



Department of French and Italian

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Dear Meg,

The Arts and Humanities panel met on Tuesday, April 12 and discussed the new Screenwriting Minor proposed by the Interdisciplinary Film Studies Committee. The Film Studies program has long offered courses in screenwriting and are aware of the demand from students. Enrollment data in Film Studies' screenwriting courses as well as their majors' choice of focus area make clear that many students would welcome the creation of this new minor. Screenwriting appears to be the single biggest area of curricular interest in the Film Studies program, with between a quarter and half of all students viewing it as their area of specialization.

The proposed Screenwriting Minor is designed to reflect the Film Studies Program's dynamic interdisciplinary model and, more specifically, the linkage between creative practice and critical study. It draws courses from a variety of units (Film Studies, English, History of Art, Theatre, and ACCAD), complementing the screenwriting courses with courses in film history and theory, creative writing, and literary history. The minor requires the completion of 18 credit hours spread across: one introduction to film studies course; one introductory course in the history or practice of storytelling; one advanced film studies course; one course in story development and, one course introducing students to screenwriting and one course in the business of screenwriting and more advanced techniques.

The A&H panel unanimously approved the minor with two contingencies. We asked for adjustments to the minor sheet, which were completed. We also expressed our concern that two categories: Introduction to Development and Introduction to Screenwriting each had one course available, which means that they would have to be offered frequently. The director of Film Studies, Ryan Friedman communicated to me by email that this was a point that the Film Studies Committee debated at some length when they devised the proposal for the screenwriting minor. The proposal originally called for a single Introduction to Screenwriting category to include both Theatre 5331 and FS 4800 as options for satisfying that requirement. However, the faculty who teach in screenwriting felt that, because the two classes are very different in their content and approach, it made sense to put them in separate categories and to require both for completion of the minor. He suggests that the minor be offered as originally proposed and that the Film Studies office will monitor this issue. If they see that course availability is hampering students' progress through the minor, then they will combine the two classes into a single category. I agreed and moved the minor forward.

Sincerely,

Janice M. Aski
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