

Film Studies Department Writing Plan

Writing is a critical part of the film studies department at Coe. This document is intended to outline the role writing and critical evaluation play in our department, the skills students have the opportunity to develop as film studies majors, and a reference for students and faculty interested in learning how our department understands the role of written communication and analysis in the major.

What does your department value in written communication?

Film studies is an interdisciplinary major that offers two implicit tracks for students: production and critical analysis. All students are required to take film studies courses with Writing Emphasis, and students may also choose to continue their pursuit of the critical and written skills necessary to develop a full-blown research senior thesis. All of our Writing Emphasis courses emphasize the skills necessary to create persuasive argumentation. We believe strong writing demonstrates awareness of audience; is original in its thinking; shows a command of the English language, while allowing for stylistic variance; and undergoes a process of revision and editing.

What kinds of texts do students in your department create?

- Explications of short and feature length films and videos;
- Analytical essays on critical texts;
- Research essays/works of film studies scholarship;
- Essays that are simultaneously critical and creative;
- Short, informal responses;
- Analyses of published works of literary scholarship (e.g., articles or book chapters).

What kinds of skills or experiences help students learn to write in ways valued in your discipline?

- Close reading and explication;
- Classroom practice of critical reading in both large and small group settings;
- Assignments that emphasize writing as a process for learning and discovery;
- Discussion of writing practices;
- Peer review of student artistic creations;
- Writing conferences (with instructor, Writing Center consultants, classmates);
- Study of published works from a range of genres and forms, including film studies scholarship;
- Development of topics or research questions, typically as a first step in a larger project; • Sentence-level editing;

- Revision;
- Presentations (at conferences or to classmates, senior screenings).

What courses are best suited to giving students access to and practice in these skills and experiences?

Writing is a central element of the student experience in film studies, carrying equal weight with the development of multimedia production skills. Though film studies offers more courses related to developing these production skills (many of them offered via interdisciplinary partnerships), three of our core courses focus exclusively on the development of critical analysis and evaluation of films and texts through rigorous written responses in the form of short and long research papers. We believe this is a necessary skill for students oriented toward production and students who might pursue graduate study in film studies.

Film studies courses that are designated Writing Emphasis:

- FLM-200 Film Analysis
- FLM-225 Film History
- FLM-250 Special Topics in Film