

**To: Curriculum Council**  
**From: Thomas Quinn**

**Re: Request for new, interdisciplinary minor in Film Studies**

*The proposed minor:*

*(On the advice of Curriculum Council, and with the permission of relevant academic units, several core, minor courses will be offered under the new rubric: FILM.)*

Minor Sequence in Film Studies

A minimum of seven (7) units, of which at least three are upper division, to include:

1. FILM 110 Film Aesthetics
2. FILM 330 Digital Videography
3. FILM 320 Film Theory

4. Four courses from:

*(Courses that are not listed below, but are appropriate and available may be considered for inclusion by the Director of the School of Theatre Arts. Existing prerequisites for all courses must be satisfied.)*

- MUS 113 Audio Recording Techniques
- THEA 114 Introduction to Lighting and Sound Technology *(Course is offered with variable credit. Film Studies minors must register for 1 full unit.)*
- LC 116 German Post-War Cinema
- FA 120 Japanese Film Aesthetics
- HIST 154 Film and History, US
- LC 220 French Cinema
- THEA 225 Drawing for the Theatre
- ART 240 Digital Photography
- LC 260 Italian Cinema
- IS 260/360 Contemporary Global Cinema
- THEA 314 Lighting Dynamics
- THEA 342 Screenwriting
- ANTH 380 Visual Ethnographic Methods
- HIST 390 Seminar in Asian History: Modern Chinese History through Literature and Film
- FILM 431 Directed Study: Video Production
- FILM 432 Independent Study: Advanced Film Studies Project

*Rationale for the minor:*

*Upon what are your program requirements based? (Are they recommended by external evaluators, supported by a survey of similar programs, externally mandated, etc?)*

Minors at IWU require 5-7 units. At 7 units, the minor requirements for Film Studies are at the top of this range, which is appropriate, given the dynamic combination of *theory/history/criticism* with *film production*.

A survey of IWU's peer institutions reveals a broad range of content and quality with respect to programs in the area of Film Studies. Augustana College, University of Wisconsin–Steven's Point, and Millikin University all offer few, if any, courses in Film or Cinema Studies, and no formal major or minor programs. Conversely, Kenyon College offers a major and minor in Film Studies through its Department of Drama and Film, and Denison University offers a major and minor in Cinema through its Department of Cinema. At the extreme, on this well-heeled end of the spectrum, is Columbia College, which has a well-established film school that offers a variety of related degrees.

Most of IWU's other peer institutions fall somewhere in the middle of this range. Like IWU, they have no formal Film or Cinema department or school. Rather, they have assembled interdisciplinary, Film Studies minors that appear to have drawn upon existing curricular resources from diverse departments such as Communication, English, Languages, Theatre, Art, Anthropology, Music, and History.

An evaluation of course content and technical resources suggests that these ad hoc programs have differing focuses, and varying degrees of scope and depth. Some of them concentrate on the student as a consumer of film, and seek to develop strong skills in the areas of *film theory*, *history*, and *criticism*. Others provide what appears to be an ample measure of this content, but also offer robust coursework in the parallel discipline of *film production*, including courses in video and audio capture, cinematography, editing, lighting, producing, directing, and screenwriting.

In the state of Illinois there are currently five Film Studies minors, which, like this proposed minor, are not affiliated with a major. Virtually all of them fall into the mid-range described above, with similar core courses, and comparable variations in focus. This proposed minor for IWU has been developed with all of these considerations in mind. Its composition draws upon the best of these programs, while respecting the capacities and limitations of IWU's programs and resources at this time.

The clearest take-away from this data is that IWU needs to get into this game. We are currently lagging far behind almost all of our peer institutions in this area, and consequently, we are jeopardizing our future. Filmmaking is everywhere. It has become central to global discourse. The ongoing work of filmmakers is creating an extraordinary record of our diverse cultures. This is a defining feature of our time, and our students and prospective students know it. The absence of this content from our curriculum is a glaring gap that leaves us vulnerable to competitors, and deprives those students who do choose us of critical tools to compete and thrive in a world that is ever more driven and defined by film and digital media.

Motion pictures combine images and text to create a compelling medium that can drive person-to-person communication even as it shapes socio-cultural discussions around the world. Film Studies at IWU will challenge students to develop a collection of analytical and interpretive skills as they investigate films' meanings, aesthetics, and methodologies within a variety of historical, cultural, and political contexts. Additionally, students will develop the skills to create their own motion pictures through courses in digital videography, editing and post-production, lighting and sound, screenwriting, storyboarding, photography, and independent projects.

