

**RUTGERS**  
**FILMMAKING**  
**CENTER**

Undergraduate BFA Handbook

updated 8/2022

# Rutgers Filmmaking Center

## B.F.A. Filmmaking Handbook

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## Introduction

We are excited to welcome you to the Rutgers Filmmaking program. Over the next four years, we will embark on a journey of learning, collaboration, friendship, and community. We are looking forward to the upcoming year and doing everything we can to make sure your first year is as meaningful and successful as possible. Besides getting a solid grounding in technical production and film theory, you will have a chance to take risks, develop your unique artistic voice, refine your sensibilities, and formulate complex responses to the world around you. You will also have the chance to expand your learning through the expansive liberal arts courses offered at Rutgers University.

Please take a moment to review this handbook carefully, there is a lot of valuable information gathered here.

We hope you will take advantage of our proximity to New York City and Philadelphia. These two cities are steeped in a rich history, with internationally acclaimed cinemas, theatres, museums, and galleries. The vision and energy that emanate from these cities and institutions are for you to absorb, critique, and redefine, raising your awareness on the road to becoming exceptional artists and filmmakers.

As the dawn of your four-year journey into filmmaking begins, we want you to remember we are here not just to give you a way forward with regards to theory and practice, but also to enrich and cultivate your creative mind. All the faculty and staff at the Rutgers Filmmaking Center are here to support you during the time we are fortunate to share with you, and we look forward to fostering your professional exploration.

All the best,

Patrick Stettner  
Chair  
Rutgers Filmmaking Center

## General Information

### Registration

First-year students are guided in their registration for classes in their initial semester at Mason Gross. Once enrolled, students must register themselves for each new semester via the web registration system ([webreg.rutgers.edu](http://webreg.rutgers.edu)). This site includes links to the Course Schedule Planner and Degree Navigator. Degree Navigator tracks the courses you have already taken, credits applied, and the courses/credits you still need to complete for graduation.

A list of courses offered in the upcoming semester is available on the Registrar's Office webpage ([registrar.rutgers.edu](http://registrar.rutgers.edu)). If you are unsure about which courses you need, contact Amee Pollack, the Senior Advisor and Student Success Counselor, at [apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu). If changes are made to courses for which you are registered for, you will receive a notification via email. Therefore, it is important that you check your Rutgers email account, as well as any personal accounts, and read all emails from the university or program office. Be sure to include your Rutgers ID number, class year, and major on all email communications; this makes us more efficient in answering queries from you.

### Degree Requirements Audits

We encourage you to monitor your own status with regard to your degree requirements. In order to avoid difficulty in the final year, in addition to using Degree Navigator, please schedule regular audits with Amee Pollack, Senior Advisor and Student Success Counselor, at [apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu). The summer before the final year of study, the Senior Advisor will review each student's transcript and complete a list of all remaining requirements for graduation.

### Adding and Dropping Classes

Please check the Registrar's Office webpage ([registrar.rutgers.edu](http://registrar.rutgers.edu)) for exact dates each year.

### Academic Warning Notices

During the middle of each semester, instructors normally report to the university registrar names of any students who are making unsatisfactory progress in a course. Warning notices are then emailed to a student's Rutgers email account. Instructors may also personally warn a student, or post a warning list. Consult with your instructor immediately if you receive a warning. Students are strongly recommended to schedule a meeting with their advisor.

## Appealing a Grade

Students wishing to file a complaint about a course grade, or a grade received for a particular piece of work in a course, should first attempt to resolve the matter through discussion with the instructor. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved between student and instructor, the student may specify in writing the basis for the complaint and request a review by the departmental chair.

Complaints about grades for work completed while a course is in progress must be submitted in writing to the departmental chair no later than two weeks after notification of the grade. Complaints about final course grades must be submitted in writing to the departmental chair no later than four weeks after the end of the exam period for that semester.

A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the department should do so in writing to the Mason Gross Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Success. Written notification of the action will be sent to the students within four weeks of receipt of the appeal, excluding weeks in which classes are not in regular session.

## Film Screening Attendance

As a part of core classes, Intro to Film Production II, Intermediate Film Production I & II, Advanced Directing I & II, and the Senior Thesis I & II –you will be required to attend screenings connected with these core classes. They are listed as the second meeting time on your schedule.

First year and transfer students **do not attend** the weekly screenings **during your first semester**. Rather, all students registered for Intro to Film Production I will attend Friday workshops and Interplay (not for transfer students) in lieu of screenings. Upon your second semester, all students will begin to attend these film screenings.

Attendance is required. Although final grading is at the discretion of the professor, the following protocol will be administered regarding grade penalty when screenings are missed:

# of Screenings Missed	Grade Deduction	Example
3 or more	½ a Letter Grade	A → B+
5	Full letter grade	A → B

6 or more	Automatic "C"	A→C
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Students in the program as a third & fourth year, Junior & Senior, only have to attend 6 screenings each semester. 6 for the Fall semester and 6 for the Spring semester. See the chart below for Juniors & Seniors in the film program.

