

Cinema Studies Institute

PhD Handbook

2021-2022

**Contact Information**

Cinema Studies Institute

Innis College, University of Toronto

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[cinema.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca/cinema)

### Administrative Staff

James Cahill, Director

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Corinn Columpar, Graduate Coordinator

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Tony Pi, Graduate Program Assistant

(416) 978-5809

[gradcinema.studies@utoronto.ca](mailto:gradcinema.studies@utoronto.ca)

Denise Ing, Undergraduate Program Assistant and Assistant to the Director

(416) 978-8571

[cinema.studies@utoronto.ca](mailto:cinema.studies@utoronto.ca)

### Graduate Faculty

### Full Members

Cahill, James – PhD   
Columpar, Corinn – PhD   
Fenner, Angelica – PhD   
Keil, Charlie – PhD

Maurice, Alice – Dphil

Price, Brian – PhD

Richmond, Scott – PhD

### Sammond, Nic – PhD  Sutherland, Meghan – PhD

### Associate Members

Banning, Kass – MA

Chan, Nadine – PhD  
Cramer, Lauren – PhD   
Saljoughi, Sara – PhD  
Testa, Bart – MA   
Wijaya, Elizabeth – PhD

Zambenedetti, Alberto – PhD

### Affiliate Faculty Members

Ackerman, Alan – PhD  
Ambros, Veronika – PhD  
Baumann, Shyon – PhD  
Boler, Megan – PhD  
Brown, Elspeth – PhD  
Budde, Antje – PhD

Cazdyn, Eric – PhD

Cho, Michelle -- PhD

Jagoe, Eva-Lynn – PhD  
Jain, Kajri – PhD

Johnson, Stephen – PhD

Kaplan, Louis – Dphil

Saljoughi, Sara – PhD

Legge, Elizabeth – PhD  
Leonard, Garry – PhD

Meng, Yue – PhD

Most, Andrea – PhD

Parker, Felan – PhD

Ricco, John – PhD

Tcheuyap, Alexie – PhD  
Walcott, Rinaldo – PhD

### Member Emeriti

### Armatage, Kay – PhD

### Director’s Welcome

On behalf of the Cinema Studies Institute (CSI), I am extremely pleased to welcome you to our graduate program. In this handbook you will find the principal policies and procedures governing the major phases of your progress toward the Ph.D. Please read them over carefully and be sure to speak to either the Graduate Program Assistant or the Graduate Program Coordinator should you have any questions.

The Ph.D. program of the Cinema Studies Institute represents the culmination of significant effort by all of the Institute faculty and staff members, and it was many years in the making. We have been teaching cinema studies at the undergraduate level for close to five decades, making ours one of the longest-standing film and media programs in the country. Moreover, many of our undergraduate students have made a significant impact on the discipline, going on to graduate work at such universities as Amsterdam, Chicago, Harvard, Iowa, Northwestern, Kent, NYU, UCLA, and Wisconsin-Madison. Since 2007, the University of Toronto has joined the ranks of such peer institutions by establishing graduate programs of its own: in 2007, the same year we became a free-standing Institute, Cinema Studies launched an M.A. program, and in 2013, we inaugurated a Ph.D. program, securing our status as one of the foremost film and media programs in North America and Europe.

As you undertake your doctoral work at CSI you will discover what thousands of other students before you can confirm: that the University of Toronto offers peerless research resources on a campus in the heart of a cosmopolitan city, renowned for its rich film and media culture; that CSI faculty members possess a wealth of pedagogical skill and research expertise; that the facilities, both at Innis College and in the Media Commons at Robarts Library, feature the latest technologies; and that your peers are among the brightest and most accomplished of young film and media scholars in the country and beyond.

Past graduates of CSI now teach at universities across the continent, but they also work at film and media-related institutions ranging from the Toronto International Film Festival Group to the Pacific Film Archive, serving as respected executives, creators, and curators. We are committed to providing our students with a rigorous, engaging, and memorable education. Equally important, we aim to introduce our graduates to a close-knit academic community that shares a common goal: exploring the depth and breadth of film and media scholarship in an environment that stimulates thought and fosters collegiality. We are excited at the prospect of working with you and hope that the coming years will be as enjoyable for you as they are productive.

