Film and Media Studies (FMST)

FMST 1100 Gateway to Film Media Stds 3 Credits
This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of film theory and to the study of newer media and distribution platforms, ranging from radio and television to videotape and the internet. A portfolio of writing will give students an opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in analysis and their awareness of both historical and theoretical aspects of media texts. Pre-requisites: Admission to the Film & Media Studies minor
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)
Course registration restrictions:
Enrollment is limited to students with a minor in Film and Media Studies.

FMST 1150 Film Festival Practicum 1 Credit
In the Film Festival Practicum students will have the opportunity to gain direct, hand-on experience organizing the inaugural Georgetown Student Film Festival. The former director of AFI DOCS (formerly Silverdocs) and the Newport International Film Festival will lead them through every logistical and theoretical aspect of what it takes to envision, prepare, and execute an ambitious festival event, including programming, technical, production, and marketing. Although the practicum is offered as a capstone for students who took Film Festival Studies course, it is open to all students of the university.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 1151 Media Industry Studies ILE 1 Credit
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 1181 Intro to Filmmaking 3 Credits
FMST 181-20: This course explores introductory film production techniques and strategies. Students will learn video and audio recording, scriptwriting and non-linear editing using Adobe Premiere Pro software. Visual storytelling concepts and creative post-production editing will be emphasized. In-class exercises and short film projects will allow students to become comfortable working in various film production roles. Additionally, critiques and screenings of student and professional film work will provide students with an understanding of the narrative film genre.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2000 Escapism 3 Credits
Everything you think you know about escapism is probably wrong. Escapism isn't selfish or a waste of time; it is actually a worldbuilding form of self-care that provides relief from stress, time to recharge, and energy to imagine and pursue brighter futures. In this class, we will seek to understand what philosophers have said about the morality of escapism, why escapism has such a bad reputation, and how people have practiced escapism historically and at present. In addition to philosophy, we'll study media and media theory to understand why some films, TV shows, and novels get called "escapist" and how that label reinforces specific ideologies and taste cultures. We'll approach escapism as personal, subjective, and dynamic, and we'll experiment with different forms of escapism, including activities like napping, reading, and watching TV. We will consider escapism's political potentials and whether and why it can become dangerous. We'll watch films like I Saw the TV Glow and Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song and read works by Tricia Hersey, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Yi-Fu Tuan, not to mention Plato, Immanuel Levinas, and Ursula K. Le Guin.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2205 Keywords in Media Studies 3 Credits
This course introduces students to media studies by exploring the debates that have developed around a few keywords in the field. Starting with the word "media" itself, the major terms in media studies inform the structure of the discipline and the shape of inquiries within it. What assumptions about the nature and functions of electronic media are encoded within the terms we use to discuss them? What do the keywords in media studies teach us about the core methods and guiding concerns in this area of study? Each unit of this course examines a particular keyword in media studies—asking, for example, what we mean when we call something "virtual," how an "interface" constrains our actions, and why we call computers "digital." We will look at examples ranging from the gramophone to the MP3, from the earliest moving-image technologies to the latest virtual-reality platforms, from papyrus to smartphones. Alongside these, we will read foundational texts in media theory and explore a range of methods to discuss the political, historical, and philosophical dimensions of media technologies.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2210 Development of Motion Picture 3 Credits
This course introduces students to media studies by exploring the debates that have developed around a few keywords in the field. Starting with the word “media” itself, the major terms in media studies inform the structure of the discipline and the shape of inquiries within it. What assumptions about the nature and functions of electronic media are encoded within the terms we use to discuss them? What do the keywords in media studies teach us about the core methods and guiding concerns in this area of study? Each unit of this course examines a particular keyword in media studies—asking, for example, what we mean when we call something “virtual,” how an “interface” constrains our actions, and why we call computers “digital.” We will look at examples ranging from the gramophone to the MP3, from the earliest moving-image technologies to the latest virtual-reality platforms, from papyrus to smartphones. Alongside these, we will read foundational texts in media theory and explore a range of methods to discuss the political, historical, and philosophical dimensions of media technologies.
