



Rename the Bachelor of Arts in "Film Studies" to "Cinema and Media Studies" (PCC 19001)

PRESENTED BY Janna Bianchini, Chair, Senate Programs, Curricula, and Courses Committee

REVIEW DATES SEC – October 22, 2019 | SENATE – November 5, 2019

VOTING METHOD In a single vote

RELEVANT POLICY/DOCUMENT NA

NECESSARY APPROVALS Senate, President, University System of Maryland Chancellor, and Maryland Higher Education Commission

ISSUE

The College of Arts and Humanities proposes to rename its current Bachelor of Arts program in "Film Studies" to "Cinema and Media Studies." The new title better reflects the current scholarship, teaching, and learning activities of the program, which go beyond film studies in the traditional sense. Changes in the production, distribution, and reception of moving images since the beginning of the new millennium have caused a sea change not just in the economics of the film and video industry, but in the very nature of what constitutes film itself. In fact, film—celluloid strips that run through a projector—no longer exists, outside of a few niche fields of independent or experimental filmmaking. There is little difference anymore between any number of modes of moving image forms. Television, motion pictures, music and music video, YouTube video—to pick just the most popular examples—have lost much of their older distinctions in terms of aesthetics, production, and distribution.

Various institutions within the field have already adopted this more inclusive name. The most prominent professional organization in the field is the Society of Cinema and Media Studies. The society's journal is titled, *The Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. Many peer academic institutions, including Yale, Indiana, California-Berkeley, UCLA, Penn State, Minnesota, and Chicago, have adopted the same title or a similar variation that reflects the field's natural evolution over the last two decades. The new program title of "Cinema and Media Studies," therefore, better reflects both the professional and intellectual transformations in the field.

This proposal was approved by the Senate Programs, Curricula, and Courses committee on October 4, 2019.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula, and Courses recommends that the Senate approve this program title change.

COMMITTEE WORK

The committee considered this proposal at its meeting on October 4, 2019. Luka Arsenjuk and Eric Zakim, Associate Professors in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, and Ralph Bauer, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, presented the proposal and responded to questions from the committee. The proposal was unanimously approved by the committee.

ALTERNATIVES

The Senate could decline to approve this program title change.

RISKS

If the Senate declines to approve this name change, the name will continue to be an outdated and inaccurate description of the program's scholarship, teaching, and learning activities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications with this proposal.

University of Maryland PCC
Program/Curriculum/Unit Proposal

PCC Log No: 19001

Program: Film Studies

Department/Unit: School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

College/School: Arts and Humanities

Proposal Contact Person (with email): Eric Zakim (zakim@umd.edu)

Type of Action (check one):

- Curriculum change (includes modifying minors, concentrations/specializations and creating informal specializations)
- Curriculum change is for an LEP Program
- Rename a program or formal Area of Concentration
- Establish/Discontinue a formal Area of Concentration
- Other:
- Establish a new academic degree/certificate program
- Create an online version of an existing program
- Establish a new minor
- Suspend/Discontinue a degree/certificate program
- Establish a new Master or Certificate of Professional Studies program
- New Professional Studies program will be administered by Office of Extended Studies

Italics indicate that the proposal must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Approval Signatures - Please print name, sign, and date. For proposals requiring multiple unit approvals, please use additional cover sheet(s).

1. Department Committee Chair Mehl A. Penrose *Mehl A. Penrose* April 9, 2018
2. Department Chair FATEMEH KESHAUARI *Fatemeh Keshaouari* April 9, 2018
3. College/School PCC Chair Alexandro Canique *Alexandro Canique* 5/8/19
4. Dean Ralph Bucci *Ralph Bucci* 5/14/19
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) _____
6. Chair, Senate PCC Jinna Banchini *Jinna Banchini* 10-7-19
7. University Senate Chair (if required) _____
8. Senior Vice President and Provost _____

Instructions:

When approved by the dean of the college or school, please send the proposal and signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus-5031, **and** email the proposal document as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

Summary of Proposed Action (use additional sheet if necessary):

The Program in Film Studies is proposing to rename the program, to be called: Program in Cinema and Media Studies. As outlined in the accompanying explanation, the renaming derives from both professional and intellectual transformations in the field of cinema and media studies. The proposed name responds to changes in the production and study of the moving image, both within the program and within the discipline at large. In this, the new name aligns the the UMD Program with academic norms in the US and better reflects the content and approach of the major. For students, the new name indicates more accurately the relation between course of study and the professional landscape that the study of cinema and media engages. As well, the new name announces to the world outside the university the focus and preparation of students who have majored in this Program.