# of Screenings Missed	Grade Deduction	Example
1	½ a Letter Grade	A → B+
2	Full letter grade	A → B
3	Automatic "C"	A→C

*Please note, for all students: arriving late (5 minutes or more) to screenings, if this happens more than two times, can result in an additional 'missed screening'.*

## Internship & Screening Conflict

Please refer to our Internship Handbook for information on Internships and how to get them approved for credit towards your degree.

Juniors & Seniors that are participating in an internship during the Fall or Spring semester that requires them to miss the Friday screening will have to do the following:

- Show proof of internship placement by emailing the Department Administrator the following:
  - Contract – must include hours
  - Internship Description
  - Proof that you are receiving credit for it
- Attend 3 screenings
- Write 3 one-page summaries for any of the films that were shown during the semester at the VFS. Most films are online or can be purchased.

If students are unable to attend **ANY** Friday screenings, they must then:

- Write 6 one-page summaries of films showcased during the Visiting Filmmaker series.
- Most films can be purchased online. Again, students will write a total of SIX – one-page – summaries.
- These summaries must be submitted to their core course instructor at the end of the semester before the last day of class. That is either your Advanced Directing

or Senior Thesis instructor.

If students fail to follow any of these protocols, they will automatically be penalized for missing the screenings, which can result in grade deductions or even failure of the course.

## Production Credit

RFC requires BFA students to add a final title card to all exercises and all films produced at the program for public screenings. The following should read as follows for 3 seconds:

Produced at the Rutgers Filmmaking Center  
Copyright 20XX (year produced)  
Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey

This is especially a requirement for any film shown outside of Rutgers University.

## RFC Undergraduate Degree

RFC offers undergraduate studies leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree. The Bachelor of Fine Arts is offered only to students enrolled in the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

## BFA Program

The Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) program in Filmmaking offers comprehensive technical and artistic training in a supportive environment. Students collaborate, take risks, and build upon a solid foundation in fiction, experimental and documentary filmmaking to create original films. Students receive hands-on training in direction, cinematography, screenwriting, producing, editing, and post-production technique, while delving into filmmaking history, theory, and criticism.

**The BFA requires a total of 122 credits for graduation**, from a combination of Liberal Arts (university mandated/33 credits) and Filmmaking (89 credits) courses. Work towards the BFA degree starts with foundation courses, and the intermediate and advanced courses provide specific training in the area of concentration. Studies culminate in the final year with a BFA Thesis project. Please note that some requirements may differ for various BFA cohorts.



## **BFA Filmmaking Requirements (89 credits)**

As part of the work toward the BFA degree students must complete the following: 16 Film Production Courses (64 credits), 1 Interplay (1 credit), 4 Cinema Studies Courses (12 credits), 2 Visual Arts courses (8 credits), 1 Intro to Art History 106 course (3 credits) and 7 Free Film Electives (21 credits). *(NB\*Art History (3 credits) and 2 Cinema Studies Courses (6 Credits) double dip with your Liberal Arts.)*

There are several online courses via Rutgers Arts Online. Please note that many of these online courses include material that will be taught in required film classes. Online film courses do not necessarily count towards your BFA Degree.

## **BFA Liberal Arts Requirements (33 credits)**

In addition to the 88 credits of Filmmaking requirements, students must complete 33 total credits in Liberal Arts, including the following Natural Sciences (6), Arts & Humanities (12), Social Sciences & History (6), Writing & Communication (3), Literature (3), and Quantitative/Technical Skills (3). Please remember that all Arts & Humanities Liberal Arts Requirements are also part of the BFA Film requirements.

## **BFA Electives (21 credits)**

BFA Filmmaking students will also have the opportunity to choose seven 3 credit elective courses from across the university to fulfill their 122 credits for graduation.

## **Independent Study**

Students can only take up to 9 credits in an independent study or internship.

## **Transfer Students**

Transfer students enrolled in both Intro to Film Production, and Intermediate Film Production may not use the same material to present in both classes. This is not allowed. Instructors of both courses are made aware of transfer students that are enrolled and share the content of their work.

## **Duplication of Film Projects**

Students cannot use the same projects/work for different courses in the film program. For example, you cannot use your Cinematography project for Intro to Film Production II. This could result in severe penalty grade.

## Internships

All internship placements must go through a department review before the student is allowed to start. Students are required to complete 120 logged hours at internship placement along with weekly journal entries and a final paper. The supervisor must sign off on all documents. All documents will be reviewed via Canvas. **Students are not allowed to intern at a location where they previously worked.**

## Rutgers University Requirements in English

Every student at Rutgers must demonstrate basic competency in English and Mathematics. All students entering from high school must take placement tests in both subjects to determine their placement.

At Rutgers, every student must pass English 101: Expository Writing, which is generally taken in the second semester of the first year. If a student is placed at a lower level in English composition, all courses preliminary to English 101 should be taken in sequence immediately upon entering the program. This also applies to remedial English courses, which must be completed satisfactorily before other academic coursework may begin. Failure to take and pass the required courses in English will be regarded as a failure to progress in the BFA program and may result in dismissal.