Level: Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2215 Italian Americans on Screen 3 Credits
This course surveys the representation of Italian Americans in films and TV series from the silent era to the present. During the first half of the semester students will be exploring the use of stereotypes and film genres commonly used to depict Italian Americans, During the second half of the semester, students will focus on the Italian American experience at large, analyzing films that deal with a wide variety of topics (from domesticity, family, and food to emigration). This course will help students reflect upon the concept of Italian Americanness, and question the very existence of Italian American cinema. Indeed, during the semester, students will appreciate how Italian Americans progressively moved from being represented by others, to finally acquiring their own authorial voice. Nonetheless, this voice will be problematized, along with the ever-recurrence of stereotypes and labels that continue to plague the Italian American identity and community.
Level: Undergraduate
Corequisites: SABR 0011
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2220 Transnational Cinema 3 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2225 Ital Realisms:Docu Filmmaking 3 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2230 Intro-Global Cinema:ClimateChg 1.5 or 3 Credits
This course will examine the history and theory of global cinema since the Second World War, through the rise of the European art cinema movement of the 1960s and ’70s. It will encompass the growth of Asian cinemas, the consequences of digital filmmaking, and conclude with the more recent transnational blockbusters of today. It will survey major cinematic movements, and their responses to the social, political, economic, technological, and cultural conditions and values that precipitated them. All of the major genres will be represented: comedy, drama, documentary, and experimental film.
Level: Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2231 Intro to Global Cinema 3 Credits
This course will examine the history and theory of global cinema since the Second World War, through the rise of the European art cinema movement of the 1960s and ’70s. It will encompass the growth of Asian cinemas, the consequences of digital filmmaking, and conclude with the more recent transnational blockbusters of today. It will survey major cinematic movements, and their responses to the social, political, economic, technological, and cultural conditions and values that precipitated them. All of the major genres will be represented: comedy, drama, documentary, and experimental film.
Level: Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2235 Cultures of Artificial Intel 3 Credits
The stories we tell about artificial intelligence reflect our fantasies and anxieties about powerful technology, as well as our beliefs about the nature of intelligence and consciousness. If computers one day surpass human intelligence, will the machines enslave or kill us all, or will they help us to achieve world peace, stop climate change, and live in luxury? This class explores the history of intelligent machines, both real and imagined. We’ll ask how films (Her, Ex Machina, Ghost in the Shell) and fictions (by Kazuo Ishiguro, Isaac Asimov, and others) about artificial intelligence reflect our technological hopes and fears. Alongside these narratives, we’ll read scholarship about the dangers and potentials of artificial intelligence, philosophies of human and artificial consciousness, and studies of how machine learning has already begun to transform human life. We also will experiment with existing AI technologies, including a platform that helped me write this paragraph.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2246 Experimental Filmmaking 3 Credits
Experimental film is a mode of filmmaking that re-evaluates cinematic conventions and explores non-narrative forms and alternatives to traditional narratives. Students will learn about the genre through film screenings and discussions and learn basic film production skills in order to enable them to create projects that invent new and unusual methods of expression. No previous film experience necessary.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2247 ExperimentAvant Garde Cinema 3 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 2281 Intermediate Filmmaking 3 Credits
Must have completed FMST 181/1181 or permission of instructor.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3100 International Horror Cinema 3 Credits
FMST 3100: International Horror Cinema (Caetlin Benson-Allott)
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Many scholars, filmmakers, and skeptics have asked why people want their movies to scare them, which is an interesting but perhaps unanswerable question. This course accepts the enduring popularity of horror movies and asks instead what horror is and how movies horrify us. We often think of horror as a genre, but what is the effect—or field of sensation—that this genre names? What do we feel while watching horror movies, and how do different film traditions seek to elicit those responses in us? To answer such questions, we will examine some of the most effective scary movies from around the world, studying the history of film technology and film theory to unpack the various mechanical and cultural components that contribute to horror in films.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3200 Digital PostproductionEditing 3 Credits
