Why study Film Studies here?

* The Department of Film Studies consistently receives excellent ratings of student satisfaction in course evaluations and national polls.
* Academics at the cutting edge of their discipline introduce you to the latest ideas and innovations in research.
* You are exposed to global cinema and media cultures from around the world, with particular strengths in Europe, South Asia and Latin America.
* Through wide-ranging staff expertise, you will experience a variety of approaches, including aesthetics, film history, identity, industry, media archaeology and politics.
* You develop proficiency in oral and written communication, critical thinking, media literacy, and other transferable skills.
* We consistently maintain high standards of teaching and student work, and continually look to develop our teaching and curriculum in line with latest developments in the discipline.
* Students take an active role in St Andrews’ robust film culture, participating in and programming film series, festivals, and other events.

Location and resources

The Department is located in two buildings on North Street near the town’s cinema. We benefit from specially-fitted teaching facilities, including a screening/seminar room with 3D projection, and film screenings take place in a specially equipped auditorium. The University Library holds excellent specialist resources including one of the best collections of international film and video on DVD, holding over 9,300 AV materials and including some extremely rare works. Our vibrant research culture features many student-led initiatives, including film festivals such as the ‘60 Hour Film Blitz’, the Reel Film Society (a student-run film series), our postgraduate film journal Frames, and student-led professional conferences and symposia.

What will I study?

Film Studies at St Andrews is a dynamic and growing discipline, drawing in students with a variety of intellectual interests. The Film Studies degree resonates with the demands of today’s job market, where film and media literacy is of direct relevance to a variety of careers, from journalism and teaching to professions in the creative industries. Our students engage with the cultural, historical, and intellectual substance of film scholarship, and emerge with a powerful and relevant set of analytical tools.

Film Studies at St Andrews is defined by a particular focus on global cinemas. We critically examine the history of moving images across time and cultures, looking at a diverse range of topics from sexuality in film to activist documentary, from early propaganda to digital media. Film Studies uses a variety of critical, theoretical and historical approaches to examine the most significant cultural form of the twentieth century.
“Film Studies has been incredibly interesting for me throughout my time here at St Andrews. The lecturers are really knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject, and the film screenings each week expose me to so many different films that I wouldn’t have seen otherwise. I have enjoyed my course immensely.”

Emma (Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, England)

The introductory modules at sub-honours (first and second years) lay the foundation and provide the theoretical, cultural and methodological frameworks you will need for the more specialised and increasingly challenging modules offered at Honours. The Honours syllabus reflects the research expertise of teaching staff, who are, in many cases, pre-eminent scholars in the field. Students work closely with the teaching staff, developing excellent intellectual, writing and research skills that are useful in a wide variety of professions.

Film Studies element of your Honours degree

First year (2 x 20-credit modules required)
The two 1000-level modules include film form and aesthetics, key approaches to the study of film (such as the cycle of film production, distribution and exhibition and the analysis of genre, narrative and stars), early cinema and the advent of sound, classical Hollywood cinema, key aspects of European cinema and other world cinemas. Cinema provides a rich resource for analysing the social, cultural, and ideological crosscurrents of a particular historical moment, and the films we teach bring these into bold relief.

Second year (2 x 20-credit modules required)
The two 2000-level modules focus on historical aspects and technological advances in the period following World War II, typically looking at new wave cinemas in Europe, political movements in Latin America and Africa and contemporary trends in Asia. Throughout these modules we introduce a variety of methodological and theoretical frameworks for the historical study of cinema and the visual media. Based on screenings of a selection of cinematic texts, you are also introduced to questions of identity and representation, and the relationship of film, public discourse, cultural production, and cultural policy.

Honours – third and fourth years
Honours modules explore particular topics, such as Documentary, Sensory Cinema, Stars, Cinemas of India, and Digital Media. Each week you will participate in seminar discussions of advanced work in the field. The Honours programme introduces a diverse range of film and media theories covering gender, national and transnational, and philosophical approaches. In your final year you will have the opportunity to complete a dissertation on an advanced topic in Film Studies.

We offer a rich programme combining traditional approaches to film study with emerging forms of critical thought. We specialise in:

- Colonial film
- Film sound
- Digital media
- Documentary
- Queer theory and gender identity
- Advertising and promotion
- Early cinema and film history
- Film festivals
- Film and human rights and activism
- Sensory cinema
- World cinemas
- Film and politics
- Film and history
- Film festivals

Modules available will reflect current staff specialisms and therefore may vary year to year (see Curriculum development on page 7).

Typical class sizes and teaching information

First year: lectures 160, tutorials maximum 12
Second year: lectures 65 - 130, tutorials maximum 10 (usually fewer)
Honours: classes maximum 17

Most teaching on film takes place in a lecture theatre equipped for the evening film screenings that accompany lectures. Sub-honours Film Studies modules are taught by a combination of whole-class lectures, screenings and seminars. Class sizes at Honours vary between modules. We aim to give all students in Film Studies the chance to engage in learning, debating and presenting in lively seminars.

Typical methods of assessment
All 1000- and 2000-level modules are assessed by a balance of coursework and written examinations. At Honours level, the modules are entirely assessed on the basis of coursework, including scholarly essays and other innovative forms of assessment.

Study abroad
You may apply to the University’s St Andrews Abroad programme. See page 22.

Careers

A degree in Film Studies from St Andrews will provide an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers as well as for careers directly connected with cinema (such as film distribution and production, arts administration, cinema management, film festivals, advertising and public relations, journalism/media, publishing and education).

The main purpose of the programme is to provide a high quality general education, promote independence of thought and encourage intellectual initiative backed by a solid knowledge of cinema’s history. We do not teach film production, although we do host film festivals and frequently invite filmmakers to the University as guest speakers.

Film Studies graduates will be well placed to compete in today’s job market, having gained an extensive range of skills from written and oral communications to archival research and visual analysis.

See also page 46 for details of the University’s Careers Centre.