

Graduate Certificate: Documentary Arts and Ethnographic Research

Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts / SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND MEDIA ARTS

Learn more about the graduate certificate in Documentary Arts and Ethnographic Research.

This program is not accepting applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

About the Certificate

The graduate certificate in Documentary Arts and Ethnographic Research is a 12-credit interdisciplinary program that involves faculty and courses in the Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Lew Klein College of Media and Communication. The certificate builds on Temple's strong international reputation in documentary film and visual anthropology. It is ideally suited for students who plan to incorporate visual studies, ethnographic methods and documentary practices into their artistic and scholarly projects. The certificate program offers students the opportunity to develop marketable applied expertise in practices that bridge the arts, humanities and social sciences.

The philosophy behind the certificate program is to promote a broad and critical use of diverse media tools in the study and representation of culture(s). Program topics include the theories, methods, aesthetics and ethics of documentary research and visual representation; the relationships between artistic, humanistic and scientific visual research methods; the collaborative use of visual media in indigenous, diaspora and non-Western communities; the critical understanding of the use of new media in documentary contexts, such as mobile media; and the political economy that shapes how images are made, distributed and used worldwide. Students in the program develop skills to:

- create cultural, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary documentary projects through film, digital technologies and representational media;
- integrate visual and cross-cultural materials through innovative uses of technologies;
- incorporate cultural aesthetics, research ethics, cross-cultural research and the use of documentary arts and media tools in their teaching careers; and
- work on collaborative projects involving multiple countries and contexts that can include scholarly research, international government and nongovernmental research, participation in cross-disciplinary projects on contemporary issues, and media activism.

Time Limit for Certificate Completion: 3 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: The graduate certificate can be completed on a part-time basis. NOTE: International students may not be eligible to apply for a student visa based on admission to the certificate program. Please contact the certificate program director for more information.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: The certificate program is open only to students enrolled in MFA and PhD programs at Temple University.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: March 21

Spring: October 21

Access the certificate application [here](#).

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 1

From Whom: A letter of support must be written by the applicant student's advisor.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: Applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree — and must be currently enrolled in an MFA or PhD program at Temple University.

Statement of Goals: Describe your reasons for pursuing the certificate in Documentary Arts and Ethnographic Research in 250 words.

Interview: Qualifying applicant students are invited for an interview with a member of the Certificate Steering Committee.

Other Requirement: Applicant students must provide certification that they are currently enrolled in good standing, maintaining a minimum GPA of 3.5 in their MFA or PhD program at Temple University.

Certificate Requirements

Number of Credits Required to Complete the Certificate: 12

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Courses		
Select at least one ANTH course and one FMA course to complete a minimum of two of the following:		6
ANTH 5389	Fieldwork in Ethnography	
ANTH 5438	Anthropology of Mass Media	
ANTH 5444	Anthropological Problems in Visual Production	
ANTH 8408	Approaches in the Anthropology of Visual Communication I	
FMA 5676	Anthropological Film/Media	
FMA 8462	Documentary Arts and Visual Research	
Electives		
Select at least two from the following: ¹		6
ANTH 5428	Theory and Methods in Culture and Communication	
ANTH 5439	Anthropology and Photography	
ANTH 5458	Anthropology of Public Culture	
ANTH 8012	Ethical Considerations in Anthropology Research	
ANTH 8344	Seminar in Expressive Culture	
ANTH 8409	Approaches in the Anthropology of Visual Communication II	
ANTH 8429	Problems in the Anthropology of Visual Communication	
ANTH 8435	Seminar in Visual Anthropology and the Arts	
ARTH 5405	History of Photography	
FMA 5241	Cinematography Workshop ²	
FMA 5242	Videography ²	
FMA 5672	History of Documentary Film	
FMA 5673	Time-Image Arts/Cinema Praxis	
FMA 5674	Media Arts Thry-Practice	
FMA 8244	Experimental Methods	
FMA 8245	Documentary Workshop	
FMA 8246	Advanced Documentary/Fiction Workshop	
FMA 8340	Topics in Production	
FMA 8450	Topics in Media	
FMA 8551	Digital Post-Production	
FMA 8670	Topics in Media Studies	
FMA 8680	Advanced Topics in Media Arts Studies	
MMC 9209	Media Ethnography	
PHOT 8283	Graduate Projects in Photography I	
PHOT 8284	Graduate Projects in Photography II	
SOC 8371	Sociology of Culture	
Total Credit Hours		12

¹ Alternately, students may choose to take one or two additional courses from the list of core courses above to fulfill the electives requirement.

² Only non-FMA students make apply this course toward the certificate.

GPA Required to be Awarded the Certificate: 3.0 minimum

Contacts

Certificate Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/documentary-arts-and-ethnographic-research-certificate-graduate-ca-daer-grad>

Department Information:

Film and Media Arts Graduate Admissions
Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts/School of Theater, Film and Media Arts
2001 N. 13th Street, 127 Presser Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19122-6016
tfma@temple.edu
215-204-8598
Fax: 215-204-4957

Submission Address for Application Materials:

https://connect.temple.edu/portal/gr_applytoday

daep@temple.edu

Department Contacts:

Program Director:
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Chair:
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