

**GRADUATE STUDIES**  
in  
**MOTION PICTURES**



**DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS**  
**MASTER OF FINE ARTS - MOTION PICTURES**

**A GUIDE TO THE INCOMING STUDENTS**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025**

(Revised July 12, 2024)

## GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN MOTION PICTURES

The Department of Cinematic Arts of the School of Communication offers a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) degree in Motion Pictures.

**M.F.A. candidates** are expected to follow a set sequence of courses during the first two semesters of their studies. During the second year of studies, candidates are strongly encouraged to explore not only a primary but also a secondary area of specialization in the program and develop a minimum of two creative projects consistent with their areas of primary interest and secondary specialization. A minimum of 6 credit hours in each area of specialization is required. Under faculty committee supervision, students will develop one or two creative projects in the third year of their studies. This three-year program culminates with a thesis portfolio that demonstrates, not only skillful execution of craft, but strong conceptual development rooted in collaborative work and innovative uses of technology.

Graduate students are encouraged to pursue independent and critical thinking, research, and creative work as appropriate to the fulfillment of the requirements of their degree. In addition, the graduate program seeks to support innovative approaches and ideas and to aid in the pursuit of relevant scholarly and creative endeavors.

### KEY FACULTY CONTACTS

(The Department of Cinematic Arts is in the Wolfson Building, Room 4004)

Department Chair	Al Martin	<a href="mailto:almartin@miami.edu">almartin@miami.edu</a>
M.F.A Coordinator	Ed Talavera	<a href="mailto:etalavera@miami.edu">etalavera@miami.edu</a>

Each area of specialization has a faculty **coordinator**. The coordinator has the responsibility of advising student progress toward the degree, enforcing deadlines and resolving any academic problems that may arise.

Coordinator, Production	Ed Talavera, <a href="mailto:etalavera@miami.edu">etalavera@miami.edu</a>
Coordinator, Screenwriting	Tom Musca, <a href="mailto:t.musca@miami.edu">t.musca@miami.edu</a>
Coordinator, Producing	Rechna Varma, <a href="mailto:rxv310@miami.edu">rxv310@miami.edu</a>
Coordinator of Graduate Assistants	Ed Talavera, <a href="mailto:etalavera@miami.edu">etalavera@miami.edu</a>

For any issue relating to the M.F.A. degree, students should: First, consult the coordinator of the specific specialization. If the matter is not resolved, consult the M.F.A Coordinator. If the matter is not resolved, consult the Department Chair. If additional action is required, the Director of Graduate Studies for the School of Communication will review the matter and take the appropriate actions as outlined by School or University policy.

## GRADUATE STATUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Graduate status:

The M.F.A. program is designed for students maintaining a **full-time graduate status**.

- As defined by the Graduate School, full-time status constitutes 9-12 credit hours per semester. Less than 9 credit hours per semester is less than a full course load; over 12 credit hours per semester requires permission of the M.F.A coordinator and Director of Graduate Studies.
- The required course sequence assumes that the student will begin in the Fall semester and continue with

full-time status throughout the program.

- In the event a student seeks to drop out of the program for a semester or longer, he/she must submit a request in writing for a leave of absence to the Chair of the Department of Cinematic Arts, which is then forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies and then to the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Enrollment in 1-credit 800-level course in order to complete the thesis requirement will constitute full-time status.
- Students are expected to be continuously enrolled in the School of Communication while completing degree requirements (except during an approved leave of absence).
- If the student has completed all classes and continues to work on his/her M.F.A. thesis, enrollment in COM 825 (a one-credit full-time Master's study class) is required each semester.
- The student need not enroll in COM 825 if on an approved leave of absence.
- All students must be enrolled while using program facilities or faculty resources and during the semester in which the thesis defense is held.

If a student *applies* to graduate for a particular semester and *does not* graduate, he/she must re-apply to graduate.

If a student drops out of the program or falls below the minimum course requirements, he/she will be considered "inactive" and must **re-apply** to the program.

#### **Dropping out:**

Dropping out of the M.F.A. is defined as not being enrolled in courses for two consecutive semesters. If the student seeks an exception to this provision (for illness, family emergency, or other documented circumstance), he/she **MUST** submit this request in writing to the Department Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies at the time the course of study is interrupted.

A student who has dropped out must **officially re-apply** for admission into the graduate program.

#### **Re-application:**

It is understood that the process of re-application does not mean automatic reinstatement. Because the graduate M.F.A. program is limited by the number of students it can optimally manage, re-application will be considered and evaluated with respect to others who are applying for the program.

*By dropping out or falling below the minimum credits, the student risks his/her future status in the program.*

## **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

#### **Process:**

A limited number of graduate assistantship awards are available for M.F.A. graduate students in the Department of Cinematic Arts. Awards may include a partial tuition scholarship in varying amounts and/or stipend award. In exchange for the assistantship award, students work a designated number of hours as assistants to faculty and in other positions.

Graduate Assistants are assigned to CCA courses by the Department of Cinematic Arts to assist instructors with successfully delivering classes to students as outlined in the course syllabus or to assist the professor with their creative work or research.

Graduate Assistants may also be assigned to teach an undergraduate course as part of their award.

- Application for assistantships will be announced February 1<sup>st</sup>. The **deadline** for filing applications is **March 1st**.
- **Announcements** of assistantship awards for the upcoming academic year will be made at the end of the spring semester.

