

Cinema and Media Studies

*Committee Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies: James Lastra, Ro 418,
702-9244, jflastra@uchicago.edu
Program Coordinator: Noah Minnick, G-B 418, 834-1077*

*E-mail: cine-media@uchicago.ed
Web: humanities.uchicago.edu/cmtes/cms/*

Program of Study

For more than a century, and across widely different cultures, film has been the primary medium for storytelling, for depicting and exploring the world, and for engaging and shaping the human senses and emotions, memory and imagination. We live in a time in which cinema, the theatrical exhibition of films to a paying public, is no longer the primary venue in which films are consumed. But cinema seems to survive, even as it is being transformed by television, video, and digital media; and these media, in turn, are giving rise to new forms of moving image culture.

The major in Cinema and Media Studies provides a framework within which students can approach the history of film and related media from a variety of historical, critical, and theoretical perspectives. Focusing on the study of the moving image (and its sound accompaniments), the program enables students to analyze how cinema creates meanings through particular forms, techniques, and styles; how industrial organization affects the way films are produced and received; and how the social context in which they are made and consumed influence the way we understand and make meaning of films.

At the same time, the goal is to situate the cinema (and related media) in broader contexts. These include the formation of visual culture and the history of the senses; modernity, modernism, and the avant-garde; narrative theory, poetics, and rhetoric; commercial entertainment forms and leisure and consumer culture; sexuality and gender; constructions of ethnic, racial, and national identities; and transnational media production and circulation, as well as the emergence of global media publics.

Students graduating with a Cinema and Media Studies major will be trained in critical, formal, theoretical, and historical thinking and analysis. The program aims to develop an ability to understand forms of cultural production in relation to wider contexts, as well as to foster discussion and writing skills. Students will gain the tools to approach today's media environment from a historical and international perspective, and will thus be able to work within a changing mediascape.

Students wishing to enter the program should consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Spring Quarter of their first year. Participation in

the program must be declared to the Director of Undergraduate Studies before registration.

Program Requirements

The major is comprised of twelve courses (four required courses and eight elective courses) and a B.A. research paper.

Required Courses. The following four courses are required:

Introduction to Film Analysis (CMST 10100). This course provides an introduction to the basic concepts of film analysis. It should be completed before other Cinema and Media Studies courses; it must be completed before other required courses. It should be completed as early as possible; it must be completed by the end of the third year.

History of International Cinema sequence (CMST 28500 and 28600). This required two-quarter sequence covers the silent era (CMST 28500) and the sound era to 1960 (CMST 28600), as well as major characteristics and developments of each. It is typically taught in Winter and Spring Quarters. It should be completed by the end of the third year.

Senior Colloquium (CMST 29800). In Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students must participate in a Senior Colloquium (CMST 29800) that helps them conceptualize their B.A. research paper and address more advanced questions of methodology and theory.

Elective Courses. Of the eight remaining courses, five must either originate in or be cross listed with Cinema and Media Studies. Students must receive prior approval of the five courses that they choose, and they are encouraged to consider broad survey courses as well as those with more focused topics (e.g., courses devoted to a single genre, director, or national cinema). A course agreement form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Autumn Quarter of the student's third year is available in G-B 418.

Although the other three courses may be taken outside Cinema and Media Studies, students must demonstrate their relevance to the study of cinema. For example, a group of courses could focus on: art forms and media *other* than film, photography, and video (e.g., the visual arts, digital media, architecture, literature, theater, opera, dance); cross-disciplinary topics or sets of problems (e.g., the urban environment, violence and pornography, censorship, copyright and industry regulation, concepts of the public sphere, globalization); subfields within area studies (e.g., East Asian, South Asian, African American, Jewish studies); or traditional disciplines (e.g., history, anthropology/ethnography, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, sociology, political economy). A form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Winter Quarter of the student's third year is available in G-B 418.