*Is staffing sufficient? What staffing will be needed to cycle through the required courses?*

All three of this new minor's required courses will be taught by full time faculty. FILM 330 – Digital Videography will be taught by Professor Tom Quinn, Theatre Arts. His regular course rotation includes four-to-five units per academic year. Consequently, he typically has one or two units (usually in the Spring semester) that are flexible. Over the past several years he has been free to teach one or two units per year from a list of some ten Theatre courses, (required and elective), on an occasional basis. This flexibility will allow him to weave FILM 330–Digital Videography into his rotation with no significant staffing impact, and to continue with his occasional offerings, including THEA 342 – Screenwriting, which is an elective in the new minor.

The other two required film courses will be taught by Professor James Plath, English. Nationally, film aesthetics and theory courses are often taught by English faculty because the film is theoretically viewed as a form of "text." Professor Plath took over the FA (*now FILM*) 110-Film Aesthetics course when Barb Bowman, who had been teaching the course for more than a decade, retired. The course is offered annually. With the support of his colleagues in the English department, Professor Plath has also agreed to create FILM 320-Film Theory, a new course which builds upon the basic introduction to film criticism and appreciation by introducing students to theories of film—including classical film theories, modernism and realism, theories of auteurism, genre theory, structural analysis, queer theory in film, and psychological and feminist criticism.

Theatre Arts and English are keenly aware of the need for strategy and frugality with regard to the deployment of permanent faculty, and have given extensive consideration to the potential staffing impact of these new courses. Both academic units have concluded that any impact will be manageable. They have considered the enormous potential of Film Studies at IWU, and have decided to fully support this new minor.

To complete the minor, in addition to the three *required* courses, students must select four units from the list of *elective* courses. (*There are two new courses on this list. For further information on them, please refer to the enclosed requests for new courses.*) Some of these elective courses are on regular rotations, offered every year, or every other year. Many other courses on the list are offered occasionally. Going forward, if the Film Studies minor is approved, these courses may be offered more frequently, depending on student interest and enrollment demands. With only two exceptions, all other courses on the list are standing courses that require no catalog adjustments. The two exceptions are:

- IS 260/360 – Contemporary Global Cinema  
In the past, this course has been offered under the *Special Topics* rubric in International Studies as IS 270/370. However, to be included in this new minor, it will require a new, permanent course number. Professor Scott Sheridan will soon be submitting an appropriate request to Curriculum Council to pursue this change.
- LC 220 – French Cinema  
Currently offered only in French as FR 312, this upper level language course requires prerequisites that make it inaccessible to Film Studies minors who have not studied French. To accommodate these students, Professor Scott Sheridan will soon submit a request to CC to create a new, alternative section, (LC 220), which will be delivered in English, and its course requirements will be calibrated to the 200 level.

*Is there sufficient student interest? How do you know?*

In the School of Theatre Arts, students have consistently requested more content in this area. Further, faculty recruitment efforts have revealed that, for prospective students, film related course and programmatic offerings can be important, even primary considerations as they decide what college or university they will attend. Significantly, there are seven academic units from across our campus that have signed on to provide courses for this new minor. Discussions and planning have been ongoing for several years. The driving force behind this broad and persistent enthusiasm among our colleagues is, quite simply, student interest. Our students come from a YouTube, Instagram, film/video generation. There is an undeniable appetite for film content in course work and research, and as means of artistic expression and scholarly communication. The skills required to create motion pictures are being offered at almost all of our peer institutions, and they are changing the academic landscape across the country.

### **Employment Opportunities**

- In 2010 the film industry created over 282,000 high-quality jobs in production, marketing, manufacturing and distributing, paying salaries 74% higher than the US average (\$82,000 film industry avg.); paying a total of \$42.1bn in wages. -MPAA 2010 Survey
- Over 93% of the jobs for an average Hollywood film are behind the scenes. -Stephen Follows Film Data & Education
- Taken 2 – 14,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited
- Life of Pi – 14,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited
- The Wolverine – 15,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited
- The Counselor – 13,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited
- X-Men Days of Future Past – 15,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited
- Suicide Squad - 15,000+ jobs - credited & uncredited

### **Creative Opportunities with Original, Exclusive Content**

- Since Netflix debuted House of Cards in 2013 there has been a surge in the demand for original content. This may be the best time to be a filmmaker with over 25,000 TV

