

**PROPOSAL TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

**TITLE OF PROPOSAL**

*Rename and revise the B.S. in Media Studies as the B.S. in Media and Cinema Studies.*

**SPONSORS:**

Ronald E. Yates, Dean, College of Media  
Sleeman Professor of Business Journalism  
University of Illinois  
810 S. Wright St.  
119 Gregory Hall, MC-462  
Tel. 217.333.2350 Fax 217.333.9882  
E-mail: [ryates@uiuc.edu](mailto:ryates@uiuc.edu)

David Desser, Director, Unit for Cinema Studies  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
University of Illinois  
4080E FLB, MC-162  
Tel. 217.333.3356 Fax 217.244.8430  
[desser@uiuc.edu](mailto:desser@uiuc.edu)

Clifford Christians, Director, Institute of Communications Research  
College of Media  
University of Illinois  
810 Wright St.  
228 Gregory Hall, MC-463  
Tel. 217.333.1549. Fax 217.244.7695  
E-mail: [cchrstns@uiuc.edu](mailto:cchrstns@uiuc.edu)

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:**

The newly formed Department of Media and Cinema Studies in the College of Media will offer a revised and renamed B.S. degree in Media and Cinema Studies with two possible concentrations: Media Studies and Cinema Studies. These two concentrations within one degree and department give undergraduates the opportunity to specialize in either of these two intellectual areas, recognizing the history of the B.S. degree in Media Studies and the Cinema Studies concentration within the B.A. in interdisciplinary studies, while simultaneously recognizing their interdependence. Electives are chosen across the concentrations, but each concentration has a core of 15-16 required credits. (cf. Appendices A-1 and A-2) No courses will be cancelled and students enrolled in the

current programs, both Media Studies and Cinema Studies, will be able to finish under the old guidelines, if they choose to do so.

### **JUSTIFICATION:**

The Bachelor of Science in Media Studies has been offered at the University of Illinois since 1984. Students in the media studies program explore the theory behind today's media systems and learn about their origins, structures, and implications for society. The development of the popular media is considered in light of more general concerns about technology, culture, social institutions and politics. The Media Studies major examines and responds to pressing concerns about the power of the media, the need for critical analysis of propaganda, the need for ethical and reasoned policies guiding the development of media industries, and the need to ensure democratic access for all citizens. Race, ethnicity, and gender are crucial components in the curriculum. Media studies majors gain a broad education that sets a foundation for graduate school or careers in numerous media-related professions.

The B.S. degree in Media Studies from the beginning has emphasized its liberal arts core, with required courses offered on the History of Communications, Popular Culture and Film Culture, Media and Democracy, Media Ethics, and Economics of the Media. 14 elective hours are required from courses offered in the College of Communications in advertising, journalism, or media studies. And 18 hours outside the College in an approved area or a university-approved minor is required also to ensure that students have breadth but in a specified area rather than scattered courses without educational coherence (Appendix A-1). It is this interdisciplinary degree that will remain with its own identity as a concentration in the newly formed Department of Media and Cinema Studies, enriched by Cinema Studies as a second concentration in the Department.

Film courses have been offered at UIUC, off and on, since the 1930s and were first offered on a regular basis in the 1960s. In 1974, the Unit for Cinema Studies was established in the newly formed School of Humanities, and in 1979 the Cinema Studies Concentration was created within the Humanities Major (now the Interdisciplinary Studies Major). The Unit now offers 19 courses under its own control and cross-lists 16 courses controlled by other units. Two of its courses are General Education courses in Literature and the Arts and two qualify for the Non-Western or American sub-culture category. The Cinema Studies Concentration offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of film (and related screen media) from various literary, cultural and social perspectives. The Concentration's underlying aim is to enrich students by exposure to the most significant patterns, philosophies, and artifacts of history and of narrative and dramatic expression. The Concentration emphasizes development of methods and skills of critical analysis and places cinema in its wider context as an important art form in the twenty-first century. Four required courses establish the theoretical, critical and global framework. Nine hours must focus on foreign language cinema, with at least two languages represented. The Special Topics CINE 498 requirement requires a significant paper comparable to a senior honors thesis, and six hours in Western Civilization are necessary also. 12 hours of supporting coursework, approved by the Cinema Studies advisor, set the wider background or provide analytic tools for approaching the study of

film (cf. Appendix A-1). It is this interdisciplinary degree that will merge with its own identity as a concentration in the newly formed Department of Media and Cinema Studies, enriched by Media Studies as a second concentration in the Department.

