

Film Studies Program Bylaws

Ratified by Core Faculty, November 24, 2020

This document outlines the rights, responsibilities, and procedures by which faculty and students participate in the academic governance of the Film Studies Program at Michigan State University. If specifications or omissions place these Bylaws in conflict, in any manner, with the College of Arts & Letters, or University policies, as enacted in their Bylaws, the latter will take precedence. Questions about conduct of business shall be referred to these Bylaws or to the revised Robert's Rules of Order as necessary.

1. **Function & Objectives.** Film Studies is a College of Arts & Letters program housed within the Department of English.
 - 1.1. Participating Units. Film Studies is a college program within the Department of English, but it also collaborates extensively with other units in the College of Arts & Letters as well as with units across the university such as the School of Journalism, with which it shares curricular administration of the Minor in Fiction Filmmaking and the Minor in Documentary Production.
 - 1.2. People. Film Studies also represents the faculty and students who comprise its membership as articulated in section 2.
 - 1.3. Goals. Film Studies integrates the study of filmmaking with a firm grounding in history, theory, and criticism. This is a fundamentally humanistic vision that challenges false distinctions between making and thinking, practice and theory, technology and aesthetics, and thus is in keeping with Michigan State University's world-grant mission. The Film Studies Program is also committed to supporting scholarly and creative work through its vibrant research culture. A central disciplinary focus of cinema and media studies centers on the notion of film culture: that at any given time and place, diverse communities can form collectively around the moving image to view, debate, and create films. Cinema is thus inherently tied to the public sphere, and our aim as a program is to foster this process, focusing our community's development as one that is both critically and creatively engaged with the cinematic medium, particularly as cinema intersects with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

2. **Membership & Participation.** The membership of the Film Studies Program is composed of Core Faculty, Affiliated Faculty, and Student Members.
 - 2.1. Core Faculty.
 - 2.1.1. The Core Faculty shall consist of all persons holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, specialist, or instructor at MSU who have academic appointments or joint assignments in the Film Studies Program. Core Faculty maintain a research, production, and/or teaching focus in the discipline of cinema and media studies. These faculty members are, as a matter of course, program faculty, and their commitments to the program are governed by their appointment letters and/or Memoranda of Understanding with their home departments or units.
 - 2.1.2. Current Core Faculty. Current Core Faculty are listed on the Film Studies website (<https://filmstudies.cal.msu.edu/faculty-staff/>). Core Faculty were recognized as such in the 2015 Film Studies BA Curriculum proposal, as the authors of that

document, and the current list reflects departures as well as new hires and appointees with appointment letters and/or Memoranda of Understanding formalizing their commitments to the program.

2.1.3. Application for Core Faculty Status.

- 2.1.3.1. In consultation with the Core Faculty, the Director will solicit application letters from faculty and other eligible members of the MSU community to join the Core Faculty of the Film Studies Program.
- 2.1.3.2. Joint assignments in the Film Studies Program for current MSU faculty must be provisionally agreed upon by the applicant, the chair of their home department, the Director, and the Chair of the Department of English.
- 2.1.3.3. Joint appointments in the Film Studies Program for current MSU faculty must be provisionally agreed upon by the applicant, the chair of their home department, the Director, and the Chair of the Department of English.
- 2.1.3.4. The Core Faculty will review the applications and vote on the applicants' eligibility for Core Faculty status, as defined by these Bylaws. A majority vote of the Core Faculty is needed for approval. Joint appointments must be further approved by the Department of English, which will co-house the joint appointment with the home department.
- 2.1.3.5. Applicants will be informed by email and by a formal letter of their relationship to the Film Studies Program.
- 2.1.3.6. If approved, Memoranda of Understanding will be developed across the participating units that formalize the nature of the joint assignment or appointment.
- 2.1.3.7. If a new hire to MSU is being brought in specifically to be a Core Faculty member in Film Studies, the hiring process will constitute core faculty membership approval, provided that current Core Faculty are involved in the hire and are able to provide feedback on the candidate.
- 2.1.3.8. Core Faculty status may be reviewed as requested by the faculty member, the Director, or by a majority vote of the Core Faculty.

2.1.4. Rights and Duties of the Core Faculty.

- 2.1.4.1. The Core Faculty support the activities of the Film Studies Program and assist in developing and implementing its curriculum and projects. To facilitate these services, the resources of the Film Studies Program shall be put at the disposal of the Core Faculty.
- 2.1.4.2. Core Faculty members with instructional roles in the university are eligible to teach courses in the Film Studies curriculum.
- 2.1.4.3. Core Faculty members are expected to participate in the business and activities of the Film Studies Program.
- 2.1.4.4. Each Core Faculty member shall have a vote in the deliberations of Core Faculty meetings.

2.2. Affiliated Faculty.

- 2.2.1. The Affiliated Faculty shall consist of persons holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, specialist, or instructor at MSU who have a professional interest in the objectives of the Film Studies Program, but who either do not qualify under 2.1.1 above or do not choose to become Core Faculty members.

