



University of Colorado **Boulder**

2025 Program Review

Department of Cinema Studies and
Moving Image Arts

Academic Review and Planning
Advisory Committee Report

Approved

Signed by:
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Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs | Date

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Process Overview

The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) review of the Department of Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts (CINE) was conducted in accordance with the 2025 program review guidelines. The degree program report and goal setting exercise were prepared and submitted by the unit. An external review committee (ERC), consisting of two experts from outside of the University of Colorado Boulder, engaged in a virtual visit and submitted a report based upon review of relevant documents and interviews with faculty, staff, and student unit members and university administrators. ARPAC staff, employing web conferencing tools, facilitated the external review as a remote visit over March 6 and 7, 2025. The ARPAC unit liaisons submitted a summary of findings derived from the goal setting exercise. ARPAC reviewed and considered these materials, met with the chair, and wrote this report.

Past Reviews

The 2016 ARPAC report—to what was then the Film Studies Program—outlined a range of recommendations:

1. *Request a change of the program to a department and discuss graduate curricular requirements and advising practices with the Department of Art and Art History (AAH).* As of 2018, the Program in Film Studies officially became the Department of Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts. A number of changes have been made to graduate advising and curricular requirements in collaboration with AAH (which houses an interdisciplinary Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Film); nevertheless, as discussed below, the status of the collaborative MFA program remains a source of challenges. CINE-AAH partnership remains a source of concern for the department.

2. *Protect junior and/or female faculty from overly demanding teaching and service obligations and make sure that senior faculty do their fair share of service. When possible, sequence faculty leaves to ensure that teaching and service duties are distributed equitably. Ensure that mentoring is available to all faculty. Engage in a bylaws review and revision, including to add provisions for instructors to contribute to unit governance.* Mentoring opportunities are available, and new bylaws have been drafted (although they are awaiting review by the College of Arts and Sciences). While both the department's goal setting exercise and the external reviewer report identify the inequitable allocation of service responsibilities as an ongoing problem, further discussions with the full ARPAC committee raised the question of whether the issue might primarily be one of overload rather than equity: with only one full professor rostered fully in the department, a considerable number of administrative responsibilities necessarily fall on faculty members at the associate and assistant level (this is discussed further below).

3. *Continue to clarify curricular goals.* Considerable progress has been made, and the department has recently created a new curriculum committee.

4. *Address criticisms of the undergraduate program, such as class unavailability and the need for course descriptions that outline technology requirements.* Considerable progress has been made. However, as discussed below, limited class availability remains an issue, in part due to space constraints (suggesting a need for support from campus).

5. *Ensure the program devotes sufficient resources to address student equity concerns regarding the costs of equipment rental and film stock purchasing and processing.* Here too, progress has been made, but as discussed below, concerns remain about equity with respect to equipment rental costs, especially between CINE and the College of Media, Communication, Design and Information (CMDI).

6. *Organize regular meetings among all of the unit's constituents to discuss curriculum, requirements, and other relevant matters.* The department now hosts an annual retreat and has created a curriculum committee with participation from a range of constituents.

7. *Make sure that instructors and lecturers know what is being taught in which courses. Provide professional opportunities for adjunct faculty to learn about recent filmmaking innovations.* Considerable progress has been made on the first point, but it is less clear that progress has been made on the second point (indeed, this issue is not discussed in the department's current submissions or by the external reviewers).

8. *Consider developing a formal internship program.* Based on its website, the department now offers a range of internship opportunities.

9. *Consider graduate curriculum changes.* Curricular changes have been made, but as noted above (and discussed further below), the status of the interdisciplinary MFA program housed in AAH remains a source of concern for the department.

10. *Submit a request for more teaching assistant (TA) funding to the dean. Discontinue any practice of using graduate students as de facto TAs or informal mentors in large undergraduate courses.* This issue appears to have been addressed.

11. *Schedule regular advising sessions between the graduate studies director and Bachelor of Arts (BA)/Master of Arts (MA) students.* This issue appears to have been addressed.

12. *Connect undergraduate and graduate curricular goals to a revised strategic plan for hiring. Provide a clear rationale for the sequencing of future hires.* As discussed below, the department has begun conversations about developing a comprehensive five-year hiring plan.

13. *Ensure that student concerns about acts of favoritism in the classroom and in grading, sexist language in the classroom, and student-on-student harassment of protected classes in and outside of classrooms are comprehensively addressed.* The department reports making progress here, and neither the department nor the external reviewers raise concerns about this issue in their current submissions.

Unit Analysis

The campus' standardized description of the Department of Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts (CINE) is available on the website of the Office of Data & Analytics (D&A) at <https://www.colorado.edu/oda/institutional-research/institutional-level-data/information-department/academic-review-and-planning>. D&A updates the profile annually in the fall semester. This report cites data posted from August 2024, reflecting the state of CINE as of the academic year (AY) 2023-2024; this report also draws on more recent data from the unit's submissions. Information on

enrollments in CINE in fall 2025 became available on the D&A website while this report was being written.