For over twenty years now, the field of cinema studies has shifted from an almost exclusive focus on the history, criticism and theories of film as a specific medium to a more inclusive emphasis on the cinematic. During these two decades, professional organizations devoted to the scholarly study of film began to change their names and/or become more inclusive of areas of study related to but not necessarily limited to film. For instance, the University Film Association became the University Film and Video Association. The most prestigious organization, the Society for Cinema Studies, a few years ago became the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. In the same way, a large number of university programs which began as film or film/television programs have become broader in understanding their scholarly and pedagogical mission. Cinema has thus come to include a focus on a variety of texts in a variety of contexts. And meanwhile Media Studies programs, including the B.S. in Media Studies here at UIUC, have added film and visual culture to their curriculum and faculty members in television and other media include the cinematic in dealing with the larger social, economic, political issues. There is a prevailing educational logic at present for combining the mission of the Unit for Cinema Studies and the Program in Media Studies into one Department, where their individual histories are understood as separate concentrations, and simultaneously their interdependence is recognized in the revised and renamed major in Media and Cinema Studies (cf. Appendix A-2). This two-concentration model parallels the successful program in journalism, which has a sequence in broadcast journalism and another in news editorial within the same degree and department. It thus respects the individuality and history of both the Cinema Studies and Media Studies degrees, and incorporates the revised major into the structure of the College of Media.

#### **BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:**

a. Additional staff and dollars needed

No new staff or financial investment is required from the University to implement the revision of the major.

b. Internal reallocations (e.g., change in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio, etc.)

No new classes are proposed as part of this revision. While class size may increase in some courses as Cinema Studies students take Media Studies courses and vice versa, enough choices and electives are offered to ensure that increases in individual classes will be minimal.

c. Effect on course enrollment in other departments and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments.

No new classes are proposed and no significant enrollment shifts in existing classes are anticipated. Class sizes may increase in some courses, but enough choices and electives are offered to ensure that increases in each class will be minimal.

d. Impact on the University Library.

None is anticipated.

e. Impact on computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.

No appreciable net impacts are anticipated for computer and laboratory use, and equipment.

### **GUIDELINES FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION:**

The Bachelors of Science in Media and Cinema Studies is uniquely positioned to meet the three guidelines for undergraduate education identified in “An Academic Plan for the Urbana-Champaign Campus.”

**1. “Every undergraduate should develop or have developed the basic ability to read and listen intelligently, write and speak coherently, observe and respond critically to a variety of forms of communication: think clearly, critically, and creatively; think quantitatively and qualitatively; and acquire an attitude which reflects curiosity, a desire to continue to learn, a respect for evidence, a tolerance of disagreement, and a positive acceptance of change.”**

Cinema Studies is a liberal arts undergraduate concentration that trains students in thinking and writing critically about texts and other cultural artifacts, and as such it provides a good general background for most professions that do not require a highly specialized, technical undergraduate major. The Media Studies program gives students the writing and analytical skills valued so highly in technological and industrial society today. The aim of both of these stimulating concentrations is helping students, as citizens, to be intelligent users of media technologies and thoughtful contributors to the discourse about their role in society. The commitment in the B.S. in Media and Cinema Studies Department is not to media as tools by themselves, but as subjects for inquiry and analysis for everyone’s benefit in democratic societies.

**2. “Every undergraduate student should acquire a deep understanding of our heterogeneous culture, acquire an acquaintance with most of our culture’s basic aspects, and examine in some depth a culture foreign to him or her.”**

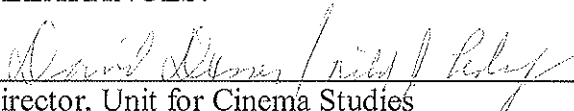


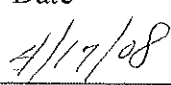
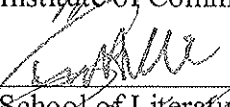
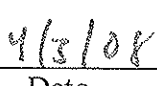
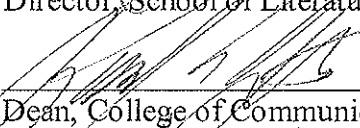
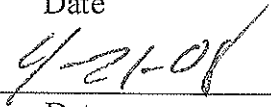
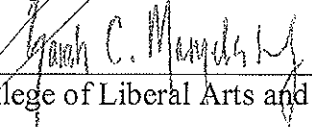
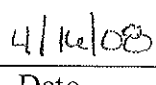
Race, gender, and ethnicity are crucial components in the study of media. Connections are made continually in the curriculum between media practices and racial, sexual, class, and gender stratification. These crucial issues are taught in various courses reflecting wide-spread faculty expertise in these areas. The media actively interconnect with social, cultural, and political processes at the local, national, and international levels. Cinema Studies helps fulfill this university guideline by requiring world cinema, at least one course in a foreign-language national tradition or traditions, and by requiring courses that address identity, culture and politics in the U.S. and/or world cinema. Also, media ethics,

the media and democracy, and social aspects of the media are included in the Media Studies core. The significance of the various media in a global political economy are a crucial aspect of both concentrations as a way to increase student capacity to understand and speak to issues of national and global importance.

3. "Professional preparation, to the extent that it goes beyond these basic abilities and attitudes, should be provided for those professions that are of interest to a sizable number of students, and that require the theoretical base provided by an institution of advanced learning. A professional education should train a student to advance with, and, at best, lead the development of her or his field. Undergraduate professional training should not be directed simply toward a contemporary job category, but should be sufficiently generalized to encourage this future development."

