

Honors Program in Cinema and Media Arts

Guidelines

The Honors Program in Cinema and Media Arts offers exceptional students the opportunity to undertake a high-level independent research and/or creative project during the senior year. A CMA honors thesis may be creative, critical, or a combination of both. Projects must be rigorous, in-depth, and demonstrate a student's ability to sustain an argument, an aesthetic principle, or narrative arc in a *substantial* form. Students will consult with their honors thesis advisor while designing their individual projects in media production and/or studies. Keeping in mind that every project will have its own parameters and justifications, in general, we offer the following guidelines: critical theses should be between 50-70 pages; screenplays should be feature-length; film and video work should be either of a substantial length (at least 30- 50 minutes) or comprised of a suite of thematically-related shorter works. Students may devise a project that combines creative and critical modes of writing and filming, as well. Other formats are welcome and should be discussed with the advisor before submitting the application. All final theses must be accompanied by a ten-page minimum written statement that situates the work within the context of extant scholarship, film & media theory, history, and aesthetics (as is appropriate to each project) and describes the project's ambitions.

For admission to the CMA Honors Program, students must have and maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.3 and an average of at least 3.5 in courses counting toward the CMA major. **Students must also submit an application to the program director outlining the proposed thesis topic by August 15th.**

The proposal must include:

1. A 300-word explanation of the critical, aesthetic, or theoretical ideas the student plans to pursue. It should also explain and justify the form of the work as befitting an honors project, one that goes above and beyond coursework and reflects a two-semester, six-credit engagement with material.
2. A bibliography and filmography of *at least* ten works that will inform the research for the project;
3. The name of a CMA (or CMA-affiliated) faculty member who has agreed to serve as the honors thesis advisor and who, if contacted, can attest to the student's work ethic and ability to carry out independent projects.

Once accepted into the program, students must satisfy the following requirements:

- CMA 4998: Honors Thesis (3 credit hours) in the fall semester. This is an independent study with the thesis advisor in research and creative methods related to the project.
- CMA 4999: Honors Thesis (3 credit hours) in spring semester. Students will produce the final project working in consultation with the thesis advisor and committee.

- Oral defense. In the last week of classes, honors students will defend the thesis project to a committee composed of the CMA program director, the faculty advisor, and at least one other faculty member (for a total of three faculty members).