## Byrne First-Year Seminar Program

The program connects first-year students to the research life of the University from the beginning of their studies at Rutgers. The seminars have no letter grades and no formal exams. These seminars are small, one-credit courses, limited to 20 students. Seminars typically meet for 10 weeks, starting in the second week of fall and spring semester. Students may take one seminar each semester. The Byrne Seminars are open only to Freshmen. For details, see <http://byrneseminars.rutgers.edu/>.

## BFA Review & Required Showcase Submission

### Freshman Check-in

Toward the end of the first semester is the Freshman Check-in, a 1-on-1 meeting with a faculty member. This is meant to give students additional support and is not a formal assessment. This is about artistic and academic development, students can express concerns, and seek guidance as they acclimate to the rigor of the Filmmaking program.

## **Artistic Reviews**

At regular intervals, the division reviews each student's work to determine artistic/technical achievement and commitment to the professional program warrants retention in the program. Students in the Rutgers Filmmaking Center receive a program review in the spring of their sophomore and junior years. The sophomore review enables the faculty to review and recommend each qualified student for the Advanced Directing class. The faculty's junior review initiates the third-year student's plan for senior BFA thesis coursework.

### **Sophomore Review**

Students have a mandatory faculty review at the end of the Spring semester of the Sophomore year. Passing the sophomore review is a requirement of the BFA program and a prerequisite for the junior review.

Students upload a selection of their best work from the full range of freshman and sophomore courses they have taken at Mason Gross, plus any other independently produced films they have completed during their time at Rutgers. Faculty members assess whether the student is making work at an appropriate level. Students who lack sufficient work, show poor engagement with their studies, or demonstrate poor quality work will not pass the review at that time and will be re-reviewed the following fall semester.

### **Junior Review**

At the end of the spring semester of your junior year, BFA Filmmaking Program students who have passed the sophomore reviews have a mandatory artistic review with faculty in their declared concentration. Students upload a selection of their best work from the second semester of their sophomore year, and junior year and prepare a short statement that defines their plans for their Thesis.

Passing the junior review is a requirement of the BFA program and a prerequisite for graduation. This is an opportunity for the faculty to assess the progress and to get a sense of the ideas and skills students need to focus on during their senior year. Faculty will assess whether students are making work at an appropriate level. Once students have passed the Junior Review, they can register for their Senior year and Thesis. Those students who lack sufficient work, show poor engagement with their studies, or have poor quality work will not pass the junior Review at this time and will be re-reviewed in the Fall semester. Students who need to be re-reviewed can register for their Thesis but will not receive credit until they have passed the re-review.

## Senior Thesis Review

Several weeks before the end of the spring semester of the senior year, the BFA Filmmaking Program students will have a mandatory thesis artistic review with a faculty committee. Students will be responsible for uploading a cut of their thesis film, usually one week before their committee meeting. Students will participate in a critique session with the faculty committee regarding their film.

Participating in this Thesis review is a requirement of the BFA program and a prerequisite for graduation.

## Artistic Probation and Dismissal

### General Principles

A student's progress in the BFA Filmmaking program will be measured by the level of achievement in film classes. Artistic achievement will be indicated by the instructor's grade and the reports by faculty members at the mandatory reviews. The following criteria will not necessarily result in probation or dismissal, but should be regarded as the adequate justification for such action.

### Artistic Probation

A student may be placed on probation for any of the following reasons:

- A grade of C or worse in any semester in a film course
- Not passing Sophomore Review.
- Not passing Junior Review.
- Not following the Filmmaking curriculum.

Students placed on artistic probation are notified in writing and must satisfy divisional requirements to remain in the program. Students whose dismissal has been recommended by the Faculty Committee for artistic reasons (deficiency in artistic production and/or quality of the work) may request transfer to other programs of the Mason Gross School of the Arts or any other college at Rutgers whose admission requirements they meet. No guarantee of admission to another division or program can be given to students who have received an artistic dismissal. Still, Student Advisement and Success will assist students in completing the necessary transfer forms.

Artistic dismissal is subject to appeal by the Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Success.

## **Artistic Dismissal**

A student may be dismissed from the Filmmaking Program for any of the following reasons:

- A grade of D or F in any semester, or grades of C or worse in any two semesters
- Failure to pass a Sophomore Re-review
- Failure to pass a Junior Re-review

Except in extreme circumstances, a student will not be dismissed without first being placed on probation for one semester. After a probationary semester, a performance that would justify further probation will normally result in dismissal. Artistic Probation and Dismissal can be appealed to the Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Success of Mason Gross.

## **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

Policies concerning academic performance are established for all students in Mason Gross and can be found in the Mason Gross section of the Rutgers Undergraduate Catalog. Each student's academic progress is monitored. When issues arise, they are resolved by the Mason Gross Scholastic Standing Committee. The specific guidelines for deciding when a student should be placed on probation or dismissed are as follows:

### **Academic Probation**

Any student, including first-year students, whose term average is lower than 1.8, is placed on academic probation. Students are notified in writing of probationary status before the start of the next term. While on probation, students must maintain full-time academic status and must complete successfully at least 12 credits per term.