Teaching and Learning Excellence and Assessment

CINE offers a BA with two tracks: a critical studies track, focused on the critical study of film as an art form (with an emphasis on the history of both national and international film); and a production track, focused on filmmaking (with an emphasis on all aspects of the filmmaking process). The department also offers a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), focused on preparing artists who will be competitive as independent filmmakers; the BFA program is open only to BA students in CINE, who must submit an application that is reviewed through a competitive selection process. Additionally, the department offers an undergraduate minor, as well as an interdisciplinary MFA degree; the graduate program is a collaboration between CINE and the Department of Art and Art History, located administratively in AAH (but with funding secured by CINE). Undergraduate courses primarily serve CINE majors, with only 17% of student credit hours in 2024 being taken by non-majors; however, the department is considering ways of opening its courses to a broader range of students, such as revising prerequisites so that non-majors find it more feasible to take CINE classes.

CINE's Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for its critical studies BA track focus on developing an understanding of the evolution of cinema and national and international film history, along with learning to apply film criticism, aesthetics, and film theory in writing and other forms of communication; the primary assessment mechanisms are examinations and papers. PLOs for the production track and the BFA focus on technical proficiency, creative principles, and professional practices in various film- and mediamaking formats, as well as understanding cinema aesthetics, film criticism, history, and theory; in addition to papers and exams, assessment mechanism include individual and group projects, with a strong emphasis on peer review. In January 2025, the department formed a curriculum committee that will "evaluate the flow of classes, the balance of production and critical studies classes, as well as assess learning outcomes to ensure academic excellence." Additionally, the department reports that by hiring an assistant professor in Archiving, Preservation, and Restoration in Film/Video (who joined the faculty in August 2025), it hopes to launch a professional master's degree program.

CINE's curriculum appears to resonate with student interests: its undergraduate programs are among the most popular in the arts and humanities at CU Boulder, including 370 majors at the time of fall 2024 census (as noted below, there has been a slight decline since then, but the numbers remain quite high). The department's curriculum devotes considerable attention to issues of politics and representation, including by developing courses such as "Black Radical Cinema" and housing the Give Us the Camera artist collective, which supports underrepresented filmmakers and is open to all members of the university community committed to diversifying media arts. Additionally, the department emphasizes breadth of its moving image offerings (including its equipment and extensive film and video collections), as well as physical resources such as a digital editing lab, an audio mixing and recording suite, and the Analog Media and Preservation Center (to offer a few examples).

Turning to the interdisciplinary MFA offered with AAH, this program is described by the external reviewers as "one of the jewels in the crown of the Department." The collaboration with AAH provides CINE graduate students with the opportunity to interact with peers in related fields and

endures a viable cohort of MFA students across the two units, and the department notes that its MFA students “act as ambassadors for the university with exponential impact in the wider Boulder-Denver cinematic-arts community”; the external reviewers also “stress that we see great value in this program as it is one whose reputation extends well beyond the CU Boulder Campus.”

At the same time, the materials reviewed by ARPAC suggest that there at least three structural challenges affecting the growth and sustainability of these offerings:

- The first is the number of faculty. As of fall 2025, CINE has 9 tenured/tenure-track (TTT) faculty and 3 teaching faculty, which makes it difficult to meet student demand. Although (as noted above) 1 new TTT faculty member joined the department in August 2025, 2 TTT faculty members left in AY 2024-2025, resulting in a smaller faculty cohort overall. This is discussed in further detail below.
- The second concerns space. CINE has only one dedicated screening room, which holds only 70 students and, according the department, “is in near-constant use from Monday-Friday, 8:00a.m to 9:50p.m. and for special events on weekends”; CINE must therefore rely on spaces controlled by other units (such as AAH and the ATLAS Institute (ATLAS)) for many of its classes, including its larger offerings. The unit reports that this lack of dedicated space makes it difficult to develop a schedule that addresses student needs: for example, required classes are sometimes scheduled in such a way that they conflict with one another, making it difficult for some students to graduate in four years. The external reviewers also suggest that limited space in ATLAS causes other difficulties for students: according to the reviewers, because of limited space in ATLAS, “CINE computer labs are spread out between ATLAS and Macky Auditorium,” with the result that “equipment is checked out in one building and production studies are in another building,” and “students are forced to carry heavy gear back and forth between the two buildings.” Additionally, the International Film Series (IFS)—which provides training to undergraduate and graduate students—relies on space administered by the Department of Chemistry, making it difficult to schedule programs with sufficient advance notice.
- The third issue relates specifically to the MFA program. As noted above, the location of this program in AAH yields a number of benefits. At the same time, both CINE and the external reviewers raise concerns about the long-term sustainability of this model, and there also seems to be some division among CINE faculty about the best path forward here. This issue is discussed in further detail below.