B.A. Research Paper. Before seventh week of Spring Quarter of their third year, students meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to discuss the focus of their required B.A. project. Students begin reading and research during the summer. By the end of fourth week of the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students select a project adviser and prepare to present an outline of their project to the Senior Colloquium. Writing and revising take place during Winter Quarter. The final version is due by fourth week of the quarter in which the student plans to graduate. The B.A. research paper typically consists of a substantial essay that engages a research topic in the history, theory, and criticism of film and/or other media. The essay may be supplemented by work in the medium of film or video. Registration for the B.A. research paper (CMST 29900) may not be counted toward distribution requirements for the major.

Grading. Students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies must receive quality grades in all courses required for the major. With prior consent of instructor, nonmajors may take Cinema and Media Studies courses for *P/F* grading.

Honors. Students who have earned an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher and a GPA of 3.5 or higher in Cinema and Media Studies courses are eligible for honors. To receive honors, students must also write a B.A. research paper that shows exceptional intellectual and/or creative merit in the judgment of the first and the second readers, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Master of the Humanities Collegiate Division.

Summary of Requirements

1	Introduction to Film Analysis (CMST 10100)
2	History of International Cinema sequence (CMST 28500-28600)
1	Senior Colloquium (CMST 29800)
5	elective courses in Cinema and Media Studies (courses originating in or cross listed with Cinema and Media Studies)*
3	further elective courses (courses originating in Cinema and Media Studies or elsewhere that are relevant to the study of cinema)**
—	B.A. research paper
12	

* *A course agreement form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Autumn Quarter of a student's third year is required to obtain approval of these courses.*

** *A form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Winter Quarter of a student's third year is required to obtain approval of these courses.*

Advising. A course agreement form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Autumn Quarter of the student's third year is required to obtain approval of the five elective courses that must either originate in or be cross listed with Cinema and Media Studies. A form to be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies by fourth week of Winter Quarter of the student's fourth year is required to obtain approval of the three additional elective courses. Both forms are available in G-B 418. Members of the resource faculty typically teach courses that meet requirements for the three elective courses; students are encouraged to consult with them when making their selections. Core and resource faculty members are listed below.

Committee Members

J. Chandler, T. Gunning, M. B. Hansen, M. Hansen, J. Hoffman, J. Lastra, L. Letinsky, D. Levin, M. Raine, J. Snyder, Y. Tsvivan, R. West

Resource Faculty

L. Auslander, L. Berlant, R. Bird, W. Brown, D. Chakrabarty, G. Chauncey, J. Comaroff, M. Feldman, J. Goldsby, N. Harris, B. Hoeckner, T. Holt, L. Kruger, R. Majumdar, W. Mazzarella, W. J. T. Mitchell, E. Santner, B. Shallcross, B. Stafford, M. Sternstein, M. Stokes, K. Taylor, W. Veeder, M. Ward, R. Zorach

Courses: Cinema and Media Studies (CMST)

10100. Introduction to Film Analysis. (=ARTH 20000, ARTV 25300, ENGL 10800) This course introduces basic concepts of film analysis, which are discussed through examples from different national cinemas, genres, and directorial oeuvres. Along with questions of film technique and style, we consider the notion of the cinema as an institution that comprises an industrial system of production, social and aesthetic norms and codes, and particular modes of reception. Films discussed include works by Hitchcock, Porter, Griffith, Eisenstein, Lang, Renoir, Sternberg, and Welles. *Autumn, Spring.*

15401. The Film Musical. (=MUSI 23906) This course primarily considers the historical and theoretical questions that the Hollywood film musical invites. We discuss the particular nature of the diegesis in Hollywood musicals (how the "numbers" relate to the narrative); the apparent boundaries of the genre; the generation of excess and affect; and ideological and feminist interpretations. Films include *The Smiling Lieutenant* (Ernst Lubitsch, 1931), *Le Million* (René Clair, 1931), *Jolly Fellows* (Grigori Alexandrov, 1934), *Top Hat* (Mark Sandrich, 1935), *The Gang's All Here* (Busby Berkeley, 1943), *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Minnelli, 1944), *Singin' in the Rain* (Gene Kelly/Stanley Donen, 1952), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Howard Hawks, 1953), and *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (Jacques Demy, 1967). *S. Keller. Spring.*