### **Academic Dismissal**

There are no automatic dismissals for first-term, first-year students. Students ordinarily are dismissed when their term average is 1.4 or less regardless of their cumulative grade-point average or preceding term average. Students may also be dismissed if their term average falls below the probationary level in any three terms or in any two consecutive terms or if their cumulative grade-point average at any time is less than the following: first year, 1.6; sophomore year, 1.8, junior year; 2.0; senior year, 2.0.

## Appeal

Students placed on probationary status may appeal in writing to the Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Success within one week of the date of the letter of probation. Grounds for appeal include technical errors and/or changes in temporary grades. Letters of appeal must state the reasons for the appeal and must be written by the student, although advice from others may be sought in formulating the appeal. Students dismissed from the Mason Gross School of the Arts by the school's Scholastic Standing Committee may appeal by letter to the Office of the Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Success within one week of notification of the decision. Grounds for appeal include technical error, extenuating circumstances, and/or additional information not previously available to the committee. The letter of appeal must state the reasons for the appeal and must be written by the student, although students may seek advice from others while formulating the appeal.

The Scholastic Standing Committee may determine that the student has presented evidence not previously available and sufficient to require the Scholastic Standing Committee to reconsider the case, or that insufficient evidence has been presented to justify further consideration of the appeal. At the student and/or committee's request, a student may be present at the meeting of reconsideration, unaccompanied by an adviser or attorney, to amplify their appeal request.

The committee may reinstate the student, with or without conditions, or may deny the appeal. Some conditions for reinstatement include a term average of 2.0 or better or no incomplete grades. The committee also may define future courses to be completed. The committee notifies the student of its decision and any conditions within one week of reconsideration. Action by the committee is final.

## Rutgers Filmmaking Covid-19 On-campus Protocols

Face coverings will still be required in all teaching spaces (classrooms, screening rooms, cinemas, lecture halls, seminar rooms, etc.), computer labs, studios, libraries, and clinical facilities. Additionally, face coverings will continue to be required in student-staff and student-faculty meeting spaces. All members of the community should have a mask in their possession at all times on campus. Social distancing is highly recommended when possible, including in stairwells and elevators. And we highly encourage everyone to keep their masks on in all our indoor spaces.

If you show any symptoms of COVID-19, STAY HOME and contact Student Health (students) or occupational health (faculty/staff) as well as your primary care physician. Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 can experience a wide range of symptoms, from

mild to severe. Symptoms typically appear 2-10 days after exposure to the virus. Details on COVID-19 symptoms can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Fully vaccinated individuals exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 but remain asymptomatic are not required to quarantine and may continue to visit campus.

If you have COVID symptoms, contact Student Health at 848-932-7402, (or Occupational Health for faculty and staff), the after-hours nurse line at 800-890-5882, or the all campuses COVID-19 information hotline at 848-445-3033 as well as your primary care physician or local urgent care center to determine if you need to be tested.

If any Rutgers student, faculty, or staff member test positive for COVID-19, they will need to contact Student Health (students) or Occupational Health (faculty/staff) who will determine if there were any close contacts that will need to be notified. A Rutgers Contact Tracer will then notify anyone that may have been exposed through close contact and instruct them on testing and quarantine, if necessary. The CDC defines exposure as a minimum of 15 minutes within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19, without appropriate protection.

Anyone that tests positive for COVID-19 is only required to notify anyone that is considered a close contact. Due to privacy issues, the department cannot notify others that a particular person has tested positive for COVID-19, though other precautions may be taken.

To maintain a safe and healthy community, we ask that if anyone tests positive for COVID-19 to notify department administration. If you notify the department, only the necessary personnel will be notified to help keep our department safe and healthy. The department will not notify close contacts but will advise any positive individuals to communicate that information through Student Health or Occupational Health.

## **Rutgers Filmmaking Covid-19 production protocols**

Rutgers Filmmaking cares about your safety and the safety of others. Whether using our equipment and facilities onsite or shooting on location, we ask that you follow the following safety protocols:

- Practice social distancing of at least 6 feet, when possible.
- Wear a mask when in indoor spaces.
- If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or have had a possible COVID-19 exposure, get tested.

-If you, or anyone in your household, has tested positive for COVID-19, stay at home and self-quarantine for at least five days.

Following these protocols will in no way eliminate the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus, but they will immensely increase your safety and the safety of your peers.

### **Production protocols for working with a crew/cast**

All persons on set should wear a mask and practice social distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible. When not performing on camera, actors should also wear masks and maintain social distance. Here are some additional recommendations:

- Limit to a 10-hour shoot day from crew call to camera wrap.
- Create a closed set with absolutely no visitors.
- Encourage all cast and crew members to be tested and confirm negative COVID status before arriving on set.
- Provide food and beverages in pre-packaged containers and discourage sharing between individuals.
- Encourage your cast and crew to self-drive to set. If this is not possible, ensure masks are worn, air-conditioning is on, or windows are cracked while sharing a ride.
- Cast and crew members are entitled to withdraw from projects anytime due to health and safety concerns.

