

Academic Business Plan: Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Cinema

Overview

The Cinema Department was established in 1970, and it has been a legendary center for alternative, experimental forms of cinematic expression, recognized as one of the most influential programs for the cinematic art in the United States. The Cinema Department has two areas of focus: cinema production and film studies. The cinema production side challenges students to broaden their creativity through various courses focusing on experimental film, video art, non-fiction, animation, audio works, installation, and performance, while the film studies side discusses film history, theory, and other topics in cinema to expand students' knowledge and understanding of the art of the moving image. Students in this program will be encouraged to explore in depth the formal, historical and cultural meanings of cinema and its components, processes and tools, as a means to better develop creative strategies for self-expression. What makes a work of cinema far-reaching, expressive and unique, inventive, discerning or effective, will be among the questions that we will raise in an environment fostered by critical and creative thinking—an environment where making something is not only about understanding how to use the tools but how to innovate and how to lead.

Students in the Cinema Department will be exposed to the contemporary practice in the cinematic art through the Visiting Film/Video Artists/Scholars Speakers Series, an event the Cinema Department invites contemporary film/video artists and scholars for their screenings and presentations, and the Cinema Department provides opportunities for students to organize on/off-campus exhibitions/screening events, including the Student Experimental Film Festival in Binghamton, an annual showcase of experimental films made by college students nationwide.

Now the Cinema Department proposes to establish a new 2-year MFA in Cinema program. This Academic Business Plan focuses on the MFA in Cinema that will be offered in a traditional face-to-face classroom format. An updated or separate plan will be submitted later in conjunction with a formal proposal.

Context

The Cinema Department constitutes a fundamental part of the Harpur College of Arts and Sciences. The proposed MFA in Cinema will increase the visibility of the department, enrich the existing art programs in the college, and contribute to the university's reputation as one of the nation's premier research institutions. It will also enhance a vibrant environment for the Cinema's undergraduate program, as graduate students will take several courses with junior and senior students. The MFA in Cinema will take advantage of structural, financial and human resources within the Cinema Department, and will leverage the expertise of others via partnerships with individual faculty and academic units across campus.

Students in MFA in Cinema will have access to our facilities, equipment, and software to work on various projects of their interests, such as:

- Super 8 and 16mm film projects
- Digital video projects
- Animation projects
- Sound and visual performance projects
- Expanded Cinema projects

Students in MFA in Cinema will present their projects to the entire Cinema faculty twice, once at the end of the first MFA year and another for the MFA Thesis Review at the end of the second year. The highlight of the program is an MFA Exhibition, a premier event to exhibit all thesis projects, which will become a new platform to meet local artists/filmmakers and curators to exchange dialogues and ideas.

Students in MFA in Cinema will also work closely with our faculty members to organize and conduct the department's events, including:

- Harpur Cinema: a screening series that showcases about eight feature-length movies to campus throughout a semester
- Visiting Film/Video Artists and Scholars Speakers Series: an event series that brings about three filmmakers/scholars to campus for their screening/talk events
- Student Film Show: an end-of-semester event that exhibits students' projects produced for the production courses in the semester

In these activities, students will acquire a knowledge of film curation, as well as how to plan and organize a screening event, which requires communication, logistic management, and marketing and promotion skills. The new videographer intern position at the Binghamton University Art Museum would require a student(s) to work under the supervision of one of the museum's curators, which would allow him/her to gain real-life experience and professional knowledge to work for exhibitions and other events at a museum. Moreover, there is an opportunity for graduate students to teach CINE 300: Curating Film & Video, in which undergraduate students organize a film festival, SEFF Binghamton: Student Experimental Film Festival in Binghamton, an annual student-run film festival since 2010. The graduate students who get involved in these activities can apply for a film programmer/curator position.

The proposed program will also offer opportunities for graduate students to teach summer and winter courses and conduct filmmaking workshops, as well as graduate grader positions for some of film studies courses, which will make them become strong candidates for teaching positions at post-secondary education institutions.

Chair and Graduate Director, as well as the faculty in the Graduate Program Committee will all contribute their expertise and time to instructional efforts and administrative oversight of the proposed program. The Cinema Department will keep communicating with other departments and their faculty members regarding their courses to cross-list with our graduate program. Chair

and Graduate Director will consult the Graduate School to ensure that our curriculum decisions have undergone appropriate reviews and participate in decisions regarding admissions.

