

TFM MFA in Television, Film and New Media Curriculum

Following is a “snapshot” of a typical program of study:

First Year Curriculum: Fall

You will find that the TFM Program offers a great deal of elective flexibility. Among the 54 units you must take to earn the Master of Fine Arts Degree, only seven courses are required: TFM 601, TFM 605, TFM 610, TFM 625, TFM 670 and TFM 675, and TFM 790. As you progress through the required 54 course units, many elective options will become available to you.

Each graduate student is required to begin the fall semester with two seminar classes: **TFM 605 and TFM 625**. In addition, each student will take one critical studies elective and one production elective, for a total load of 12 units.

TFM 605 Seminar in Production for TV and Film (required fall semester). This is a weekly seminar meeting of new graduate students. The seminar is organized around the production exercises and the development of a short film: a documentary or a fiction narrative film. The class will familiarize you with each other, with the second and third-year grads, and with undergrads whose skill sets are often quite impressive. You will learn about the TFM equipment and facilities, and will be introduced to the faculty and staff. You will gain a working knowledge of the hardware and software you will be using to carry out your projects. Apart from the focus on creative/collaborative work, this seminar also focuses your thinking on questions of media literacy and on the critical appraisal of your and others' work.

TFM 625 Seminar in Writing Short Narrative and Documentary.

(required fall semester): The primary purpose of the seminar is to address the process of screenwriting. The seminar will cover both fictional narrative screenwriting and documentary screenwriting. The goal of the seminar is to complete a viable short film screenplay (fiction or documentary) that you will put into production in TFM 670 for your Midway Review Project. Your screenwriting will be subjected to frequent and comprehensive critiques by the instructor and by the seminar participants. More than write your screenplay, you will effectively *rewrite* it until it is deemed ready for production.

Electives: Students will take 2 electives in their first semester, one in critical studies and one additional elective from a range of skills classes or independent study options, depending on what your interests are, and where your strengths and weaknesses lie

Spring

TFM 0601 Business Aspects of Film. This course provides knowledge critical to the survival and success of graduate students entering the professional world of independent filmmaking. Specific topics relate to career development and professional success as a filmmaker, including portfolio, press kits, film festival strategy, PR, marketing, and distribution.

TFM 670 Seminar: Midway Review Production must be taken during the spring semester of your first year. In this class, you will complete your **Midway Review Project** which will be presented as an authored DVD with commentary and “bonus features.” This will be buttressed by a written analysis of your project, its aesthetic and conceptual influences and its design. This project/written report combination is a dress rehearsal for the thesis project and thesis defense to come later.

Electives: Students will take 2 electives in their second semester, one production elective and one additional elective from a range of skills classes or independent study options.

The Midway Review is the first big hurdle each graduate student must

jump over on his or her way to the Master of Fine Arts Degree. It is analogous to the qualifying exam in a Ph.D. Program in that you must pass the review before you can qualify for the capstone project. The Midway Review takes place at the end of the spring semester in TFM 670. The written reports will be carefully scrutinized and evaluated by the TFM 670 Professor and **a committee of TFM faculty will review the projects and make recommendations**. Each student will be given an appraisal of his or her Midway Review work with advice and recommendations. Students who do not pass this review will have one more chance to bring up the quality of their work to passing standards. If you pass the Midway review, you will be eligible to present a thesis project proposal.

Second Year Curriculum: Fall

TFM 0610 Seminar in Writing for Television and Film . This seminar will continue to develop the writing skills of the student, with the goal of developing a solid script that will be the basis of the thesis project.

Electives: Students will elect one production and one critical studies elective this semester.

Spring

TFM 675 Seminar: Research and Bibliography in Media Production. Once you have passed your Midway Review and the four aforementioned seminars, you become eligible to propose a thesis project to the TFM faculty. This requires one more course, TFM 675, Thesis Project Proposal. The thesis proposal follows a prescribed format. The class offers a detailed template for the proposal which reflects the creative preparation a filmmaker or screenwriter engages in at the initial stages of production: A conceptual framework is proposed, film and literary sources are identified for research, a script or treatment is generated along with a production plan, schedule and budget, and a method of approach is

specified. You will identify a TFM instructor to be your faculty supervisor on the project. If you pass the Thesis Proposal class with a B or better, the Graduate Advisor will recommend you for **Advancement to Candidacy**. All TFM thesis projects follow the Plan B thesis model, where the student will create a major portfolio project that will serve as a capstone experience and comprehensive examination.

Electives: Students will take two additional electives this semester.