Decisions on assistantships in the Department of Cinematic Arts assume that the applicant has sufficient time and expertise to assist where needed and commitment to the responsibilities of the assistantship. The Department of Cinematic Arts makes recommendations for assistantships in the M.F.A. track; the final decision is made by the Graduate Studies Office.

### **Time Commitment:**

1/2 GA = 10 hours (2 courses)

Full GA = 20 hours (4 courses)

Teaching Duties = 1 semester course taught = 10 hours

### **Assistantship responsibilities:**

Responsibilities and duties assigned to assistants will be determined by the needs of the department and are coordinated and evaluated by the assigned faculty supervisor.

Graduate assistants are expected to dedicate 5 hours per week towards their duties pertaining to the class they have been assigned. Of this time 2.5 hours are dedicated to being present in the class and fully engaged in class discussions. This is also a time when the professor may call on the GA to make presentations and instruct students on the use of class-related technologies (camera, microphones, editing software, audio recorder etc.). GAs should make sure they know all the gear to be used in the class at a level where they are able to instruct students thoroughly.

The other 2.5 hours are dedicated to duties performed by the GA outside of class time. These include prepping and wrapping class equipment as well as:

#### Taking attendance on Blackboard:

GAs are responsible for entering attendance on Blackboard in class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Anyone student who is more than 10 minutes late will be marked as late. Unexcused lateness beyond 30 minutes will be marked as absent.

The offer and acceptance of an assistantship carries with it the understanding that *the responsibilities of the graduate assistant will take priority over any other non-academic activities*. This means that:

- Course work, including work on projects and theses, must be properly coordinated with the duties attached to the assistantship so that all are properly balanced.
- Any part or full-time job must not interfere with the assistantship.
- There is no extension of graduate assistantships past the third year of studies.

*Failure to perform on an exemplary level in course work and/or assigned duties may result in the revocation of the assistantship.*

### **Evaluation of graduate assistants:**

“Progress evaluations” will be made by the faculty monitoring the performance of the graduate assistants.

Satisfactory progress toward a degree, including but not limited to meeting all requisite deadlines and all course distribution requirements, is essential for the continuation of graduate assistant status.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

### Course requirements:

The student must successfully complete all required courses for the degree:

- 66-credit hours at the graduate level are required.
- Transfer credit (of up to nine credits) may be submitted to and evaluated by the Department Chair.
- University of Miami 500-level courses *taken as a UM undergraduate* are not acceptable for graduate credit.
- Any 600-700 level course *outside* the Motion Picture M.F.A. curriculum within or outside of UM must be approved by the M.F.A coordinator of the Department of Cinematic Arts and Director of Graduate Studies.
- Credits earned for the attainment of another degree *cannot* be accepted toward the M.F.A. degree.
- There are up to 6 credits of internship credit offered at the graduate level.

### Additional requirements:

- A total of 36 credit hours (of the 66) must be taken at the advanced level. At least 12 credit hours of these must be at the 800 level.
- No more than 9 credit hours of CCA799 and or CCA794 combined may be counted toward the graduate degree.

### GPA requirements:

To satisfy the M.F.A. degree in Motion Pictures, a cumulative grade-point average of "B" (3.0) or higher must be maintained.

- Graduate students must achieve a grade of "B-" or better to pass any CCA course.
- Any CCA course in which a graduate student receives a grade below a "B-" must be repeated and passed with a "B-" or better.
  - *A course may be repeated ONLY one time.*

### Incomplete grades:

A grade of "I" (incomplete) or "S" (satisfactory) will be given only in the following instances:

- For the twelve-credit Master's thesis project a grade of "S" will be given until the thesis project is completed.
- The student who receives an "I" in any course must complete the course with a passing grade within the time frame specified by the professor but not longer than the end of one calendar year or prior to graduation (whichever occurs first). Upon petition, any Academic Dean may approve an extension.

- In the special instance (such as a medical emergency) where an “I” grade is given, the course must be completed (and a grade given) *within one year*. If not, the grade will be changed to a failing mark.

Further, the School of Communication requires that any graduate student with more than one Incomplete grade because of a “special” circumstance will be restricted to enrollment of no more than six credits.

**Thesis project and examination:**

Besides the credit hour requirement, graduation with an M.F.A. degree in Motion Pictures is contingent upon completion of a thesis project approved by the student’s Thesis Committee. Details regarding the format and length of the thesis project will be determined in consultation with the student’s Thesis Committee.

Examples of appropriate thesis projects include:

- One feature length narrative film or documentary
- Two separate shorts or one short that demonstrates exceptional mastery
- One feature length screenplay
- One television pilot script and an additional episode
- A business plan for a proposed feature film or major venture in motion pictures
- Any combination of the above

**General outline of studies:****1<sup>st</sup> year:**

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Meet with the specialization coordinators – begin developing a specialization.
- 3) Choose an advisor
- 4) Develop a strategy
  - a. Develop a study course

**2<sup>nd</sup> year:**

- 1) Focus on specialization
- 2) Develop a thesis project
- 3) Spring semester - Form thesis committee.
  - a. CCA Chair
  - b. CCA committee member
  - c. Outside committee member
- 4) Develop a timeline
- 5) Production of a 2<sup>nd</sup> year projects

**3<sup>rd</sup> year:**

- 1) Specialization
- 2) Film literacy examination
- 3) Produce thesis project
- 4) Thesis project defense

**Evaluation of projects and theses:**

- All M.F.A. thesis projects require an oral defense.

