

Film & Media

PhD in Film and Media

Students in the Film and Media PhD are encouraged to situate moving images within the larger theoretical and analytical frameworks of a range of other disciplines. They integrate the traditions of history, law, literature, cultural studies, gender studies, and political theory to the newer disciplines of film studies and digital media, applying the tools of post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, new historicism, media archaeology, Frankfurt School, feminist theory, queer theory, post-colonialism, and critical race theory. Many combine their degree study with a campus designated emphasis (graduate "minor") in New Media, in Critical Theory, or in Women, Gender and Sexuality.

Designated Emphasis in Film Studies

PhD students at Berkeley outside the Department of Film & Media may add a Designated Emphasis in Film Studies to their major fields. The designated emphasis provides curricular and research resources for students who want to concentrate on film and media research within their respective disciplines and have their work formally recognized. Designed to bring together faculty and students from different departments, the program provides a unique context for rigorous cross-disciplinary thinking and promotes innovative research in the theory and history of cinema and media studies.

Admission to the University

Applying for Graduate Admission

Thank you for considering UC Berkeley for graduate study! UC Berkeley offers more than 120 graduate programs representing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The Graduate Division hosts a complete list (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/choosing-your-program/list/>) of graduate academic programs, departments, degrees offered, and application deadlines can be found on the Graduate Division website.

Prospective students must submit an online application to be considered for admission, in addition to any supplemental materials specific to the program for which they are applying. The online application and steps to take to apply can be found on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/>).

Admission Requirements

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale; and
3. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field.

For a list of requirements to complete your graduate application, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions Requirements page (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/>). It is also important to check with the program or department of interest, as they may have additional requirements specific to their program of study

and degree. Department contact information can be found here (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2024-25/graduate/degree-programs/>).

Where to apply?

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Admission to the Designated Emphasis Program

Applicants must be enrolled in a doctoral program at Berkeley and must have completed either FILM 201, offered each fall semester, or FILM 200, taught every spring.

Curriculum

FILM 200	Graduate Film Theory Seminar	4
FILM 201	Graduate Film Historiography	4
FILM 203	Film Studies Proseminar	2-4
Film Electives: Graduate seminars (4 courses)		16
Outside Field Electives (2 courses)		8

Coursework/Curriculum

A minimum of three graduate seminars in Film Studies must be taken at Berkeley. Independent study courses are not acceptable to fulfill this requirement.

Required courses

FILM 200	Graduate Film Theory Seminar	4
FILM 201	Graduate Film Historiography	4
FILM 240	Graduate Topics in Film (or a graduate seminar cross-listed with Film and Media)	4

Qualifying Examination (QE)

A member of the Graduate Group in Film Studies must be a formal member of the PhD qualifying examination committee. If applicable, the Film Studies Graduate Group member in the student's home department will serve in this function. A member of the Graduate Group may also serve as the outside member of the qualifying exam committee. A Film Studies topic must be included as a subject on the qualifying examination.

Dissertation

A member of the Graduate Group in Film Studies must be a formal member of the dissertation committee. The dissertation must contribute to the study of film and moving-image media.

Degree Conferral

Upon completion of these requirements and the dissertation, the student will receive a designation on their transcript to state that they have completed a "PhD in [major] with an Emphasis in Film Studies."

Film and Media

FILM 200 Graduate Film Theory Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Spring 2024

This seminar will examine both traditional and recent critical approaches to a systematic and historical study of film. Although we will emphasize contemporary structuralist-semiotic, psychoanalytical, and socio-critical methods, we will also study the classical debates in film theory about representation, filmic vs. literary signification, sexual difference, and the social function of images in modernism and postmodernism. Illustrations will be taken from film history from 1910 to 1980.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 201 Graduate Film Historiography 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

The theoretical and methodological issues raised by the recent practice of film history are the focus of this seminar. Intended primarily for first-year film studies graduate students and other students interested in starting work on film history, the seminar provides both a theoretical overview of film historiography and an introduction to the practice of historically oriented film research. The first part of the course uses both overtly historiographic readings and film history examples to raise historical questions of technology, institution-formation, exhibition, cultural history, and spectatorship.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar and 2 hours of laboratory per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 203 Film Studies Proseminar 2 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

A seminar introducing Film Studies graduate students to the field, the profession, and the faculty practicing film studies. Envisioned as a way for new students to learn what is expected of them and for more advanced students to pass through the all-important last years of their training in an atmosphere of helpful camaraderie. Introduces students to the intellectual and physical resources of the Berkeley campus as well as the Bay Area. By the end of the semester students should gain an understanding of the expectations of their performance in graduate school, have identified the major goals on the way towards getting a Ph.D., and, depending on where they are in their studies, have begun to achieve those goals.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

FILM 204 Compact Seminar 2 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2010