2.2.2. Persons whose positions at MSU fall outside the above listed ranks but who are actively involved in Film Studies projects and activities may be added to the Affiliated Faculty via the application process in 2.2.3.

2.2.3. Application for Affiliated Faculty Status.

2.2.3.1. In consultation with the Core Faculty, the Director will solicit application letters from faculty and other eligible members of the MSU community to join the Affiliated Faculty of the Film Studies Program.

2.2.3.2. The Core Faculty will review the applications and vote on the applicants' eligibility for Affiliated Faculty status, as defined by these Bylaws.

2.2.3.3. Applicants will be informed by email and by a formal letter of their relationship to the Film Studies Program.

2.2.3.4. Eligible applicants who are admitted to the Affiliated Faculty may apply for Core Faculty status in subsequent years.

2.2.3.5. Affiliated Faculty status may be reviewed as requested by the faculty member, the Director, or by a majority vote of the Core Faculty.

2.2.4. Rights and Duties of the Affiliated Faculty.

2.2.4.1. The Affiliated Faculty support the activities of the Film Studies Program and assist in developing and implementing its programs and projects.

2.2.4.2. The Affiliated Faculty may participate by teaching Film Studies courses and approved cross-listed courses, collaborating on co-curricular activities, and serving on ad hoc committees.

2.2.4.3. Affiliated Faculty members may attend all Film Studies membership meetings and participate fully in consultation and discussion but have no voting rights on Film Studies governance and administrative issues.

2.3. Student Members.

2.3.1. The student membership shall consist of any student at MSU who is enrolled in any major, minor, or graduate certificate program affiliated with the Film Studies Program.

2.3.2. Student members shall be able to participate in all Film Studies sponsored activities, including seminars, screenings, and meetings, and shall be eligible to serve on ad hoc committees.

2.3.3. Student members may attend all Film Studies membership meetings and participate fully in consultation and discussion but have no voting rights on Film Studies governance and administrative issues (see 2.3.4).

2.3.4. Student Representatives.

2.3.4.1. One undergraduate and one graduate student may be appointed from among the Film Studies Student Members to serve in Film Studies faculty meetings.

2.3.4.2. Student Representatives, when appointed, serve as advisory, nonvoting members who may participate in all discussions, except on matters excluded by the University and College Bylaws.

2.3.4.3. Student Representatives serve for a one-year term when appointed. No student may serve more than two consecutive terms on a committee.

3. **Organization and Governance.**

3.1. Structure. Film Studies is organized for academic governance through the following officer and bodies: a Director, the Core Faculty duly assembled in Core Faculty meetings, and the full membership as defined in section 2 duly assembled in membership meetings.

3.2. The Director.

3.2.1. Purpose. The Director is the administrative head of the Film Studies Program in accordance with current University Bylaws.

3.2.2. Level and Reporting. The Director shall be a tenure-stream, Core Faculty member of the Film Studies Program at MSU, selected in accordance with the Bylaws of the College of Arts & Letters and the University. The Director is a college-level director serving normally on a three-year, renewable basis. The Director shall report to the Chair of the Department of English and will work closely with the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters.

3.2.3. Responsibilities. The Director shall:

3.2.3.1. Provide the program with innovative leadership and a clear vision for the future that is disciplinary grounded and engaged with arts and humanities initiatives on campus.

3.2.3.2. Collaborate with faculty and students to build and sustain a thriving research and creative film culture on campus in line with the program's vision statement and core values.

3.2.3.3. Provide administrative support to the program and serve as administrative liaison between Film Studies and the colleges, departments, units, and other programs of the University.

3.2.3.4. Oversee the curriculum of the program.

3.2.3.5. Coordinate course scheduling for the program each year, in collaboration with the Associate Chair of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of English, who oversees all course scheduling for the department.

3.2.3.6. Guide the program's strategic planning process under the advice of the Core Faculty and overseeing the implementation of the program's strategic plan.

3.2.3.7. Prepare annual budget requests and supervise budget expenditures according to MSU business policies and practices.

3.2.3.8. Build the Film Studies Program through the recruitment of students, development of research projects, and cultivation of an environment of intellectual exchange among its members and with the broader public.

3.2.3.9. Organize regular meetings of the Core Faculty, at least once per semester.

3.2.3.10. Promote principles of diversity and equity and an open and inclusive climate in the program.

3.2.4. Review.

3.2.4.1. Core Faculty Review. The Director shall be subject to regular review by the Core faculty at intervals, normally in a lead up to the potential renewal of the position every three years. The Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, in consultation with the Chair of English and the Core Faculty, shall establish procedures for the review. The review committee shall include members of the Core Faculty who will survey the Members of the Film Studies Program as part of the review.