Each thesis project will be evaluated by the student's thesis committee as described below:

It is *not to be assumed* that simply submitting a project meets the requirement for graduation. *Should the thesis committee find the quality of a project not satisfactory such a project may not fulfill the requirements of the degree.*

If a thesis project is deemed unsatisfactory at the defense, the committee has two options: 1) to fail the student based on unsatisfactory progress; 2) to request a revision and resubmission of the work, followed by a second oral defense, at which time a final evaluation will take place.

## THE M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT

The information in this section applies to all projects and theses in the M.F.A. in Motion Pictures program.

**Procedures and deadlines:**

Toward the end of fall semester of the second year, the specialization coordinators will meet with graduate students to explain the procedures for assembling the M.F.A. **thesis committee** and preparing the **proposal** for the thesis project. The key deadlines of the process and their importance will be defined and explained.

**The thesis project committee:**

Each committee must have at least three members – a Chair, a second member and an outside member.

- The **committee chair** must be a member of the Department of Cinematic Arts graduate faculty.
- The **second member** of the committee must be a full-time faculty member at the Department of Cinematic Arts.
- The **outside member** must not be a full-time faculty member of the Department of Cinematic Arts. This member may be an adjunct faculty or may be from within the School of Communication or the University of Miami at large. The outside committee member may also be a professional with demonstrated expertise in the area of the student's thesis project. Any such professional *must* be approved in advance by the committee chair. If a professional, a copy of the resume of this member must be submitted to the committee chair and the Graduate Studies office prior to the thesis project approval.

**Scheduling a Thesis Defense:****The thesis project defense:**

Two weeks prior to the thesis project defense, the student **MUST** provide the School of Communication Graduate Studies Office, the Department of Cinematic Arts and the members of his/her committee with one of the following relevant materials:

- a high-resolution QuickTime file of the finished film or project
- a pdf file of a completed screenplay
- a pdf file of a business plan for a proposed feature film or major motion picture project or venture

Additional materials maybe required as determined by the student's thesis committee.

Each graduate student **MUST** appear before his/her thesis committee for a defense.

- The thesis defense must be done **in person**. **Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Department Chair and the Graduate Studies Director.**

## OWNERSHIP AND COPYRIGHT OF PROJECTS AND THESES

The following represents the official statement from the legal department of the University of Miami regarding the ownership and copyright of motion picture and screenplay projects.

From Lisa G. Karp, Assistant General Counsel, University of Miami, memo sent to Paul Lazarus, dated December 7, 1989:

*The right of first publication and the statutory copyright in any student's motion picture screenplay or film created during the student's participation in the graduate program shall be the property of the student. This policy does not affect agreements made between students and sponsors which may entitle the sponsors to rights in the motion picture screenplay or film.*

*The Patent and Copyright Policy of the University of Miami as reflected in The Faculty Manual shall control all student copyright issues.*

*The student shall be responsible for any expenses incurred in the registration of copyright. The School of Communication reserves the right to retain a copy of the film in videotape or digital file for use in library or other educational purposes. The school shall also have the right to use, exploit, or otherwise provide for the exhibition of the student film for any non-profit purpose including, but not limited to, film festivals, public television broadcasts and public exhibitions.*



## DELIVERY SCHEDULE FOR M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT

Delivery schedule for all aspects of the M.F.A. thesis project must be clearly defined in writing and agreed upon by the thesis committee.

### Third Year Suggested Thesis Project Timelines:

#### PRODUCTION:

- One Month Prior to Commencement of Principal Photography: Screenplay, budget, production plan must be approved (see form).
- No later than **December 15** – Students **MUST** have commenced principal photography.
- Requests for reimbursement of production costs by the School of Communication must be presented no later than two weeks after completion of principal photography. Final Deadline to apply for reimbursements are: for May Graduation (**March 31<sup>st</sup>**) – for Fall Graduation (**December 1<sup>st</sup>**).
- On or about **March 15** – Students will screen rough cuts for the faculty. The exact date will be announced one month prior to the screening. There will be **NO GRACE PERIOD** for this deadline.
- Within two weeks following Spring break – Students will meet with their thesis committee to receive notes on a fine cut and prepare for the final project defense.
- Between **April 1** and **May 10** – Students **MUST** schedule their project defense by arrangement with the Graduate Studies office. Two weeks' notice **MUST** be given prior to the defense date.

#### SCREENWRITING:

- No later than **October 15** – A revised treatment and first act of the screenplay **MUST** be submitted to the thesis committee.
- By the end of class of Fall semester – The entire draft of the screenplay **MUST** be distributed to committee members.
- First week of the Spring Semester – Students must meet with their committee to receive notes on the first draft.
- On or about **March 15** – screenwriting students will read pages of their second drafts for the faculty. The exact date will be announced one month prior to the reading. There will be **NO GRACE PERIOD** for this deadline.
- Within two weeks following Spring break – Students will meet with their committee to receive notes to prepare for the final project defense.
- Between **April 1** and **May 10** – Students **MUST** schedule their project defense by arrangement with the Graduate Studies office. Two weeks' notice **MUST** be given prior to the defense date.

#### PRODUCING:

- On or about **March 15** – Students will screen their edited work and present a first draft of their project and business plan to their committee.
- Within two weeks following Spring break – Students will meet with their committee to receive notes to prepare for the final project defense.