James Leo Cahill

Director and Associate Professor

Cinema Studies Institute

University of Toronto

**Timeline**

**YEAR ONE**

**August** Attend orientation

**September** Begin Fall coursework

**October** Recommended: begin exploring possible supervisors

**January** Begin Winter coursework

**YEAR TWO**

**September** Begin Fall coursework, including the Proseminar

**October** Finalize choice of supervisor

**November** Finalize supervisory committee, in consultation with supervisor, by November 15th

**December** Declare the two special fields that will constitute the areas of the Qualifying Exam by the first week of the month

**March** Hand infinalized bibliographies for both special fields by March 1st

**April/May** Write the Qualifying Exam (a take-home exam given over a four-day period)

**Summer** Complete a draft of the dissertation proposal and submit it to the supervisory committee by September 1. The committee will then review the proposal and either accept it, return it for revision, or reject it by September 30th.

**August** Be sure that all course work is completed

**YEAR THREE**

**December** Achieve candidacy by December 1. After candidacy is achieved, dissertation writing begins; thereafter the supervisory committee must meet with the student at least once a year.

### Graduate Advancement Policies

# I. Supervision and Examination Preparation

## First Academic Year

1. During Orientation Week, the Graduate Coordinator will review the Ph.D. handbook with incoming students and outline points for consideration when contemplating choice of a supervisor.

2. Students will review the SGS Supervisory Guidelines. <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Documents/supervision+guidelines.pdf>

3. Each student should have a supervisor by the commencement of Year Two.

## Second Academic Year

1. Following the completion of coursework in Year Two, the student will sit for the Qualifying Exam (see Section III).

2. By November 15the of Year Two, the student will, in consultation with your supervisor, select a supervisory committee.

3. By the first week of December, the student will declare the two special fields for the Qualifying Exam and file the appropriate form with the Graduate Office.

4. By March 15th of Year Two, the supervisory committee will draft a set of six questions upon which the Qualifying Exam will be based.

5. The supervisory committee will forward a copy of the six questions to the Graduate Committee by March 15th. In an advisory capacity only, the Graduate Committee will note any potential problems in the Qualifying Exam questions.

6. The Qualifying Exam will take place following the completion of coursework in Year Two. To avoid conflicts with faculty summer research, the student should plan to schedule the written and oral portions of the Qualifying Exam to take place no later than the second week of May.

7. The Qualifying Exam will be take-home, and will consist of six questions across two categories (special fields). The student will be required to answer two questions from one category and one question from the other, and each answer should be between 2000 and 3500 words. The student will receive a formatted template for answers prior to taking the written portion of the exam. The time of the exam is to be agreed upon between the student and the supervisor, who will email the student the exam. That email will constitute a time stamp. The student will have 96 hours to return the exam to their supervisor.

8. As a part of the examination process, the student will be expected to create a syllabus for an undergraduate course based on one of the special fields. This syllabus may be included as part of the oral portion of the exam; it is up to the committee to decide in advance of the exam if this will be the case.

9. The oral portion of the exam will take place within seven business days after completion of the written portion, whenever possible.

10. The supervisory committee will review the student’s performance in the oral portion of the Qualifying Exam and will decide by consensus whether the student has passed.

11. The student may receive the following marks: Pass with Distinction, Pass, or Fail.

12. If the student fails, they may retake the special field exam once. Arrangements for repeating the exam are to be completed within one week of receiving the first exam results.

13. If the student fails the exam twice, they will not advance to candidacy.

## Supervision

1. Supervisors must have graduate standing.

2. Supervisors may include eligible professors on leave.

3. After the student has selected a supervisor, they will create a timeline together for discussing and developing the special fields, the special fields reading lists, and the Dissertation Proposal.

4. That timeline will be congruent with those Proseminar session dates devoted to the Dissertation Proposal, as well as with dates set for the Qualifying Exam.

# II. Proseminar

## The Proseminar will typically convene in the fall semester of Year 2. The purpose of the seminar is to prepare the 2nd Year PhD cohort for the Qualifying Exam process and to advance their overall professionalization in cinema and media studies and cognate fields.

