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## General Information

Major requirements and course offerings are listed in the Vassar catalogue

### Approach

Vassar College offers a Bachelor of Arts and a correlate sequence in Film. Our courses cover film history (American and international), film theory, film and digital production, and screenwriting.

Film at Vassar emphasizes the exploration of film within a broad liberal arts education. Roughly two-thirds of students' classes are taken outside their major area of concentration, drawing freely from Vassar's rich curriculum. Thus, our students achieve an understanding of film in the context of their interests in the other arts, social sciences, and sciences. All of our classes are small, and the instructors come to know the students well.

Students majoring in film at Vassar move in many directions after graduation. Even though our program is not specifically pre-professional in nature, the high level of skill students obtain here helps them find employment or pursue post-graduate degrees in filmmaking or film studies.

### Curriculum

The department offers an introductory course, Film 175: Introduction to Screen Arts, which is open to first year students. The major officially starts during the sophomore year, with students enrolling in a year-long introduction to film history and theory (Film 210 and Film 211). In the sophomore year, students also have the option to take a production course, Film 240: Foundations.

Many of our courses are offered every year; others on a three-year cycle.

During their senior year, our students undertake sophisticated, advanced projects, writing screenplays or academic theses, making documentaries or sync sound narrative films, or working on multimedia presentations.

## Facilities, Equipment and Resources

<http://film.vassar.edu>

Vassar College completed the construction of a state-of-the-art Center for Drama and Film, designed by the renowned architect, Cesar Pelli in 2003. The facility houses modern classrooms with smart podia; a screening room with surround sound, a 35mm, and an advanced digital projector; a soundproof studio equipped with a lighting grid and green screen; three editing suites, a high-tech multimedia laboratory, and a screening room for student use.

Students in production courses have the opportunity to work with up to date digital media and in 16mm film. In our video courses students use cameras by Canon and they learn to edit on Final Cut Pro or Adobe Premiere. If working in 16mm, students shoot with a variety of cameras. Students taking production courses pay a modest expense fee and are only charged further for broken or lost equipment. Otherwise, their equipment, supplies, and processing costs are covered.

Our senior narrative films work under a letter of agreement with those in SAG-AFTRA (the union for performers in film, television, radio and on the web). See: <http://film.vassar.edu/facilities/casting/>

Our Festival Supervisor submits selected student films to film festivals. We are very proud that our students' films have been recognized at Cannes, Tribeca, Woodstock, and many other festivals worldwide. See: <http://film.vassar.edu/students/festivals.html>

The Vassar library offers a comprehensive collection of scholarly books, as well as an ever-growing archive of over 13,000 feature and documentary films, all of which are available to all students.

Our Rosenwald Theater, a premiere screening facility, allows us to invite professional filmmakers to campus. Vassar graduate John Gatins brought his feature, *Flight* (2012), to Vassar prior to its theatrical release date. Tom Hanks and Lisa Kudrow have also come to speak, and we held a premiere of Noah Baumbach's *Frances Ha* (2012). As a part of our Katherine Stone White Artist in Residence Program, we have hosted visiting filmmakers such as Debra Granik, Kasi Lemmons and Shola Lynch.

## Internships and Fieldwork

Vassar maintains an active network of alumnae/i and friends who help Film majors obtain summer internships and fieldwork positions. Our website lists internships where students have recently worked.

Each year the department hosts a Career Night, during which Vassar graduates come to speak to current students about the myriad of opportunities available in preproduction, production, post-production, distribution, festivals and archives.

Financial assistance for summer work can sometimes be obtained through the Fellowship Office. Students are particularly encouraged to consider:

- A** | The Geraldine Gewirtz Friedman '41 Career Development Fund for Students of Drama, Film, Literature and the Visual Arts
- B** | The Steven J. Hueglin '74 Media Studies Internship  
[http://fellowships.vassar.edu/fellowships/all/hueglin\\_media\\_studies/](http://fellowships.vassar.edu/fellowships/all/hueglin_media_studies/)
- C** | Students should consider applying for the Telluride Film Festival Symposium held every year.
- D** | Students looking for internships and jobs should join these facebook groups:  
  - \_VC SPLICE NYC\_
  - VC// 24 Frames // L.A.
- E** | Please check the Film Department website for news:  
[film.vassar.edu](http://film.vassar.edu)

## Prospective Students

Visit [film.vassar.edu](http://film.vassar.edu) for more information

### Interested in Film at Vassar?

- 1** You can arrange to visit the Department through [film@vassar.edu](mailto:film@vassar.edu). You can sit in on classes, meet with a professor, and/or get a tour of the facilities.
- 2** On the Film Department website you can find samples of the films and theses our students have authored.  
<https://film.vassar.edu/students/work/>
- 3** On Vassar's youtube channel take a tour of the Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sRxUUU5uy8>
- 4** Please check the Film Department website for news:  
[film.vassar.edu](http://film.vassar.edu)
- 5** Another way to connect is by joining our Film Department Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/vassarfilm>

## First-Year Students

Major requirements and course offerings are listed in the Vassar catalogue

### When can I start?

First-year students should take **Film 175 - Introduction to Screen Arts:** An introductory exploration of central features of film and television aesthetics, including formal and stylistic elements: color, lighting, editing, sound, etc. Exposure to a wide spectrum of types of films, including: silent, abstract, non-narrative, documentary, and genre films, and the artistic choices manifested by each. Subjects are treated topically rather than historically, and emphasis is placed on mastering key vocabulary.