- Between **April 1** and **May 10** – Students **MUST** schedule their project defense by arrangement with the Graduate Studies office. Two weeks' notice **MUST** be given prior to the defense date.

**ALL DEADLINES AGREED UPON WITH THE STUDENT'S THESIS COMMITTEE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FINAL. FAILURE TO MEET AGREED UPON DEADLINES WILL AFFECT STATUS IN THE PROGRAM AND MAY BE CAUSE FOR PROBATION AND/OR DISMISSAL.**

## FILM AND TV LITERACY EXAMINATION

All M.F.A. students are responsible for viewing and familiarizing themselves with the films and television episodes on the Screening List provided. As part of the degree requirement, each student **MUST** take a Literacy Examination covering the 130 titles on this list. Students are expected to have seen each film or television episode and be conversant—in general terms—about their aesthetic, historical and cultural significance.

To successfully fulfill the Literacy requirement, a grade of "B" (85%) or higher on the written examination is needed. Passing the one-hour Literacy Exam is a requirement for graduation. The test is usually administered to students in spring semester of their third year, under the supervision of the film studies faculty.

The Film and Television Literacy requirement reflects the Motion Picture faculty's commitment to educating graduate students and, in particular, facilitating their knowledge of how aesthetically, historically, and culturally relevant films and programs helped to establish the medium of film or television, changed the course of these mediums, and/or pointed to new directions relevant to emerging creative professionals. To this end, the program supports student viewing by providing DVD materials of the titles on the list. They are housed on the fourth floor of the School of the Communication and can be accessed through the Sr. Program Coordinator (Joselyn Garcia) or the Office Staff.

The titles below are also available on Blackboard. Students are advised to visit the CCA 601 Blackboard website for more versions of the Literacy list (by chronology and genre) and for further study resources. They are also encouraged to make use of the School of Communication Norton Herrick Center for Motion Picture Studies [[www.nortonherrickcenter.org](http://www.nortonherrickcenter.org)], a digital archive and educational resource that streams over 3000 classic and rare film and television titles.

## REQUIRED FILM AND TV SCREENING LIST

### FEATURE FILMS (106 titles)

39 Steps, The (Alfred Hitchcock, 1935, 86 min)  
 400 Blows, The (Francois Truffaut, 1959, 99 min)  
 42nd Street (Lloyd Bacon, 1933, 89 min)  
 8 ½ (Federico Fellini, 1963, 138 min)  
 Aguirre, Wrath of God (Werner Herzog, 1972, 93 min)  
 All That Jazz (Bob Fosse, 1979, 123 min)  
 Anatomy of a Murder (Otto Preminger, 1959, 160 min)  
 Annie Hall (Woody Allen, 1977, 93 min)  
 Awaara (Raj Kapoor, 1951, 82 min)  
 Awful Truth, The (Leo McCarey, 1937, 91 min)  
 Battle of Algiers, The (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1965, 121 min)  
 Battleship Potemkin (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, 66 min)  
 Best Years of Our Lives, The (William Wyler, 1946, 172 min)  
 Bicycle Thief (Vittorio de Sica, 1948, 93 min)  
 Big Sleep, The (Howard Hawks, 1946, 114 mins)  
 Birth of a Nation, The (D. W. Griffith, 1915, 165 min)  
 Bonnie and Clyde (Arthur Penn, 1967, 111 min)  
 Breathless (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960, 90 min)

Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1919, 67 min)  
Casablanca (Michael Curtiz, 1942, 102 min)  
Chinatown (Roman Polanski, 1974, 130 min)  
Chronicle of a Summer (Jean Rouch & Edgar Morin, 1961, 85 min)  
Citizen Kane (Orson Welles, 1941, 119 min)  
City Lights (Charles Chaplin, 1931, 87 min)  
City of God (Fernando Meirelles & Kátia Lund, 2002, 130 min)  
Claire's Knee (Éric Rohmer, 1970, 105 min)  
Cleo from Five to Seven (Agnes Varda, 1961, 90 min)  
Dance, Girl, Dance (Dorothy Arzner, 1940, 90 min)  
Dante's Inferno (Ken Russell, 1967, 91 min)  
Diary of a Country Priest (Robert Bresson, 1951, 95 min)  
Dog Day Afternoon (Sidney Lumet, 1975, 125 min)  
Do the Right Thing (Spike Lee, 1989, 120 min)  
Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands (Bruno Barreto, 1976, 110 min)  
Don't Look Back (D.A. Pennebaker, 1967, 96 min)  
Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying ... (Stanley Kubrick, 1963, 95 min)  
Fargo (Coen Brothers, 1996, 98 min)  
General, The (Buster Keaton, 1926, 107 min)  
Godfather, The (Francis Ford Coppola, 1972, 175 min)  
Goodfellas (Martin Scorsese, 1990, 146 min)  
Graduate, The (Mike Nichols, 1967, 106 min)  
Grand Illusion (Jean Renoir, 1937, 114 min)  
Harlan County, USA (Barbara Kopple, 1976, 103 min)  
Headless Woman, The (Lucrecia Martel, 2008, 87 min)  
High School (Frederick Wiseman, 1968, 75 min)  
Hyenas (Djibril Diop Mambety, 1992, 110 min)  
Ikiru (Akira Kurosawa, 1952, 143 min)  
Imitation of Life (Douglas Sirk, 1959, 125 min)  
In the Mood for Love (Wong Kar Wai, 2000, 98 min)  
It Happened One Night (Frank Capra, 1934, 105 min)  
L'Avventura (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960, 143 min)  
Last Picture Show, The (Peter Bogdanovich, 1971, 118 min)  
Last Year at Marienbad (Alain Resnais, 1961, 94 min)  
Late Spring (Yasujiro Ozu, 1949, 108 min)  
Letter from an Unknown Woman (Max Ophuls, 1948, 86 min)  
Lives of Others, The (Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, 2006, 137 min)  
Los Olvidados/The Forgotten Ones (Luis Buñuel, 1950, 80 min)  
M (Fritz Lang, 1931, 99 min)  
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, 1929, 68 min)  
Meet Me in St. Louis (Vincente Minnelli, 1944, 113 min)  
Memories of Underdevelopment (Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, 1968, 97 min)  
Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927, 153 min)  
Mon Oncle (Jacques Tati, 1957, 117 min)  
Morocco (Josef von Sternberg, 1930, 92 min)  
Nanook of the North (Robert Flaherty, 1922, 79 min)  
Nashville (Robert Altman, 1975, 159 min)  
Old Boy (Park Chan-Wook, 2003, 120 min)  
On the Waterfront (Elia Kazan, 1954, 108 min)  
Peeping Tom (Michael Powell, 1960, 101 min)  
Persona (Ingmar Bergman, 1966, 83 min)  
Piano, The (Jane Campion, 1993, 121 min)  
Primary (Drew Associates, 1960, 60 min)  
Pulp Fiction (Quentin Tarantino, 1994, 154 min)  
Rebel Without a Cause (Nicholas Ray, 1955, 111 min)  
Red (Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1994, 99 min)  
Rome, Open City (Roberto Rossellini, 1945, 103 min)  
Salesman (Albert & David Maysles, 1969, 85 min)