### **Nudity in Student Projects**

Students must get written consent from all performers if nudity will be performed in their film projects. And depending on the project and the scene involved (please consult with faculty) - students should hire an 'intimacy coordinator.' These 'intimacy coordinators' are well-versed in inappropriate coercion issues and ensure that the actors involved are comfortable with the process of shooting.

### **BFA Showcases & New Lens Film Festival**

*Student participation in the annual showcases is a RFC requirement. Not submitting a film for the showcase can result in a 20% grade reduction for directing class and student being placed on Artistic probation.*



## Fall Semester - Showcases

At the end of the Fall Semester, Sophomores and Juniors must submit one of their films to be part of the BFA Showcase, which we will host on an evening in the last week of the Fall semester; we will have one BFA Showcase for Sophomores and one for Juniors.

## Spring Semester - Showcases

At the end of the Spring semester, Freshmen, Transfers, and Seniors must submit one of their films to be part of the BFA Showcase, which we will host on an evening in the last week of the Spring semester. We will have one BFA Showcase for Freshmen & Transfers combined and one for Seniors.

## Spring Semester – New Lens Film Festival

At the end of the Spring semester, we will host a faculty-judged and selected New Lens Film Festival open to all BFA students in the film program and the Rutgers University community.

## Facilities & Equipment Resources

For up-to-date protocols for accessing RFC equipment and facilities, visit: <http://film.rutgers.edu>

Rutgers Filmmaking cares about your safety and the safety of others. First and foremost, know that you are not required to use Rutgers Filmmaking equipment, facilities, or otherwise be onsite to fulfill the requirements of this or any other Rutgers Filmmaking course.

The use of Rutgers Filmmaking equipment and facilities is entirely voluntary. However, whether using our equipment and facilities onsite or shooting on location to complete a class assignment, you must agree to adhere to the COVID-19 safety protocols listed on the website.

Following these protocols will in no way eliminate the risk of contacting the COVID-19 virus, but they will increase your safety and the safety of your peers. Anyone found not adhering to these protocols could lose facility and equipment privileges.

## Computer Labs

All Civic Square Building computer labs are available to students when classes are not in session. Log in with your NETID and password. In addition, CSB 325B is a dedicated computer lab solely for Rutgers Filmmaking students. Swipe in any time using your RUID. Appointments are not necessary.

## Post-Production Suites

Post-production suites include the Color Correction Suites (CSB 303) and the Sound Mix Suite (CSB 310). These rooms are a resource for juniors and seniors only. They are available for 6-hour blocks by reservation. Students interested in reserving suites need to first submit an [RFC FACILITIES CONTRACT](#). After doing so, they will gain access to the reservation system.

### Color Correction Suite (CSB 303)

This room is equipped with an iMac Pro, DaVinci Resolve control panel, calibrated OLED TV, and 5.1 monitoring.

### Surround Sound Suite (CSB 310)

This room is equipped with an iMac, Artist Mix panel, calibrated 5.1 Monitoring, LED TV, and Pro Tools Ultimate.

*\*Available only to students in Advanced Sound or who have passed a comprehensive room tutorial.*

## Studio Reservations

The Civic Square Building has studios available to students for use in film shoots and other production needs necessary to complete coursework. The LARGE FILM STUDIO is located in CSB 326. A smaller classroom CRIT ROOM is located in CSB 327. The small FOLEY / STUDIO ROOM is located in CSB 308. Students wishing to use these studios must make a request at least two business days in advance using the [RFC STUDIO REQUEST FORM](#).

## Equipment Rental

Filmmaking BFA students have access to Equipment Checkout (EQC) as a resource to rent sound, lighting, and camera equipment free of charge. This equipment is solely for BFA coursework, not professional or personal projects. As students move through the program, they progressively access more advanced gear each year. Before a student can reserve equipment, they must submit an [EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT CONTRACT](#).

Advance reservations are required and must be submitted via the [EQUIPMENT REQUEST FORM](#). Additionally, students must sign up for timed equipment pickup and return appointments. Drop-ins are not permitted.

For questions about equipment-related issues, please email the EQC team at: [rfcmgsa@gmail.com](mailto:rfcmgsa@gmail.com) or call (848) 932-2938.

## Safety Practices During Production

Safety is paramount, and given today's tools, skills, and technology, there is never a reason to put anyone's safety at risk. No member of the cast or crew should ever be put in jeopardy for a shot. Anyone who is responsible for a dangerous situation and does nothing to correct it is subject by law to a charge of criminal negligence. We consider any place where shooting occurs a "set," whether it involves one or two persons or dozens of cast and crew members. Regardless of their size, working conditions on film sets change from day to day, especially when working on location. The best way to prevent accidents is to be aware of the work environment and the equipment being used.

Call sheets are the best way to communicate safety information to the cast and crew. In the case of unusual circumstances such as stunts and special effects, safety meetings should be held with all the involved parties.

All members of the cast and crew must feel free to discuss any concerns they have regarding their safety and/or potential hazard. This can be achieved by encouraging everyone to voice their concerns or ask questions regarding issues of safety.

For larger shoots, the director should designate a crew member to be the safety officer. For smaller shoots, the safety officer may be the director themselves.

Regardless, the safety officer plays a critical role in establishing and executing safe practices during production.

