

# RADIO/TELEVISION/FILM

<https://communication.northwestern.edu/academics/radio-television-film/index.html> (<https://communication.northwestern.edu/academics/radio-television-film/>)

The Department of Radio/Television/Film offers education in the history, theory, and production of media. Broad-based and interdisciplinary in orientation, the department offers a range of perspectives on media forms from cinema to broadcast and cable television to alternative media to emerging technologies. Courses emphasize that media are social and cultural practices in dialogue with the broader context of the humanities. The department is dedicated to integrating theory and practice, creating intersections with other disciplines, and fostering cutting-edge media production. Originality, critical analysis, and vision are valued in both scholarly research and creative work. The department's goal is to educate students and citizens to critically interpret contemporary media, envision alternative structures in theory and practice, and reinvent the media of the future.

Production facilities include 16mm film and HD equipment, sound stage, and editing suites; advanced audio postproduction; and state-of-the-art computer graphics. Students operate the 7,200-watt FM radio station WNUR, which serves the Chicago area and also broadcasts on the Internet. The School of Communication funds multiple active student-run cocurricular production groups and offers students opportunities for internships at television and radio stations and production companies in the Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles areas. Frequent guest lectures are offered by alumni with careers in media and by other well-known professionals.

## Programs of Study

- Film and Media Studies Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/communication/radio-television-film/film-media-studies-minor/>)
- Game Design + Media Arts + Animation Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/communication/radio-television-film/game-design-media-arts-animation-minor/>)
- Radio/Television/Film Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/communication/radio-television-film/radio-television-film-major/>)
- Sound Design Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/communication/radio-television-film/sound-design-minor/>)

## Learning Objectives

Undergraduate majors in Radio/Television/Film become fluent in the production of media, the critical and cultural analysis of media, and the craft of writing for the media. They receive hands-on training in filming, editing, directing, producing, and writing for a range of media forms, including films, television, animation, soundtracks, audiovisual installations, video games, and new media. They examine media cultures around the world and throughout history to situate media production in social, economic, and political context. Honing their skills, students develop unique voices through media production and screenwriting, informed by a comprehensive, critical study of the culture and history of film, television, sound media, and digital media.

Courses in the Department of Radio/Television/Film are designed to achieve a combination of the following learning outcomes:

- Understand and describe the cultural, historical, aesthetic, economic, ethical, and political factors influencing contemporary media arts;
- Compare, critique, and assess diverse styles and traditions of media production across time and from multiple cultural and national contexts, drawing upon multiple theoretical and methodological approaches;
- Demonstrate competency in writing and creating media in multiple styles, genres, and modes of production;
- Create original media works that demonstrate a distinctive artistic voice;
- Integrate skills in writing, storytelling, production, and analysis to develop innovative and original approaches to research and practice in media.

## Courses

**RTVF 190-0 Media Construction (1 Unit)** Introduces the core components of media-idea, image, sound, and sequence- with the technical fundamentals involved in shooting and editing video. Students work with SLR and digital video cameras and with Photoshop and Final Cut Pro editing software, completing four projects in different genres during the quarter. Prerequisite for all upper-level production courses. Required for majors; typically taken in first year.

**RTVF 202-0 First-Year Topics Seminar (1 Unit)** Beginning seminar focused around a special topic of media analysis, history, or theory. Students will learn research, analytic, and writing skills while focusing on issues relevant to film, media and/or digital arts and culture. *SOC First-Year Seminar*

**RTVF 220-0 Analyzing Media Texts (1 Unit)** Introduction to the study of the moving image. Basic elements of style across media including film, television, and interactive media. Focus on close analysis of texts to find significance. Prerequisite for upper level courses in the department. Required for majors; typically taken in first year. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 260-0 Foundations of Screenwriting (1 Unit)** Introduction to writing for the screen (film, television, and/or computer). Structure, character, dialogue, format, voice, scope, pace, context. Lecture/workshop. Prerequisite for upper-level writing courses in the department.

