

FILM STUDIES

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THE MINOR/CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN FILM STUDIES

As an artistic medium, film explores the complexity of society through its many cultural uses, serving as a source of entertainment, a pinnacle of artistic experimentation, an instrument of social persuasion, and an interdisciplinary art form. Film courses in this program offer students the opportunity to participate in critical conversations about film, enhancing liberal arts learning by emphasizing strategies for close analysis, historical inquiry, narrativity, and philosophical thinking.

The interdisciplinary film minor/certificate program invites students to examine critically the cultural production and reception of film. Students in the program will analyze film style, explore the intersection of film and society, inquire into the making of film, learn strategies for writing about film, and investigate film's relations with other disciplines. (Any of the courses may be taken without commitment to the entire program.)

Program Objectives:

- 1) Investigate historical moments of cinematic production and reception as well as film's interdisciplinary relations.
- 2) Serve as a minor for students who wish to extend their work in a major to include film.
- 3) Offer a certificate program for students to emphasize their concentrated study of film (for a career in film or graduate studies in film).

Program Requirements:

- 1) ENGL 356W is required of all students in the program.
- 2) A minimum of 15 approved program credits is required to complete the minor and to obtain certification.
- 3) In addition to the courses listed below, certain internships, independent studies, and special topics courses focusing on film may also count toward the minor/certificate as determined by the Film Studies Director.
- 4) Students should consult the Film Studies Director on matters of course selection and advising.

THE CURRICULUM IN FILM STUDIES

The designation "MW" means that at least one-third of the course reading involves works by minority and women writers.

COMM 350. Media Criticism (3-3-0)

Prerequisite: COMM 201,249, 250.

Spring, alternate years.

This course examines various critical approaches to the analysis of classic and contemporary films and television programs. Attention is given to expressive techniques (cinematography, editing, sound, theatrics and composition), aesthetic judgments, types of films and programming, and the audience's response to media content. Students sharpen their skills in critical thinking, effective writing and articulate oral communication while analyzing a wide range of media texts.

COMM 395. Special Topics (3-3-0)

Prerequisite: COMM 201,249, 250.

Fall or Spring.

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty. This course's topics vary each semester; consequently, only those topics that involve film, such as documentary, will be credited toward the film studies minor.

ENGL 320W. Studies in Women and Literature-WI (3-3-0) (MW)

Prerequisites: ENGL 101-102 or 123.

Students will analyze the influence of gender on literary texts by and about women. The focus will vary from semester to semester and may include historical surveys, major authors, genres and special topics including motherhood, marriage and the family; sexuality; the nature of work; religion and spirituality and literary theory on women and gender. In alternate years, the course will focus on studies of women in film; this version of the course will count toward the film minor. Satisfies Writing Intensive Requirement.

ENGL 356W. Writing about Film-WI (3-3-0)

Prerequisites: ENGL 101-102 or 123.

Fall or Spring.

This course offers students the opportunity to hone their analytic writing skills by investigating the artistic and cultural construction of films and how writers write about film. Satisfies Writing Intensive Requirement and the Film Studies Requirement.

ENGL 380. Film and Literature (3-3-0)

*Prerequisite: ENGL 208 or consent of the instructor.
Fall, alternate years.*

This course investigates the myriad ways film and literature may be understood as conversant, symbiotic, or even combative mediums. The relationships between film and literature will be examined in terms of how one is adapted into the other (such as novels made into films), how both represent the cultural concerns of a particular historical moment (such as films and literature of the Great Depression), and how each depend upon and enhance certain stylistic strategies of narrative and non-narrative storytelling (such as narration and metaphor).

ENGL 395. Special Topics in Film (3-3-0)

Prerequisite: ENGL 208.

The topics in film studies will represent general student interest or the special research interest of a faculty member, for example, women and film.

ENGL 415. Studies in Literary Genre: Satire (3-3-0)

*Prerequisite: ENGL 308 or consent of instructor.
Fall or Spring.*

This course investigates the dimensions of satire through close analysis of film and literature. Students will study such historical objects of satirical venom as: Hollywood, middle-class life, youth culture, war, and gender roles. While this course is also taught with attention to genres other than satire, only the course with the focus on satire is credited toward the film studies minor.

HIST 327/427. History on Film (3-3-0)

*Prerequisite: History 111G or junior standing or consent of instructor.
Spring and Summer.*

In analysis in depth of the relationship between film and historical record. In conjunction with lectures and class discussions, students will view and analyze classic popular fictional films as well as political, documentary and propaganda films. The course will focus on understanding the sometimes blurred lines between history and fiction or “docu-drama” written for political or social purposes. Films examined in the course will vary from term to term. A typical course may include Ingmar’s Bergman’s *The Seventh Seal*; Leni Riefenstahl’s *Triumph of the Will*; *Inherit the Wind*; *Spartacus*; *The Crucible*; *Gandhi*; *Nixon*; *JFK*; *The Paths of Glory*; *The Life of Emile Zola*; and *Schindler’s List*.

HIST 395/495 Topics (3-3-0)

*Prerequisite: HIST 111G or 112G or 201 or 202 with junior standing or consent of instructor.
Fall, Spring, or Summer.*

A thorough analysis of a particular phase, movement, or subject area of history with emphasis on its impact upon the larger historical scene. This course’s topics vary each semester; consequently, only those topics that involve film will be credited toward the film studies minor.

PHIL 326W. Philosophy in the Movies-WI (3-3-0)

*Prerequisites: ENGL 101-102 or 123, and junior standing.
Offered at least once every other year.*

A philosophical and experiential exploration of philosophical concepts within popular film. Course will focus on different themes each time it is taught. Themes will include images of good and evil, images of the future, science, technology, and humanities’ relationship to the environment; images of women, love and sex; images of justice, the law, and the cosmos. Satisfies Writing Intensive Requirement.

RSTD 326W. Religion in the Movies-WI (3-3-0)

*Prerequisites: ENGL 101-102 or 123.
Offered at least once every other year.*

A theoretical and experiential exploration of religious concepts within popular films. Concepts considered will include: Rudolph Otto’s *Mysterterium Tremendum et Fascinans*, film as postmodern bard, sacred time and space, spiritual journey, spiritual mediation, icons, hierophanic phenomena, transcendence, and Paul Schrader’s understanding of *Transcendental Style in Film*. Theories of religious experience from the following authors will be integrated into the examination of film as a medium of religious communication: Rudolph Otto, Mircea Eliade, Peter Berger, Clifford Geertz, Walter Ong, Marshall McLuhan, Evelyn Underhill and Paul Schrader. Satisfies Writing Intensive Requirement.

THEA 361W. Broadway to Hollywood and Back-WI (3-3-0).

Prerequisites: ENGL 101-102 or 123.

Since the advent of the talkies, plays of all types have been regularly adapted for presentation as film. As storytelling mediums, film and theater share many similarities but are, at heart, vastly different art forms in terms of their texts, modes of presentation, and audience sensibilities. This writing-intensive course examines famous plays of all genres – classics, such as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; musicals, such as *Cabaret*; dramas, such as *A Streetcar Named Desire*; and comedies, such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* – and uses their transformations from stage to screen as a basis to appreciate dramatic literature and to compare both art forms. The more recent trend of transforming films into plays is also examined. Satisfies Writing Intensive Requirement.