This course introduces students to the techniques and workflows of non-linear digital film editing and post-production. Through class exercises and assignments, students will gain practical experience editing video and audio and performing color correction using the Adobe Creative Suite. Students will participate in regular class screenings of past student and professional work as well as critiques of their own projects and those of their peers.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3231 Third Wrld Film,Third Wrld Pol 3 Credits
This class focuses on key 20th- through 21st-century films from across the so-called "Third World" with a focus on Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The selected films all grapple with questions of decolonization, with special focus on liberation struggles that challenge our understanding of justice, sovereignty, and economic democracy.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3245 Expanded Cinema 3 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3320 Film Festival Stds- SILVERDOCS 4 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3345 Experimental Film Media 3 Credits
Since the end of the First World War, artists – poets, painters, sculptors – made non-commercial films to explore the essence of cinematic language. After the Second World War the impetus to make such films migrated to America where an avant-garde cinema continues to flourish. This course will survey the major experimental film movements of the twentieth century, from the European "city symphonies," surrealist visions, and abstract films of the 1920s to the development of the American postwar avant-garde, ending in a discussion of video art from the 1960s to the online viral videos and digital gallery installations of today. It will closely examine the theory, criticism, history, and aesthetics of this alternate film movement. Most of the readings will come from the texts of the filmmakers themselves. Films by Luis Bunuel, Salvador Dali, Dziga Vertov, Maya Deren, Stan Brakhage, Hollis Frampton, Andy Warhol, Su Friedrich, Jonas Mekas and Yvonne Rainer will be among those discussed, as we consider the basic theory and purpose of experimental film and video as compared to narrative and documentary formats.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3349 CURE: Reframing Doc Impact 3 Credits
This is a designated CAS CURE (Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience) class. Reframing Impact: Documentary, Change, and the Impact Imperative explores how the idea of “impact” has reshaped the documentary world—transforming approaches to filmmaking, funding, and audience engagement since An Inconvenient Truth (2006). Students will conduct original research and interviews with filmmakers, funders, and impact producers to examine how “impact” is defined, achieved, and debated. The course also interrogates how the pressure to demonstrate measurable change can affect artistic freedom and creative vision. It culminates in a collaborative project designing a new Impact Lab for the DC/DOX Documentary Festival, connecting student scholarship to real-world efforts that use film as a catalyst for reflection, advocacy, and democratic dialogue.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3350 Film Festival Studies 3 Credits
Through an immersive learning experience, students will have the opportunity to gain direct, hand-on experience organizing the annual Georgetown Student Film Festival. The former director of AFI DOCS (formerly Silverdocs) and the Newport International Film Festival will lead them through every logistical and theoretical aspect of what it takes to envision, prepare, and execute an ambitious festival event, including areas of focus such as programming, production, and marketing. Additionally, the course will contextualize our own practice through the exploration of the phenomena of film festivals, including their historical and cultural significance, distinct programmatic identities, and their relationships to an ever-evolving film industry and to particular film themes and genres. From its origins in Venice in 1932 where nine nations presented twenty-five feature films against a climate of geopolitical disputes, to the recent proliferation of specialized and thematic festivals world wide (independent, documentary, experimental, shorts, human rights, queer), this course will look at how festivals do more than just exhibit films, but also serve as important market places and sometimes even the springboard for new artistic and/or political climates in world cinema. Industry experts and leading filmmakers will periodically visit the class, and in addition to our own creation of a film festival, there will be opportunities to integrate and support established film festivals in the DC region for additional learning.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3355 Documentary Film:Hist Theory 3 Credits