Unit Code(s) (to be entered by the Office of Academic Planning and Programs):

University of Maryland PCC
Program/Curriculum/Unit Proposal

PCC Log No: 19001

Program: FILM Studies

Department/Unit: English Language and Literature

College/School: ARHU

Proposal Contact Person (with email): Christina Walter, Director of Undergraduate Studies in English

Type of Action (check one):

Curriculum change (includes modifying minors, concentrations/specializations and creating informal specializations)

Curriculum change is for an LEP Program

Rename a program or formal Area of Concentration

Establish/Discontinue a formal Area of Concentration

Other:

Establish a new academic degree/certificate program

Create an online version of an existing program

Establish a new minor

Suspend/Discontinue a degree/certificate program

Establish a new Master or Certificate of Professional Studies program

New Professional Studies program will be administered by Office of Extended Studies

Italics indicate that the proposal must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Approval Signatures - Please print name, sign, and date. For proposals requiring multiple unit approvals, please use additional cover sheet(s).

1. Department Committee Chair Christina Walter Christina Walter 10/23/19

2. Department Chair Amanda Bailey A Bailey 10/24/19

3. College/School PCC Chair Alexandro Coneguez Alexandro Coneguez 5/8/19

4. Dean Ralph Bauer Ralph Bauer 5/13/19

5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) _____

6. Chair, Senate PCC _____

7. University Senate Chair (if required) _____

8. Senior Vice President and Provost _____

Instructions:

When approved by the dean of the college or school, please send the proposal and signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus-5031, **and** email the proposal document as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

Summary of Proposed Action (use additional sheet if necessary):

The English Department supports FILM's proposal to change their name to the Program in Cinema and Media Studies. Such a change will dovetail nicely with the Media Studies track in the new English major, which will roll out in Fall 2018, and which will include a number of cinema courses.

Unit Code(s) (to be entered by the Office of Academic Planning and Programs):

Proposal for Renaming Program Program in Film Studies

March 1, 2019

Submitted by Eric Zakim, Director

Narrative Justification

PCC Manual 1B: Proposals to rename, merge, or split a program consist of a cover sheet and narrative proposal only. Use of a particular proposal format is not required. A straightforward narrative justification normally will be sufficient. Appropriate justification for renaming, merging, or splitting a program might include a need for conformity with national norms or a requirement for a more accurate program description, in the interests of enrolled students.

The Program in Film Studies requests to change the name of the program and the associated undergraduate major. The proposed name will be: **Program in Cinema and Media Studies**. The associated undergraduate major will be called: **Cinema and Media Studies**. Within the Schedule of Classes (Testudo) and in SIS and other advising information systems, we would like the Program's rubric to be **CINE**.

Changes in the production, distribution, and reception of moving images since the beginning of the new millennium have caused a sea change not just in the economics of the film and video industry, but in the very nature of what constitutes film itself. In fact, film—celluloid strips that run through a projector—no longer exists, outside of a few niche fields of independent or experimental filmmaking. “Moving image,” as a designation for the myriad cinematic images that are distributed through either traditional means or new digital platforms, has replaced “film” as an analytic term of any true significance.

Academically, film and cinema studies programs have been changing as part of a natural evolution of teaching and scholarship that looks at and analyzes the aesthetics and the transforming conditions in the production and consumption of moving images. Some of the best work in recent years by individual researchers in the field—both among our faculty at the University of Maryland and throughout the profession—have reflected an acute awareness of the reorientation of film studies toward a perspective that understands cinema and media more generally as part of a large number of intersecting contexts. Institutional examples of response to the changing conditions of cinema and media studies are many and begin with the most prominent professional organization in film studies, which changed its name in 2002 from the Society of Cinema Studies to the Society of Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS). In October 2018, SCMS changed the name of the organization's journal from *Cinema Journal* to *The Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*.

In a similar way, most of our peer institutions have created programs or changed older names of film studies programs to reflect these changes, including Yale University (Film and

Media Studies Program); Indiana University (Cinema and Media Arts); UC Berkeley (Department of Film and Media); UCLA (Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media); Pennsylvania State University (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies); University of Minnesota (Cinema and Media Culture); and the University of Chicago (Cinema and Media Studies).

At the University of Maryland, as our program has succeeded in growing and taking in new members, the change to Cinema and Media Studies will more accurately reflect both the research and teaching emphases of the faculty, as well as the interests and focus of the students. We started off some years ago as a small coterie of film scholars. But as the field and the program have evolved, along with cinema and media in general, the character of the program has, by necessity, changed as well. The current faculty feels stymied by an older designation that does not show the currency of our program to students or outside colleagues. While many of the course names still use “film” in their title, these are holdovers from the origins of the program 10 years ago, when film still possessed a greater singularity for the faculty and in the academic community at large. At this point, we are trying to change the name of the program in order to reflect changes that have already occurred tectonically in the profession, in research and scholarship, inside our classrooms, and outside in the broader world, where there is little difference anymore between any number of modes of moving image forms. Television, motion pictures, music and music video, YouTube video—to pick just the most popular examples—have lost much of their older distinctions in terms of aesthetics, production, and distribution. Our program has metamorphosed quite naturally, along with the transformations that have affected our object of study.

