

Friday, June 12, 2009

Oakland University to debut new major in cinema studies this fall

Press Release

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Rochester, Mich. – Amid growing tax incentives and national interest in film production in Michigan, Oakland University has approved a new bachelor of arts major in cinema studies to begin fall 2009.

The 48-credit major is fairly unique to the state, with only a few public and private universities supporting a similar degree program. The combination of coursework in film history, film theory, video production and screenwriting sets Oakland apart.

"There has been an obvious spike in interest in film in Michigan recently, as a result of the state's film initiatives," said Andrea Eis, chair of the Art and Art History Department and co-coordinator of the concentration in film aesthetics and history. "This program is not a direct result of those initiatives, but its development is certainly timely for students who are seeing increasing opportunities in the film industry and in the academic field of cinema studies."

Set in a field that is bringing new jobs to the state, the cinema studies major attacks the problem of losing educated students to jobs elsewhere. A major goal of the program is to attract the best students to the area and keep them here after graduation.

"The special events that will be offered regularly, such as film series and bringing nationally recognized filmmakers and film critics to the area, will enhance the campus culture for OU students, faculty, staff and members of the surrounding community," said Kyle Edwards, an assistant professor in the English department and director of the cinema studies program.

Students armed with a cinema studies degree will be prepared to begin a career in the field or move on to graduate coursework in cinema studies, higher education, curatorial, research and archival positions.

Possible career options include film criticism, education, production, film archiving, screenwriting, story editing, film-related public relations, advertising, marketing and legal representation. These graduates also would be suited to pursue professional degrees in law and business.

"We seek to attract students first with a passion for film and second with a willingness to devote themselves to the intensive study of this medium and to challenge themselves to become astute, sophisticated and creative film critics," Edwards said.

More information on the cinema studies major as it develops will be added to the program Web site at www2.oakland.edu/cinemastudies. Students interested in declaring a cinema studies major should contact Edwards at edwards2@oakland.edu.

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SUMMARY

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