## INSURANCE

Rutgers Filmmaking recommends that students, especially those checking out advanced equipment, purchase insurance to offset any personal costs incurred due to equipment damage, theft, or loss. Gallagher Insurance has created personal property policies catered specifically to Rutgers Filmmaking that automatically include \$25,000 in coverage for film equipment for as little as \$138 per year. For more info visit: [www.collegestudentinsurance.com](http://www.collegestudentinsurance.com) and use the drop-down menu to select "Rutgers University - Filmmaking BFA"

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:

1. If someone is injured, seek immediate medical attention by calling 911.
2. If someone is injured on campus, contact Rutgers University Public Safety: (732) 932-7211

## GENERAL RULES AND TOOLS TO HELP ASSURE SAFETY

Everyone can help ensure that the set is safe by encouraging and following general safety guidelines.

- **Encourage communication and teamwork.** Ask everyone to have their eyes and ears open and watch out for each other. Each person working on a project has to speak up if there is something they feel is unsafe or potentially hazardous.
- **Prepare.** Strategize your plans in advance as much as possible, and communicate them to your collaborators.
  - Visit locations in advance of the shoot, bringing key collaborators with you to assess safety, access, schedule, and shooting strategies. This should include identifying parking areas, restrooms, and shade and rest locations.
  - Hold planning meetings with collaborators before the shoot to review your intentions, plans, and concerns.
  - Share information. Gather and share everyone's email and phone number. Call sheets are the best way to communicate safety information to the cast and crew. A call sheet is a comprehensive list of the locations, scenes, cast, and crew for each day of production and is distributed prior to that day's shooting. Call sheets include maps to each location, call times for cast and crew, and pertinent safety information.

- Identify nearby emergency facilities, such as a hospital, fire station, and police station. Include physical addresses and phone numbers on any call sheet or schedule you give to your collaborators.
- **Safety meetings should be held** for the entire crew upon arrival at each new location. Require additional safety meetings for all stunts, special effects, water, or other potentially hazardous activity. In the case of unusual circumstances such as stunts and special effects, safety meetings should be held with all the involved parties. Normally, that would include the director, the first assistant director, the director of photography, the stunt coordinator, the stunt performers, and any special effects crew involved.
- **Work reasonable hours.** Avoid work days longer than 12 hours, including commute time to and from the location.
- **Firearms.** All firearms are prohibited from all shoots, including those that require blanks. Any use of 'non-guns' or plastic 'prop guns' must have safety orange barrel tips displayed at all times.
- **Be aware of your surroundings.** When you arrive at a new location, begin with a walk-through of the area to see if there is any damage or danger. Keep an eye on your crew and lend a hand as needed. Throughout the work day, keep the use of electronic devices to a minimum to avoid distraction and do not use earbuds or headphones.
- **Demand good housekeeping on the set.** Walkways and work areas should be kept free of equipment and debris.
- **Require "no smoking" policies on set.** Provide designated smoking areas with butt cans. Be sure to empty and take away these cans at the end of the shoot.
- **Have firefighting equipment** (extinguishers, sprinklers, hoses, etc.) on set and make sure they are all in working order.
- **Practice safe cable management.** Make sure that cables are routed properly and cover them with mats, gaffer's tape, and/or crossovers in traffic areas.
- **Do not allow pranks or roughhousing on the set.** Distracting crew members from their jobs could result in injury
- **Ensure the crew is informed of weather and shooting conditions,** including clothing (heat, cold, rain, snow, etc.). Provide protective equipment such as safety glasses or hearing protection when needed. Be aware of general location safety concerns such as extreme temperature or precipitation, unsafe terrain, nasty critters, and vegetation.

## SAFETY OFFICER

Designating a crew person to be a safety officer is crucial to creating a safe production environment on set. The safety officer will be the person who is responsible for making

call sheets, who will be on set every day, who knows the project and its cast, crew, and locations intimately, who communicates well, and who is respected among the cast and crew.

The roles of the safety officer include, but are not limited to:

- Attending each location and tech scout to note the safety concerns. They will then include this information on call sheets or communicate it to the crew member making the call sheets.
- Lead safety meetings at the start of each production day.
- Assist communication between departments. Does everyone know the day's schedule and plan?
- Note every cast and crew member's dietary needs and allergens to communicate to catering and craft services.
- Provide and make accessible water, food, and medical supplies during production days if a caterer or craft services are not on the crew.

## **SAFETY MEETINGS**

The best way to address safety concerns is to conduct safety meetings. Whether you are on location or on the soundstage, a safety meeting should be called to share information and address all safety concerns.

When to Call a Safety Meeting:

- The beginning of the day on the first day of shooting.
- When there is a new location or circumstance.
- When the current plans change.
- When there are stunts. Everyone on set must be aware of the stunt and how it will be performed and covered.
- When there are prop weapons. Everyone must be made aware of any prop weapon on the set.
- When there is new or specialized equipment being used.
- When there are any special effects. Everyone on set must be made aware of the special effect and how it will be implemented and shot.
- When the shoot is on or in water. All protocol and safety issues must be discussed.
- When there is a significant change in the number of cast and crew working on the production.