Research, Scholarly, and/or Creative Work Excellence

CINE is very active in research/scholarship and creative work. The department's own goal setting exercise highlights numerous interdisciplinary projects currently being pursued within the department which collectively seek to push “the boundaries of cinematic forms on multiple fronts.” The D&A unit profile for CINE dated August 20, 2024, shows that nearly every member of the unit consistently reported research and/or creative activity in their annual Faculty Report of Professional Activities (FRPA) reports during the seven-year period ending in November 2022 (10 out of 11 in 2018-2021 and 9 out of 11 in 2022). In terms of outputs, CINE's research/scholarship and creative work skew heavily towards the latter category. During the seven years ending in November 2022, faculty members in CINE reported 52.8 creative works per faculty member (an average based upon the total number of creative works reported during this period and the number of faculty affiliated with CINE in November 2022). This impressive record ranks CINE as second only to the College of Music in the production of creative works during this period among the 46 units covered by D&A

data. Faculty members also published refereed books, articles and chapters (an average of 0.2 books and 1.4 articles and chapters over the seven years ending in November 2022) and frequently gave conference presentations (an average of 10.5). CINE's goal setting exercise emphasizes the high quality of the presses where books written by its members were published (prominent university presses in the US and the British Film Institute), a point which is not captured by simple statistics. Grant funds secured totaled \$222,000 in the five-year period ending in fiscal year (FY) 2023. This ranked CINE third out of the 14 units being reviewed in the current cycle.

The external reviewers laud the faculty of CINE as a community of “accomplished scholars and artists” who are recognized nationally and internationally “for their innovative, distinctive work.” CINE's goal setting exercise states that its faculty “have a tremendous research profile” and especially notes the work of its members on the “history and contemporary expressions of film outside paradigms.” The paradigm-shifting work includes innovative interdisciplinary projects which push the boundaries of cinema, such as “hybrid feature films that blend elements such as science and poetry, integrate speculative narratives with non-fiction storytelling, and explore the interplay between animation and live-action filmmaking as well as microscopy and still-image exploration.” The document also lists an extraordinarily impressive range of international venues in which the work of its members has been screened, including the Sundance Film Festival, Science New Wave, Amsterdam Eye Film Museum, Berlin Film Critic's week, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Full Frame, Los Angeles Film Forum, Whitechapel Gallery in London, CERN, the British Film Institute, and the Rotterdam International Film Festival.

Given this strong record of collective achievement, it is striking that both the department and external reviewers identify a notable gap between the external recognition of the research and creative work by CINE faculty and the comparatively low profile they believe this work has on campus. CINE notes that its faculty feel their “their work, especially nontraditional outreach, screening, and public exhibitions, are not legible to the broader campus community.” The external reviewers reiterate this concern: “the University does not appear to be fully aware of the distinction and impact of its faculty at the current moment, how it is actively building upon the storied legacy of cinema education and practice on campus.”

The issue of the “legibility” of the department's research and creative work to the broader campus community seems to present both a challenge and an opportunity. The current situation seems to be impacting department morale. The goal setting exercise recognizes that “we need to find more ways to more widely showcase our research.” One potential vehicle for doing so will be the Sundance Film Festival, which will move to Boulder from Utah in 2027. Although this is not mentioned in the external review committee report or CINE's goal setting exercise, the arrival of the Sundance Film Festival promises to increase dramatically the profile of CINE across the broader Boulder-Denver region. The festival's impending arrival seems like an obvious platform to increase the visibility of cinema studies on campus and through further community outreach. It may also encourage other units on campus to seek new interdisciplinary connections with the department.

Hiring and Mentoring (Faculty, Staff, Postdoctoral Fellows)

According to the D&A profile for AY 2023-2024, faculty in CINE consisted of 10 tenured and tenure-track (TTT) faculty, 3 teaching-track faculty, and 3 lecturers. The unit's submission during AY 2024-2025 noted the same overall number of TTT and teaching track faculty (2 full professors, 6 associate professors, and 2 assistant professors; and 1 teaching associate professor and 2 teaching assistant professors), as well as an increase in other faculty (6 lecturers and 1 visiting

professor). However, as noted above, according to the unit's reply to the discovery summary report, while 1 new assistant professor was hired and joined the faculty in August 2025, 2 other TTT faculty left last year (one moved to another institution, and one left as part of the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program); therefore, CINE currently has 9 TTT faculty (1 fewer than last year). We would also note that 1 of the remaining full professors, and 1 of the remaining associate professors, have 50% appointments in other units.

In fall 2022, assistant professor salaries were roughly in line with (97% of) Association of American Universities (AAU) public peer averages. Greater discrepancies existed at the full and associate professor levels, which were 85% and 81%, respectively, of AAU public peer averages.

In terms of mentorship, pre-tenured faculty receive guidance regarding review processes, including feedback on their own materials and examples of successful dossiers. Given the relatively small size of the department's faculty, pre-tenured faculty are also informed that mentors are available from other departments.