This course surveys the history of documentary film (technological, stylistic, thematic, etc.), while taking up the theoretical debates around cinematic claims to truth and representations of reality. Students will examine how the documentary genre differs from other kinds of filmmaking, how documentaries make ‘truth claims’, and how these claims influence the ways in which these films are received and circulated. Beginning with the actualities of the Lumière Brothers, students will be exposed to multiple genres (e.g. ethnographic, cinéma vérité, experimental, self-reflexive) and filmmakers (e.g. Robert Flaherty, Frederick Wiseman, Albert Maysles, Errol Morris) while addressing the variety of arenas (e.g. scientific, civic, commercial) in which documentary has appeared.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3356 Documenting DC 3 Credits
Documenting DC provides Georgetown students with opportunities to research, explore, document, and shape stories about the lived past and present of the District of Columbia. D.C. has unique status in the American experience, related to its identity as both the Nation's Capitol and as a dynamic and diverse city, with its own distinct communities and concerns, but without true home rule. Working together in production teams, students will propose, develop, shoot/record, and edit short documentaries about aspects of the social, cultural, and political history of DC. Students will work in local archives and collect oral histories in order to engage with individual, community, and collective memory. Connecting critical documentary studies with historiography, Documenting DC asks students to consider the problem of accessing, interpreting, understanding and communicating about the American past. We will focus special attention on histories of race, class, gender, sexuality, and justice. The course builds upon AMST-205: American Civilization III: Documentary and prepares students for FMST-399: Social Justice Documentary.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)
Course registration restrictions:
Enrollment is limited to students with a program in American Studies or Film and Media Studies.

FMST 3360 Avant-Documentary 3 Credits
This course delves into the rich and dynamic field of experimental documentary, exploring how filmmakers push the boundaries of nonfiction storytelling. Through a combination of screenings, readings, discussions, and creative projects, students will investigate how a body of documentary films has challenged conventional narrative structures and aesthetic norms, and how experimental films have utilized real-world source material to explore and expand their aesthetic concerns. We will examine a diverse array of experimental documentaries that employ innovative techniques such as reenactments, animation, abstract imagery, unconventional editing, and hybrid forms that blur the lines between reality and fiction. We will also explore various film forms including city symphonies, essay films, compilation films, and autobiographical films, among others. Key themes include the exploration of subjective versus objective truth, the role of the filmmaker as an artist and activist, the impact of experimental forms on viewer perception and emotional response, and the ethical considerations that come with the creative treatment of actuality. In addition to historical and theoretical analysis, students will have the opportunity to create their own short experimental documentaries, applying the concepts and techniques discussed in class to their projects. This hands-on component will encourage students to experiment with form and content, fostering a deeper understanding of the creative possibilities within documentary filmmaking. Special filmmaker guests will be included.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3361 Documentary Ethics 3 Credits
Documentary Ethics This course explores the ethical stakes and social responsibilities embedded in nonfiction filmmaking. Through a wide range of historical and contemporary texts—with particular emphasis on the last two decades of documentary film production—we examine how documentary filmmakers have represented real people, events, and environments, and how those representations have shaped public understanding, policy, and cultural memory. Moving beyond a simple opposition between fiction and nonfiction, the course investigates how power, consent, authorship, and truth operate in documentary practice. We trace shifting approaches to depicting others, documenting the self, and engaging with the natural world, while considering how these categories are often entangled. Key areas of focus include the legacy of ethnographic film, questions of voice and authorship in personal documentaries, and the ethics of witnessing—especially in the contexts of trauma, activism, and environmental crisis. We also examine legal issues such as fair use and consent, and conclude with a look at how generative AI and emerging technologies are impacting the field. Students will engage with films that provoke critical reflection on what it means to look, to listen, to tell, and to expose. We ask: What does it mean to film another person responsibly? What are the risks of turning the camera on oneself? How do documentaries shape—or distort—collective memory? And what role should ethics play in creative expression? Through screenings, readings, discussion, and special guests, this course offers students the tools to think critically about documentary as both an art form and a mode of ethical inquiry.