Scarface (Howard Hawks, 1932, 93 min)  
Searchers, The (John Ford, 1956, 119 min)  
Seven Samurai (Akira Kurosawa, 1954, 207 min)  
Sherman's March (Ross McElwee, 1986, 157 min)  
Some Like it Hot (Billy Wilder, 1959, 120 min)  
Sorrow and the Pity, The (Marcel Ophuls, 1971, 251 min)  
Star Wars Episode IV: The New Hope (George Lucas, 1977, 121 min)  
Sunrise (F.W. Murnau, 1927, 94 min)  
Sunset Boulevard (Billy Wilder, 1950, 110 min)  
Sweet Smell of Success, The (Alexander Mackendrick, 1957, 96 min)  
Thin Blue Line, The (Errol Morris, 1988, 103 min)  
Tongues Untied (Marlon Riggs, 1989, 55 min)  
To Live (Zhang Yimou, 1994, 125 min)  
Top Hat (Mark Sandrich, 1935, 101 min)  
Touch of Evil (Orson Welles, 1958, 95 min)  
Treasure of the Sierra Madre (John Huston, 1948, 126 min)  
Trouble in Paradise (Ernst Lubitsch, 1932, 83 min)  
Ugetsu (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1953, 96 min)  
Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958, 128 min)  
Wall-E (Andrew Stanton, 2008, 98 min)  
West Side Story (Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, 1961, 152 min)  
White Ribbon, The (Michael Haneke, 2009, 144 min)  
Wizard of Oz, The (Victor Fleming, 1939, 102 min)  
Woman Under the Influence, A (John Cassavetes, 1974, 155 min)  
Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown (Pedro Almodóvar, 1988, 90 min)  
World of Apu, The (Satyajit Ray, 1959, 105 min)  
Xala (Ousmane Sembene, 1975, 123 min)

### **SHORTS (7 shorts)**

Chien Andalou, Un (Luis Buñuel & Salvadore Dali, 1929, 16 min)  
Illusions (Julie Dash, 1988, 34 min)  
La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1963, 28 min)  
Meshes of the Afternoon (Maya Deren, 1944, 14 min)  
What's Opera, Doc? (Chuck Jones, 1957, 7 min)  
Window Water Baby Moving (Stan Brakhage, 1962, 13 min)  
Wallace & Gromit: The Wrong Trousers (Nick Park, 1993, 30 min)

### **TELEVISION (29 titles)**

All In The Family - "Sammy's Visit" (1971-1979, 30 min)  
Breaking Bad - "Season 1, Episode 1" (2008-2013, 45 min)  
Boardwalk Empire - "Two Impostors" (2010-2014, 55 min)  
Cheers - "Christmas Cheer" (1982-1993, 30 min)  
Cosby Show, The - "Night Time Is The Right Time" (1984-1992, 30 min)  
Deadwood - "Deadwood" (2004-2006, 55 min)  
Dick Van Dyke - "That's My Boy" (1961-1966, 30 min)  
Father Knows Best - "A Day In The Country" (1954-1960, 30 min)  
Fugitive, The - "Detour On A Road Going Nowhere" (1963-1967, 51 min)  
Game Of Thrones - "Baelor" (2011-present, 55 min)  
Good Wife, The - "Ham Sandwich" (2009-present, 60 min)  
Hill Street Blues - "Hill Street Station" (1981-1987, 60 min)  
Honeymooners, The - "The \$99,000 Answer" (1955-1956, 30 min)  
House Of Cards - "Season 1, Chapter 4" (2013-present, 55 min)  
I Love Lucy - "Lucy Does A Television Commercial" (1951-1957, 30 min)  
Mad Men - "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" (2007-present, 45 min)  
Mary Tyler Moore Show - "The Last Show" (1970-1977, 30 min)  
M\*A\*S\*H - "Hawkeye" (1972-1983, 25min)  
Peyton Place - "Season 1, Episode 1" (1964-1969, 30 min)  
Roseanne - "Language Lessons" (1988-1997, 22 min)

