

CINEMA, BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)

The Bachelor of Arts in Cinema is focused on narrative movie production. Consequently, the program is designed to advance conceptual understanding of visual storytelling and to teach and practice the technical methodologies foundational to movie-making.

Cinema majors collaborate on student productions under the supervision of faculty with professional production experience. Each summer session, students and faculty work collectively on a series of films funded by the School of the Arts.

Course work explores the proper use of motion picture cameras, lights, sound recording equipment and editorial software. Students also learn the history and theory of film, and develop skills in screenwriting, producing, directing and the business of movie-making.

The B.A. in Cinema requires a minimum of 120 credits, including 48 in the major. At least 45 of the 120 credits must be taken as 300- and 400-level courses. Students are admitted directly into the cinema program and are not required to complete the Art Foundation Program.

Many full-time students enrolled in the cinema program graduate with their B.A. degree after the successful completion of the summer session following their third year.

Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate safe, effective and responsible technical practices used in operating motion-picture cameras, grip/lighting, sound and editing equipment employed in all stages of production
2. Write, revise and critique original screenplays that include fundamental narrative elements appropriate to creative guidelines
3. Express a rich understanding of the history and influences of cinema by communicating adeptly about references with professionals in the film universe
4. Produce narrative films by competently, collaboratively and professionally participating with a team in their assigned production role.

Special requirements

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in the program.

Majors in the Cinema Program may choose to complete a second major or minor in any other department or program that supports their educational and artistic goals. Alternatively, students may create a customized plan of study for a second major by requesting admission to the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program.

Degree requirements for Cinema, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

Course	Title	Hours
General education (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/)		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30

Major requirements

• Major core requirements		
CINE 100	Visual Storytelling I	3
CINE 101	Visual Storytelling II	3
CINE 110	Writing for Cinema I	3
CINE 111	Writing for Cinema II	3
CINE 200	Cinema Form and Concept I	3
CINE 201	Cinema Form and Concept II	3
CINE 300	Cinema Form and Concept III	3
CINE 301	Cinema Form and Concept IV	3
CINE 390	Digital Cinema Production Intensive I	12
CINE 490	Digital Cinema Production Intensive II	12

Ancillary requirements

ARTH 270 & ARTH 271	History of the Motion Picture I and History of the Motion Picture II	6
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Open electives

Select any courses toward a minor, second major or electives.	36
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Total Hours	120
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The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester	Hours
ARTH 270 History of the Motion Picture I	3
CINE 100 Visual Storytelling I	3
CINE 110 Writing for Cinema I	3
UNIV 111 Focused Inquiry I (satisfies general education UNIV foundations) Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	3
General education course	3
Term Hours:	15

Spring semester

ARTH 271 History of the Motion Picture II	3
CINE 101 Visual Storytelling II	3
CINE 111 Writing for Cinema II	3
UNIV 112 Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations) Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	3
General education course	3
Term Hours:	15

Summer semester

CINE 390 Digital Cinema Production Intensive I	12
Term Hours:	12

Sophomore year

Fall semester	Hours
CINE 200 Cinema Form and Concept I	3

UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
Courses toward a minor, second major or electives		5
General education courses		6
Term Hours:		17
Spring semester		
CINE 201	Cinema Form and Concept II	3
Courses toward a minor, second major or electives		7
General education courses		6
Term Hours:		16
Summer semester		
CINE 490	Digital Cinema Production Intensive II	12
Term Hours:		12
Junior year		
Fall semester		
CINE 300	Cinema Form and Concept III	3
Courses toward a minor, second major or electives		11-12
General education course		3
Term Hours:		17
Spring semester		
CINE 301	Cinema Form and Concept IV	3
Courses toward a minor, second major or electives		13
Term Hours:		16
Total Hours:		120

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

CINE 100. Visual Storytelling I. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors. This course will build a foundation of skills in the use of camera, lighting, sound and editing for narrative film production. Pre-production planning concepts and methods will also be presented.

CINE 101. Visual Storytelling II. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 100. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors. This course will build a foundation of skills in the use of camera, lighting, sound and editing for narrative film production. The primary focus will be on production and post-production software and processes.

CINE 110. Writing for Cinema I. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors. This course will examine the creative process and elements of effective narrative writing. Students will explore various formats such as narrative pieces, critical essays and basic screenplays.

CINE 111. Writing for Cinema II. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 110. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors. This course will focus on the development of synopsis, treatments and intermediate screenplays. Strategies for pitching and communicating narrative ideas will be addressed.