A compact seminar features a distinguished, short-term visitor with expertise in Film and Media. During the stay, the visitor meets intensively with graduate students, who then continue to work on research topics for the remainder of the semester. The seminar meets eight times one hundred and twenty minutes, not including screening time, and a substantial (twenty-five page) research paper is required at the end of the semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 4 weeks - 4 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 220 Film Curating 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2011, Fall 2006

An introduction to the theory, history, and practice of film curating taught by Pacific Film Archive curators. What do curators do? How do they decide what to show? What is the role of film archives and film exhibition in the field of film and moving image study? Using the Pacific Film Archive and its programmers as a laboratory, students will go behind-the-scenes of the Archive's curatorial, print traffic, publicity, and editorial departments and learn how to program by doing. The course will culminate in a proposal for a comprehensive film series.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar and 1-4 hours of laboratory per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 221 Film Curating Part 2 2 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2007

Students will develop and present a film series for presentation at the Pacific Film Archive. Possibly refining a series proposed in 220. PFA curators will have final approval of the series topic and the film/video selection. Students will locate and book all films, write program notes, do outreach, and introduce programs. Guest speakers will include local press, writers, and artists. Local film and videomakers will trace the history of a work from production through exhibition.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: 220

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 230 Graduate Production Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2013, Spring 2013, Spring 2012

Intensive study of the basic elements of film and digital video production and post-production. Graduate students will develop a working knowledge of film and video making through hands-on production experience that will enable them to film and edit their own productions. They will also acquire training to teach basic video and film production classes. The uses of specific technologies and formats will be discussed in relation to aesthetic and theoretical questions. Training includes pre-production-scripting and storyboarding, production elements including image capture, and post-production strategies and aesthetics for non-linear digital editing programs. The course will also introduce problems of how to format video/films for exhibition and approaches to distribution, exhibition, and funding. Classes will consist of technical lectures and hands-on workshops, creative exercises, seminar-style discussion and critique, film screenings, assigned readings, and visiting artists and speakers.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of lecture and 3-5 hours of laboratory per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 240 Graduate Topics in Film 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Selected topics in the study of film.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of lecture and 0-3 hours of laboratory per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 297 Dissertation Writing Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025

Students having completed doctoral qualifying examinations and now working on a dissertation or prospectus will undertake a structured process leading to the completion of a finished piece of work, in most cases a dissertation chapter. Each week, students will discuss one or more works in progress, and will have an opportunity both to learn from other students' process and research, and to receive feedback from a diverse group on your own writing. Alongside the work of participants, students will read relevant theoretical texts and discuss research methods, questions of genre, tools for moving through blocks, and avenues for publication.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Students must have successfully completed their doctoral qualifying examinations and advanced to candidacy

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

FILM 298 Special Study 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Summer 2022 First 6 Week Session, Fall 2021

Designed to allow students to do research in areas not covered by other courses. Requires regular discussions with the instructor and a final written report.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor. Graduate standing

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

3 weeks - 5-20 hours of independent study per week
 6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of independent study per week
 8 weeks - 2-7.5 hours of independent study per week
 10 weeks - 1.5-6 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FILM 299 Directed Research 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2020

Open to graduate students who have passed their Ph.D. qualifying examinations.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-12 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 1.5-22.5 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

FILM 375 Teaching Reading and Composition through Film & Media 2 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2021

This course serves as introductory training for first-time R&C GSIs who are interested in incorporating moving-image materials and instructional strategies into their teaching repertoire.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: This course exposes students to current research on teaching student writing, encourages discussion of strategies and practices for R&C courses using both readings and moving-image media in the instructional content, and creates a structured space for current GSIs to workshop and troubleshoot issues from teaching in progress during the semester's instruction.

Student Learning Outcomes:

2. be able to create and evaluate the effectiveness of lesson plans and assignments that employ active learning strategies (e.g., discussion, collaborative problem solving, applied practice) in the study of moving-image media materials;
3. know the standards of ethical conduct by which they and their students must abide and how to provide a welcoming and respectful learning environment for a diverse student body;
4. know general and field-specific University policies and resources for teaching film and media composition courses on the Berkeley campus, such as those pertaining to students with disabilities, students in distress, student athletes, sexual harassment, academic integrity, and instructional technology;
5. know how to assess student learning and grade student work fairly, consistently, and efficiently, with special attention to the structural and cultural differences in preparation that present barriers to learning effective writing;
6. be able to use feedback and assessment tools such as mid-semester evaluations to improve teaching;
7. be able to reflect upon teaching and learning and explain why they make the choices they do as teachers in their field;
8. know how to effectively communicate and collaborate with members of a teaching team (e.g., faculty instructor, head GSI, co-instructors, fellow GSIs, Readers, course support staff).

Upon completion of the course, GSIs should:

1. know effective practices, current directions, and resources for engaging students in writing about film and media;

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Current or upcoming first-time appointment as GSI

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

FILM 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students 1 - 6 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018

Individual study in consultation with faculty director as preparation for degree examinations.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-6 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 1.5-11 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Film and Media/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.