Roots - "Season 1, Episode 8" (30 min)  
Seinfeld - "The Contest" (1989-1998, 22 min)  
Simpsons, The - "Special Edna" (1989-present, 22 min)  
Sopranos, The - "College" (1999-2007, 55 min)  
St. Elsewhere - "Cora and Arnie" (1982-1988, 60 min)  
Twilight Zone - "Will The Real Martian Please Stand Up?" (1959-1964, 51 min)  
Twin Peaks - "Season 1, Episode 1" (1990-1991, 47 min)  
Upstairs/Downstairs - "The Mistress and the Maids" (1971-1975, 60 min)  
Wire, The - "Final Grades" (2002-2008, 55 min)

**Time limitation for completion of M.F.A program:**

The M.F.A. must be completed within 3 years of admission to the program. This includes all course work and the thesis project. No financial assistance will be provided after the end of the third year. In rare cases, exceptions, withdrawals, and/or readmissions are provided for. See pages 3-4 for policies.

**Start and evaluation of M.F.A. Thesis Project:**

The M.F.A. thesis project cannot begin until the thesis committee has been formed and the thesis project has been approved. Evaluation of the thesis project will be made by the student's committee (as noted above) with the final grade given by the committee chairperson.

**Application for graduation:**

Graduation depends upon meeting the requirements of:

- course work (passed with acceptable grades)
- thesis project (passed by the committee)
- A minimum passing grade of B<sup>+</sup> in the Cinema Literacy examination is required for graduation
- Application for graduation forms are available from the School's Graduate Office

## **M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT PRODUCTION GUIDELINES**

It is very important that every student preparing a production thesis project becomes familiar with the procedures and policies that are specified in the *Motion Picture Production Handbook*. This instruction guide is distributed during the first semester of studies.

**Procedural guidelines:**

- Select a three-member thesis committee. Including 1 "outside" member.
- Examples of an appropriate production thesis project include a feature film; several short films; or one short film (approximately 20 minutes) that demonstrates exceptional mastery. The project may be shot on any approved professionally acceptable moving image format that can be completed within the evidenced resources of time and funding available.
- Final screenplay, detailed budget, proof of funding (if additional funds beyond those allocated by the Department are needed), production plan, and production schedule must be reviewed and approved by the thesis committee prior to principal photography.
- The logistics of the production must not interfere with (a) the reasonable access of equipment by other students working on approved projects or (b) the student's performance in other graduate courses or, if applicable, responsibilities as a graduate assistant.
- M.F.A. production candidates may satisfy the M.F.A. thesis project requirement by serving in major production capacities (director, editor, sound, cinematographer, etc.) - however, thesis credits will be awarded only to substantial creative work in these capacities. Editing or Sound specializations require that candidates serve as Editors or Sound Recordists/Designers on a minimum of two production thesis projects; Cinematography specialization requires that candidates serve as Directors of Photography on at least two production thesis projects.
- At the faculty's determination, more than one M.F.A. candidate may receive M.F.A. project credit on a single production thesis. Any such proposals must be initiated by the candidate(s) and approved by the thesis committee chair(s).

- Committee meetings should be held with ALL committee members present. The entire committee will formally meet on the following occasions: approval of the script; approval of budget and production plan; feedback on dailies; feedback on the rough cut and feedback on the fine cut.
- It is the candidate's responsibility to solicit assistance from the thesis committee members. Any meeting of the entire committee beyond the above requirements must also be at the student's initiative.
- Upon successful delivery of the candidate's production thesis project, a final meeting of the committee will be held with the candidate to approve the thesis project for defense or to stipulate conditions for the final acceptance towards the thesis defense.

**Funding for productions:**

Graduate student filmmakers working on their approved M.F.A. thesis project will be reimbursed for production expenses by the Department of Cinematic Arts. Original receipts of expenses must be maintained and presented for reimbursement of expense. For additional reimbursement procedures please see the "Reimbursements Rules and Procedures" form on page 20 of the manual.

The following restrictions apply to funding the M.F.A. thesis project:

- Each production thesis project will be allowed not more than \$4,000 for pre-approved production expenses. All expenses must be directly related to the actual costs of the production and post-production of the thesis project.

**Important restrictions:**

- NO FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION MAY BE USED FOR THE PURCHASE OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT OR FOR PERSONAL SERVICES OR MATERIALS.
- No funds may be used as payment to an individual.
- Students receiving financial assistance through federal loans need to be aware that their reimbursement funds, are not directly reimbursed as cash, but repaid to their loan. This is a requirement by federal law, so that the cost of student debt does not rise to the detriment of the student.

Again, no matter how students (with loan assistance) are paying for their thesis project (loans, out of pocket, credit card, etc.), the Department of Cinematic Arts is required to pay reimbursements back to student loans, not the student.