**RTVF 298-0 Studies in Media Topics (1 Unit)** Theoretical or practical or both; emphasis on evolving trends.

**RTVF 310-0 Television History (1 Unit)** Political, cultural, social, and industrial history of television, from the classic network era to the post-network contemporary period of media convergence. Exploration of programs as well as major events and shifts in television history. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline*

**RTVF 312-1 History of Film I (1 Unit)** International survey of motion pictures as a distinctive medium of expression from its prehistory to the present. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**RTVF 312-2 History of Film II (1 Unit)** International survey of motion pictures as a distinctive medium of expression from its prehistory to the present. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 313-1 Doc Film History & Criticism (1 Unit)**

Survey of the schools, styles, and purposes of documentary film as a unique form of artistic expression and sociopolitical persuasion.

*Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 313-2 Documentary Film & Video (1 Unit)**

Contemporary work and issues in documentary film and video.

*Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 314-0 History of the Recording Industry (1 Unit)**

Exploration of the history of the recording industry from the invention of the phonograph in 1877 to recent developments in digital audio.

**RTVF 315-0 Audio Drama (1 Unit)**

Introduction to masterpieces of audio and radio drama in three historical periods: classic American (1937-54); mid-century British (1954-1974) and contemporary global traditions.

**RTVF 316-0 Media and Cultural Theory (1 Unit)**

Introduction to the critical analysis of film, television, and other popular media by surveying influential theories of media, culture, and power.

**RTVF 321-0 Radio/Tv/Film Authorship (1 Unit)**

Idea of authorship in the media and an examination of different uses of author theory related to the work of particular artists.

*Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 322-0 Radio/Television/Film Genre (1 Unit)**

Concept of genre in the media, with reference to popular American forms.

*Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 325-0 Film, Media & Gender (1 Unit)**

Explores issues of gender in film and media. Introduces students to major debates and theories regarding gender and sexuality in the media.

**RTVF 326-0 Film & TV Criticism (1 Unit)**

Contemporary critical methods applied to film and/or television. Students read literature on critical methods and analysis and write critical analyses of films and television programs.

*Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**RTVF 330-0 Culture Industries (1 Unit)**

Overview of business and social organization of film and television industry. Introduction to how media industries produce cultural products for local, national, and transnational audiences.

**RTVF 341-0 Technological Innovations (1 Unit)**

How technology develops and is assimilated into mass media.

**RTVF 345-0 History of Hollywood Cinema (1 Unit)**

Overview of the development of the classical Hollywood cinema, with particular emphasis on the 1920s through the early 1960s. Explores the relationship between industry practices and aesthetic features of classical narrative film genres.

**RTVF 351-0 National Cinema (1 Unit)**

Historical aspects of cinema in a culture outside the United States or a social/cultural/intellectual movement within cinema's general evolution.

**RTVF 353-0 Film, Media, and Globalization (1 Unit)**

Explores theories of media's role in the globalization of cultures. Examines transnational production, marketing, and reception of film, television, and/or digital media.

**RTVF 358-0 Topics in Improv (1 Unit)**

In-depth study and practice of improv techniques and aesthetics. Sample topics include Intro to Improv, Improvising Characters, Writing and Performing Stand-up, Writing with Improv, Improvising the Text-based Collaborative Show, Improvised Comedy Web Series.

**RTVF 360-0 Topics in Media Writing (1 Unit)**

Various approaches to screenwriting, emphasizing different modes and genres, such as the short film, the feature film, screenplays based on preexisting material, the teen film, interactive computer scenarios. May be repeated for credit, depending on the change in topic.

Prerequisite: RTVF 260-0.

**RTVF 363-0 Writing the TV Pilot (1 Unit)**

Students will learn the craft of writing a television pilot in this small, workshop-based course.

Prerequisite: RTVF 260-0.

**RTVF 364-0 Writing the Feature (1 Unit)**

Students will learn the craft of writing a feature film in this small, workshop-based course.

Prerequisite: RTVF 260-0.

**RTVF 365-0 Writing the Adaptation (1 Unit)**

Students will learn the craft of writing an adaptation in this small, workshop-based course.

Prerequisite: RTVF 260-0.

**RTVF 368-1 Introduction to Acting for the Screen (1 Unit)**

Foundational concerns and practices for screen acting. Scene analysis, rehearsal, staging and camera space, casting, editing for performance. Creating and portraying characters for most effective capture by the camera. Film directing techniques as related to the actor. Required introductory course for the Acting for Screen module sequence. Prerequisites : RTVF 190-0 and either THEATRE 171-0 or THEATRE 273-1.