Given the number of faculty available to support CINE's large number of majors and handle departmental service responsibilities, both the department and the external reviewers see a pressing need for additional faculty hiring. Per the unit's reply to the discovery summary report, the CINE faculty will discuss the possibility of developing a five-year hiring plan at an August 2025 retreat. Given the fiscal realities facing the Arts and Humanities (AHUM) at CU Boulder, it seems unlikely that the department will be able to hire in the full range of areas it might desire (at least without significant external fundraising activities). This suggests that it would be important for the department's hiring plan to prioritize among different areas of need and identify which needs should be addressed by TTT hires and which by teaching professor hires; this also suggests that it would be beneficial for the Dean of the Arts and Humanities to consult with CINE as it develops this plan to ensure alignment between departmental and divisional priorities.

According to the D&A profile for AY 2203-2204, staff personnel in CINE consisted of 6 university staff members, 2 classified staff members, and 16 student hourly employees. The unit's submission during AY 2024-2025 notes a small decrease, with the department employing 6 full-time staff members, a 0.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) lab coordinator, and an average of 12 undergraduates each semester.

Although the unit identifies some potential areas of staff hiring, it describes the current staff as "robust." The external reviewers also note that they were "extremely impressed by the apparent competence, knowledge and skill of the CINE Staff."

Student Success and Mentoring (Undergraduate and Graduate Students)

At the undergraduate level, CINE has consistently enjoyed strong enrollment in recent years. According to information available on the D&A website, the number of majors in the BA in Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts since 2020 has consistently remained around 370 students, with a peak total of 391 in 2023, before returning to 370 in Fall 2024. The data for fall 2025 indicates a decline to 342 majors. The degree program report submitted by the department indicates that student credit hours (SCH) have consistently hovered around 6,500 since 2020, except for a dip in 2023 (down to 5,984 SCH, before rebounding to 6,521 in 2024). Enrollments in the BA in Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts since 2020 show a clear trend towards a higher percentage of SCH being taken by majors, increasing from 76% in 2020 to 83% in 2024. Although the

department notes that its undergraduate courses are taken by students “from Aerospace, Theatre and Dance, Environmental Sciences, Art & Art History, Ethnic Studies, Women & Gender Studies, and more,” the percentage of non-majors taking cinema courses has declined with the growing proportion of SCH taken by majors (declining from 24% of SCH in 2020 to 17% in 2024). This reflects priority being given to majors who need to take specific courses to complete their degrees. This also suggests that more non-majors might choose to take CINE courses if additional classroom seats could be made available to them.

The department also offers the BFA in Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts to select students who apply from within the BA. Over the past five years, the number of students in the BFA has gradually declined from 35 in 2020 to 23 students in both 2023 and 2024.

In terms of the number of degrees awarded, the award of BAs has oscillated somewhat since 2020. In 2020, 61 BAs were awarded in Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts. The number increased to 75 in 2021, before dropping to 61 in 2022 and 49 in 2023. In 2024, the number rebounded dramatically to 77. In addition, 12 BFAs were awarded in Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts in 2020. Roughly tracking the trend for the BA, no fewer than 26 BFAs were awarded in 2021, before dropping to 16 in 2022 and 15 in 2023. There was a small rise to 17 BFA degrees being awarded in 2024, but the total dropped to 13 in 2025.

According to D&A unit profile for CINE dated August 20, 2024, in the fall semester of 2022, 43% of its undergraduate students were taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty and 22% were taught by instructors or senior instructors (now called assistant teaching professors and associate teaching professors or teaching professors). A mere 3% were taught by graduate part-time instructors (GPTI/TA). The remaining 32% were taught outside the department in courses which counted for credit towards the BA or BFA degree (“All other credit”).

In terms of content, CINE offers a wide range of moving-image course offerings, including critical film studies in the BA program and film production in both the BA and the BFA. Both of these degree programs were substantially revised in a series of curricular reforms in 2017-2018, as described in CINE's responses to follow-ups from the 2016 ARPAC review.

Students are able to borrow specialized camera and sound equipment from the “Kage,” participate in “Gear Fridays” and “Sound Tuesdays,” access a large library of specialist Blu-Ray/DVDs, and participate in the Give Us the Camera collective (described above). An even greater array of technical equipment seems to be available to BFA students, including digital editing labs and film stock preservation and developing equipment. Students are also able to benefit from CINE's connection to the Brakhage Center, the very popular International Film Series screenings and First Person Cinema (formerly the Experimental Cinema Group), “the longest running university program in the world screening avant-garde film and video,” which brings multiple visiting artists to campus each semester.

Many graduates from the BA and BFA programs have made successful careers in film and television, in a wide range of different capacities. The degree program report notes that alumni from these programs have worked on a long list of high-profile movies and television series, and some have won extremely prestigious awards, including “Emmys, Tonys, Peabody Awards, three Student Academy Awards, and multiple other honors”. The department's website also highlights the achievements of its alumni, with the webpage for prospective new students prominently featuring a link to “See what our Alumni are up to”. This “Where Are They Now?” webpage (<https://www.colorado.edu/cinemastudies/where-are-they-now>) features an extremely impressive

list of former BA, BFA, and MFA students, using information from Internet Movie Database (IMDb) and LinkedIn. This constitutes powerful evidence of the department's success in preparing its students for careers after graduation, especially in the film and television industries.