**III. Qualifying Exam**

**Written Portion**

1.The written portion of the Qualifying Exam is a take-home exam, in which the student will have four days to answer three of six questions across two special fields. A “special field” outlines an area of competency that relates to the dissertation topic, but is much wider in scope than the future dissertation. the student’s chosen special fields will come to play an important role in their professionalization, demarcating areas of expertise that will comprise an important – perhaps even a defining – aspect of their scholarly identity on the job market. It is an area of wider disciplinary competency in which they could teach, for example, and in which their scholarship will intervene. It may be demarcated along or intersect with such analytics as, for example, epoch, national culture, authorship, sexuality/race/class, theory, aesthetics, or style.

2. The written portion of the exam will be scheduled at the discretion of the supervisory committee, but no later than the second week of May.The student should also make arrangements early to avoid overlap with any summer teaching duties, allowing at least a three-day margin between beginning or ending of such duties and beginning or ending of the qualifying exam. If the student has been hired as course marker, they can still complete the exam, but they should not be assigned any marking three days prior to or following the written or oral portion of the exam.

3. The written portion of the Qualifying Exam will consist of three questions for each special field (six overall). The student will answer three questions total, and must answer at least one question from each category. In other words, they cannot answer all three questions from one category and none from the other. Rather, they must answer one of three questions from one category, and two of three questions from the other.

4. The Graduate Program Assistant will email the pre-approved Qualifying Exam to the supervisor, who will forward it to the examinee at the commencement of the agreed upon 96-hour window of time, cc’ing the Graduate Program Assistant ([gradcinema.studies@utoronto.ca](mailto:gradcinema.studies@utoronto.ca)) and the Graduate Coordinator in order to officially confirm the start time.

5. The examinee must return the completed written portion of the Qualifying Exam within 96 hours via email attachment to the supervisor, again copying the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Coordinator to confirm the completion time.

6. The submitted paper will be printed by the Graduate Program Assistant and placed in the student’s graduate file.

# Oral Portion

1. The oral portion of the Qualifying Exam should take place approximately 7-10 days following completion of the Qualifying Exam and will convene all members of the supervisory committee. The supervisor and at least one supervisory committee member must preside in person, and up to one committee member may participate remotely. The supervisor should obtain from the Graduate Program Assistant the grade submissions form and arrange for a two- to two-and-a-half-hour room booking, factoring in consultation time among committee members prior to the student’s presentation; the exam will last between one and two hours.

2. The content and structure of the oral portion of the exam may commence with remarks by the student, wherein they reflect on the writing process and share any additional content they would have liked to include. Faculty will pose clarifying questions on existing content, as well as possible future directions for the dissertation.

3. Results (Pass, Pass with Distinction, Fail) of the Qualifying Exam should be communicated to the student immediately following the oral portion of the exam, and posted by the supervisor to the Graduate Program Assistant via the Grade Submission Form no later than August 15th. This ensures the possibility of a retake (in the event of a failed exam) prior to the commencement of T.A. duties in September.

# IV. Dissertation Proposal and Advancement to Candidacy

## Structure of Dissertation Proposal

1. The dissertation proposal shall contain:

a. An abstract/statement of intervention

b. A literature review

c. An overview of each chapter

d. A bibliography

e. A mediagraphy

2. The abstract will typically be no more than one page, single-spaced.

3. The literature review will detail the existing literature—secondary and primary—pertaining to the dissertation topic, less to demonstrate rote knowledge of that literature than to explicate how the dissertation is an intervention in, and extension of, that literature.

4. Chapter discussions will clearly identify the focus and argument of each chapter, as well as how each relates to the larger argument of the dissertation.

5. The scope of the bibliography and mediagraphy should be adequate to the topic.

6. Generally speaking, the dissertation proposal should not exceed 15 single-spaced pages.

## Preparation of the Dissertation Proposal

1. Following successful passage of the Qualifying Exam (including both the written and oral portions), the student will confer with the supervisor to finalize the Dissertation Proposal.

2. The student will submit a final version of the Dissertation Proposal to the supervisory committee no later than September 1st.

3. The supervisory committee will review the proposal and either accept it, return it to the student for revision, or reject it by September 30th of Year Three.

4. The supervisor will be responsible for collecting all comments and feedback from members of the supervisory committee and vetting this feedback before, in turn, delivering it to the student. This entails evaluating committee members’ comments for relevance and feasibility, and ordering these into a meaningful chronology intended to provide coherent counsel on the proposed research trajectory.