- 3.2.4.2. Annual Chair Review. The Chair of the Department of English will review the Director's service as part of the annual review process in English.
- 3.2.4.3. Annual Dean Review. The Dean of the College of Arts & Letters will review the Director's service as part of the annual review process for Chairs and Directors in the College of Arts & Letters.
- 3.2.5. Reappointment. There is no limit, other than the limits imposed by University rules, on the number of times an individual may be continued in the position of Director.
- 3.2.6. Selection. When a new Director is chosen, the selection shall take place in accordance with the Bylaws of the College of Arts and Letters and the University.
 - 3.2.6.1. For Internal Searches from the pool of current Core Faculty, a search committee will be established by the Chair of the Department of English in consultation with the Dean of the College. The search committee will normally have a chair and two additional members, a majority of whom are Core Faculty in Film Studies. When possible, a member of the Policy Committee of the Department of English will serve as a member of the search committee. An affirmative action representative will also be named from amongst the committee members. The committee will organize an interview between the candidate(s) and the Core Faculty of Film Studies, obtain feedback from the Core Faculty, and submit an advisory report to the Chair of the Department of English, who will subsequently draft an advisory report to the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. The Dean of the College of Arts and Letters will make the final appointment decision.
 - 3.2.6.2. For External Searches for a new director from outside of MSU into the Department of English, Department of English hiring guidelines will govern the hire. A search committee will be established by the Chair of the Department of English in consultation with the current Director of the Program and with the Dean of the College. The search committee shall comprise members of the Core Faculty, as well as other members of the Department of English in keeping with departmental hiring guidelines.
 - 3.2.6.3. For temporary, Acting Directors: the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters may in consultation with the Chair of the Department of English and the current Director may appoint a temporary, Acting Director from outside of the Core Faculty on a one-year, renewable basis if a Core Faculty member is not available to serve. Appointment and reappointment is subject to consultation with the Core Faculty.
- 3.3. Committee Work.
 - 3.3.1. Core Faculty. The Core Faculty serve as the advisory committee for the program, which is the major channel for advising the Director on all matters of Film Studies policy, program, and personnel; on any matter on which the Director seeks advice; and on any other matter of importance.
 - 3.3.1.1. Composition. The Core Faculty of the program serve as the voting members of the advisory committee. The Director serves as Chairperson on the committee but does not vote except in the event of a tie, and on matters of Bylaws and Memo of Agreement ratification and revision, which require two-thirds approval by Core Faculty members.

3.3.1.2. Responsibilities.

- 3.3.1.2.1. The Core Faculty shall meet as necessary, but not less than once per semester. Agendas shall be circulated one week before the date of the meeting. Emergency meetings shall be convened by the Director as needed.
- 3.3.1.2.2. The Director shall chair the Core Faculty meetings.
- 3.3.1.2.3. A quorum is necessary for the conduct of official business at any meeting of the Core Faculty. A quorum shall be defined as fifty percent of the eligible members.
- 3.3.1.2.4. The Core Faculty shall deliberate upon and make recommendations concerning general program-related issues and questions, including but not limited to budget, faculty, curriculum, events, and projects, except on matters as excluded by the University and College Bylaws.
- 3.3.1.2.5. The Core Faculty shall deliberate upon and make recommendations concerning curriculum development, and general course parameters.
- 3.3.1.2.6. The Core Faculty shall periodically review program course syllabi and make recommendations for their alignment with program objectives.

3.3.2. Ad Hoc Committees. When the need arises, the Advisory Committee and/or the Director shall create and appoint ad hoc committees. The formation of ad hoc committees will be kept to a minimum; wherever possible, issues shall be referred to the Core Faculty.

4. **Bylaws**

- 4.1. Initial Approval. The Film Studies Program Bylaws will become effective on approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the Core Faculty, and the approval of both the Chair of the Department of English and the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters.
- 4.2. Interpretation. The Director, with the Core Faculty, will be the final authority with regard to the interpretation and implementation of these Bylaws.
- 4.3. Amendment.
 - 4.3.1. Amendments to these Bylaws are a shared responsibility of and require shared agreement between the Director and the Core Faculty. If shared agreement is not achieved, then final approval of changes to the Bylaws rests with the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters.
 - 4.3.2. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed in writing to the Core Faculty of the Film Studies Program. The Core Faculty shall review proposed amendments and, where deemed necessary, call a Core Faculty meeting to discuss them.
 - 4.3.3. Proposed amendments shall be voted on by the Core Faculty (at a Core Faculty Meeting or electronically). Amendments to these Bylaws shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present, physically or electronically.
 - 4.3.4. Upon approval by a two-thirds majority vote, the amendment becomes a part of the Bylaws.
 - 4.3.5. If, in any manner, these processes are in conflict with College or University policies, as enacted in their Bylaws, the latter will take precedence.
- 4.4. Review of Bylaws. In accordance with the provisions of the University Bylaws for Academic Governance, the Core Faculty will review the Bylaws at regular intervals not to exceed five years. The Core Faculty will have the responsibility of ensuring that these

reviews are carried out and will have the delegated authority conferred by the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters and the Provost to establish the procedures for the review and amendment of these Bylaws.