If you think you might wish to major in film at Vassar, it is **absolutely critical** that you enroll in Film 210/211 (World Cinema) in your Sophomore year. They serve as required prerequisites for essentially all further courses offered by the film department.

### What should I take as a first-year student?

1

We think that film is “about everything” and thus relates in some way to nearly every discipline in the liberal arts. You are encouraged to explore the Vassar curriculum widely during your first year.

2

First-year students are also strongly encouraged to complete their college requirements—the language requirement, the quantitative course and the writing course—to maximize their ability to take film courses in their later years.

### What if I want to get involved as a first-year student?

You can volunteer to help junior and senior filmmakers by becoming a production assistant or acting in a student film; to volunteer for the Film Majors' Committee; or even choose a work-study job within the Film Department. The Film administrative assistant, Amy Treaster (film@vassar.edu), can put you in contact with the appropriate people. Our website is also a great resource: <http://film.vassar.edu>.

## Requirements

Major requirements and course offerings are listed in the Vassar catalogue

### Major Requirements

- 1 11 Units Required
- 2 Film 210, Film 211, Film 392 required. Film 392 must be taken senior year.
- 3 2 additional Film Department units in cinema studies at the 200-level or above. These units must be completed before enrolling in Film 392.
- 4 1 film history unit in international cinema. This course, which must be at the 200-level or above, may be taken within the Department of Film or another Vassar Department. With prior approval, a film history course taken while a student is attending a JYA or Exchange Program may satisfy this requirement (This would count as one of the two possible JYA credits).
- 5 5 additional Film Department units in film. These may include Film 175 or any combination of courses at the 200-level or above in cinema studies, film and video production, or screenwriting. With prior approval from the department, two units of Junior Year Away coursework may be used to satisfy a portion of this requirement.
- 6 No First-Year Writing Seminar, Field Work, ungraded work or NRO will count toward the major sequence.

## International Cinema Requirements

- 1 Course must be at the 200 level, either in Film or across the VC curriculum.
- 2 Course must study more than 7 films during the semester as part of the culture or cinematic tradition of that nation.
- 3 Bring the course syllabus to your film adviser for approval.

## Correlate Requirements

- 1 Required Courses: FILM 210, FILM 211.
- 2 4 additional units in Film, including at least one more film studies course and one course at the 300 level. One of these 4 units may be a national cinema course taken in another Vassar department. (See requirements above for approved national cinema). The 300-level courses may include: FILM 310, FILM 317, FILM 320, or FILM 321.
- 3 Correlates may NOT take the following courses to fulfill their correlate sequence: FILM 319, FILM 325, FILM 326, FILM 327, FILM 392, nor any of Film's Thesis options.
- 4 Students are encouraged to declare the correlate in the sophomore year.
- 5 No First-Year Writing Seminar, Field Work, ungraded work or NRO will count toward the correlate sequence.

Major /  
Correlate  
Forms

Additional Forms can be picked up from the Registrar's Office.

**Download the forms in this handbook**

You can visit <https://pages.vassar.edu/filmmajors/> to download additional copies of the forms and a digital version of the complete handbook.



Handbook



Major Forms



Correlate Forms

## Major / Correlate Forms

Additional Forms can be picked up from the Registrar's Office.

## Download the forms in this handbook

You can visit <https://pages.vassar.edu/film-majors/> to download additional copies of the forms and a digital version of the complete handbook.

# VASSAR COLLEGE FILM DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

The logo features the word "FILM" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. To the left of the text is a vertical bar composed of four colored squares: blue, light blue, yellow, and orange.

**FILM**

The logo consists of the words "VASSAR" and "COLLEGE" stacked vertically in a white, serif font, centered within a solid yellow circle.

VASSAR  
COLLEGE

# FILM

A guide to declaring a Film Major

**1** Fill out two copies of the **Film Field of Concentration Form** (Page 11).

**2** Ask one of the continuing members of the faculty if he or she will be your advisor.

**3** At the **Registrar's** office in Main, pick up one copy of the **Declaration of Major Form**. You do not need the yellow card.

**4** In pencil, fill out one copy of our **Field Form** with all the courses you have already taken and all that you hope to take during your Vassar career.