Data from the 2021 Senior Exit Survey indicates that graduating students in 2021 had a reasonable degree of satisfaction with their educational experience in CINE. Most of the results were broadly in line with those for other units in the Division of Arts and Humanities, but one exception was the result concerning “Preparation for the job market”. The percentage of respondents describing themselves as satisfied or very satisfied on this question was only 20% for Cinema Studies, which was slightly lower than the overall result for the Arts and Humanities (24%) and markedly lower than the result for the campus as a whole (39%).

The continuing high demand for CINE courses, along with healthy enrollments and the numerous discipline-related activities sustained by the department and its students, suggests a vibrant intellectual and pedagogical environment. Nevertheless, both the department and the external reviewers emphasize the difficulty of sustaining this work without the ability to hire additional teaching and (ideally, from the department’s perspective) tenured/tenure-track faculty. The external review committee is blunt about the impact of this problem: “every member of the faculty and teaching staff we spoke with [indicated] that they are overloaded and disheartened by the lack of immediate relief in sight. The faculty-to-student ratio [sic] is too high, creating undeniable challenges for teaching and governance.”

As noted above, equipment and space issues constitute further challenges for the CINE's undergraduate teaching mission. CINE courses need greater access to appropriate screening rooms, and current class locations often require heavy equipment to be carried back and forth across the campus. There are also concerns with the production and workshop spaces currently used in Macky. Nearby rooms are regularly used for music practice, creating noise that can be intrusive.

Equipment-related issues include the need for more equipment to allow more students to access and experiment with specialized video and sound gear. This equipment is held and maintained by specialist staff in what is called the Kage. As the external reviewers noted, “student demand far outstrips the capacity of the Kage to meet it, requiring students to schedule their shoots together, effectively doubling up to share equipment.” Students are also required to pay additional fees each time they check out equipment from the Kage. In addition to burdening CINE students with recurring out of pocket expenses, these fees seem unfair to the department's students because of discrepancies with the way these costs are covered for courses in the College of Media, Communication, Design and Information: this issue is discussed below.

Turning to graduate education, as noted above, CINE offers an MFA in collaboration with—but officially housed in—the Department of Art and Art History. According to the AAH degree program report, the combined MFA program has consistently enrolled around 30 students annually since 2020 and usually awards around 7-13 MFA degrees every year; however, these totals include students who are not focusing on film (instead reflecting all of the students in the MFA program in Art Practices). Although the MFA program is administered by AAH, the two departments secure funding for their respective students within that larger cohort separately. In recent years, CINE has only been able to fund two new MFA students each year, creating a maximum cohort of six film-track students at any one time.

CINE is justifiably proud of the accomplishments of its former MFA students, with the external reviewers noting an impressive list of film and art festival appearances and fellowships won by graduates. Several recent graduates from the program have also won tenure-track jobs outside Colorado. The external reviewers laud the “MFA in CINE...[as] one of the jewels in the crown of the department.” However, the same report also notes “serious challenges” for the program and warns that “the administrative structure of the film MFA is not sustainable”. The external reviewers identify “division among faculty about the value of the program.”

All the concerns noted above in relation to undergraduate education also apply to graduate education, but issues of funding, administrative control and credit, and faculty bandwidth also seem to be especially pertinent to the MFA program, whose cross-department structure is described by the external reviewers as “devastating to... [the graduate program's] stability and long-term viability”—even as it yields some benefits noted earlier in this report.

- Funding issues impact the MFA program in multiple ways. At present, CINE must “cobble together disparate funding” each year to support its incoming and continuing MFA students. This causes “undue labor” for members of the department, who must put in considerable work for students housed in a different unit; this also makes it impractical to increase the number of graduate students in the program. The lack of stable funding for graduate students also impacts their ability to teach in their own discipline. CINE has expressed a desire to increase its intake of new MFA students from 2 to 3-5 students per year.
- Administratively, the external reviewers express concern that because graduate courses are offered through AAH, “MFA in CINE students can only take undergraduate level courses in their own discipline.” Additionally, there seems to be concern that because the MFA students are enrolled in AAH, CINE does not always receive credit for their accomplishments.
- The issues outlined above have led the external reviewers, and some members of the department, to advocate moving the program into CINE. However, the reviewers note that “there also seems to be division among faculty about the value of the program”: ARPAC’s understanding is that some faculty members, while enthusiastic about the MFA students, worry that moving the MFA program into CINE would create significant new administrative burdens for a department that is already stretched quite thin and divert attention from serving undergraduate students. This suggests a need for further discussion of this issue within the department.