Both the current B.S. in Media Studies and the current concentration in Cinema Studies within the interdisciplinary studies B.A. have developed excellent track records already in fulfilling this guideline. Graduates in media studies have found careers in public broadcasting, media research and production, public relations, music, and internet industries. They have successfully pursued graduate study on both the master's and doctoral levels in various fields, including law, the social sciences, humanities, and media arts. Cinema Studies graduates have graduated from Ph.D. programs in Cinema Studies and from M.A. and M.F.A. programs. The degree has provided the historical/theoretical background for careers in filmmaking and careers in all aspects of the industry, including agencies, distribution, exhibition, computer graphics and entertainment publications. The professional and educational roles of media studies and cinema studies as concentrations will be enhanced by their synergy in one department, and they will benefit by their location in a College of Media that through its entire history has provided students with the concepts and skills needed to succeed in their careers either as professionals or academics.

**CLEARANCES:**

	
Director, Unit for Cinema Studies	Date
	
Director, Institute of Communications Research	Date
	
Director, School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics	Date
	
Dean, College of Communications	Date
	
Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	Date
Chair, Educational Policy Committee	Date

## **STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:**

### **Bachelor of Science in Media and Cinema Studies**

The Department of Media and Cinema Studies in the College of Media offers a B.S. Degree in Media and Cinema Studies with two concentrations, Media Studies and Cinema Studies. Students from outside the Department or College can earn an undergraduate Minor in Cinema Studies and a graduate Minor in Cinema Studies.

Students in the media and cinema studies program develop an understanding of modern communications media and cinema from an interdisciplinary perspective. They explore the theory behind contemporary media and their origins, structures and implications for our society. The development of all mediated forms is considered in light of more general concerns about technology, culture, society, and politics.

For the media studies concentration, the following is a sampling of the topics considered:

- Multicultural and global issues in popular culture
- Political implications of global multimedia conglomerates
- Ethics of truth and deception
- How representations of women in media affect broader cultural understandings
- Tabloid TV: Is gossip replacing news substance?
- Impact of digital technology on news and entertainment
- Implications of the way underrepresented minority groups are portrayed in media
- First Amendment issues, e.g. banning “indecent” programming in media aimed at children

For the cinema studies concentration, these are sample topics considered:

- Growth and development of the art of film from the point of view of aesthetics, narrative and ideology
- How film is implicated in other arts— theater, the novel, photography, painting, architecture—and the mutual influences between and among them
- How film has been implicated in larger social and historical formations—the growth of industry and technology, imperialism, war, societal problems, globalization
- The importance of subcultures in American cinema—African American, Asian American, and Jewish American, for example
- The rise of national cinemas and their relation to Hollywood
- Gender roles in U.S. and international cinema
- The relationship between film, television and new media in recent times

#### **Approach and focus**

The program incorporates the study of contemporary mass media and cinema with related theoretical considerations. It is designed for students whose interests in the media

generally or cinema specifically are focused on broad background issues involving the origins, structures and implications of the media and cinema.

Media technologies are a burgeoning field increasingly influencing all of our social institutions. The media studies concentration introduces students to an interdisciplinary perspective on this dynamic phenomenon. It prepares students for many media-related positions and develops the writing and analytical skills so widely prized by employers in today's competitive job market. Media studies students gain a broad education that sets a foundation for graduate school or careers in numerous professions. Graduates in media studies have found careers in public broadcasting, media research and production, public relations, music, and internet industries. They have successfully pursued graduate study on both the master's and doctoral levels in various fields, including law, the social sciences, humanities, and media arts.

The media studies concentration examines and responds to pressing concerns about the power of the media, information and persuasion; the need for critical analysis of propaganda; the need for ethical and reasoned policies guiding the development of media industries; and the need to ensure democratic access for all citizens. Media industries and technologies are global in character, making international perspectives of particular importance. Race, ethnicity, and gender are crucial components in the study of popular culture.

The cinema studies concentration offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of film (and related screen media) from various literary, cultural, and social perspectives. The concentration's underlying aim is to enrich the individual by exposure to the most significant patterns, philosophies, and artifacts of history and of narrative and dramatic expression. This concentration emphasizes the development of methods and skills of critical analysis. It places cinema in its wider context as a dominant art form of the twenty-first century.

Cinema studies is an interdisciplinary concentration that trains students in thinking and writing critically about texts and other cultural artifacts, and as such it provides a good general background for most professions which do not require a highly specialized, technical undergraduate major. Cinema studies graduates have earned Ph.D.'s in Cinema Studies and have graduated from M.A. and M.F.A. programs. The concentration has provided the educational background for careers in filmmaking and careers in all aspects of the industry, including agencies, distribution, exhibition, computer graphics and entertainment publications.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

Fall 2009.