**5** Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss your curriculum. When you agree, take the blank copy of the **Field Form** and fill it out neatly. Then get your advisor's signature.

**6** Bring the **Field Form** and the **Declaration of Major Form** to the Chair for his or her signature.

Ask the Film Administrative Assistant to make copies of the **Field Form**. You will need 2 more. Please make them double-sided.

X 

Disperse as follows:

**7** The **Declaration of Major and one Field Form** go to the Registrar's office

1 **Field Form** goes to the Film Department Administrative Assistant

1 **Field Form** goes to your advisor, and keep the first one you filled out for your records.

**8** Congratulations! You are now a Film Major!


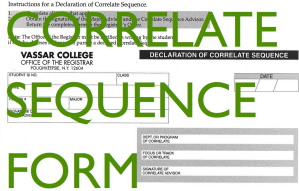









# FILM

A guide to declaring a Film Correlate

- 1 Fill out two copies of the **Declaration of Film Correlate Form** (Page 14). 
- 2 Ask one of the continuing members of the faculty if he or she will be your advisor.
- 3 At the **Registrar's** office in Main, pick up one copy of the **Declaration of Correlate Sequence Form**. 
- 4 In pencil, fill out one copy of the **Film Correlate Form** with all the courses you have already taken and all that you hope to take during your Vassar career. 
- 5 Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss your curriculum. When you agree, take the blank copy of the **Film Correlate Form** and fill it out neatly. Then get your advisor's signature.
- 6 Bring the **Film Correlate Form** and the **Declaration of Correlate Sequence** to the Chair for his or her signature. Ask the Film Administrative Assistant to make copies of the **Film Correlate Form**. You will need 2 more. Please make them double-sided. 
- 7 Disperse as follows:  
The **Declaration of Correlate Sequence** and one **Film Correlate Form** go to the Registrar office  
1 **Film Correlate Form** goes to the Film Department Administrative Assistant  
1 **Film Correlate Form** goes to your advisor, and keep the first one you filled out for your records.
- 8 Congratulations! You are now a Film Correlate! 



## Criteria for Honors

The criteria for departmental honors in Film are re-evaluated by the department every year, so these may change.

### Criteria:

- 1 | A cumulative GPA of 3.4 or higher.
- 2 | A GPA of 3.7 or higher in courses offered by the Film Department.
- 3 | As determined by the voting faculty members of the department, work of exceptional merit\* in one of the following senior-level courses:
  - A | Film 300 (Research Thesis)
  - B | Film 301 (Screenplay Thesis)
  - C | Film 326 (Documentary Workshop)
  - D | Film 327 (Narrative Workshop)
- \* | Please note an "A" letter grade does not necessarily represent work of exceptional merit.

## Theses

Major requirements and course offerings are listed in the Vassar catalogue

### Academic Thesis

You must submit a hard copy and an electronic copy of your essay to the Film Department ([film@vassar.edu](mailto:film@vassar.edu)) as well as follow submission instructions in this handbook.

1

Ask a faculty member to mentor you. You may work either with the Faculty of the Film Department, or—with the permission of the Chair—faculty from another Vassar department. **You must meet with your advisor 2-3 times during the semester before you write your thesis to narrow your focus and compile a bibliography.**

2

For theses written in the Fall semester: an initial draft is due at the end of classes; the final draft is due in the second week of the B semester. Theses written in Spring (B) semester are due during study period.

3

Theses are given letter grades.

4

The thesis should be between 40-80 pages in length. Sample theses linked to our web site:  
<http://film.vassar.edu/students/work/#capstones>

5

You should bind your paper in the press-back binder (ask in the Film Office, we have a box of extras). Only one copy need be bound. The title of your project, your name, and the name of your advisor should appear on the outside cover.

6

Include a title page. A table of contents is optional.

## Academic Thesis (Cont.)

- 7 Extensive, thorough research is expected. Include a bibliography citing all books and articles used in your thesis. You do not need a filmography. Use Chicago Manual of Style Endnotes and Bibliography: see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)
- 8 Double-space the text, but single-space and indent 5 spaces on the right and left any lengthy quotations. Quotation marks are not needed for indented quotations.
- 9 Margins on all sides, including the bottom, must be at least 1". Leave a wider margin at the left to allow for binding.
- 10 Illustrations, e.g. frame grabs, may be included. They should be labeled and inserted in the written text close to your analysis, not at the end of the chapter.
- 11 The department expects that you will give a brief presentation about your thesis at the Projects and Screenings Presentations in May. This can include clips, Powerpoint or Prezi slides, etc.
- 12 Please see the next page in this handbook for further information about how Vassar retains thesis projects.

## Theses

Major requirements and course offerings are listed in the Vassar catalogue

### Screenplay Thesis

You must submit a hard copy and an electronic copy of your screenplay to the Film Department ([film@vassar.edu](mailto:film@vassar.edu)) as well as follow submission instructions in this handbook.