Diversity

In terms of diversity of the faculty body, the Cinema Department will make an effort to increase future participation of a diverse population of faculty. The current faculty body consists of 10 members from three different nationalities, United States, Canada, and Japan, and three different ethnicities, Asian, Hispanic, and White. In the past 5 years, we have lost one female Assistant Professor from Ecuador and two female Lectures, one from France and another from the United States, and hired one female Assistant Professor, one male Assistant Professor, one female Lecturer, and one male Lecturer, all from the United States. As a result, the current female faculty members represent only 30% of the faculty body, down from 40% 5 years ago, showing the gender imbalance.

To increase the diversity in our faculty body, the Cinema Department strives to emphasize applications from female and underrepresented minorities at search committee meetings. When recruiting, the current faculty members will seek out minority candidates by reaching out to colleagues at other institutions to generate interest of female and underrepresented minority applicants from their MFA and PhD programs in our program.

We discussed how to recruit underrepresented minority faculty with Karen A. Jones, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and received the following links to the webpages that list historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and the Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs) from the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

<https://hbculifestyle.com/list-of-hbcu-schools/>

https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1%2C5

We looked through these lists and found the following institutions that offer MFA and/or PhD degrees relevant to our program. We will send a job advertisement to these programs.

List of HBCUs

College/University	Program
Howard University	MFA in in Film program in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film PhD in in Communication, Culture and Media Studies
Norfolk State University	MFA in in Visual Arts
University of Arkansas	Studio Art MFA

List of HSIs

College/University	Program
Arizona State University	MFA in Art MFA in Digital Technology

Univ. of Arizona	MFA in Art PhD in English
California State University Northridge	MFA in Visual Arts
California State University Sanbernardino	MFA in Studio Arts
Mount Saint Mary's University	MFA in Film and Television Program
San Francisco State University	MFA in Cinema
San Jose State University	MFA in Digital Media Art
UC Davis	MFA in Art PhD in English
UC Irvine	MFA in Art PhD in Visual Studies
UC Riverside	MFA in Visual Art PhD in English
UC Santa Barbara	MFA in Art PhD in Film and Media Studies
UC Santa Cruz	MFA in Digital Arts & New Media PhD in Film & Digital Media PhD in Visual Studies
University of Central Florida	MFA in Emerging Media
University of Illinois at Chicago	MFA in Art PhD in Art History PhD in English
University of Nevada, Las Vegas	MFA in Art
Fairleigh Dickson University	MFA in Animation
New Jersey City University	MFA in Media Production
Rutgers University	MFA in Visual Art
William Paterson University	MFA in Visual Art
Lehman College	MFA in Art
City University of New York	MFA in Film
University of Houston	MFA in Art

When hiring, the members of the hiring committee will consider giving minorities and underrepresented candidates high priority. We will keep working with the Diversity Committee and the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to ensure prospective applicants from these groups feel welcome to apply to a future faculty position.

Although the Cinema Department has the high tenure rate (all the faculty members hired in the last 10 years who have been going up for tenure have received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, a total of three), the Cinema Department will reinforce a more supportive and collegiate work atmosphere by implementing a new mentoring model for junior faculty members, assisting with promotion and recognition, especially for faculty from

underrepresented minorities, in order to increase the retention of faculty. The Cinema Department formed a new team mentoring program in Spring 2021, and a team consists of the chair and one senior faculty member. The team meet with their assigned junior faculty member on a regular basis, assisting with matters such as creative work/research direction, fellowship and grant writing, film festival submissions, and teaching issues.

The undergraduate student body in the Cinema Department is highly diverse. Most notably, we have a very high rate of international students, as the table below shows, we have had more than double the percentage of the international students at Harpur College, except this fall, which would be due to the pandemic situation during the spring in the United States, as most of our production courses were offered as “in-person only” courses. We expect that higher percentages will be achieved in the proposed MFA in Cinema program, as more international students have been admitted to the graduate programs at Harpur College.