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3398 Gaming Justice 3 Credits
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the fundamentals of game design through the lens of control systems and strategies of resistance to the often problematic content and practices of the video game industry. The course is part seminar, part workshop that will give students an introduction to the rhetorical devices of video games and virtual spaces and experience in manipulating those devices to create a prototype for a digital game or other interactive experience. Approximately half of the class meetings will engage students in traditional seminar-style lecture and discussion format, with the other half dedicated to guiding student groups in building theoretically-informed projects that will make a persuasive argument about or intervention on a social justice issue of their choice. This will give students experience in connecting theory with praxis, creating collaborative scholarship, working in new modes of literacy, and extending the uses of technology beyond those for which they were originally intended. After completing this course, students will have worked in groups to produce a concept for a game, game mod, or virtual space, along with a working proof-of-concept demonstration. This course will build teamworking skills, familiarization with new technology, and an understanding of how ideas can be communicated in ways other than writing.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 3399 CBL:Social Justice Documentary 4 Credits
Social Justice Documentary takes up three intersecting bodies of knowledge: • Documentary Filmmaking techniques and practices • Film and Media Studies scholarship • Social Justice Theory and the practices of Community Based Organizations in Washington, DC The course will enable students to collaborate with members of DC-based Community Organizations in order to create documentary video projects and learn about non-fiction video as a tool for social action. Students in Social Justice Documentary will work in small teams to produce short documentary videos about social justice issues as related to the work of Washington, DC-based Community Organizations. At the end of the course students should be able to define, summarize, and interpret documentary theories; have a working knowledge of pre-production, production, and post-production processes that are part of making a documentary video; and be able to formulate and demonstrate ways through which documentary video can be used to meet social justice ends. In addition, students will have gained experience in working as members of video production team —as successful video production heavily depends on cooperation, collaboration, and respect among team members. This is a 4-credit course and will require substantial time outside of scheduled class meetings. This course will include hands-on workshops on camera, lighting, sound, and editing scheduled in additional to regular course meetings.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)
Course registration restrictions:
Enrollment is limited to students with a program in American Studies, Culture Politics, Film and Media Studies or Justice and Peace Studies.

FMST 4949 Tutorial: FMST 0-3 Credits
Level: Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

FMST 4970 Capstone Preparation 3 Credits
In the Capstone course, senior FMST students will engage with key ideas and texts in Film and Media Studies through close critical reading and creative theorizing. Together, we will revisit aspects of your learning in the Gateway course and Introduction to Filmmaking, retracing your intellectual genealogies, identifying and returning to questions and approaches that have been important to you. You will develop signature, culminating projects in workshop formats, regularly pitching ideas, providing and receiving feedback, and refining and developing your ideas. By the end of the fall term, you will have engaged important critical questions in Film and Media Studies, connected questions and learning from your FMST curriculum, developed proposals for final projects, and planned effectively to carry out your capstone work in the spring 2016 semester. Your learning in FMST-400 will continue in FMST-401 in the spring and will conclude with your final presentation of and reflection on your capstone work.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)
Course registration restrictions:
Enrollment is limited to students with a program in Film and Media Studies.

FMST 4971 Capstone Film/Media Studies(2) 3 Credits
The Capstone is an opportunity for students to explore their own interests in the field of Film and Media Studies. In FMST 401: Film and Media Studies Capstone, students work individually or on groups to actualize their research. The topic and format of the capstone is chosen by the student in FMST 400: Capstone Preparation. Projects may take a number of forms (a scholarly essay, a documentary short, an experimental short, a screenplay, audio documentary, or short narrative film, e.t.c.). All projects must be critically engaging and clearly contextualized in the field of Film and Media Studies. Students who undertake a time-based media project must work in a group (of their choosing) no smaller than 2 and no bigger than 4 members. Students who chose to produce written capstones may work individually. Students may choose any topic and form within the field of Film and Media Studies provided that the student has previous experience with the research area and methodology, for example, someone who has not taken any documentary classes may not make a documentary.
Level: Graduate, Undergraduate
Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)
Course registration restrictions:
Enrollment is limited to students with a program in Film and Media Studies.