- 1** Ask a faculty member to mentor you. **You must meet with your advisor at least 4-5 times during the semester.**
- 2** You must complete at least 3 rounds of revisions under the guidance of your mentor.
- 3** For theses written in the Fall semester, an initial draft is due at least 2 weeks prior to the end of classes; a second draft is due at the end of classes; and the final draft is due the second week of the Spring semester. For theses written in the Spring semester, an initial draft is due 2 weeks prior to the end of classes; a second draft is due at the end of classes; and the final draft is due by the end of the study period.
- 4** Theses are given letter grades.
- 5** You should bind your paper in the press-back binder (ask in the Film Office, we have a box of extras). Only one copy need be bound. The title of your screenplay, your name, and the name of your advisor should appear on the outside cover. Also include a standard title page to your screenplay.
- 6** You should bind your paper in the press-back binder (ask in the Film Office, we have a box of extras). Only one copy need be bound. The title of your project, your name, and the name of your advisor should appear on the outside cover.

## Screenplay Thesis (Cont.)

7

The format of the screenplay itself must adhere to professional standards and practices laid out at:

<http://www.oscars.org/nicholl/screenwriting-resources>  
or in "The Complete Screenwriter's Manual" (Longman, 2006).

8

Your screenplay must be preceded by two items:

A

A Critical Introduction of 5-10 pages in length, contextualizing your script within film history. Elements to consider are, but not limited to, the thematic treatment, historical context, genre designation, and formal structure of your project. For example, if your screenplay is neo-realist, film-noir tale of revenge that inverts gender stereotypes, unpack this intent in your Critical Introduction. Include a bibliography citing all books, articles, and films referenced in your thesis. Use Chicago Manual of Style Endnotes and Bibliography: see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

B

A 5-10 page treatment of your film, i.e. a prose synopsis of your story.

11

The department expects that you will give a brief presentation about your thesis at the Projects and Screenings Presentations in May.

Dear Senior,

Traditionally Vassar College has collected and retained senior theses in paper format. These theses evidence the scholarly work of the college. Furthermore, they may contain original research of use to others, and may serve as models for juniors contemplating a senior thesis. Members of the Vassar community (students, faculty, staff and administrators) may read these theses, but may not make copies of them without permission of the author.

We are now also collecting senior theses and senior projects in electronic format. With the advent of electronic collection your thesis or project will be cataloged in our institutional repository (IR). You may also publish your thesis or project in our IR. You may choose to publish it, and restrict access to members of the Vassar community and alumni, or you may choose to publish it even more widely as “open access” so that anyone with an internet connection may read it.

Please choose one of the options below.

Please just catalog and archive my thesis/project. I understand that members of the Vassar community may view it, but only by contacting a member of the Archives and Special Collections staff and having the thesis/project made available in a controlled environment. Copying of my thesis by a researcher requires my permission.

Please publish my thesis/project in the IR but limit access to members of the Vassar community, and Vassar alumni.

Please publish my thesis/project in the IR as open access.

To the best of my knowledge, my thesis/project does not infringe any copyright, nor violate any proprietary rights, nor contain any libelous matter, nor invade the privacy of any person or third party.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Class Year

## JYA Study Away

For more information also visit  
<http://internationalprograms.vassar.edu>

### Policies for Film Majors

General advice: Students may transfer up to two units towards the major requirements. No units taken off the Vassar campus count towards the correlate. Students who wish to be considered for advanced senior work in filmmaking or screenwriting should plan to go abroad in the Fall (rather than Spring) of their junior year. Be prepared to show your advisor your syllabus and a list of screenings for the class you wish to count.

1

Language programs:

Students who participate in a foreign language program—e.g. to France, Italy, Spain, etc.—may have the opportunity to study non-American cinema there. Students may apply to their advisor to have this class count as their “non-American national cinema” towards the major.

2

Media-specific JYA programs:

Students may count two units towards the major if these units lie in two distinct areas of our curriculum, such as screenwriting and film production or film studies and film production. Extra units will count towards graduation.

### Programs Vassar Students have attended

#### **FAMU—Prague, Czech Republic**

FAMU allows study abroad students the opportunity to work closely with faculty mentors and participate in all aspects of filmmaking, including: directing, cinematography, casting, screenwriting, producing and editing. This program encourages the creation of students' own films using traditional 16 mm through small group collaborations between Czech and international peers.

#### **Australian Film, Television and Radio School—Sydney, Australia**

Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) is Australia's national screen arts and broadcast school. The Sydney campus was designed and geared to prepare students for digital content creation, collaboration, and convergence.

#### **Vassar's Media Studies Department at Goldsmith's College, University of London**

See: <http://internationalprograms.vassar.edu/programs/vassar/london/>



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