- Student projects which are funded in whole or in part by sources outside the Department of Cinematic Arts MUST provide proof of funding before the project committee can approve the thesis project for production. Lack of funding will not constitute a reason for an extension of the thesis project completion deadline.
- Additional reimbursement rules and procedures can be found on page 20.

**Additional restrictions and considerations:**

- Production projects must have all required clearances and/or releases in writing and on file, including but not limited to music and must subscribe to all SAG rules and regulations as applicable.

- All projects must contain a single frame (card) “end credit” reading:

**Student Produced at the Department of Cinematic Arts  
University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida**

- The student MUST deposit a fully mastered high-resolution QuickTime file of the finished film or project with the Graduate Studies office of the School of Communication as a requirement for graduation. A duplicate copy must be deposited with the Department of Cinematic Arts.

**The Department of Cinematic Arts:**

- Shall have the right to use the finished production for pedagogical purposes in undergraduate and graduate courses, giving appropriate credit to the candidate.
- Shall have the right to enter the finished film in student film competitions that have not been entered by the candidate.
- Shall have the right to use all film/video/still/media materials in part or in whole for publicity of the Department, School, and University (refer to The Patent and Copyright Policy of the University of Miami as reflected in The Faculty Manual).

**Use of Equipment:**

The Motion Picture Program authorizes the use of its production and post-production facilities by candidates working on their productions through their semesters of residence only. Additional repair and replacement insurance might be required from students for some equipment rental. The department is not responsible for any additional equipment rented outside of the school by a student for their productions

**M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT DISPOSITION OF SCREENPLAYS**

The thesis screenplay MUST conform to the following conditions:

- It must be in the correct screenwriting format and length;
- It must be completely free of spelling and grammatical errors; and
- It must be professionally formatted, proofread, and bound as is common in the profession and/or submitted as a pdf file.

The program reserves the right to use the screenplay for pedagogical purposes in undergraduate and graduate courses, giving appropriate credit to the candidate.

**M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT BUSINESS PLAN**

Each student will prepare, under the mentorship of his/her chairperson, a business plan for the option, purchase and exploitation of an intellectual property suitable for a feature film. The Business Plan may cover a book, screenplay, song, poem, article or other intellectual property of the student's choosing.

The Business Plan will detail how the student proposes his first film/project outside of school to be financed, including, but not limited to, estimates of production costs, packaging, marketing strategies, sources of financing, advantages to the investor(s), and strategies for obtaining financing for development and film financing.





## Graduate Studies

DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS

### M.F.A. THESIS PROJECT COMMITTEE NOTIFICATION

This form is the initial step in establishing your thesis project committee. Please have your committee members sign below and submit two copies of this form: one to the Chair of the Department of Cinematic Arts, FLW 4004 and one to the Graduate Studies Office, FLW 4025. Once your committee is confirmed, you may begin working on your thesis project.

*As you progress with your project, you must obtain the committee members' signatures on the "M.F.A. Thesis Project Progression and Defense Approval form". If you have questions, please see your chairperson or the MFA Coordinator.*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Committee Members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
1. **CHAIR:** Print Name Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
2. CCA MEMBER Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
3. OUTSIDE MEMBER\* Signature

\*For outside members, please provide vitae/resume and contact information to the committee chair.



## Graduate Studies

DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS

### M.F.A. Thesis Project Progression and Defense Approval Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

- All required clearances and /or releases, including but not limited to music, must be presented to the committee for final approval.
- Student must deliver a copy of their completed M.F.A. thesis project to the Department of Cinematic Arts office prior to receiving official graduation approval.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list your committee members:

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Outside Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Project progression is determined by the committee in agreement with the student and according to the nature of the thesis project. Committee members must indicate their attendance and approval at each phase of the thesis project progression by signing on the designated line. The committee chair is responsible for filling out the topic of each committee review. A minimum of three committee reviews are required prior to receiving "approval to defend" for a thesis project.

\_\_\_\_\_

#### I. Approval of Project

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outside Committee Member

## M.F.A. Thesis Project Progression and Defense Approval Form Page 2

II. Approval of Budget\*

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_   
Outside Committee Member

III. Approval of Production Plan\*

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_   
Outside Committee Member

IV. Committee Review 1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_   
Outside Committee Member

V. Committee Review 2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_   
Outside Committee Member

VI. Committee Review 3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_   
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_   
Outside Committee Member

### M.F.A. Thesis Project Progression and Defense Approval Form

Page 3

VII. Approval to Defend\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outside Committee Member

\*Production thesis project only



VIII. Project Defense

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outside Committee Member

This form must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office immediately after all requirements have been met in order to meet graduation deadlines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Department of Cinematic Arts

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Graduate Studies



## DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS

**Reimbursement Rules and Procedures for CCA Projects****Procedures:**

1. Students seeking reimbursement for course approved production work should submit a detailed budget to their production faculty supervisor or thesis project committee for approval prior to equipment being checked out. This budget must indicate the source of all funding to be used in connection with the said production project. It must also specify the name of the Producer, Director and key crew (Cinematographer and Editor at a minimum).
2. Students must submit original receipts within 15 working days upon completion of shooting in order to receive reimbursement.
3. ONLY one reimbursement submission is accepted per production project.
4. At the time the student submits original receipts to CCA for reimbursement, he/she must also submit their budget signed by their faculty supervisor/committee chair indicating the source of all monies utilized in connection with his/her production project.
5. Each student seeking reimbursement from CCA will be asked to sign a Receipt for Monies Paid Form certifying that to the best of his/her knowledge, all numbers reflected on the budget are true and accurate.
6. All reimbursements must follow the University's Finance Policies and Procedures guidelines.
7. Expenses to be reimbursed must have a legitimate business purpose. ONLY original paid receipts or paid invoices detailing the nature of the expense, date, and amount paid will be accepted. For examples of acceptable paid receipts/invoices see [here](#).