21801/31801. Chicago Film History. (=ARTV 26750/36750) Students in this course screen and discuss films to consider whether there is a Chicago style of filmmaking. We trace how the city informs documentary, educational, industrial, narrative feature, and avant-garde films. If there is a Chicago style of filmmaking, one must look at the landscape of the city; and the design, politics, cultures, and labor of its people, as well as how they live their lives. The protagonists and villains in these films are the politicians and community organizers, our locations are the neighborhoods, and the set designers are Mies van der Rohe and the Chicago Housing Authority. *J. Hoffman. Spring.*

23201/33201. From Page to Screen: Literary Adaptation in the Italian Cinema and Beyond. (=ITAL 23201/33201) Italian cinema has a long history of adapting literary texts to the screen. In this course, we study selected theories of film adaptation and the history of Italian cinema's use of literature. We also analyze specific cases of book-to-screen adaptations. Films studied include Pasolini's *Decameron*, Visconti's *Ossessione* and *Death in Venice*, Benigni's *Pinocchio*, Fellini's *La voce della luna*, Rossellini's *Ladri di biciclette (Bicycle Thief)*, and Salvatores's *Io non ho paura (I Am Not Afraid)*. We also read the texts upon which these films draw. Students majoring in Italian read materials in Italian; nonmajors use English texts. *R. West. Winter.*

23500/33500. Pasolini. (=GNDR 28600, ITAL 28400/38400) *PQ: Consent of instructor. A. Maggi. Autumn.*

24201/34201. Cinema in Africa. (=AFAM 21900, CMLT 22900/42900, ENGL 27600/48601, ISHU 27702) *PQ: At least one college-level course either in African or in film studies, and advanced standing.* This course examines cinema in Africa as well as films produced in Africa. It places cinema in Sub-Saharan Africa in its social, cultural, and aesthetic contexts—ranging from neocolonial to postcolonial, Western to Southern Africa, documentary to fiction, art cinema to TV. We begin with *La Noire de...* (1966), a groundbreaking film by the “father” of African cinema, Ousmane Sembene, contrasted with a South African film, *The Magic Garden* (1960), which more closely resembles African-American musical film. We then continue with anti-colonial and anti-apartheid films, from Lionel Rogosin's *Come Back Africa* (1959) to Sarah Maldoror's *Sambizanga*, Ousmane Sembene's *Camp de Thiaroye* (1984), and Jean Marie Teno's *Afrique, Je te Plumerai* (1995). Lastly we examine cinematic representations of tensions (between urban and rural life; between traditional and modern life) and the different implications of these tensions (for men and women; for Western and Southern Africa; in fiction, documentary, and ethnographic film). *L. Kruger. Winter.*

24401/34401. Czech New Wave Cinema. (=SLAV 26700/36700) *M. Sternstein. Spring.*

24903/34903. Cinema in Japan: Art and Commerce in a Transnational Medium. (=EALC 24903/34903) *Knowledge of Japanese not required.* This course surveys Japanese cinema from its prehistory to the work of contemporary

transnational *auteurs*. We focus on both aspects of the object of study: Japan and the cinema. A “moment” from the history of Japanese cinema is presented each week along with a methodological issue in film studies brought into focus by it. We pay attention to the masters of Japanese cinema (e.g., Mizoguchi, Ozu, Kurosawa) but also study film in relation to broader cultural movements. Texts in English and the original. *M. Raine. Autumn.*

24905/34905. Propaganda and Agitation: Film Policy and Film Style in Wartime Japan, 1937 to 1945. *Knowledge of Japanese not required.* This class surveys the ways in which cinema was understood and deployed as both national art and “optical weapon” during a time of total war. We introduce the attempts to control cinema and more local sources of wartime Japanese cinema. Filmmakers studied include Arnold Fanck, Mizoguchi Kenji, Ozu Yasujiro, Tasaka Tomotaka, Imai Tadashi, Yamamoto Kajiro, and Kurosawa Akira. Japanese sources discussed in separate section. *M. Raine. Spring.*

27200/37200. Slavic Critical Theory: From Jakobson to Zizek. (=ISHU 21300/31300, SLAV 28500/38500) *M. Sternstein. Spring.*