CINE’s by-laws include mention of an MA in critical film studies, but the lack of comment about an MA in the degree program report suggests that the MA is not currently offered by the department. On the other hand, CINE is currently trying to launch a new professional master’s degree in the preservation and archiving of media materials. This reflects an aspiration expressed in the 2016 ARPAC review. The recent hiring of a tenure-track assistant professor in moving-image archiving is intended to support this ambition.

Inclusivity and Unit Culture

In February 2022, a collaborative group met and identified the following [five goals to advance diversity, equity and inclusion](#) at CU Boulder: (1) employee skills and development; (2) student achievement outcomes; (3) community building; (4) employee recruitment outcomes; and (5) preparing students to participate in a diverse democracy. CINE has undertaken a number of

initiatives in this area, including supporting the Give Us the Camera collective and department-wide programs such as First Person Cinema and the IFS; expanding enrollment caps for courses such as “Black Radical Cinema”; and holding faculty and staff workshops with the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance.

The 2021 Campus Cultures Survey indicated that 17% of CINE employees and students reported either experiencing discrimination as a result of an aspect of their protected class identity or identities within the previous 12 months or being uncertain about this: this included 25% of CINE faculty and 16% of CINE undergraduates. While this issue is not cited in the unit submissions, and while the external reviewers praise CINE for initiatives such as the Give Us the Camera collective, these results suggest the importance of continuing to devote attention to issues of inclusion and access in the department.

The external reviewers note the existence of mutual respect and high morale among the staff, and the department has undertaken a number of efforts to foster a positive working environment for both staff and faculty, including more meetings and listening sessions and a yearly faculty retreat. At the same time, the unit submissions and external reviewers also identify two significant issues:

- As noted above, the external reviewers, in particular, emphasize that the size of the faculty relative to the size of the undergraduate major results in faculty being extremely overworked. The reviewers write that “given the need to cover oversubscribed courses, faculty cannot take course releases for performing administrative work, which is out of line with standard practice and detrimental to faculty productivity, morale and retention,” and that “when faculty members take leaves, which is to be expected and desired for a faculty to remain productive and relevant, this is not taken as a welcome and expected distinction but rather as a problem that remaining faculty have to work around.” The reviewers also state that “phrases like ‘austerity measures,’ ‘keeping our heads above water,’ ‘need immediate relief’ and ‘exhaustion’ were common in our discussions with the faculty.”
- Both the unit and the external reviewers state that, as the case in the previous ARPAC report, “junior and/or female faculty have had unduly heavy service loads...while some senior faculty have resisted or refused to perform their service obligations.” Compounding this problem is the fact that the unit only has 2 full professors—1 of whom has a 50% appointment in another unit—which places further pressure on assistant and associate professors. The fact that this issue continues to be cited is a source of concern. At the same time, there is considerable evidence that CINE has worked to address this issue: CINE’s 2018, 2019, and 2020 follow-up reports to the last ARPAC review detail steps that the unit has taken to address this issue. ARPAC discussed whether the issue may not primarily be one of equity, but one of overload: with only one full professor rostered fully in the department (a full professor who served for close to two decades as department chair), a considerable number of administrative responsibilities necessarily fall on faculty members at other levels. This suggests a need for further discussion within the department about this issue, perhaps in consultation with others on campus (e.g., the A&S Associate Dean for Faculty Success, the Dean of the Arts and Humanities, or the Office of Faculty Affairs).

Unit Planning and Governance Structures and Processes

CINE changed from being a program to becoming a department after the 2016 ARPAC review. This change was approved by the Board of Regents in summer 2018. CINE has consistently articulated a unit identity around inclusiveness and related issues (as seen in initiatives such as Give

Us the Camera and First Person Cinema). It also supports pushing “the boundaries of cinematic forms on multiple fronts” through the research and creative work of its faculty and students.

The department aspires to roster a larger and more diverse range of faculty in the future. Such future hires would enable current enrollment caps on popular courses such as “Black Radical Cinema” to be raised and allow a reconsideration of the prerequisites which currently restrict access to courses for non-majors. More generally, as discussed in more detail above, CINE continues to battle with the problems of being a department with a limited number of faculty.

CINE characterizes its current staff of 6.1 FTE employees as “robust” but would like to add an additional staff member who could work with alumni and donor relations, as well as work as “a liaison with internship opportunities and student placement after graduation”. The department also foresees “that at least two or three of our FTE employees will have more duties in the coming years as the professional master’s program launches”.

CINE describes its unit planning and governance as striving “to foster a collaborative climate” through in-person faculty meetings and efforts to promote more transparency and discussion. However, given the current size of the faculty, the department struggles to find faculty members who can fulfill its governance requirements and service needs and identifies its “dearth of leadership” as a major concern for “the overall functioning of the department” and “is not sustainable for the long-term”. Pre-tenured rank faculty risk being overburdened with service in the critical early years of their careers and some senior faculty risk “service burnout”. These problems have been a long-term issue for CINE.

