MFA in Film

Southampton Graduate Arts

Associate Provost: Robert Reeves, (631) 632-5028

Director: Christine Vachon, Manhattan Facility

Associate Director: Magdalene Brandeis, Chancellors Hall (631) 632-5010

Degree Awarded: M.F.A. in Film

Web Site: http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/film

MFA in Film

The MFA in Film is a three year program that includes a core curriculum in screenwriting, directing and producing, with production periods culminating in a feature screenplay, a 20-minute MFA thesis film, or a feature producer’s package. Faculty Christine Vachon & Pamela Koffler, along with top industry professionals, guide participants through the essential elements of independent film production. Hands-on, experiential, in-depth, project driven.

The curriculum requires 45-48 credits.

Interested students should request information from the department and find application information at https://www.grad.stonybrook.edu/ProspectiveStudents/app_info.shtml. Students are encouraged to apply as early as possible, especially if they plan to apply for financial aid.

Admission to the MFA Program in Film

This MFA program in Film is intensive and admission to it is highly selective. Upon review, finalists are invited for an interview. For admission, the following, in addition to the minimum Graduate School requirements, are normally required:

A. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university.

B. Undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0.

C. A minimum of three years of professional experience / training (preferred).

D. Three letters of recommendation.

E. A current résumé

F. A written statement of artistic, educational and professional goals

G. A portfolio in one of the following areas of interest.

   • Screenwriting: 1) UP TO 30 PAGES OF a completed screenplay that best represents your work; and 2) a brief description of a screenplay you are currently writing or wish to write while in our program

   • Directing: 1) The link to a short film submission; 2) the link to a video pitch about a short film you’d like to direct while in our program. You may upload select supporting materials, such as research (written or visual), and any other inspiration for your approach; and 3) a list of movies and/or ideas for a film you would like to direct/create while in our program

   • Producing: 1) three writing samples, including, critiques, production program notes, and/or literary criticism of a chosen screenplay or film (UP TO 30 PAGES); 2) a film or screenplay if you have written, acquired or produced; and 3) a brief statement describing your view of the role of Producing in today’s platform agnostic film industry.

H. A list of proficiencies in various production skills: camera, lighting, editing, directing, production and/or production design.

I. Acceptance by both the MFA in Film program and the Graduate School.

Any deficiencies in these or the Graduate School admission requirements shall not automatically bar admission, but it is understood that inadequacies in undergraduate preparation normally will require the student to take additional work, the amount to be determined by the appropriate graduate advisory committee. Additional work may not be used to fulfill MFA degree requirements.

Eligibility

Applicants to the Master of Fine Arts program must have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and, except in special circumstances, have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale. It’s fine to have an undergraduate degree in an area outside of the arts and humanities. A candidate with outstanding promise in film but a less-than-stellar academic transcript may be admitted on a conditional basis.

Transfer Credit

The program permits the transfer of up to 12 hours of credit in suitable graduate work done elsewhere that resulted in a grade of B or better. To obtain transfer credit, the student must make special application to the program, submit official transcripts and provide course descriptions or
syllabi. Transfer credits are only approved at the discretion of the academic department and the Graduate School. Courses older than five years will be accepted only in rare circumstances. No courses that have been credited toward another degree, such as an MA or an MFA in a different field, can be transferred. Transfer credit request forms are available on the Graduate School website.

Facilities
The MFA in Film is located in the Carriage House on the Stony Brook Southampton campus, which includes the Avram Theater and Gallery, a 429-seat theater that was substantially renovated in 2007. Students also work in a digital film studio, and at our Manhattan Facility. The program has Canon C100s, (with 3 Canon Digital Cinema Prime lenses and a Red Rock Cage shoulder mount and follow focus for each camera) Panasonic AG 150s, Kino flo and Arri light kits, Sennheiser lavaliers and booms, iMacs and Final Cut Studio.

The University Library holds in excess of 15,000 items comprised of books, eBooks, videos, periodicals, music scores, dissertations, and audio files related to the study of film, which are easily accessible through interlibrary document delivery. Our book collection contains over 7,500 volumes.

Degree Requirements
The MFA in Film requires a minimum of 45 credits. In addition to the minimum Graduate School requirements, the following are required:

A. Required Core Courses (27-28 Credits)
FLM 500 Introduction to Graduate Studies, 4 cr.
FLM 510 Western Theatre & Literature I, 3 cr.
FLM 523 Theatre in New York, 3 cr.
FLM 525 Topics in Theatre, 3 cr.
FLM 576 Theatre Workshop (Summer), 2 cr.
FLM 576 Theatre Workshop (Academic Year), 2-3 cr.
FLM 591 Independent Project, 3 cr.
FLM 660 Acting, 3 cr.
CWL 530 Forms of Scriptwriting: Screenwriting, 4 cr.

B. One of the following Literature Courses (3 Credits)
FLM 520 Western Theatre & Literature II, 3 cr.
FLM 530 Directed Readings in Theatre, 3 cr.

C. One of the following Writing/Performance Workshops (3-4 Credits)
CWL 510 Forms of Fiction, 4 cr.
CWL 520 Forms of Poetry, 4 cr.
CWL 530 Forms of Scriptwriting, 4 cr.
FLM 575 Adaptation Workshop, 3 cr.
FLM 640 Scenography and New Media, 3 cr.

D. One of the following Interdisciplinary Options (3-4 Credits)
With the approval of the Film Program director, select an interdisciplinary study option chosen from any FLM, TAF, CWL, or other SBU graduate course.

E. One or more of the following practicums (3 credits)
FLM 550 Practicum in Teaching, 3 cr.
FLM 690 Professional Internship, 3 cr.

F. MFA Thesis Project and Paper (6 credits)
FLM 691 MFA Project, 3 cr.
FLM 692 Thesis, 3 cr.
G. Residence Requirement
This program is normally completed in three years of full-time residency. Two semesters must include Southampton residency.

University Requirements
The granting of master’s degree is based upon the completion of any special departmental requirements in addition to the items listed below:

A. Courses and Grade Point Average
A student must maintain a 3.0 overall grade point average

B. Registration
Degree candidates must be registered in the program granting their degree. Students must be registered for the semester in which they intend to graduate. Spring (May) and Fall (December) candidates must register for at least one graduate credit; Summer (August) candidates may register for zero credits in either summer session, but it still must be graduate level.

C. Time Limits
The time limit for the MFA is three years for full-time study and five years for part-time study. A student’s full- or part-time status is based on registration, and the time-limit may be modified if enrollment switches between part- and full-time. The student may petition for an extension of time limit for the degree. Such requests must be filed before the limit is exceeded and must contain a significant justification.

Faculty of the MFA in Film Program

Associate Professor

Visiting Professor
Vachon, Christine, Director. B.A., 1983, Brown University
Feiffer, Jules. The Pratt Institute: Humor and Truth, Screenplay
Gabler, Neal. A.M., 1974, University of Michigan, Creative Nonfiction, Biography, Essay

Visiting Assistant Professor
Brandeis, Magdalene, Associate Director. M.F.A., 2008, Stony Brook University
Handley Chandler, Annette. C.W. Post College
Koffler, Pamela. B.A., 1987, Yale University
Krogman, Dane Pizzuti. MFA, 1976, University of Minnesota
Pero, Simone. MPP, 1994, University at Albany
Russo, Kathleen. BFA, 1986, Rochester Institute of Technology

Lecturer
Roberts, Jordan. MFA, 2009. New York Film Academy

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.