

**Proposal to Create a Department of Film and Media  
within the College of Arts and Sciences**

---

Submitted to the College of Arts and Sciences Assembly by  
Andrea Eis, Professor and Director, Cinema Studies  
Kevin Corcoran, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
October, 2019

This proposal from the faculty of the Cinema Studies program in the Department of English, outlines the rationale, benefits, and changes required in the creation of a Department of Film and Media in the College of Arts and Sciences. This proposal is made with the support of the Department of English and the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Sciences.

---

**RATIONALE AND BENEFITS**

---

**There have been substantial changes in the discipline and in the program's fit within the English department. These changes intensified with the creation of the filmmaking specialization. A separate department would resolve many current issues.**

- **Establishment of an appropriate level of administrative infrastructure and support to accommodate continuing growth in enrollment, faculty, curricular offerings, programmatic and community engagement initiatives, equipment, and facilities.**

**We are a fast growing and extremely active program.**

The major started in the fall of 2009; filmmaking specialization started in fall 2017.

	<b>FALL 2009</b>	<b>FALL 2019</b>	<b>% 09-19</b>
<b>Total CIN majors</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>+ 633%</b>
<b>CIN credits taught</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>2,297</b>	<b>+ 268%</b>

	<b>FALL 2009</b>	<b>FALL 2019</b>
<b>CIN faculty</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>
Professors	0	1
Associate Professors	1	3
Assistant Professors	1	3
Visiting Assistant Professor	0	1
Special Lecturers	2	1
Lecturers	0	2

This growth has created strain on faculty review and hiring processes which involve the entire department; course scheduling complexity (with variations in course meeting hours due to screenings; increasing number of program initiatives; events; community engagement activities). As an equipment and technology intensive program, CIN has put a strain on the Administrative Secretary; the program also has discipline-specific, technology-specific classrooms which need constant monitoring and work with CAS Technical Support, OU Classroom Support, and other university departments.

- **External visibility and reputation.**  
Currently the program, despite its growth and strength, is relatively invisible within the university structure due to its position as a program within a department. This is critical to student recruitment, community engagement, internship and career opportunities for students, alumni interactions.

- **Internal visibility, stature and ability to advocate for program needs within the College of Arts and Science and the University.**

The new department would have a place and voice within the chair-level informational and decision-making structure of both CAS and OU. For example, currently decisions on priorities for faculty position requests have to be balanced between ENG, CW and CIN, rather than based on program needs.

- **Discipline-specific faculty review, tenure and promotion procedures, merit procedures, and faculty hiring policies.**

These procedures and policies are currently weighted more towards the discipline of English. Cinema Studies faculty are very different in knowledge base, scholarship, and creative activity.

---

## **CHANGES REQUIRED FOR A NEW DEPARTMENT**

---

### **1. A DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

The current program director essentially functions largely as a chair, except for signing responsibilities/authority. The director does the scheduling, makes budget decisions on equipment purchases, runs separate CIN faculty meetings, retreats, and oversees new faculty, handles the majority of student issues, etc.; the director also meets with the Dean's office independently of the English department chair. The program as a whole is relatively autonomous, handling its own program review and assessment, curriculum change and development, academic advising, internship advising, and events.

### **2. A FULL-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY**

CIN currently shares an administrative secretary with English and Creative Writing; CIN pays a portion of a CT position.

### **3. INCREASE IN EXISTING CINEMA STUDIES BUDGET**

CIN has its own budget; the increase would cover some expenses that are currently covered by the English Department.

### **4. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policies and procedures specific to the new department are being developed.

---

## **NO CHANGES TO CURRENT STRUCTURE NEEDED**

---

### **1. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE SPACE AND FACILITIES IN THE SHORT-TERM**

CIN would stay in its current offices on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and 1<sup>st</sup> floor of O'Dowd Hall. The new Administrative Secretary would take the office space of the current CT.

### **2. NO CHANGES TO CURRICULUM**

The curriculum remains the same. Notes: as of Fall 2018 the only remaining courses with the English rubric that were taught exclusively by CIN faculty are now CIN courses. One English course sometimes taught by CIN faculty is now cross-listed between English and Cinema Studies.

### **3. NO CHANGES TO CORE FACULTY**

### **4. NO CHANGES FOR FACULTY FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

Faculty from other departments who teach interdisciplinary electives in the major and minor will continue to be scheduled for classes by the departments in which they hold their primary appointments.