To reduce the impact of faculty leaves, the 2016 ARPAC review recommended that CINE should try to “sequence leaves to ensure that teaching and service duties are distributed equitably”. This advice still seems valid. However, the “dearth of leadership” issue also suggests that CINE should explore the possibility, in consultation with the Dean of Arts and Humanities, of making at least some future faculty hires at above assistant professor level.

CINE's bylaws were approved by the department faculty in May 2019 and ratified with amendments in September 2022. The bylaws confirm voting rights for all TTT faculty who have at least a 50% appointment in CINE, as well as teaching faculty. The bylaws specify that CINE has two distinct divisions for academic and curricular purposes: critical studies and production. When associate chairs are appointed, the bylaws state that “consideration will be given to selecting the Associate Chair from among faculty members from the program area different from the area to which the Chair of the department belongs”. Similar balancing between critical studies and production is also required for the Merit/Salary Committee. While the composition of the Merit/Salary Committee is explicitly based upon rotation, the bylaws offer no details about the process by which merit and “career merit” are to be determined, other than requiring faculty to complete the annual FRPA form.

The bylaws list multiple departmental standing committees. A new Curriculum Committee was created in January 2025, whose remit has been described as “curricular reform, focusing on enrollments, bottlenecks, and new course formulations.” If this committee becomes a standing rather than ad hoc committee, the bylaws will have to be amended accordingly.

The bylaws specify procedures for recruiting new faculty members. For reappointment, tenure, and promotion, the bylaws identify the various ranks of faculty who can vote on different types of cases. A multi-page supplement to the bylaws addresses the criteria for evaluating creative filmmaking

and production work for reappointment, tenure, and promotion because how these forms of creative work need to be evaluated in different ways from the “traditional scholarship” of critical studies.

The bylaws specify procedures for grievances, including by a student against a faculty member. However, the bylaws do not seem to include any explicit provision for including student voices in departmental administration (such as student participation in at least part of a committee's business).

Mentoring is described as being offered to all faculty, in accordance with the policies of the College of Arts and Sciences. Faculty members are able to request specific mentors and the chair “will endeavor to make sure that a faculty member's choice of mentor is honored.”

ARPAC's understanding is that although the bylaws have been approved by the department, they are still under review by the College of Arts and Sciences.

Support Needs

As indicated above (see section 3.1), one need involves space. This suggests a need for the Office of Space Optimization to work with CINE to identify both temporary and long-term solutions that will allow CINE to deliver its curriculum and ease burdens on students.

A second need involves computing. Noting that film production requires specialized software, the external reviewers express concern that centralized campuswide policies regarding computing impede access to this software, creating burdens on CINE staff and impeding student success. For example, certain specialized software needed for film production requires older operating systems; campuswide requirements to update the latter therefore impede access to the former. This may become an even more significant issue in the context of the forthcoming new professional master's degree in media preservation. This suggests a need for the Office of Information Technology to work with CINE to identify solutions to these challenges.

A third need involves equipment. According to the external reviewers, students in CINE classes pay a rental fee each time they check out film production equipment, which poses a significant financial burden, disincentivizes the use of this equipment, and creates discrepancies with similar courses offered by CMDI, which does not charge a per-checkout rental fee but rather (as described by the external reviewers) covers these costs through a one-time tuition expense. This suggests a need for the leadership of the College of Arts and Sciences, perhaps in collaboration with CMDI, to work with CINE to assess whether alternative funding models are possible and (if so) consider their implementation.

A final need involves the relationship between CINE (located in the College of Arts and Sciences) and CMDI itself. In addition to highlighting the funding discrepancies outlined above, the external reviewers express concern about competition for resources and missed opportunities for collaboration between CINE and CMDI, including the existence of curricular redundancies and different pay scales for lecturers teaching in the two units. While some degree of overlap and competition may be unavoidable (especially when dealing with two different colleges at large public university), it may be helpful for the provost to convene a conversation between CINE (and perhaps AHUM leadership) and CMDI to explore opportunities for collaboration as well as points of tension.

Recommendations

The members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee address the following recommendations to the Department of Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts and to the offices of responsible administrators:

To the Unit:

1. Faculty Hiring and Departmental Governance

- a. Create and regularly update a rolling five-year plan to coordinate faculty teaching and service commitments, anticipate and accommodate faculty leaves, and identify opportunities and needs for new hires (including by prioritizing which needs are most effectively addressed by TTT hires and which needs are most effectively addressed by teaching faculty hires).
- b. Engage in a discussion, as a department, about whether steps are needed to more equitably allocate faculty service and leadership roles and responsibilities, consulting (as needed) the Dean of Arts and Humanities, the Associate Dean for Faculty Success, and others for support.
- c. Ensure that the current version of the department's bylaws have been reviewed and approved by the College of Arts and Sciences, while also considering (and submitting for review and approval) additional revisions (such as options for including student voices in appropriate departmental committees).