Percent of Diverse: International Students

	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Cinema Students	21.3%	19.4%	13.2%	12.0%	7.3%
Harpur College Undergraduates	8.4%	7.3%	6.5%	5.5%	4.4%
Harpur College Graduates	34.5%	36.0%	36.3%	36.0%	33.0%

In addition, the Cinema Department has been building an alliance with the College of Art at Nihon University, the largest university in Japan with more than 60,000 students, where our summer study-abroad program, CINE 300: Japanese Art Animation and Beyond, has been held since 2017. In Fall 2020, the Cinema Department has started a conversation with the Department of Cinema at Nihon University to establish a faculty/student exchange program with a simplified admissions process. It is still in an early stage, but this program aims to bring a broad cultural and international perspective to the program and other units at the university.

The gender diversity of Cinema students has been increased in the past 5 years, as the table below indicates the growing percentage of female Cinema students.

Percent of Diverse: Female Students

	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Cinema Students	35.0%	27.8%	31.6%	38.7%	45.5%
Harpur College Undergraduates	52.7%	53.4%	54.4%	54.8%	55.8%
Harpur College Graduates	50.5%	52.7%	53.5%	51.3%	52.1%

The Cinema Department keeps integrating multicultural content into the curriculum and employing a pedagogy that is appropriate to diverse students for the retention of students from diverse backgrounds and their success. The tables below show that the percentage of Black, Hispanic, and Asian Pacific Islander students in the Cinema undergraduate program, and each of which is more than the percent of overall Graduate Students at Binghamton University, especially the percentage of Hispanic students that is almost double of the one of Graduate Students. It is expected that similar percentages will be achieved in the proposed MFA in Cinema program.

Percent of Diverse: Black

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
Cinema Students	6.5%	7.5%	5.6%	6.6%	4.0%
Graduate Students	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%

Percent of Diverse: Hispanic

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
Cinema Students	4.8%	10.0%	11.1%	9.2%	10.7%
Graduate Students	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%

Percent of Diverse: Asian Pacific Islander

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
Cinema Students	9.7%	8.8%	6.9%	7.9%	9.3%
Graduate Students	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%

The proposed program will strive to further increase the number of students from underrepresented minorities through initiatives in recruitment and admissions. As suggested by Karen A. Jones, we plan to invite artists/scholars from the minority groups to the Visiting Film/Video Artists/Scholars Speakers' Series, as well as using pictures of underrepresented minority students for our department's website, which would represent how inclusive and diversity our program is and help us increase the number of students from the underrepresented minority groups. Furthermore, we have been discussing how to seek a potential donor(s) to establish a new scholarship/fellowship for minority students with Jay Duseau, Director of Development at Harpur College, which would attract prospective minority students and help us retain them in the program.

The faculty members in the Cinema Department have been addressing disability-related topics through courses and creative work. Currently, we are offering a film studies course, CINE 285B: Disability On-Screen, in which students learn the cultural and aesthetic function of disability in cinema, and one of our production faculty members has completed a series of videos about her physical illness, trauma, and recovery. In 2013, we invited a deaf video artist to participate in our semester-long artist-in-residence program, and she taught a production course, CINE 286F:

Fatalistic Encounters, which questioned the physical and spatial experience of cinema. We work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to accommodate students with disabilities, as our program might need special support to assist such students. For example, we may want to provide a device/application to generate subtitles for video contents or create more accessible studios.

In summary, the Cinema Department plans to increase the diversity of the faculty body regarding the gender imbalance, and the MFA in Cinema program will follow the tradition of inclusion of a diverse set of students we have in the undergraduate program, while striving to further increase the number of Black students. We also keep aware of disability issues and accommodate students with disabilities.

Benefits

The MFA in Cinema Program will be directly related to one of the “Road Map to Premier” Strategic Priorities of Binghamton University, Creative Activities, as it will enhance the graduate programs and creative/research activities at Binghamton University. Our facilities will offer rare opportunities for our students to work on both analog and digital film/video-making and audio-making projects, including projection mapping projects, which will broaden their skills and deepen their understanding of the cinematic art, which would make them unique candidates in the job market. Our students’ creative activities will focus on issues of cultural, intellectual and aesthetic significance. As the “Road Map” says, these issues are critical to our future, and our Program has a strong relationship with Transdisciplinary Areas of Excellence: Material and Visual Worlds (TAE: MVW). Our Cinema faculty have received seed grants in 2013, 2016, and 2017, and collaborated with the faculty in the other departments, including the Computer Science Department, the English Department, and the Mechanical Engineering Department. Moreover, our Department has co-presented events for their Speakers Series, including Jimena Canales, Graham Harman, Walid Raad, Amie Siegel, Michael Snow, and Anthony McCall. In addition, our Program has been collaborating with the Center for Civic Engagement, projecting students’ animation projects on the wall of buildings on and off campus, including at a shopping mall. In Fall 2020, students in Animation course created voting animations, which were projected on the façade of the Library Tower, impacting on spreading awareness of voting among the campus community at the event and through social media afterwards. All of these transdisciplinary activities would explore the role of material objects and images in shaping society and culture, which will inspire our undergraduate and graduate students to pursue careers in which they can use the knowledge they gain at Binghamton to improve our world. As the art of the moving image is spreading from a cinema to streets and from a TV to a mobile device, our Program will make students prepared for broadening career paths to shape the coming generations.

