

M.F.A. in Film and Television Production Curriculum

It should be emphasized from the outset that the TFM Graduate Program *stresses hands-on creative endeavor in the context of independent filmmaking*. Ultimately, it is the student's artistic achievement that will determine success in this program. All incoming TFM Graduate Students start in the fall semester with the same curriculum, and thus form a tightly knit group. The collaborative alliances students form in the first two semesters are very likely to extend through their graduate careers (and beyond) and strongly influence the success of their creative work in the program. These alliances are not necessarily limited to other graduate students; there are many talented and industrious undergraduates who support crew production.

Overview of the Curriculum

Your production work will be linked to the courses you take, with several independent or "Special Studies" courses available to you. Over the course of your graduate studies, you are required to take a total of 54 graduate units (18 3-unit courses), culminating with a directed thesis project (TFM 790). You may, of course, take more than 54 units, but only 54 will count towards your degree (you, with the advice of the Graduate Advisor, will designate which 54). **Graduate courses are considered those with a 601 level catalogue number or higher.** Courses with a 500 level number are advanced undergraduate courses. You will be allowed to take certain **500 level classes** for graduate credit. This is an attractive option for most of our graduate students since many of these undergraduate classes offer valuable craft skill content. As you will learn, you can use various "clerical workarounds" to take additional lower division undergraduate courses (those with numbers below 500). Moreover, you are allowed to take up to **six Special Studies courses** (3 TFM 798 courses and 3 THEA 795 courses) for graduate credit (see "electives" below). Finally, you may take up to three courses in departments outside the School for Masters credit. As you can see, we offer an unusually flexible "elective-heavy" curriculum designed to support ongoing creative productivity.

To check the current course offerings, go to <https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/search>

Just select the appropriate calendar and click on it. Under "Class Schedule" in the upper left corner of the page, click on the department you would like to see. (TFM or THEA, for example). To see our program listings, go to "TFM."

Normally, TFM graduate students are expected to take **9-12 units per semester** (3-4 classes) in order to graduate in three years. In their third year students may take only 6 units, in order to concentrate on their thesis project. TFM graduate students may extend beyond the expected three years in order to complete thesis projects. Although technically you are allowed up to six years to complete your program of study and your thesis project, going beyond a third year is strongly discouraged.

Degree Requirements:

Specific Requirements for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Candidates for the Master of Fine Arts degree in film and television production must complete 54 units of coursework to include the following:

1. Core preparation courses comprised of fifteen (15) units, Television, Film and New Media 601,610 605, 625, and 670.
2. Six (6) units of production electives selected from TFM 522,540,621,627, and 662.
3. Nine (9) units of critical studies electives selected from TFM 530, 563, 571 and 573.
4. Nine (9) units of Capstone Project Preparation. TFM 675 and 790.
5. With approval of the graduate adviser, fifteen (15) additional graduate units in Television, Film and New Media, Theatre, and other departments.
6. No more than nine (9) units of electives outside the School of Theatre, Television, and Film.

Core Preparation

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
TFM 0601	Business Aspects of Film	3.00
TFM 0605	Seminar: Production for Television and Film	3.00
TFM 0610	Seminar in Writing for Television and Film	3.00
TFM 0625	Seminar: Writing Short Narrative and Documentary Films	3.00
TFM 0670	Seminar: Midway Review Production	3.00

Production Electives

Select 6 units from the following:

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
TFM 0522	Advanced Film and Television Cinematography	3.00
TFM 0540	Documentary Production	3.00

TFM 0621	Sound Design for Film	3.00
TFM 0627	Film Editing and Postproduction	3.00
TFM 0662	Scene-Based Film Production	3.00

Critical Studies Requirement

Select 9 units from the following:

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
TFM 0530	Selected Topics in Genre Studies for Television and Film	3.00
TFM 0563	Documentary: History and Theory	3.00
TFM 0571*	Selected Topics in Director Studies	3.00 – 6.00
TFM 0573*	Selected Topics in History of Film, TV, and Media	3.00 – 6.00

Capstone Experience Preparation

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
TFM 0675	Seminar: Research and Bibliography in Media Production	3.00
TFM 0790*	Portfolio/Examination Preparation	6.00

Electives

Select 15 units from the following:

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
TFM 0522	Advanced Film and Television Cinematography	3.00
TFM 0550	Art Direction for Television and Film	3.00
TFM 0551	Production Design for Television and Film	3.00
TFM 0559	Digital Design for Film and Stage	3.00
TFM 0560	Advanced Film	3.00
TFM 0561	Advanced Television	3.00
TFM 0563	Documentary: History and Theory	3.00
TFM 0590	Directing for Film and Television	3.00

TFM 0596	Selected Topics in Television, Film and New Media	1.00 – 4.00
TFM 0621	Sound Design for Film	3.00
TFM 0627	Film Editing and Postproduction	3.00
TFM 0662	Scene-Based Film Production	3.00
TFM 0798+	Special Study	1.00 – 4.00
THEA 0610	Seminar in Design Aesthetics for Theatre, Television, and Film	3.00
Total Units		54

*May be repeated once for credit

+May be taken for a total of 9 credits