### **5. SHARED FACULTY**

For the foreseeable future, scheduling of classes in the new department for faculty with a primary appointment in the English department will be done in coordination between the two chairs.

### **6. GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

For the foreseeable future, scheduling of English graduate teaching assistants to the new department will be done in coordination between the two chairs.

---

## TOTAL EXPECTED COSTS

---

The full salary attached to the current C4 position would be used to cover a portion of the new C7 position, requiring an additional **\$9,177** in compensation. Additions to controllable budget to support wages for an Equipment Resource Tech, an increase in S&S, and equipment purchase/replacement/repair would be **\$42,160**, for a total increase of **\$51,337**. With the exception of the \$9177 to cover the new C7 position and a small portion of the S&S budget for materials reflecting the establishment of the department, all other additional costs address current program needs.

There was \$9000 plus \$720 fringe in the original program budget to support the Program Director stipend, which is currently in the CAS budget. The average CAS Chair's salary is \$14,000 plus \$1120 fringe. While Chair's salaries are centrally funded, we acknowledge this will be an additional expense and CAS may be asked to return the current stipend pay to the central budget to help cover the Department Chair's pay.

---

## PROJECTED IMPACT ON DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

---

- This proposal has been made after extensive discussion and consultation within English Department. Although English faculty have lamented the loss of working with their Cinema Studies colleagues, the general consensus is that this is a positive and logical move, based on the current and projected size, scope, and disciplinary direction of the Cinema Studies program.
- The departure of Cinema Studies from the English department would reduce the ever-increasing strain on department resources (which is especially acute, given the growth of the Creative Writing and Cinema Studies programs) and on the heavy workload of the English department Administrative Secretary (reviews, equipment orders, scheduling).
- The departure of Cinema Studies would clarify position requests, hiring decisions and the faculty review process for the English department.
- Implementation of this proposal would have an overall impact on the *total* major enrollment and SCH for the *total* English department (*total* currently includes ENG, ENG-STEP, CW and CIN majors and SCH). However, since the establishment of the Cinema Studies major in 2009, CIN majors and SCH have been calculated separately from ENG, CW, and ENG-STEP in OIRA data. As a result, identifying the continuous paths as separate entities would be relatively easy.

**A letter of support from Kevin Laam, Chair, Department of English, may be found on the next page.**



October 15, 2019

Dear Dean Corcoran,

I provide this letter in support of the proposal for a new Department of Film and Media submitted by the College of Arts and Sciences and the faculty of the Cinema Studies program in the Department of English.

The proposal has been made in consultation with staff and faculty in the English Department. While the Cinema Studies program has been an integral part of the department and contributed substantially to its development over the past decade, the program has progressed to the point where its needs would be served best as a separate department. Film and media studies has evolved significantly as a discipline in recent years, and the Cinema Studies program has evolved along with it, continually refining and expanding its curricular and programmatic offerings (as seen most notably in the launch of the filmmaking specialization in 2017). Under the auspices of a new unit with its own chair and administrative support system, the Film and Media Department will be optimally equipped to deal with discipline-specific issues: not just programmatic and curricular matters, but also lab space and facilities, equipment, and community engagement. They will be able to develop and implement discipline-specific criteria for faculty reappointment and promotion, as well as appropriate procedures for faculty reviews, position requests, service, and merit. They stand to increase in visibility and stature both within and beyond the university, thus positioning the department to recruit more students and strengthen alumni networks.

On the English side, the departure of Cinema Studies will help to reduce the strain on department resources, in particular the workload of the Administrative Secretary, who currently handles administrative matters for three sizable programs: English, Cinema Studies, and Creative Writing. After Cinema's departure, it will be important that both the English and Film and Media departments are provided with the administrative support they need to serve students and faculty. It is furthermore critical that scheduling for the new department of Film and Media be done in close cooperation with the English department chair, as there will remain English department faculty who regularly teach CIN classes and, perhaps more importantly, have contributed essentially to the success and the development of the CIN program.

While English Department are sad to see their Cinema colleagues go, they recognize the opportunity the formation of a Film and Media department represents for students, faculty, and other members of the Oakland University community. Please accept this letter as confirmation of my enthusiastic support for the new department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Laam".

Kevin Laam, Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of English