Our Program will be directly related to another Strategic Priorities of Binghamton University, Learning Community. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are currently offering both in-person and online courses. Some of the production courses have been adapted to keep offering in-person instructions, while other production courses have been taught remotely, providing a

wider variety for students to choose from. Our production courses have been providing opportunities for students to work with off-campus art venues to exhibit their projects and present screening programs. We also offer opportunities for students to work for other departments, encouraging them to learn outside the Department. For example, our students have been helping the Theatre Department produce a video of their performance event while taking Independent Study course with our faculty. Through these experiences, our students will learn how to work with professionals and their expectations so that they will be ready for pursuing a career in this field and working with the communities and beyond. Recently, our Program has co-developed a new videography internship position at the Binghamton University Art Museum, and the Art Museum is offering this opportunity in Spring 2021, for which students will work closely with one of the museum's curators for their exhibitions and other public events. Furthermore, the Cinema Department offers a summer study-abroad program that takes place in Tokyo, in which students will learn the uniqueness of the Japanese art animation while exploring Japanese culture, which will increase their cultural competency, preparing them for successful, fulfilling and meaningful lives.

The MFA in Cinema Program will be related to the other Strategic Priorities of Binghamton University, Engagement, as it will enhance the University's cultural impact through engagement from the local to the global level. Several of our faculty members have been collaborating with Spool Contemporary Art Space, an artist-run organization in one of our neighboring towns, to exhibit our class projects, including screenings, performances, and exhibitions, and some of these events have been co-organized with students in the other programs, including Art and Design Department and Theatre Department. In 2018, Spool Contemporary Art Space and the Cinema Department has received the Ross Fund Award from Binghamton University for the project, "Projex Cinema," to conduct a series of screening and talk events at their gallery space.

Our Program hosts an annual film festival, SEFF Binghamton: Student Experimental Film Festival in Binghamton, which takes place at various local venues, such as galleries, museums, and restaurants, screening short film programs students curate to showcase contemporary experimental films and videos to the local audience. At the Festival, students will not only engage with local film enthusiasts and art lovers but also filmmakers from different states – we often have filmmakers in attendance so that students can exchange and share their experiences and knowledge with them. The Festival has been developing a connection between our Program and local venues, as well as film programs at other institutions beyond New York state, and students have been participating in local service and philanthropic contributions, and developing character traits that will make them ambassadors for Binghamton University upon graduation. Moreover, through these activities, students will understand the value of collaboration and will continue to establish partnerships throughout the region and across New York state.

Regarding the activities outside the United States, our Program has been building an alliance with the College of Art at Nihon University, the largest university in Japan with more than 60,000 students, where our study-abroad class sessions have been held since 2017. We will

keep developing a good relationship with Nihon University to seek possibilities of establishing a faculty/student exchange program with a simplified admissions process in the future.

The MFA in Cinema Program will be also related to “Power of SUNY” Strategic Plan, especially, SUNY and the Vibrant Community, which says, “SUNY also acts as a major source for arts-and-culture programming that makes life richer or everyone and connects us to one another as no device or social network ever can.” As mentioned above, our Program engages with our community through events taking place at their venues to exhibit our students’ projects and present screening programs of SEFF Binghamton, acting as a major source for arts-and-culture programming that makes life richer or everyone and connects us to one another as no device or social network ever can in the community. We also invite our community to the events we organize on campus. All the screenings of Harpur Cinema, which was established in 1965, featuring a wide variety of movies from around the world, are open to the public, as well as the events of the Visiting Film/Video Artists/Scholars Speakers Series, where we invite film artists/scholars to campus to present their recent creative/scholarly projects. Students in the MFA in Cinema program will organize these events, which will provide rare opportunities for the local community to get a glimpse of today’s cinema and the art of the moving image. The MFA in Cinema Program will also invite the local community to see the premiere of our students’ thesis projects, which will promote mutual understanding between the local community and our Program and students.