**RTVF 368-2 Advanced Acting for Screen (1 Unit)**

A retrospective critique of curricular and extracurricular performance work in the Acting for Screen module intended for seniors and other students about to graduate. Course will involve continued advanced scene work, as well as an evaluation of performer's range and capabilities as they apply to film and television industries, and the student's professional self-presentation through a self-edited actor reel and resume. Prerequisites: RTVF 368-1/THEATRE 376 and at least one approved Acting for Screen module elective.

**RTVF 369-0 Topics in Acting for the Screen (1 Unit)**

Production-based courses on a range of practices and methods in acting for screen. May be repeated as topic varies. Counts as elective for the Acting for Screen module. Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 370-0 Topics in Pre-Production (1 Unit)**

In-depth study of preproduction film, video, and media techniques and aesthetics. Sample topics include storyboarding, producing, and motion graphics.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 372-0 Editing (1 Unit)**

The technique and art of editing for film. Topics include editing for continuity, controlling pace and rhythm, and editing nonlinear narratives.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 373-0 Topics in Sound (1 Unit)**

In-depth study of sound techniques and aesthetics.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 374-0 Topics in Cinematography (1 Unit)**

In-depth study of cinematography techniques and aesthetics.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 376-0 Topics in Interactive Media (1 Unit)**

Exploration of the techniques and aesthetics of interactivity using various media.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 377-0 Topics in Non-fiction Media (1 Unit)**

In-depth study of nonfiction media techniques and aesthetics.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 378-0 Topics in Post-Production (1 Unit)**

In-depth study of postproduction film, video, and media techniques and aesthetics. Sample topics include color correction, special-effects cinematography, and finishing.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 379-0 Topics in Film/Video/Audio Production (1 Unit)**

In-depth study and practice of one area of film, video, or television. May be taken more than once for credit, depending on changes in topic.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 380-0 Cinematography - Film (1 Unit)**

Techniques, aesthetics, and technologies of lighting for cinema using film and film cameras.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 381-0 Cinematography - Digital (1 Unit)**

Techniques, aesthetics, and technologies of lighting and digital camera skills.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 383-0 Introduction to Sound Production (1 Unit)**

Introduction to the theories and principles of basic sound production. Demos, lectures, readings, screenings, and exercises cover all basics of sound recording technology.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 384-0 Introduction to Sound Postproduction (1 Unit)**

Introduction to the theories and principles of basic sound production. Demos, lectures, readings, screenings, and exercises cover all basics of sound recording technology.

Prerequisite: RTVF 383-0.

**RTVF 389-0 Practicum in RTVF Research (1 Unit)** Collaboration with a faculty member on design and execution of a media research project. Students learn how to construct and complete a research project and document results. Requires a paper or other form of work product as determined by the faculty member.

**RTVF 390-0 Topics in Directing (1 Unit)**

Single-camera dramatic directing, including visualization and breakdown of scripts, camera blocking, and working with actors.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 392-0 Documentary Production (1 Unit)**

Students examine documentary practices and produce their own shorts.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 393-0 2D Computer Animation (1 Unit)**

Animation techniques in the 2-D sphere and incorporation of visual design principles.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 394-0 Experimental Media Production (1 Unit)**

Creation of an experimental work as a linear film or video, an interactive website, an installation, a game, or a multidisciplinary performance.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 395-0 Computer Animation: 3D (1 Unit)**

The fundamental concepts and techniques of 3-D computer modeling and animation. Use of concepts acquired in camera-based production techniques to create a rendered animation.

Prerequisite: RTVF 190-0.

**RTVF 397-1 Advanced Directing I (1 Unit)** Two-quarter sequence for students creating advanced artistic production, with critique of work throughout the production and postproduction process;

conceptual resources offered as needed. Students may work in any genre (documentary, narrative, experimental) and any medium. Admission based on portfolio of previous media work and proposal for project, including script and budget.

**RTVF 397-2 Advanced Directing II (1 Unit)** Two-quarter sequence for students creating advanced artistic production, with critique of work throughout the production and postproduction process; conceptual resources offered as needed. Students may work in any genre (documentary, narrative, experimental) and any medium. Admission based on portfolio of previous media work and proposal for project, including script and budget.

**RTVF 398-0 Symposium: Issues in RTVF (1 Unit)**

Special issues and topics in the analysis of radio, television, film, and popular culture.

**RTVF 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit)** Prerequisite: consent of undergraduate dean after submission of petition.