2. Degree Programs, Curriculum, and Students

- a. Engage in an internal discussion, as a department, about what changes (if any) are needed to sustain the MFA in Arts Practices/Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts; based on the results of that discussion, engage with the Department of Art and Art History (perhaps in a conversation facilitated by the Dean of Arts and Humanities) to address the structure and future of this program.
- b. Engage with the Dean of Arts and Humanities to explore ways of securing consistent, stable funding for CINE MFA students, possibly with the aim of increasing the annual intake of new CINE students each year.
- c. Continue curricular reform efforts, formulating a timeframe and clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of the newly formed curriculum committee and the department as a whole in this process.
- d. Continue efforts to move forward with the new professional master's degree in media preservation.
- e. Work with the Dean of Arts and Humanities, the Dean of the College of Communication, Media, Design and Information, and other relevant CMDI leadership to identify opportunities for collaboration while also addressing concerns about curricular offerings and other points of competition between CINE and CMDI, especially Critical Media Practices and Media Studies.

3. Infrastructure

- a. Engage with the Office of Space Optimization to identify both temporary and long-term solutions that will allow CINE to deliver its curriculum and ease burdens on students.
- b. Engage with the Dean of Arts and Humanities and others to explore possibilities for enhancing the equipment and maintenance budget for the Kage and address discrepancies between student equipment access costs in CINE and CMDI.
- c. Engage with the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to explore options for meeting the department's technology needs in ways that minimize the negative impact on CINE students while addressing campus's standardized computing requirements.
- d. Engage with Advancement, the soon-to-be-renamed Office for Outreach and Community Engagement, and other public-facing offices on campus to enhance outreach efforts and develop opportunities for external fundraising and student internships, especially in connection with the arrival in Boulder of the Sundance Film Festival.

To the Dean of the Arts and Humanities:

4. Support CINE and AAH as they discuss concerns about the MFA degree in Arts Practices/Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts (including the structure and institutional location of the program, as well as the need for consistent funding to support MFA students), and work with CINE and AAH to develop solutions to address these concerns.
5. Work with CINE as it continues efforts to move forward with its new professional master's degree in media preservation.
6. Consult with CINE on the development of its five-year faculty hiring plan, identifying points of alignment between departmental and divisional priorities and potential sources of support, and considering possibilities for hiring at the associate and full professor level to address departmental service and leadership needs.
7. Work with CINE and others to assess whether alternate models for supporting student equipment access are feasible (and if so, implement these changes).
8. Work with CINE to review and approve revisions to CINE bylaws.
9. Facilitate connections between CINE and appropriate offices on campus (such as Advancement and the soon-to-be-renamed Office for Outreach and Community Engagement) that can support the department's public-facing activities, ensuring that the CINE's work is represented in campus outreach and fundraising efforts (especially in light of the move of the Sundance Film Festival to Boulder).
10. Work with CINE, the Dean of the College of Communication, Media, Design and Information, and other relevant CMDI leadership to identify opportunities for collaboration while also addressing concerns about curricular offerings and other points of competition between CINE and CMDI, especially Critical Media Practices and Media Studies.

11. Explore creating shared administrative support services for certain key functions for which individual units, especially smaller units, may not have staff personnel, e.g., graduate student administrative support, event support, budget and finance support, etc.

12. Emphasize and support the important role that CINE—and the creative, visual, and performing arts and the humanities disciplines as a whole—play in CU Boulder's mission when communicating and advocating to university administration, the local community, and the state of Colorado, including in central campus (SRC) communications and storytelling.

To the Vice Chancellor of Academic Resource Management:

13. Work with CINE to identify critical space-related challenges and needs and formulate a plan for addressing them.

To the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology:

14. Work with CINE to identify critical software-related challenges and needs and formulate a plan for addressing them.

To the Dean of the Graduate School:

15. Support CINE and AAH and the Dean of Arts and Humanities as they explore ways of securing consistent, stable funding for CINE MFA students.

16. Support CINE and the Dean of Arts and Humanities as CINE continues efforts to launch a professional master's program in media preservation.

To the Provost:

17. Work with CINE, the Dean of Arts and Humanities, the Dean of the College of Communication, Media, Design and Information, and other relevant CMDI leadership to identify opportunities for collaboration while also addressing concerns about curricular offerings and other points of competition between CINE and CMDI, especially Critical Media Practices and Media Studies.

18. Emphasize and support the important role that CINE—and the creative, visual, and performing arts and the humanities disciplines as a whole—play in CU Boulder's mission when communicating and advocating to university administration, the local community, and the state of Colorado, including in central campus (SRC) communications and storytelling.

Required Follow-up

The chair of the Department of Cinema Studies and Moving Image Arts shall submit two follow-up reports—one due on the first of April 2027 and one due on the first of April 2029. The follow-up reports shall focus on the implementation of the recommendations from ARPAC detailed herein. The dean of Arts and Humanities and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as well as the provost and other relevant central campus leadership will also respond to all outstanding matters under their purview arising from this review year's recommendations. The dean of Arts and Humanities and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will submit one follow-up report due on May 1, 2028, while the provost and relevant central campus leaders will submit one follow-up report due on June 1, 2030.