Our Program will be also related to another strategic plan of SUNY, SUNY and the World. Through our broad range of Film Studies courses, students would learn about particular ethnic, cultural, and racial communities, which will nurture a culturally fluent, cross-national mindset and put it to work improving New York’s global competitiveness. The aforementioned relationship with the College of Art at Nihon University through a study-abroad program will be a bridge to bring students from Japan to Binghamton University, while our students who participate in the program will gain a broad cultural and international perspective.

Finally, Binghamton University’s President Stenger announced the plan for the School of Visual and Performing Arts in Harpur College in Fall 2019, and the MFA in Cinema will be one of the most prominent programs in the School.

Cost

The Cinema Department provides the vast majority of expenses to support the MFA in Cinema, including equipment, facilities/studios, and operating budget.

When we expect to have 10 – 12 MFA students in the program, we plan to hire a tenure-track faculty, either in Film Studies or Production, to offer an additional 500-level Elective and CINE 591: Independent Study.

The MFA in Cinema will need additional studio space for MFA students. For the first year, the Cinema Department will modify one of the studios used for CINE 360: Expanded Cinema to a

group studio space for 6 graduate students for a temporary purpose, while requesting additional space in the basement of Classroom Wing for the second year to accommodate 12 graduate students in total. We will not need any expenses to modify one of our studios for the group studio space for the first-year MFA students, as our instructional support staff can make the modification.

The Cinema Department has been communicating with Joseph Duseau, Director of Development at Division of Advancement, seeking a donor to establish a post-MFA Teaching Fellowship, which will allow a graduated MFA student(s) to stay in the program for an additional year, while teaching one course per semester.

Operating Plan

Primary responsibility for development, operation and assessment of the MFA in Cinema rests with Chair, Graduate Director, and members on the Graduate Program Committee. The table below identifies milestone tasks for the startup and operation of the proposed MFA in Cinema, along with expected dates of completion and individuals responsible for each task.

Date	Tasks	Responsible Parties
Winter 2021	Formal proposal approved by the department	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Winter 2021	Formal proposal approved by the college	Chair and Harpur Dean
Spring 2021	Curriculum Committee of Graduate Council	Graduate School
Spring 2021	Approval by Graduate Council	Graduate School
Spring 2021	Approval by Provost	Through channels via deans
Spring 2021	Review by Faculty Senate's EPPC	Graduate School
Spring 2021	Review by Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Spring 2021	Review by full Faculty Senate	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Spring 2021	SUNY-system & NYSED approval of external reviewers	Graduate School
Spring 2021	External Reviewers visit (virtual)	Graduate School
Fall 2021	Unit response to review sent to Dean of Graduate School to add	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Fall 2021	FSEC re-reviews final proposal	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Fall 2021	University response to SUNY-system	Graduate Dean
Fall 2021	Submission to SUNY-system	Graduate School

Fall 2021	Approval by SUNY-system	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Spring 2022	Approval by NYS Dept Ed	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Spring 2022	Registration allows OIRA etc. to put into campus system	Chair and Graduate Program Committee
Upon approval	Assign Graduate Director	Chair
Upon approval	Advertise new program	Graduate Director and Graduate Program Committee
Upon approval	Establish learning outcomes for Weave assessment	Graduate Director and Graduate Program Committee
On-going	Review applications for admission	Graduate Director and Graduate Program Committee
On-going	Solicit donations or grants in support of fellowship program	Chair
Year 1	Recruit for and hire a tenure track faculty member when we expect to have 10 – 12 MFA students	Chair and hiring committee
Year 1 and then on-going	Teach summer/winter courses for the program	Graduate Director and MFA students
Year 1 and then on-going	Oversee thesis projects in progress of the 1st year MFA students	All Cinema Faculty
Year 2 and then on-going	Oversee thesis projects of graduating MFA students	All Cinema Faculty
Year 2 and then on-going	Teaching Fellowship Program for a graduated MFA student to teach an undergrad course	Graduate Director and Post-MFA Teaching Fellow
Year 2 and then on-going	Program assessment for Middle States	Chair and Graduate Director

Financial Plan

The proposed MFA in Cinema is expected to produce a net gain for Binghamton University. Many of the expenses are already part of the operation of the Cinema Department and thus are not attributable to the proposed new degree program. The only expenses listed in the Program Expenses Table below (taken from the SUNY New Program Proposal Form) are those that represent new expenses. These include new faculty hires to offer core and elective Cinema courses regularly. The Cinema Department will propose to hire a tenure-track faculty when we are having 10 – 12 MFA students, which is provisionally listed for Year 2 in the table.