5. If the proposal requires revision, the student will have no more than 60 days to complete those revisions and return the proposal to the supervisory committee.

## Advancement to Candidacy

1. In order to advance to candidacy, the student must successfully complete:

a. The Qualifying Exam (including both the written and oral portions)

b. The Dissertation Proposal

2. This work must be completed no later than December 1st of Year Three.

**V. Dissertation and Final Oral Exam**

You can find the most up-to-date information on requirements related to the Dissertation and the Final Oral Examination (FOE) here: [www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/program-completion/](https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/program-completion/)

## VI. Progressing through the Program

## The Dissertation Field Review

1. All supervisory committees must meet as a group with the candidate at least once a year.

2. In Year Two, the oral portion of the Qualifying Exam may serve this function since it also serves as a written evaluation of the candidate’s progress. Alternately, the committee may elect to meet with the candidate in September following submission of the Dissertation Proposal.

3. For every ensuing meeting with the full supervisory committee (yearly or otherwise), a Progress Report must be completed and filed with the Graduate Office. The candidate has the option of responding to this in writing, to be attached to the filed report.

## Normative Timeline

1. In order to complete the program, students must remain in “good academic standing,” which is dependent on compliance with the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies and CSI’s program requirements, and on ongoing and satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree.

2. Whenever possible, the student will complete all coursework by the end of Year Two.

3. The student must complete all SGS requirements for advancement to candidacy (see the SGS Calendar, section 8.5.1) by the end of Year Three.

4. Ideally, the candidate will complete the dissertation within four years of commencing coursework, and no later than six years after beginning coursework.

5. Once the supervisory committee has determined that the dissertation manuscript is complete and meets SGS standards in quality and format, the candidate is ready to advance to the Final Oral Examination (FOE). An examination committee must be struck, to include an external examiner and at least one internal external examiner. The supervisor shall supply the Graduate Coordinator with at least two names each for these two respective roles, and the Graduate Coordinator will, in turn, approach the scholars in question regarding availability and extend a formal invitation. Pending available budget, the external examiner may participate either on site or via video conference.

6. Once the FOE committee has been struck, a date and room must be booked with SGS three months in advance. The external examiner must receive the manuscript at least eight weeks in advance, and must submit a two- to three-page assessment to the supervisor for distribution to the candidate and the committee at least ten days in advance.

7. As a general rule, PhD candidates of the Cinema Studies Institutes should time the completion of their dissertation to enable a FOE date between early September and late May.

**External Awards**

1. CSI *strongly encourages* all eligible doctoral students to apply for external awards, particularly the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) and the SSHRC Canada Graduate Fellowship.

2. CSI *requires* all eligible students in the first year of the Ph.D. program to apply for OGS and all eligible students in the second year of the Ph.D. program to apply for a SSHRC Fellowship.

### Faculty Areas of Interests

Our faculty have a wide range of interests and expertise in cinema and media studies. We hope the following list will aid you in finding supervisors and committee members, or arranging a special consultation. Please also visit each professor's faculty page on the Cinema Studies website.

#### Kass Banning

Multi-screen & expanded media; documentary: the essay film & interactive documentary; theories & practices of national and transnational cinemas; Canadian & minor screen cultures; affect, temporality and phenomenology; migration & diasporic media; British cinemas (specializing in Black British); theorizing the archive

#### James Leo Cahill

French cinema and literature; film history and theory; animal studies; critical theory

*Nadine Chan*

Media historiography and theory; postcolonial and new empire studies; media and environment; nontheatrical film; media anthropology; visual culture; data visualization and predictive modelling; studies in Global Asia; cultural studies

#### Corinn Columpar

Feminist film theory and practice; Aboriginal and Indigenous cinemas; American independent cinema; corporeality and representation; performance; collaborative cultural practice; motherhood and media

#### Lauren M. Cramer

Blackness/black studies; hip-hop/black popular culture; visual culture; film/media studies; black geographies/architecture

#### Angelica Fenner

German and European cinemas; mobility and migration; diasporic and transnational cinemas; globalization studies; critical race theory; gender & authorship; documentary history, theory & practice; affect; everyday life; performance; first person film, autoethnography, family films and home movies

#### Charlie Keil

American cinema; early cinema; silent cinema; film history; film historiography; authorship; film analysis