Let me offer two examples from my own teaching. This spring, I am organizing a lecture class, “Film Art in a Global Society,” which takes up the question of world cinema in the age of digital production and distribution. This is an older Comparative Literature course that Film Studies has recently taken responsibility for, in order to revamp it and make it more current. I am principal lecturer, but others from the Film Studies faculty are coming to the class to talk about their areas of interest and expertise.

As we’ve defined it, this course focuses on current dynamics in world cinema, and within that context it is impossible to speak singularly about film. The change in the production and distribution of global media has caused the complete abandonment of older models of “world cinema” founded on a series of well-defined national cinemas. In its place has come a polyvalent, polymorphous transnational model of world cinema and media that cannot be contained within a single form of the analytical object. From the influence of Netflix to transmit digitally cinematic media from and to points around the world, to the influence of Ramadan television melodrama in the Muslim world, to the hypertrophied transnationalism of South Korean moving image aesthetics in film, television, and music videos, the course by necessity has engaged a broad swath of moving image production. Perhaps most illustrative in this regard is how a definition and analysis of transnational women’s cinema requires a capacious examination of moving-image aesthetics, international distribution networks across several platforms, and the place of media writ large in the global political arena.

In the fall, I taught a different course on sound and music in cinema. When I studied in conservatory and university, music, literature, and film were each a separate subject. It was up to me then to invent the analytical space that would see them as interconnected. While I still believe in the rigor that disciplinarity instills in the study of culture, one cannot teach sound and music in cinema without taking into account the recent explosion of sound studies and cinema and media studies in ways that broaden our fundamental understanding of what constitutes film, literature, and music (whether popular, experimental, or classical). By intellectual necessity, I taught this course as an intermedial encounter between forms, and not as a mode of inquiry that can be defined within itself.

Throughout the Film Program's curriculum, issues of media and cinema as far-reaching and capacious notions have moved front and center into the courses that we teach. Faculty no longer restrict themselves to a traditional definition of film in order to analyze and teach ideas about media production and consumption—whether focused on this country or, perhaps most especially, on the various places in the world that our faculty engage. Our faculty have taught courses with titles such as “Theories of Media”; “Critical Approaches to Modern Culture and Media”; “Disney without Disney - The Afterlives of Children's Media Icons”; “Geopolitics of Contemporary Storytelling”; “Introduction to Digital Video Production”; “Cinema in the History of Media”; and “Feminist Film and Media Theory.” Several new courses have expanded into a wide contextual consideration of cinema, media, and popular culture, such as “David Bowie, Film, and Audio-Visual Media,” “The Essay Across Media,” and “Animation and Social Representation.” Several courses on more traditional film topics have been widened to admit changes in the media landscape, dropping the word “film” from the title, or adding “media” to expand the scope of the analytical investigation, such as “Melodrama”; “The Global Western”; “Representing the Holocaust”; “The Israel-Palestine Conflict in Cinema and Media.” The change in the Program's name signifies curricular directions that have already been implemented and that have garnered significant student response. We want to reflect in the name what is already happening on the ground.

In recent years, our faculty has become ever more involved in several campus and college initiatives to expand the study and teaching of media and digital humanities. Among current collaborations involving our faculty, we have an ongoing project with MITH (Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities) and the Libraries concerning the AFL-CIO Archive, which includes films, radio recordings, photographs, and print media—some of which has already been digitized and in that form has become the object of preservation and study. We have also co-sponsored a three-day conference with the History Department on representations of history on Middle East television of recent years. In Spring 2018, the Program organized an international conference entitled “Constellations of the Political: Media and Representation in the Neoliberal Age,” which reflects broadly the research orientation and interests of the faculty. In the future, we already have planned conferences that address cinema as a component of a broader consideration of media studies: a collaboration with the Maya Brin Residency to bring in a Russian filmmaker, videographer, and avant-garde poet and host a conference in relation to the media intersections embodied in his work (in Spring 2020); and a conference on feminist film and media (in 2020-21).