We also plan to promote the program by organizing info sessions and portfolio reviews at other institutions and having advertisements in film festival catalogs.

In calculating Program Revenue, we assume that in Years 1 and 2, all students will be full-time and 1 out of 6 students will pay either out-of-state or international tuition. Calculations of program revenue across all years utilize the most current figures available (2020-21).

In calculating Program Expenses, we determine the starting salary for a new tenure-track faculty member in the third year reflects an estimate from the most recent hire in the Cinema Department, including start-up fund.

Enrollment and Revenue						
	Before Start	Academic Year 1	Academic Year 2	Academic Year 3	Academic Year 4	Academic Year 5
Enrollment Full Time	0	6 FT	12 FT	12 FT	12 FT	12 FT
Enrollment Part Time	0	0 PT	0 PT	0 PT	0 PT	0 PT
Revenue from Full Time (in-state)	0	\$56,550	\$113,100	\$113,100	\$113,100	\$113,100
Revenue from Full Time (out-of-state and international)		\$23,100	\$46,200	\$46,200	\$46,200	\$46,200
Revenue from Part Time	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL REVENUE	0	\$79,650	\$159,300	\$159,300	\$159,300	\$159,300
Program Expenses						
OTPS						
Library	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laboratories	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplies (software)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0

Other (marketing):	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
New Tenure-Track Faculty 1	0	0	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$73,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$75,000	\$74,500	\$74,500	\$74,500
NET GAIN/LOSS	-\$2,000	\$77,650	\$84,300	\$84,800	\$84,800	\$84,800

Design

The MFA in Cinema will prepare graduate students to be leading artists in the cinematic art scenes with critical and creative thinking, as well as knowledge and skills they need to express their ideas in a creative work.

The curriculum requires a minimum of 60 credit hours which include a combination of required courses, including CINE 599: Thesis to present their projects to the faculty at the end of the second and fourth semesters, and electives. Graduating MFA students will also organize an MFA Exhibition a premier event to exhibit all thesis projects, which will become a new platform to meet local artists/filmmakers and curators to exchange dialogues and ideas.

The MFA in Cinema Program requirements fall into four broad areas:

- Core Courses: Students will take at least one Graduate Seminar (4 credits) and one Independent Study (3 credits) every semester, plus Thesis (2 credits) for the second and fourth semesters
- Production Electives: Students will take at least one Production Electives every semester
- Film Studies Electives: Students will take at least one Film Studies Electives every semester, except the last semester
- MFA Exhibition: Students will organize an MFA Exhibition

There are three broad student learning outcomes of the program and each of which include several specific sub-competencies of knowledge and skills (not presented here). Upon completion of the MFA in Cinema, we expect graduates to be able to:

1. Demonstrate Artistic Innovation and Expression: Graduating MFA students will demonstrate the ability to produce works that demonstrate accomplished approaches to artistic innovation and expression through the use of sophisticated ideas and structures.

2. Utilize Constructive Criticism in The Creative Process: Graduating MFA students will learn to articulate and receive constructive criticism while learning to find their own individual responses in their creative practice and in how they communicate.
3. Obtain Knowledge and Creative Proficiency with Tools of Production: Graduating MFA students will demonstrate knowledge of and creative proficiency with production tools.
4. Analyze Works of Cinematic Art: Graduating MFA students will demonstrate competence in the analysis of cinematic art. Students will comprehend fundamental terms of critical and technical language in cinema, and students will understand foundational aspects of cinema history and aesthetics. Students will indicate their competence through their ability to speak and write with accuracy and merit about cinematic art.
5. Teach and Lead a Group of Students: Graduating MFA students will demonstrate the ability to teach a production course and/or conduct a filmmaking workshop to diverse students effectively.