

School of Filmmaking

Susan Riskin, Dean

I. Overview of School

The School of Filmmaking offers a four-year undergraduate program in motion-picture production, preparing students for careers in the moving image arts and industries. The faculty consists of film and television artists-in-residence as well as professional scholars, all of whom are dedicated to instilling in our students the importance of telling stories that speak to the human condition. We are committed to nurturing the “complete” filmmaker — a storyteller of vision and insight who knows and appreciates the myriad components that are essential to the creation of the entire spectrum of moving images, whether fiction or nonfiction, animated or live-action, series television, music videos, commercials, industrial shorts, or other new media. We are a training ground for young artists, giving them the freedom to explore their creative ideas within a carefully structured environment that strives to mirror the collaborative creative process of the professional world. The relationship between our faculty and students is one of “master-apprentice,” involving close collaboration in all aspects of the development, production, and exhibition of our students’ digital video and film projects.

Essential to the development of young artists is the exposure to all the performing arts, as well as a strong background in liberal arts studies. Our students benefit greatly from living and working in a closely-knit community of artists from the Schools of Dance, Design & Production, Drama, and Music. Their education is enriched by a liberal arts curriculum that is fully integrated into the School of Filmmaking BFA program. We expect our students to have or to develop a strong base in the liberal arts and humanities, as well as the physical and social sciences, with additional intensive coursework in film history, aesthetics and analysis.

The School of Filmmaking offers concentrations in the areas of Animation, Cinematography, Directing, Picture Editing & Sound Design, Producing, Production Design, and Screenwriting. In the first year of the program, all students are required to write, direct, produce, shoot, edit and design films, whether they feel artistically inclined and qualified in those areas or not. This approach gives students a foundation of general skills and knowledge prior to specializing in one area of focus.

II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

A. Physical and cognitive abilities

Students must, at a minimum, possess functional use of the somatic senses, have adequate motor capabilities to manage situations in which these senses would be employed, and be able to integrate data acquired via these senses. The School of Filmmaking embraces inclusivity and will provide reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

B. Required GPA and Test Scores

The School of Filmmaking has minimum high school GPA and SAT/ACT requirements. See [Admissions pages](#) for further information.

C. Transfer Students

Transfer credits for liberal arts classes taken at another institution are subject to the general policies of the Division of Liberal Arts.

Transfer credits in lieu of film classes in the School of Filmmaking will be considered on a case-by-case basis, if the student has earned a B or better for the course, and if the course meets faculty approval (based on review of the syllabus and course description).

Our curriculum from Year One onward is sequential, collaborative, and intensive, and therefore it is not advantageous for applicants to transfer in at an advanced level. However, we will evaluate each applicant's transcript and creative portfolio to determine whether or not transfer credit and/or advanced standing can be awarded. Please follow the guidelines for Transfer Applicants in the Admissions section of the UNCSA website.

III. Standards of Achievement, Evaluation and Continuation

Continuation in the program from year to year is based upon a number of factors, including: the student's grades, reflecting both artistic and academic performance; assessment of the student's portfolio; and their ability to interact appropriately and productively within the School community. Particular emphasis is placed upon the professional demeanor and creative discipline exhibited by the student, and the demonstration of collaborative skills in both classroom discussions and on the set of student productions. Please see UNCSA's [Undergraduate Policy on Student Probation and Continuation](#).

A. End-of-the-Year Portfolio Review

At the end of every Spring semester, the faculty will review each student's portfolio from that academic year. The review consists of a general discussion and assessment of all aspects of the student's coursework, practicum experiences, and his/her progress throughout the year.

B. Class Placement and Concentration

At the end of a student's first year, they may request a portfolio review for admission into either the Animation or Production Design department, each of which is a three-year concentration.

At the end of Year Two, those students who are not in Animation or Production Design select 1st and 2nd choice disciplines from among the following options: Cinematography, Directing, Picture Editing & Sound Design, Producing, and Screenwriting, each of which is a two-year program. Faculty will take into consideration each student's grades, artistic portfolio, and professional demeanor in order to select those students best qualified to maximize their potential in their first or second choice.

C. Minimum Grade Point Averages, Probation, and Non-continuation

Students in the School of Filmmaking are expected to meet or exceed minimum cumulative Grade Point Averages (GPAs), as delineated in the Institutional Policies section of the UNCSA Bulletin; see the chart and policy at: <https://www.uncsa.edu/bulletin/current/undergraduate/institutional-policies.aspx#UndergraduatePolicyonStudentProbationandContinuation>

Failure to meet these minimum GPAs will result in written warning, placement on probation, or possibly discontinuation from the program.

D. Division of Liberal Arts (DLA) Requirements

School of Filmmaking students pursuing the BFA must complete 30 credit hours of Liberal Arts core courses, plus an additional 6 credit hours in designated Arts or Liberal Arts courses in order to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the UNCSA School of Filmmaking. It is recommended that students complete at least 9 credit hours (3 classes) of these requirements each year in order to be on track to graduate at the end of their fourth year.

E. Additional School of Filmmaking Policies

Students must read and comply with all policies and procedures in the School of Filmmaking Student Handbook and the School of Filmmaking Safety Handbook (available online at the [Film School Art Hub](#)). Because all filmmakers must understand the importance of safety, not only for their own sake but also for their fellow crewmembers in all production situations, *students must take and pass the safety exam in the Fall Semester of each year before being allowed to work on any productions*. Students must also sign a Student Agreement of Understanding at the beginning of each school year verifying that they have read and accept the policies of the School of Filmmaking.

IV. Additional costs, materials, and equipment

A. Computer and Software Requirements

Each incoming freshman is required to purchase an Apple MacBook Pro with the latest operating system and Final Draft screenwriting software. Students will also be using Adobe Creative Cloud, the license for which is provided by UNCSA at no additional cost. The 16" size is recommended to allow more window space for editing. You should purchase the model that has at least a 2.3GHz 8-core i9 processor, a minimum of 16 GB RAM, a minimum of 1TB of SSD storage, and the AMD Radeon Pro 5500M graphics card with 4GB of memory.

The less expensive 13" MacBook Pro can be used, but is not optimal for Post Production. If you choose to buy a 13" model, choose one with at least a 2.6GHz Core i7 processor, at least 16 GB RAM, a minimum of 512 GB of SSD storage, and the AMD Radeon Pro 5300M graphics card with 4GB of memory.

We recommend that all incoming students purchase a Tripp-Lite U442-DOC 1 USB-C Docking Station (or an equivalent) to provide substantially more connectivity for their laptop, as well as an external USB3 hard drive (at least 1 terabyte) with Thunderbolt or USB3 interface, for editing and backup purposes. We strongly recommend adding the AppleCare warranty option to protect your computer investment.

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/Tripp-Lite-Ethernet-Charging-U442-DOCK1/dp/B01N9C5RP0>

B. Tools and Equipment

Students are also required to purchase several items in order to work on set safely and responsibly. A list of these tools (such as leather palm work gloves, a crescent wrench, Swiss army knife, etc.) is available at this link:

<https://www.uncsa.edu/mysa/incoming-students/undergraduate/what-to-pack-for-undergraduate.aspx>.

All of these items are available for purchase in the Winston-Salem area, but we recommend you buy these essential tools of the filmmaking trade in advance.