### Potential Agenda for Safety Meetings:

- Discuss the rules that apply to that specific location.
- Discuss the day's action and establish staging areas.
- Identify any potential hazards and make the cast and crew aware of them.
- Discuss the power requirements at the location and electrical hazards.
- Establish safe work areas and off-limits areas.
- Loading/unloading and Parking at the location
- Provide guidelines for working with any safety concerns.
- Discuss emergency procedures. Point out all fire exits and fire extinguishers to discuss evacuation plans in the event of a fire or other catastrophe.
- Create a meeting place outside the building in case of emergency.
- Let the cast and crew know that if they have any safety concerns, they should feel comfortable voicing those concerns.
- Let the cast and crew know that they need to report any injury immediately to the safety officer.
- Point out sprinkler systems to the crew and make sure lights are not set up near sprinkler heads.
- Discuss company moves taking place during the day.
- At the end of the meeting, ask if anyone has any questions or concerns.

### **FIRE LANES AND FIRE EXITS**

Means of escape in case of fire on set should be plainly identified and kept clear at all times. Built sets, props, and equipment should not obstruct the statutory fire signage used within studios, stages, or theaters. If necessary, temporary signage should be provided.

### **CLOTHING AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

Even in a school or student setting, the set is a workplace. Clothing should be appropriate for the type of work being done. Jewelry, loose sleeves, exposed shirt tails, or other

loose clothing should not be worn on set or around machinery where it might become entangled. Long hair should be tied back.

### **FOOT PROTECTION**

Appropriate shoes should be worn at all times, particularly where there is a risk of injury from hot surfaces, electricity, corrosive materials, hazardous substances, falling objects, or heavy equipment and machinery. Flip-flops, high heels, or sandals are never appropriate on-set foot wear, and no one should ever be barefoot on set. If an on-camera performer must be barefoot, keep this to a minimum, requiring shoes during run-throughs and any off-camera time.

## **HAND PROTECTION**

Wear gloves when the work involves exposure to cuts, burns, chemical agents, or electrical hazards capable of causing injury or impairments. Crew members who are working on set with construction and decoration, or those working with grip and lighting equipment, should arrive on set with a pair of durable work gloves. Do not wear hand protection where there is a danger of it becoming entangled in moving machinery. Hand protection should be appropriate for the type of exposure (e.g. porous, where exposure is to cuts; non-porous [or non-porous over porous], where exposure is to harmful chemicals). Dispose of gloves that have been exposed to hazards, allergens, toxins or any material that may cause dermatitis, inflammation, burns or other damaging skin conditions.

## **EYE AND FACE PROTECTION**

Wear eye and face protection when working in locations where there is a risk of eye or face injuries such as punctures, abrasions or burns as a result of contact with flying particles, hazardous substances, projections or harmful light. When creating wind effects, be sure to check the location for any debris that may be picked up by the fans. Provide goggles and masks to the crew when appropriate.

## **HEARING PROTECTION**

Provide hearing protection when the cast or crew will be exposed to excessive noise.

## **FALLING**

Falls are the single most common injury-producing accident on film sets. Whether it is tumbling from an overhead grid, slipping off a scaffold, toppling off a ladder, or tripping over a cable, the result can range from minor to fatal. Often these falls are the result of haste and/or not utilizing proper safety measures such as fall restraint systems, nets, and guardrails.

The most important thing you can do to prevent falling accidents is to be aware of the tempo of the set. Have a sense of when things are starting to get hectic and out of control. And when they are – slow the pace down. Haste makes waste. If you see the crew starting to ignore safety concerns in order to move faster, you have a moral obligation to put the brakes on.

## **LADDERS**

It is frequently necessary to use ladders to build or decorate sets and to hang lights or grip equipment. When using ladders, follow these guidelines:

- Inspect all ladders before each use for broken or missing rungs, steps, split side rails, or other defects.



- Never use a metal ladder near electrical wires.
- Never place ladders in doorways unless protected by barricades or guards.
- Never climb above the second rung from the top on a stepladder or above the third rung from the top on a straight ladder.
- Do not reach farther than arm's length on any ladder; move the ladder when necessary.
- Straight ladders should extend at least 3 feet above the top landing support point.
- Straight ladders should be tied down as close to the top landing support point as possible.
- Always use a 4 to 1 ratio (1 foot away for every 4 feet of ladder height) when using a straight ladder.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending and maintain a firm grip.
- If you carry tools, use a tool belt or a bucket attached to a hand line to pull equipment up and lower it down.

## **ROLLING LADDERS**

It is frequently necessary to use rolling ladders to build or decorate sets and to hang lights or grip equipment. When using rolling ladders, follow these guidelines:

- Never move the ladder while on it.
- Whenever possible, face the ladder and maintain three points of contact while climbing up or down.
- Avoid overreaching (the limit is one arm length on either side, without leaning the body past the side rails.)
- Only one person should be on a ladder at a time, with a second person as a spotter.
- Reposition the ladder to reach new areas. Never overreach, push, pull or "walk" the ladder while working on it.
- When using rolling "A" frame trestle ladders, never extend them beyond twenty feet or the manufacturer's recommendation.
- Always lock the wheels to prevent any rolling or instability.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Many possible health safety issues that can impact film production are included here. However, this does not purport to cover every possible contingency. There may well be situations that affect health and safety that have not been included. These safety protocols are intended to be adapted to other situations that may arise but are not explicitly stated herein. The Rutgers Filmmaking Center reserves the right to make modifications to the procedures and policies as necessary without advance notice.