**Rules:**

8. CCA has agreed to reimburse you for faculty pre-approved expenses for the approved project only.
9. No monies may be paid to any student currently attending the University of Miami, directly or indirectly, for their services in connection with the production project.
10. No salary may be paid to anyone directly or indirectly, for their services in connection with the project.
11. Reimbursement may not be sought for the purchase, directly or indirectly, of any equipment (hard drives included) used in connection with the production project.
12. Reimbursement may not be sought for the purchase, directly or indirectly, of any weapons, alcohol or tobacco, products.
13. The thesis project is a requirement of the M.F.A. degree and, as such represents an increase in the costs of attendance in the student's third year. These costs are standard for every third-year student, though they vary based on each student's budget.
14. Any questions regarding any of the above, students should consult the Department of Cinematic Arts at 305.284.6902

I have read the aforementioned and agreed to be bound by its content.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of student's film \_\_\_\_\_



DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am seeking reimbursement from CCA and by signing this receipt for monies paid, certify that to the best of my knowledge, all numbers reflected on the final budget are true and accurate.

I also confirm that my role in this project was that of \_\_\_\_\_ and am to be reimbursed accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
C-Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Graduate Studies

DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATIC ARTS

### M.F.A. THESIS DEFENSE NOTICE

**This notice must be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to defense date with a copy of your thesis project.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Defending: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Thesis Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One-Line Description of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment Required: \_\_\_\_\_

(Computer, Projector, Phone, etc.)

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair please initial approval: \_\_\_\_\_

**Defense location will be determined after submittal of this form and copy of thesis project.**

**Please return this form to the Graduate Studies office  
4025 Wolfson, 305-284-8702, [tracey@miami.edu](mailto:tracey@miami.edu)**

## Suggested Plan of Study

		<b>Credit Hours</b>
<b>FIRST YEAR- Fall</b>		
CCA 601	Principles of Aesthetics and Analysis	3
CCA 611	Writing the Short Film	3
CCA 620	Cinematography	3
CCA 761	Directing the Camera	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
CCA 610	Foundation of Screenwriting	3
CCA 621	Narrative Production	3
CCA 630	Introduction to Editing	3
CCA 670	The Independent Producer	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>SECOND YEAR - Fall</b>		
CCA 680	Inside the Entertainment Industry	3
Motion Pictures Studies Course (600 Level or Above)		3
Elective 1,2		3
Elective 1,2		3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
CCA 750	From Script to Screen	3
Elective 1,2		3
Elective 1,2		3
Elective 1,2		3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>THIRD YEAR - Fall</b>		
CCA 815	MFA Thesis	6
Elective 1,2		3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
CCA 815	MFA Thesis	6
Elective 1,2		3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>66</b>

<sup>1</sup> Select 600/700 level courses with input from advisor. At least 12 selected credits must be at or above the 700-level. Courses may be taken, with program director approval, from other programs or departments within the University of Miami.

<sup>2</sup> No more than 9 credit hours will be allowed for graduate internships and advanced projects and directed research.

## Curriculum Requirements

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
CCA 601	Principles of Aesthetics and Analysis	3
CCA 610	Foundation of Screenwriting	3
CCA 611	Writing the Short Film	3
CCA 620	Cinematography	3
CCA 621	Narrative Production	3
CCA 630	Introduction to Editing	3
CCA 660	Directing the Actor	3
CCA 670	The Independent Producer	3
CCA 680	Inside the Entertainment Industry	3
CCA 750	From Script to Screen	3
CCA 815	MFA Thesis (Total of 12 credits is required)	12



Motion Pictures Studies Course (600 Level or Above)	3
CCA Elective Courses 1,2	21
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>	<b>66</b>

<sup>1</sup> Students must select eight elective CCA courses with approval from their advisor. Courses outside of CCA may count towards elective credits, with permission. See below for a list of approved CCA elective courses.

<sup>2</sup> No more than 9 credit hours will be allowed for graduate internships and advanced projects and directed research.

### List of Approved Electives

Students can enroll in other approved CCA courses or courses outside of the department with approval from their advisor

Code	Title	Credit Hours
CCA 602	Global Issues and Filmmaking	3
CCA 609	Legal Aspects of Motion Pictures	3
CCA 612	Write for TV	3
CCA 626	Adaptation	3
CCA 658	Documentary Production	3
CCA 660	Directing the Actor	3
CCA 666	Character and Dialogue	3
CCA 670	The Independent Producer	3
CCA 686	Online Writing the Genre Script	3
CCA 694	Motion Picture Marketing and Distribution	3
CCA 707	Pedagogy and Film	3
CCA 710	Writing the Feature-Length Screenplay	3
CCA 730	Advanced Editing	3
CCA 740	Sound Design	3
CCA 752	Advanced Cinematography	3
CCA 761	Directing the Camera	3
CCA 794	Motion Picture Internship 1	1-3
CCA 795	Special Topics in Motion Pictures	3

<sup>1</sup> No more than 6 credits total of CCA 794 can count towards the degree.