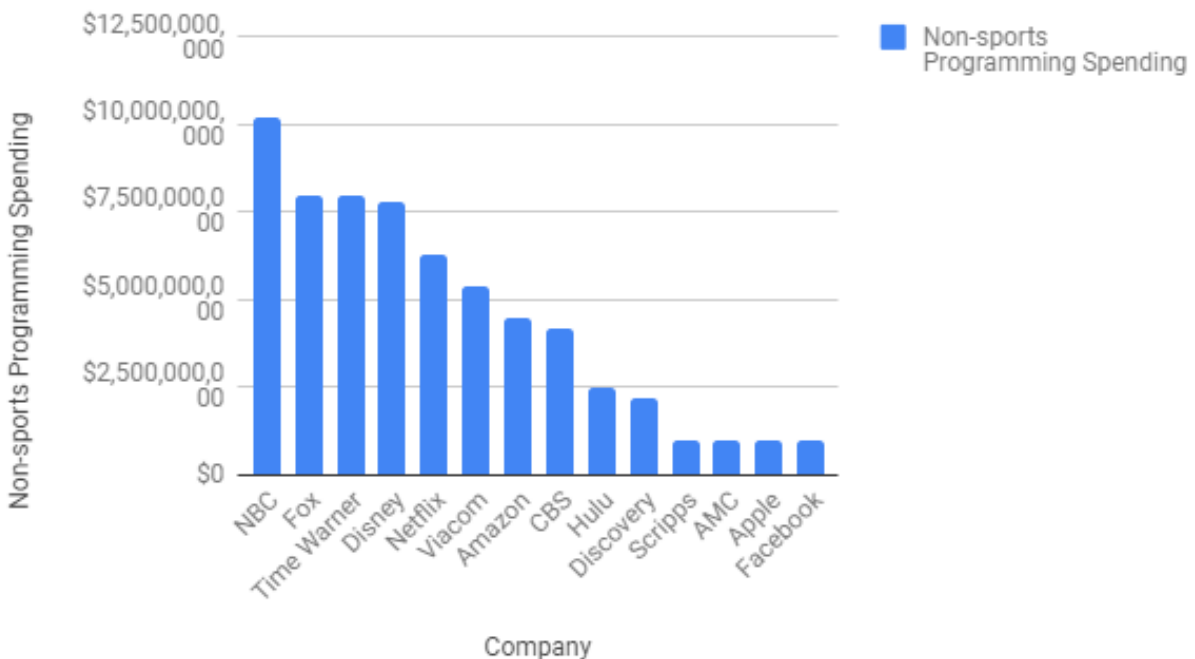
channels looking for content and new streaming services from Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, Twitch, Vimeo, YouTube, HBO GO, and more. There has never been a better time for those delivering exclusive content to providers.

- “I think we’re entering a platinum age for filmmaking. The business model I’m now working on [at Amazon] is based on filmmakers reaching further than before. I wanna give you more money than you ever had before. Films used to be budgeted within an inch of their life. And some great films came out of that, but there is always a sacrifice. We want to reach for something fresh and give filmmakers the tools and the time to make it right.” - Ted Hope Head of Production, Amazon.com

Netflix is on course to spend more money than any other company for original video content in 2018 and is estimated to reach 13 billion by year end. –IndieWire

Given this environment, some of us who will deliver courses in the minor envision our most creative students producing marketable films of various types while they are completing their course work here at IWU. Such successes would be a win for the student, but also for the university, which could capitalize on the potentially phenomenal marketing/recruitment potential of these works.

### Non-sports Programming Spending 2017



*Explain how the library, computer, media or other resources are or are not adequate. (If resources are not adequate, please indicate how they will be acquired.)*

The production component of the new Film Studies minor will rely heavily upon cutting edge video technology to introduce students to the means by which television and film are created today. While IWU’s current computer labs will be sufficient for the *film editing* portions of the

classes offered, we will not be able to rely on video equipment that is currently available for checkout at the Ames Library, or from other departments on campus. In recognition of this unique and critical need, and in support of this new minor, the administration has already appropriated funds from the Strategic Investment Plan, for the sequenced acquisition of essential video technologies. Additionally, talks are currently under way to repurpose an existing space on campus to create a soundstage, which would serve as a base of operations for this new, video production work. Moving forward, if the proposed curriculum is as popular as it is promising, a specific Advancement campaign to bring Film Studies into a fully developed major, (along with a new Theatre building), may be possible. This will not only expand our initial technology offerings, but will also provide space for a screening room, a foley/sound editing room, a dedicated video editing room, and a professional grade sound stage.

*Are any courses required or recommended outside your department? (If so, has the other department been consulted and do these colleagues agree?)*

As stated above, in addition to SoTA, there are six other academic units participating. Colleagues in all participating departments have been consulted and are in agreement.

*Does the new program overlap with existing programs? If so, please justify the duplication/overlap.*

There is no overlap.