

EXH	MOTION <i>Maynard</i>
	SECOND <i>Taylor</i>
	ACTION APPROVED BY THE REGENTS
NOTE:	MAY 19 2005

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION**

ACTION REQUEST: Approval to Establish an Academic Department

NAME OF DEPARTMENT: Department of Screen Arts and Cultures

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2005

The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts requests approval to reorganize its Program in Film and Video Studies into a Department of Screen Arts and Cultures.

The beginnings of the Program in Film and Video Studies over thirty years ago were quite interdisciplinary with faculty from a variety of disciplines drawn into teaching for the unit. These faculty were generally without specific academic training in the study of moving image media and only a few of them published in the field. Since 1988 the professionalization of the Program has occurred with the hiring of faculty who have Doctorates in film, video, and digital studies or Master of Fine Arts degrees in the area of creative moving image production. In this respect film studies' development at the University and across the discipline has historically gone against the grain of how other disciplines have gone from consolidation within disciplinary boundaries to interdisciplinarity.

Film studies is a field that has always been interdisciplinary in its integration of ideas and methodologies from other fields, and remains so. However, they are not interdisciplinary in the same way as that of all other interdisciplinary programs in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. The external reviewers summed up the issue when they wrote, "...[there] is a core of knowledge—of theory, criticism, and historiographical practices specific to these media." The Program in Film and Video Studies is more on the order of the Department of the History of Art as an intellectual discipline. Rather than have faculty who are trained in a variety of disciplines, their faculty are trained in film, video, and/or digital studies or the creative practice of these media. They seek faculty who can bring that core expertise in moving image media to the University of Michigan across disciplinary boundaries, defined both in intellectual terms and in departmental ones. The external report suggests that "according to the University's own criterion for distinguishing between a Program and a Department, Film and Video Studies is therefore a Department."

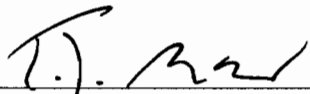
There is also the issue of nomenclature within the discipline. Programs in film studies or film and video or film and digital studies tend to be very small (two or three faculty) and are often attached to their originary sources of faculty (departments of English, for example). Every academic entity nationwide that is comparable in size and scope is a department. Departmental status and renaming are important to the recognition of the reality of the size, scope, and quality of their academic efforts. This may be especially important, as the external review suggested, in fund raising. It will also be important to solidifying the identity of their graduate Ph.D. program,

which will also be called Screen Arts & Cultures in recognition of their interest in aesthetic and culture issues, creative practice, and humanistic scholarly inquiry.

The Dean and Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts carefully considered the recommendations of the 2004 external review committee, and came to an agreement that the program should be granted departmental status. The Executive Committee approved a motion to forward this request to the Regents on March 29, 2005. We anticipate no financial costs associated with this change.

Recommended by:

Recommendation endorsed by:



Terrence J. McDonald, Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts



Paul N. Courant, Provost and
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

May 2005