Third Year Curriculum:

Fall

TFM 790 Portfolio/Examination Preparation This class is devoted to the production of the actual thesis project. In close consultation with your faculty supervisor you will pre-produce and shoot the project you developed in TFM675 .

Electives: Students will take one critical studies elective this semester.

Spring

TFM 790 Portfolio/Examination Preparation This second session of 790 is devoted to the post production of the thesis project. In close consultation with your faculty supervisor you finish and prepare for the screening of your film or presentation of your capstone project .

Electives: Students will take one additional elective this semester

Your third year will end with the presentation of your capstone project to a jury of TFM faculty. With the approval of your faculty supervisor, you will schedule a screening or presentation of your project to a jury made of up 3 TFM faculty, and other members of your class and the department. You will offer an introduction of your project, and then provide an oral defense after the presentation. With the jury's approval you will have finished the program requirements, and will be awarded the M.F.A. degree.

TFM Facilities

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For a detailed summary of the TFM equipment and facilities, including the facility policy, see *Rosebud*, the TFM facilities Policy manual.

The TFM faculty offices and facilities are located in the Communication Building. Following is a partial list of the equipment and facilities offered through the TFM Program:

Equipment Checkout

The TFM equipment checkout facility is opened five days a week from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. It houses a full complement of production gear including DV cameras, HDV cameras, Sony F3 cameras (with 10-bit Samurai recorders), 16 and super-16 mm cameras, studio lights, location lighting kits, grip and gaffing support gear including several grip and mounting kits, a pneumatic dolly, doorway dolly, camera mounts, digital and analogue audio recorders, and two digital sound effects libraries. Advanced student productions are often shot on our Sony F3 cameras, or on RED cameras (as of this writing, TFM owns no RED cameras, but can offer access to discount rental prices for RED MX and Epic cameras, as well as Arri Alexa). The TFM Program also has an arrangement with Panavision that provides student access to a full super 35 mm Panavision camera package, including lenses and camera support)

Studio A

Located in the Communication Building. A Master Control area, two full-time engineers support this studio. The studio is outfitted with three studio pedestal-mounted DV cameras, an automated lighting console, Mole- Richardson lighting, an audio control suite with digital audio console, state-of-the-art digital switcher and CG.

Studio C “SOUND STAGE”

This is a larger studio once occupied by KPBS, the local PBS affiliate, which is now based on the south end of the campus. Studio C now stands as a “shell” equipped with 300 amps of electrical power and a scene dock with a variety of flats used to create sets. Advanced and graduate student filmmakers use Studio C to build free-standing sets for single-camera style shoots.

The Postproduction Facility

In 2000, a 20-room postproduction facility was dedicated to TFM. The facility includes one room dedicated to ADR and Foley sound work. This room includes a Logic mixing board system, and is acoustically engineered for voice-over recording and ADR work. Each editing room in the post facility is equipped with Apple Power Mac 8-core processor hardware, Apple’s Studio Suite, including the latest Final Cut Pro, and the Adobe Production Suite, as well as many other applications relevant to production work. Additionally, there are several rooms outfitted with Pro Tools, and Logic, including one high-end Logic System with 24-bit sound and a robotically controlled external mixing board. Software is being continuously updated and expanded.

The Maya / ANIMATION / COMPOSITING Computer Lab

Equipped with 20 Macintosh 8-core Power Mac computers, loaded with the Apple Studio Suite and the Adobe Production Suite Software (plus much more – see above). This lab supports TFM Maya Animation and After Effects Compositing curriculum, as well as editing and sound design curriculum. In addition to a teaching classroom, students completing postproduction on student projects also use this lab. Single private editing rooms are also available on a reservation basis.

Smart Classrooms

There are several “smart classrooms” equipped with Macintosh and PC computers and DLP video projectors.

The Don Powell Theatre

This is a “luxury” theater used for the Theater Program’s most ambitious season’s plays and for media events, including several TFM Student Film Showcases. The theatre has a seating capacity of 500 and boasts state-of-the-art technology, including an excellent sound system and a Panasonic 3-DLP 10,000 lumen digital cinema projector.

The Little Theatre

This theater was restored in 1995 to show off the splendor of its original WPA period design. It seats 150, has surround sound distribution and a high-brightness digital cinema projector. The theater normally serves as a smart classroom, but is also used for special screenings.

The Production Center for Documentary and Drama

Directed by Professor Tim Powell, the Production Center provides selected students practical experience in narrative, documentary and community service media projects that are produced through the Center. It also provides important substantive professional credits.