

Film and Media Arts MFA

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

Learn more about the Master of Fine Arts in Film and Media Arts.

About the Program

The MFA program in Film and Media Arts is designed to prepare socially aware, artistically innovative candidates for professional careers in film, video or digital media. The program is characterized by an openness to all forms of media expression, with an emphasis on independent film and video arising out of both an artistic and social consciousness, taught under the supervision of recognized scholars and professionals in the field. Special attention is paid to the contemporary documentary, the independent narrative, video art and installation, and emerging forms and technologies.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 5 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: Full-time status is expected in most circumstances, but part-time study can be considered on a case-by-case basis, with approval of the Graduate Director.

Interdisciplinary Study: Although graduate students in the Film and Media Arts (FMA) program are expected to complete most of their coursework in the FMA Department, they are encouraged to explore relevant courses in other departments.

Affiliation(s): The FMA program is associated with the University Film and Video Association, an international organization of university and industry professionals working in the field of media production.

Study Abroad: Graduate students may also choose to complete courses through FMA's Los Angeles Study Away Program.

Areas of Specialization: The MFA degree program offers concentrations for students to specialize in filmmaking, new media or screenwriting. The concentrations are:

- Cinematic Arts: Narrative and Documentary
- Media Arts
- Screenwriting

Job Prospects: The MFA in Film and Media Arts produces media makers who pursue careers in academia and in the communications and production industries. Many graduates choose to work independently, creating original narrative and documentary films and videos or new media projects.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students may take FMA graduate-level courses at the discretion of individual instructors. A limit of 9 credits of graduate coursework taken prior to admission will be accepted toward an MFA in Film and Media Arts.

Financing Opportunities: Film and Media Arts supports graduate students with Teaching Assistantships and with fellowship awards offered competitively by Temple University. Most students accepted into the program receive at least partial funding.

All awards are based on and contingent upon the student maintaining an excellent record of achievement and advancement in the program.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: December 8

International students and students wanting full consideration for fellowship funding are encouraged to start their application process and submit materials earlier.

APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

Letters of recommendation should be obtained from college/university faculty familiar with the applicant's academic competency and/or professionals in the fields of communication or media production.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the appropriate baccalaureate degree at Temple University.

International applicants should review the following: <https://grad.temple.edu/admissions/international-applicants/before-you-apply>.

Statement of Goals: A 500- to 1,000-word Statement of Goals presents the applicant's goals for studying film and media arts at the graduate level. The statement should describe the creative work the applicant is interested in making and suggest an artistic point of view. A strong statement will also suggest why Temple's MFA program is a good fit for the applicant's artistic and career goals.

Standardized Test Scores:

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 100
- IELTS Academic: 7.0
- PTE Academic: 68
- Duolingo: 115

Portfolio: A portfolio shows evidence of creative potential and should include a cover sheet with titles, credits, and links, plus any supporting materials (20 pages maximum) in electronic form. Other exceptional creative work in writing, art, music, still photography, computer arts, criticism or research scholarship might be appropriate.

Resume: Current resume required.

Transfer Credit: Upon approval of the FMA graduate faculty and the Graduate School, graduate courses completed at Temple University but not previously applied to a conferred degree may be transferred into the program. Similarly, students may petition for credit for graduate work undertaken at other accredited institutions. The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 11.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required Beyond the Baccalaureate: 54, with 14-15 required credits and 39-40 concentration-specific credits

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Courses		
FMA 5242	Videography	4
FMA 5670	M.F.A. Colloquium (2 terms)	2
FMA 5671	Film Theory Seminar ¹	3
Select one critical studies course from the following:		3-4
FMA 5672	History of Documentary Film	
FMA 5673	Time-Image Arts/Cinema Praxis	
FMA 5676	Anthropological Film/Media	
FMA 5680	Topics in Film Study	
FMA 8462	Documentary Arts and Visual Research	
FMA 8670	Topics in Media Studies	
FMA 8673	Historical Film Research	
FMA 8674	Critical Studies Seminar	
FMA 8675	Seminar: International Film	
FMA 8680	Advanced Topics in Media Arts Studies	
FMA 8870	U Penn Critical Studies	
FMA 9346	Methodologies and Praxis	
Culminating Course		
FMA 9995	M.F.A. Project ²	2
Total Credit Hours		14-15

¹ With permission from the Graduate Program Director, Media Arts students may substitute a graduate-level arts- or media-theory course for FMA 5671.