Changes in courses and the Film Program's focus have come about because of the naturally evolving research interests of the faculty, in particular, additions to the faculty since the advent of the program: Luka Arsenjuk, Hester Baer, Oliver Gaycken, and Mauro Resmini. Each of them brings perspectives on research that are not confined to film studies as it has been traditionally defined. Luka Arsenjuk is engaged in a number of cross-medial projects. The major contribution of his soon-to-be-published monograph on the Soviet director and theorist Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948) is to understand Eisenstein as an artist and theorist engaged by a wide-ranging idea of what constituted movement and moving images. As part of another UMD Film Studies research project, Arsenjuk's article on internet-based production and distribution of video essays has recently won an award as best essay in an edited collection by the Society of Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS). The SCMS awards (which are listed at http://www.cmstudies.org/?page=2018_awards) recognize a wide range of scholarship on various media. Hester Baer is a participant in the collaborative research project "Feminisms in the Digital Age: Transnational Activism in Germany and Beyond" (<http://www.artsrn.ualberta.ca/feminism/>) and has written on gender in the digital age in articles such as "Redoing Feminism: Digital Activism, Body Politics, and Neoliberalism" and "Digital Feminisms and the Impasse: Time, Disappearance, and Delay in Neoliberalism." Oliver Gaycken's work on early cinema in relation to the history of science and animation has by necessity involved a cross-medial perspective on what constitutes meaning in the moving image. Gaycken is set to implement a new course next year on visualization in scientific research. In addition, Gaycken has been consistently involved with MITH and has been spearheading the Program's involvement in projects in digital humanities and media archives. Mauro Resmini's work looks at cinema within a large perspective of European political and social development in the second half of the 20th century. A recent article, "Il Senso dell'intreccio: History, Totality, and Collective Agency in *Romanzo Criminale*," explores the representation of history and politics in *Romanzo Criminale*, an Italian transmedial franchise that stretches across cinema, television, and the digital. For Resmini, criticism is never defined singularly within a narrow understanding of film production and his work consistently engages cinema as part of a broader activity of cultural theory and media production and consumption.

For most of our students, whether majors or not, the relation between course of study and post-graduate career is of great importance. In tracking our graduates, we find them throughout the mediasphere, which means to us they are taking full advantage of the flexibility, breadth, and depth offered by the major. What career tracking also shows us is that students are looking at the Program already *as* a Program in Cinema and Media Studies, both in what the major offers the students in terms of course experiences and in the diverse ways that students have fulfilled their requirements and exploited the program for their post-college careers.

In sum, the proposed name change responds to a host of transformations taking place in the fields of cinema and media studies, transformations that have already affected and influenced what we do here on campus. The name, Program in Cinema and Media Studies, is meant to reflect accurately what we as a unit already do in our teaching and our research.

**Addendum—Proposal for Renaming Program
Program in Film Studies** □

May 1, 2019

Cinema, which appeared historically during the second industrial revolution, has always had a dynamic and often competitive relationship with other modern media. But while it was perhaps possible for some time to think of cinema as an isolated object of study (due mostly to its monopoly on the production and exhibition of moving images), it is now impossible to separate the study of cinema from the larger media context into which it has increasingly been integrated. To study and teach film today, it is necessary to consider it in relation to the history and theory of media more generally—hence our request to change the name of our Program.

The specificity of approaches to media in the Program in Film Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, can be clearly distinguished from the approaches in other units in the College of Arts and Humanities.

The way media are studied and taught in the Program in Film Studies may be differentiated from the approach to the subject in the Department of English and the various literature and language departments in the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. Film Studies considers cinema as part of a longer history not only of textual but also of optical and audio-visual media, which are related to the history of the book, of literary genres, and of literary culture more broadly, but certainly cannot be reduced to it. Consequently, what the Program in Film Studies teaches students is a distinct critical and analytical vocabulary for understanding audio-visual phenomena in their specificity and in relation to their historical-cultural contexts. In this regard, one of the key strengths of the Program in Film Studies lies in its broadly transnational and comparative scope. What the Program offers is a rigorous course of study that, aside from English-language contexts and material, introduces students to cinema and other audio-visual media (television, internet culture, digital culture, videography) in the cultural and linguistic worlds of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

What distinguishes our approach to cinema and media from that of the Department of Communication is primarily our focus on interpretative (hermeneutic) and analytical questions of art and aesthetics. All modern audio-visual media inscribe themselves in the

history of human communication, but they also belong to the history of artistic forms and aesthetic value—a history that exceeds the boundaries of the communicative function of cultural artifacts. Media-centered courses in the Department of Communication tend either toward the examination of the communicative function of media (see COMM370 Mediated Communication or COMM371 Communication in Digital Media) or toward the practical application of communication concepts and techniques (see COMM373 Communication and Digital Visual Narrative or COMM374 Communicating Visually: Message Production and Digital Media). In our approach to cinema and media, we instead follow in the long tradition of philosophy and critical thought, which has always understood art and aesthetics as a crucial field of modern experience. Without ignoring the status of cinema and other audio-visual media as means of communication, we study and teach how the history of cinematic and audio-visual media relates to the transformation of artistic forms and aesthetic experiences. More generally, we see media as one of the primary sites in which modern societies reflect and “work through” some of the basic questions and contradictions of their social, political, cultural, and technological existence. Within a framework that is equally indebted to media history, philosophy, and critical theory, we look at media as symptomatic formations through which we are able to understand the larger shifts in human culture and the ways humans make sense of and orient themselves in history.