February 15, with a secondary deadline of March 31. Applications will be accepted on a space-available basis until May 30.

Cal State Apply

<https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply> (<https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply/>)

Please note: you must complete the entire application in order to be considered.

Create your account AND Complete your profile

TIP: Students who will study on a F1/J1 visa must select Non-Resident for U.S. Citizenship Status under your Extended Profile.

Please note: You will only see a list of programs that aligns with your academic degree objective.

Select the Programs to Which You Want to Apply

Narrow your program options using the provided filters.

Campus: Select “San Francisco State University”.

Location: Select “Main Campus”

Delivery Format: Select “Face-to-Face”

Face-to-Face: instruction takes place in a traditional classroom.

Start Term: Select “fall”

The Online Application is comprised of four sections

Review our TIPS for completing each of these sections.

Personal Information TIPS

- Please provide us with some basic information.
- Fields noted as Optional may be skipped.

Academic History TIPS

- We recommend that you select “I Am Not Adding Any College Transcripts” in the transcript entry field. Instead, please upload copies of your unofficial transcript to the Program Materials section of this application.
- Only use transcript entry to designate current enrollment in a course/semester.
- We recommend that you select “I don’t have a GPA to add” in the GPA entry field. The Division of Graduate Studies will calculate your GPA as part of our review.

Supporting Materials TIPS

- For the M.A. in Cinema Studies application, you may opt out of all supporting materials. Select “I Am Not Adding Any Experiences” or “I Am Not Adding Any Achievements” in this section of the application.
- In the Statement of Purpose section, indicate “Uploaded to Program Materials Section”

Program Materials TIPS

- Prepare these documents for upload in advance of application submission
- You may need to resize any scanned PDFs so that you do not exceed the MB limit for each document.

Use the Documents tab to upload the following:

1. CV/Resume

A one to two-page resume or Curriculum Vitae summarizing the applicant’s education, awards or recognition, work experience, languages, and special skills.

2. Personal Statement

Background and Research Interests Statement (four double-spaced pages maximum). Applicants should describe how their past academic work or other experience has prepared them for graduate work and discuss how they plan to develop these (or other) research interests as a graduate student in the M.A. in Cinema and Media Studies program.

3. Unofficial Transcripts

The Division of Graduate Studies requires you to upload unofficial copies of transcripts from every college or university attended, including study abroad coursework and community college coursework even if transfer credit appears on your degree transcript. Upload all transcripts to the documents section of this application. The Division of Graduate Studies may request official transcripts from you at any time during the application process in order to complete our review. Photographs of documents are not accepted.

4. Writing Sample

An example of academic writing (6–12 pages) that 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 and media disciplines are preferred, but other academic work is acceptable.

5. Additional Unofficial Transcripts

Use the Evaluations tab to:

1. Manage submission of letters of recommendation
2. Letter writer email addresses should be from professional or academic organizations (ex. @sfsu.edu, @CA.gov or @ibm.com), not personal email addresses.

Use the Questions tab to:

1. Answer the questions about your Academic Background, Foreign Language proficiency, and Teaching Interests.

The GRE is NOT required.

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.

Cal State Apply Student Support (857) 304-2087

When your application is completed, you will be asked to pay the \$55 application fee.

Application Review

Please note: Your application for graduate study to SF State is reviewed at two levels:

Part 1: Division of Graduate Studies

The Division of Graduate Studies reviews your application for general university admission requirements and requires you to upload copies of transcripts from every college or university attended, including study abroad coursework, community college coursework even if transfer credit appears on your degree transcript. Upload clear, legible copies of all transcripts to the Documents section of the Cal State Apply Application. Photos of documents will not be accepted. Make sure you resolve any financial obligations at previously attended institutions so they will release your transcripts.

Division of Graduate Studies
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave., ADM 250
San Francisco, CA 94132
Phone: (415) 338-2234
Email: gradstdy@sfsu.edu

Part 2: School of Cinema

The Master of Arts in Cinema and Media Studies program reviews your application for program-specific eligibility. 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 or media who show exceptional potential will be considered for admission to the program if they have completed at least three courses in cinema or media history and theory. Please upload admission materials requested by the School of Cinema in the Program Materials section of this application.