27502. The Frankfurt School: Cinema and Modernity. This seminar is concerned with debates within and on the margins of the Frankfurt School (e.g., Kracauer, Benjamin, Adorno, Lowenthal, Kluge) on the transformation of culture in capitalist modernity. We focus on discussions concerning the technological media and new forms of subjectivity, reception, and publicness catalyzed by these media. We consider the issue of alternative cinema, as well as the question of a specific aesthetics of film and its relevance in the age of video and digital media. *M. Hansen. Spring.*

27600/37600. Beginning Photography. (=ARTV 24000/34000) *PQ: ARTV 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor.* Photography is a familiar medium due to its ubiquitous presence in our visual world, including popular culture and personal usage. In this class, students learn technical procedures and basic skills related to the 35mm camera, black and white film, and print development. They also begin to establish criteria for artistic expression. We investigate photography in relation to its historical and social context in order to more consciously engage the photograph’s communicative and expressive possibilities. Course work culminates in a portfolio of works exemplary of the student’s understanding of the medium. *Field trips required. Lab fee \$70. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

27602-27702/37602-37702. Photography Workshop I, II. (=ARTV 24401/34401) *PQ: ARTV 10100 or 10200, or consent of instructor. Courses taught concurrently and can be repeated as part of an ongoing, developing photographic project. Camera and light meter required.* The goal of this class is to foster investigations and explorations of students in photography (e.g., refine their craft in black and white or color, with a different format camera, or by utilizing light-sensitive materials). Students pursue a line of artistic inquiry by participating in a process

that involves experimentation, reading, gallery visits, critiques, and discussions, but mostly by producing images. Primary emphasis is placed upon the visual articulation of the ideas of students through their work, as well as the verbal expression of their ideas in class discussions, critiques, and artist's statements. *Lab fee \$70. L. Letinsky. Spring.*

27800/37800. Theories of Media. (=ARTH 25900/35900, ARTV 25400, ENGL 12800/32800, MAPH 34300) *PQ: Any 10000-level ARTH or ARTV course, or consent of instructor.* This course explores the concept of media and mediation in very broad terms, looking not only at modern technical media and mass media but also at the very idea of a medium as a means of communication, a set of institutional practices, and a "habitat" in which images proliferate and take on a "life of their own." Readings include classic texts (e.g., Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* and *Cratylus*, Aristotle's *Poetics*) and modern texts (e.g., Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media*, Régis Debray's *Mediology*, Friedrich Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*). We also look at recent films (e.g., *The Matrix*, *Existenz*) that project fantasies of a world of total mediation and hyperreality. Course requirements include one "show and tell" presentation that introduces a specific medium. *W. J. T. Mitchell. Winter.*

27900/37900. Jan Svankmajer and Contemporary Surrealism. (=CZEC 27900/37900) *M. Sternstein. Winter.*

28000/38000. Documentary Video. (=ARTV 23901/33901) This course focuses on the making of independent documentary video. Examples of direct cinema, *cinéma vérité*, the essay, ethnographic film, the diary and self-reflexive cinema, historical and biographical film, agitprop/activist forms, and guerilla television are screened and discussed. Topics include the ethics and politics of representation and the shifting lines between fact and fiction. Labs explore video preproduction, camera, sound, and editing. Students develop an idea for a documentary video; form crews; and produce, edit, and screen a five-minute documentary. *A two-hour lab is required in addition to class time. Lab fee \$60. J. Hoffman. Winter.*

28001/38001. Documentary Video: Production Techniques. (=ARTV 23902/33902) *PQ: ARTV 23901 or consent of instructor.* This course focuses on the shaping and crafting of a nonfiction video. Students are expected to write a treatment detailing their project. Production techniques focus on the handheld camera versus tripod, interviewing and microphone placement, and lighting for the interview. Postproduction covers editing techniques and distribution strategies. Students then screen final projects in a public space. *Lab fee \$70. J. Hoffman. Spring.*