² Unless arranged otherwise with the Graduate Director, students will take two credits of FMA 9995 M.F.A. Project over two terms. Additional terms of M.F.A. Project may count toward electives for the MFA.

Additional course requirements for each of the three concentrations are identified in the following course grids:

Cinematic Arts: Narrative and Documentary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
FMA 5241	Cinematography Workshop	4
FMA 5361	Writing for Media I	4
FMA 9245	Thesis Development Workshop	4
FMA 9246	Thesis Production Workshop	4
Electives		23-24
Total Credit Hours		39-40

Media Arts

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Select one foundational media arts course:		4
FMA 5453	Interactive Design Workshop	
FMA 5674	Media Arts Thry-Practice	
Select one content-design and writing course from the following:		4
FMA 5361	Writing for Media I	
FMA 5462	Video Game Theory and Writing	
FMA 8245	Documentary Workshop	
FMA 8461	Interactive Narrative	
FMA 8462	Documentary Arts and Visual Research	
Select three media arts courses from the following:		12
FMA 5243	Audio Production and Aesthetics	
FMA 5451	Animation Workshop	
FMA 5462	Video Game Theory and Writing	
FMA 8244	Experimental Methods	
FMA 8451	Digital Animation	
FMA 8452	New Technology Laboratory	
FMA 8461	Interactive Narrative	
FMA 8551	Digital Post-Production	
Electives		19-20
Total Credit Hours		39-40

Screenwriting

Code	Title	Credit Hours
FMA 5241	Cinematography Workshop	4
FMA 5361	Writing for Media I	4
FMA 8362	Joint Writing Workshop 1	4
FMA 8363	Joint Writing Workshop 2	4
Select one from the following:		4
FMA 5362	Serial Writing	
FMA 8361	Writing for Media II	
Electives		19-20
Total Credit Hours		39-40

Culminating Events:

Faculty Reviews:

At the end of both the first and second years, students formally present their work to the FMA faculty, who review and evaluate students' work and progress in the program.

Comprehensive Examination:

The MFA program in Film and Media Arts requires a Comprehensive Examination in addition to an MFA thesis. The program is committed to synthesizing theory and practice, allowing students to develop aesthetically and conceptually as makers. The MFA candidate forms a committee of three FMA faculty members (or two FMA faculty and one outside approved member) and works with the committee to design customized areas of inquiry that embody their interests in film studies, media theory or any other field of knowledge relevant to them and their work. Typically, after completing 38 credits of coursework, students write and defend the examination questions, which include two essays and a research-based expanded artist statement.

Thesis Proposal and Defense:

A thesis is a completed stand-alone work that can be:

- a complete sound, film or video production;
- a feature film script; or
- a completed work in an alternative media form, such as computer-generated media, interactive media, installations or newly emerging technologies.

Students develop their thesis project proposal, treatment and/or script during their fourth semester and form a thesis committee at that time, selecting a thesis chair. The thesis committee may comprise FMA faculty entirely or two FMA faculty and one outside member. The student then proposes an MFA thesis. The MFA thesis committee evaluates project proposals individually for rigor, scope, length and other specific criteria prior to the start of production.

A thesis project must be completed by the date set annually by the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts and Temple University. While it is common and expected for students to develop thesis projects into works for professional public audiences that might entail additional changes after graduation, such as professional color correction, the thesis work must be complete and presentable. Rough versions and drafts with placeholders are not considered complete thesis projects. Upon completion of the MFA thesis, the committee and student hold a public screening or reading of the work.

Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/film-and-media-arts-mfa-ca-fma-mfa>

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

Department Contacts:

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