All prospective M.A. students may contact the School's graduate office about specific questions. Write:

M.A. Admissions Committee
School of Cinema San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave., FA 245
San Francisco, CA 94132
Phone: (415) 338-1629
Email: cinegrad@sfsu.edu

Written English Proficiency Requirement

Level One

First level proficiency is assessed by means of written work completed in CINE 700 for an overall grade of B or better.

Level Two

Second level proficiency is assessed by means of the thesis proposal.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students must also meet all general University requirements for advancement to candidacy, receive a "B" or better in all required courses for the M.A. degree, and successfully pass their thesis committee review. It is incumbent upon the student to fill out and file all the paperwork required by the Division of Graduate Studies (<http://grad.sfsu.edu/>). The Advancement to Candidacy Form is filled out in the first semester of the final year of the program.

Thesis Project

After completing course work in film and media theory and history and criticism, students produce a thesis based on the standard length of an article (25 - 35 pages) in the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. The thesis process is initiated in the second year in consultation with an adviser. Students intending to use their thesis as a writing sample in an application to doctoral programs can elect to initiate the process at the end of their second semester in the program. To initiate the process, students must assemble a committee (typically a chair and either one or two other members of the faculty). In fall or spring of the second year, the student enrolls in CINE 898 Master's Thesis to complete and file the thesis. The student's thesis committee reviews the thesis before it is approved. Recent thesis projects include:

- "Family, Selfhood, and Growing Up in the Queer World of Steven Universe," Allyce L. Ondricka
- "Who can be Eaten? Consuming Animals and Humans in the Cannibal Horror Film," Erin Wiegand
- "The Reincarnation of Tiger Mountain: Post-socializing the Model Opera Film (yangbanxi)," Xiuhe Zhang
- "Expanded Spectatorship: Cinema in the Post-proscenium Era," Oren Bonen

- “A Carnival at Termite Terrace: Laughter and Expression in Warner Brothers Animation,” Lucas Seastrom

Not all courses will be offered each semester; please check the Cinema website cinema.sfsu.edu (<http://cinema.sfsu.edu>) for schedule information for the relevant semester.

Required Courses

All students must complete at least 30 units for the degree, of which six are electives and three constitute the thesis requirement. All 30 units must be for graduate-level courses (i.e., undergraduate courses cannot fulfill the 30-unit requirement). Students are encouraged to select electives in consultation with a faculty adviser.

Three courses are required: Introduction to Graduate Studies (CINE 700), which must be taken in the fall of the student's first year, CINE 852 Directed Experience in Film Education, and Master's Thesis (CINE 898), which must be taken in the student's second year (typically the final semester). To complete the 30-unit requirement, students are encouraged to select at least 18 units of Cinema graduate M.A. courses (course numbers 720 - 749 and 820 - 829). The six units of electives may be Cinema graduate courses or graduate courses outside the Cinema discipline. In all cases, students are encouraged to discuss their options with a faculty adviser.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students will acquire broad knowledge in the areas of film theory, narrative filmmaking practices, and non-narrative filmmaking practices.
2. Students will be capable of conducting close textual analysis of written and cinematic texts.
3. Students will be capable of producing salient critical essays that utilize appropriate source materials.
4. Students will acquire skills teaching undergraduate film studies courses.
5. Students will be capable of conducting independent research that leads to a written thesis.

Cinema and Media Studies (M.A.) – 30 units

Core Requirements (6 units)

Code	Title	Units
CINE 700	Cinema Theory I	3
CINE 852	Directed Experience in Film Education	3

Electives (21 units)

Chosen from the following:

Code	Title	Units
CINE 720	Critical Paradigms and the Cinematic	3
CINE 721	Cinematic Documentary	3
CINE 723	Cinema Forms and Aesthetics	3
CINE 727	Cinematic Styles, Forms and Movements	3
CINE 728	Cinema Histories	3
CINE 741	Cinema and the City	3
CINE 743	Sexuality in the Cinema	3
CINE 748	Cinema and Cultural Studies	3
CINE 749	Critical Practices	3
CINE 820	Seminar in Critical Theory	3
CINE 897	Research Projects in Cinema Studies	3
CINE 899	Independent Study	3

Culminating Experience (3 units)

Code	Title	Units
CINE 898	Master's Thesis	3