#### Alice Maurice

Early cinema; race and cinema; documentary; film theory

#### Brian Price

Film philosophy; aesthetics and politics; colour; abstraction; French cinema

#### Scott Richmond

Media theory; film theory; queer theory; avant-garde and experimental cinema; new media aesthetics

#### Sara Saljoughi

Film theory; Iranian cinema; non-Western and postcolonial cinema; modern and contemporary continental philosophy; political film; psychoanalysis; theories of gender and sexuality; immigration & diaspora studies

#### Nic Sammond

Animation; graphic arts and cinematic media; race and cinematic media; media archaeology; moving-image culture; vernacular media practices and cultures

#### Meghan Sutherland

Media philosophy; history of American television; theories of film, TV & new media; history & theory of popular aesthetic form; political theory, Continental philosophy; avant-garde/experimental media; space, place & media

#### Bart Testa

Genres, classical film theory; auteurism; avant-garde/experimental cinemas; European cinemas; Chinese cinemas (HK, PRC, Taiwan)

#### Elizabeth Wijaya

Asian cinema; short cinema; film-philosophy; eco-cinema; political cinema; film festival research; media theory; research-creation; film curation

#### Alberto Zambenedetti

Italian cinema; time and temporality in media; the global cinematic city; international film noir; the films of Peter Greenaway; the films of Stanley Kubrick; the films of Orson Welles

### Library Support

As a University of Toronto graduate student, you have access to an incredibly rich range of print, media, and online resources:

• **Innis College Library** (Cinema Studies print collection, quiet study space, computers)<[innis.utoronto.ca/library](http://innis.utoronto.ca/library)>

• **Media Commons** (film, microfilm, and more) <[mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca](https://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/)>

-Online Streaming Video < [mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/av-online-video-resources](https://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/av-online-video-resources)>

-Media Archive Collections <[mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/archival-collections](https://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/archival-collections)>

-Suggest titles for purchase < [mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/purchase-suggestion](https://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/purchase-suggestion)>

• **U of T Libraries** (over 44 libraries and archives) <[onesearch.library.utoronto.ca](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/)>

-Request items to be delivered between U of T campuses (downtown, UTSC, UTM) <[onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/request-item](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/request-item)>

• **WIFI and IT Support**

-U of T Libraries < [onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/wifi-and-computers](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/wifi-and-computers)>

-Innis College IT Help Desk

-eduroam (WIFI access on other campuses) < [eduroam.utoronto.ca](http://eduroam.utoronto.ca/)>

-U of T free Office 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) <[bit.ly/1XqigjJ](https://bit.ly/1XqigjJ)>

-Google Scholar - Set up it to recognize you are a U of T student <[onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/linkit/google-scholar](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/linkit/google-scholar)>

At Innis College Library (ICL), be sure to set up a meeting with the Cinema Studies Librarian **Kate Johnson** <[katej.johnson@utoronto.ca](mailto:katej.johnson@utoronto.ca)> and find out more about:

• **Requesting purchases** to support your research

•Accessing the **PhD Bibliography Collection** at Innis College Library for your Qualifying Exams

• **Researching** via the library catalogue and extensive online resources, and finding useful content in other libraries for your special field examination

• Setting up a **citation manager** to collect, organize, and easily format citations

• **Printing** ($0.04) and **scanning** (free, code - 1400) at Innis College Library

**Important Links**

Accessibility Services [www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca)

Career Centre [www.careers.utoronto.ca](http://www.careers.utoronto.ca)

Centre for International Experience cie.utoronto.ca

Innis College [innis.utoronto.ca](http://innis.utoronto.ca)

Innis College Library [innis.utoronto.ca/library](http://innis.utoronto.ca/library)

Graduate Student Union [www.gsu.utoronto.ca](http://www.gsu.utoronto.ca)

Health and Wellness healthandwellness.utoronto.ca

Housing Services [www.housing.utoronto.ca](http://www.housing.utoronto.ca)

School of Graduate Studies [www.sgs.utoronto.ca](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca)

TA Union [www.cupe3902.org](http://www.cupe3902.org)

U of T Maps [map.utoronto.ca](http://map.utoronto.ca/)

### Important Phone Numbers

### Campus Police (416) 978-2222

Community Safety Office (416) 978-1485

Student Crisis Response Services (416) 946-7111