CINE 120. Integrating Sight and Sound. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment is restricted to students in the cinema program or a music program, including the music minor. This course introduces students to digital audio workstation software and its applications to produce, edit, mix and synchronize soundtracks to motion pictures. Students will receive instruction and practical experience applied to music editing, sound design, Foley and purposeful integration of sound into time-based media projects in a DAW environment.

CINE 200. Cinema Form and Concept I. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: CINE 101 and CINE 390. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors. Concepts, issues and processes involved in feature and short-form narrative screenplay writing.

CINE 201. Cinema Form and Concept II. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 200. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors. Concepts, issues and processes involved in pre-production planning for feature and short-form narrative filmmaking.

CINE 210. Synergetic Film Production. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 101. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors. This course will provide a foundation for professional communication skills, managing and leading teams, and working effectively in a positive, collaborative environment.

CINE 217. Mechanics of Screenwriting. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment is restricted to students who have permission of the instructor. Introductory course focused on building an in-depth and logistical understanding of how a screenplay informs and prescribes the movie-making process. The course will cover common story structures, standard script formatting and abbreviations, script analysis for production, and creating shot-by-shot shooting lists.

CINE 300. Cinema Form and Concept III. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 390. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors with junior or senior standing. Concepts, issues and processes involved in feature and short-form narrative filmmaking including pre- and post-production processes, as well as business and professional aspects of the industry, including funding and festival entry.

CINE 301. Cinema Form and Concept IV. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 300. Enrollment is restricted to cinema majors with junior or senior standing. Concepts, issues and processes involved in narrative filmmaking. Project-based learning on smaller-scale films emphasizes leadership roles, creative collaboration, professional communication and career exploration. Uses guided mentoring and student reflection on the creative process, and deploys hands-on learning in order to synthesize and integrate skill-sets developed in the cinema major.

CINE 354. Religion and Film: ____ 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated with different themes for a total of six credits. Explores central themes present in all global religious traditions, such as ritual, faith, myth, suffering, redemption, the religious quest/pilgrimage, the nature of good and evil and perceptions of the sacred. Using readings from sacred texts and contemporary film critiques, the course juxtaposes ancient story and wisdom with contemporary narratives in film. Possible themes would include women and religion in world cinema, Christology in world cinema, and violence and redemption in film. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester. Crosslisted as: RELS 354/ WRLD 354.

CINE 390. Digital Cinema Production Intensive I. 12 Hours.

Semester course; 40 studio hours. 12 credits. Prerequisites: CINE 100 and CINE 101, or permission of instructor. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors or by permission of instructor. Production and postproduction of narrative short films using digital technology for camera, editing and sound, with an emphasis on the technical and tactical aspects of production. This course is designed for full-day participation over a six-week summer session.

CINE 392. Independent Study in Film. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum total of 6 credits. Prerequisites: junior standing as a major in cinema and approval of department chair and instructor. Individual instruction and supervision of a special project.

CINE 401. Advanced Cinema Production. 4 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 4 studio hours. 4 credits. Prerequisite: CINE 390 or permission of instructor. Open to junior and senior B.A. in Cinema majors. Lecture and workshop in the production, theory, business and historical context of film.

CINE 490. Digital Cinema Production Intensive II. 12 Hours.

Semester course; 40 studio hours. 12 credits. Prerequisites: CINE 200, CINE 201 and CINE 390, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors or by permission of the instructor. Advanced production of narrative short films using digital technology for camera, editing and sound; working with performers; and within developed budgets and schedules. This course is designed to be full-day participation for a six-week summer session.

CINE 491. Special Topics in Cinema. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 credits. An in-depth examination of selected topics. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

CINE 493. Film Internship. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; 1-3 practicum hours. 1-3 credits. May be repeated up to a maximum of six credits. Enrollment is restricted to B.A. in Cinema majors. Supervised work experience related to cinema.

CINE 495. Cinema as Art. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of six credits. A critical exploration of cinema as art, image, narrative and theory. Film lists, theoretical/critical texts, focal points of emphasis and themes vary, including studies of individual or linked sets of filmmakers or film movements, seen through the lens of classic and/or contemporary film theory and criticism. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered.

CINE 496. Advanced Screenwriting Seminar. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 seminar hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. A study of the narrative screenwriting process. In a workshop setting, students advance their use and understanding of the formal elements of narrative such as character, story, plot, arc, conflict, unity, development and theme.

CINE 497. Expanded Cinema: ____ 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours (delivered online or face-to-face). 3 credits. May be repeated with different topics for a maximum of six credits. Students advance their critical knowledge of contemporary screen culture and expand their understanding of formats, techniques and styles in narrative cinema, television and/or streaming.