28100. Issues in Film Music. (=MUSI 20900/30901) This course explores the role of film music in the history of cinema. What role does music play as part of the narrative (source music) and as nondiegetic music (underscoring)? How does music of different styles and provenance contribute to the semiotic universe

of film? And how did film music assume a central voice in twentieth-century culture? We study music composed for films (original scores) as well as pre-existent music (such as popular and classical music). The twenty films covered in the course may include classical Hollywood cinema, documentaries, foreign (including non-Western) films, experimental films, musicals, and cartoons. *This course typically is offered in alternate years. B. Hoeckner. Autumn.*

28500/48500. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. (=ARTH 28500/38500, ARTV 26500, CMLT 22400/32400, ENGL 29300/47800, MAPH 33600) *PQ: Prior or concurrent enrollment in CMST 10100. This is the first part of a two-quarter course. The two parts may be taken individually, but taking them in sequence is strongly recommended.* The aim of this course is to introduce what was singular about the art and craft of silent film. Its general outline is chronological. We also discuss main national schools and international trends of filmmaking. *Y. Tsvivan. Winter.*

28600/48600. History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960. (=ARTH 28600/38600, ARTV 26600, CMLT 22500/32500, ENGL 29600/48900, MAPH 33700) *PQ: Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required; CMST 28500/48500 strongly recommended.* The center of this course is film style, from the classical scene breakdown to the introduction of deep focus, stylistic experimentation, and technical innovation (sound, wide screen, location shooting). The development of a film culture is also discussed. Texts include Thompson and Bordwell's *Film History: An Introduction*; and works by Bazin, Belton, Sitney, and Godard. Screenings include films by Hitchcock, Welles, Rossellini, Bresson, Ozu, Antonioni, and Renoir. *Y. Tsvivan. Spring.*

28800. Digital Imaging. (=ARTV 22500) Using the Macintosh platform, this course introduces the use of digital technology as a means of making visual art. Instruction covers the Photoshop graphics program and digital imaging hardware (i.e., scanners, storage, printing). In addition, we address problems of color, design, collage, and drawing. Topics of discussion may include questions regarding the mediated image and its relationship to art, as well as the examination of what constitutes the "real" in contemporary culture. *Lab fee \$60. Autumn.*

28900-28901/38900-38901. Video I, II: Beginning Video. *Courses taught concurrently and may be repeated. Lab fee \$60. Autumn.*

28903/38903. Video Workshop. *PQ: ARTV 23800 or consent of instructor. Lab fee \$60. Winter.*

28920/38920. Introduction to Film Production. (=ARTV 23850/33850) This intensive lab introduces 16mm film production, experimenting with various film stocks and basic lighting designs. The class is organized around a series of production situations with students working in crews. Each crew learns to operate and maintain the 16mm Bolex film camera and tripod, as well as Arri lights, gels, diffusion, and grip equipment. The final project is an in-camera edit. *Lab fee \$100. J. Hoffman. Autumn.*

29700. Reading and Research Course. *PQ: Consent of faculty adviser and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Form. This course may be counted toward distribution requirements for the major. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29800. Senior Colloquium. *PQ: CMST 10100. Required of students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies. This seminar is designed to provide fourth-year students with a sense of the variety of methods and approaches in the field (e.g., formal analysis, cultural history, industrial history, reception studies, psychoanalysis). Students present material related to their B.A. project, which is discussed in relation to the issues of the course. J. Lastra. Autumn.*

29900. B.A. Research Paper. *PQ: Consent of instructor. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Form. This course may not be counted toward distribution requirements for the major, but it may be counted as a free-elective credit. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

36001. R. W. Fassbinder: Melodrama, Politics, and the Poetics of Suffering. (=GRMN 36001) This seminar explores the films of Rainer Werner Fassbinder, from the early social melodramas (*Katzelmacher, Why Does Herr K Run Amok?*) to the later experiments in adaptation (*Fontane Effi Briest, Lola, Querelle*) and, in between, the extraordinary accounts of domestic suffering (*Fear Eats the Soul, Fox & His Friends, Marriage of Maria Braun, In a Year of 13 Moons, Veronika Voss*). Readings are by Thomas Elsaesser, Kaja Silverman, Alice Kuzniar, Steven Shaviro, and others. *D. Levin. Spring.*