## RFC Faculty contact

Faculty	Email
Allen, Kevin T.	<a href="mailto:kallen@mgsa.rutgers.edu">kallen@mgsa.rutgers.edu</a>
Haine, Charles	<a href="mailto:charleshaine@gmail.com">charleshaine@gmail.com</a>
Key, Caroline	<a href="mailto:ckey@mgsa.rutgers.edu">ckey@mgsa.rutgers.edu</a>
Lennon, Thomas	<a href="mailto:tlennon@mgsa.rutgers.edu">tlennon@mgsa.rutgers.edu</a>
Lessovitz, Danielle	<a href="mailto:dlessovitz@mgsa.rutgers.edu">dlessovitz@mgsa.rutgers.edu</a>
McCarroll, Chris	<a href="mailto:chris.mccarroll@gmail.com">chris.mccarroll@gmail.com</a>
Silbert, Ryan	<a href="mailto:ryan@originstory.com">ryan@originstory.com</a>
Snyder, Shawn	<a href="mailto:shawn.snyder@rutgers.edu">shawn.snyder@rutgers.edu</a>
Smith, Alan	<a href="mailto:alanmcintyresmith@gmail.com">alanmcintyresmith@gmail.com</a>
Stettner, Patrick	<a href="mailto:pstettner@mgsa.rutgers.edu">pstettner@mgsa.rutgers.edu</a>
Volerich, Adam	<a href="mailto:adamvole@gmail.com">adamvole@gmail.com</a>
Whilden, Shane	<a href="mailto:whilden@rutgers.edu">whilden@rutgers.edu</a>

## Rutgers Filmmaking Center Faculty & Staff

### **Stettner, Patrick**

Chair

CSB 322 – (848) 932-5294

[pstettner@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:pstettner@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

### **Lennon, Thomas**

Director, Documentary Film Lab

CSB 325C – (848) 932-5274

[tlennon@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:tlennon@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

### **Key, Caroline**

Instructor

CSB-307 - (848) 932-5274

[ckey@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:ckey@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

### **Lessovitz, Danielle**

Instructor

CSB-307 - (848) 932-5274

[dlessovitz@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:dlessovitz@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

### **Snyder, Shawn**

Asst. Professor

CSB-316 - (848) 932-5274

[shawn.snyder@rutgers.edu](mailto:shawn.snyder@rutgers.edu)

### **Allen, Kevin T.**

Technical Production Coordinator

CSB 312 - [kallen@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:kallen@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

### **Jacqueline Steadman**

Department Administrator

CSB 313 - (848) 932-5245

[Jacqueline.Steadman@rutgers.edu](mailto:Jacqueline.Steadman@rutgers.edu)

### **Amea Pollack**

Senior Advisor and Student Success Counselor

CSB 127 - (848) 932-5222

[apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:apollack@mgsa.rutgers.edu)

## Unit Computing Manager

Shane Whilden

CSB 238 - 848-932-5204 - whilden@rutgers.edu

### BFA in Film Four-Year Plan (122 credits)

*All students should consult the Senior Advisor for advisement throughout their course of study; this plan is meant as a guide only. Degree Navigator is also a tool to track requirements on your own. If you are a transfer student or if you need to take another English class prior to Expository Writing I, your course plan will vary somewhat from this plan*

	<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Spring</u></b>
Year 1	211:191 Intro to FP I ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 175 Intro to Film I ( <b>CS</b> ) 211: 205 Screenwriting ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 081:122 4D Fundamentals (4) Liberal arts or AH 106: Post 1400s Interplay - interdisciplinary course (1)	192 Intro to FP II ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 175 Intro to Film II ( <b>CS</b> ) 120 Cinematography( <b>Film Core</b> ) 355:101 Expos (liberal arts) Liberal arts
	<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Spring</u></b>
Year 2	211:291 Intermed FP I ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 211 film elective #1 081 A&D elective Liberal Arts or AH 106: Post 1400s elective	211:292 Intermed FP II ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 211 film elective #2 111 Sound ( <b>Film Core</b> ) Liberal arts elective
	<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Spring</u></b>
Year 3	391 Adv Dir I ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 231 Image Post Prod ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 175 Cinema Studies (CS) (liberal arts) 211 film elective #4	392 Adv Dir II ( <b>Film Core</b> ) 211 film elect #3 Liberal arts elective
	<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Spring</u></b>
Year 4	491 Senior Thesis I 211 film elective #4 175 CS (Liberal arts) elective	492 Senior Thesis II Liberal arts elective elective

Notes: Film students may only study abroad in the summer because of the incremental nature of the film curriculum. Film students may not double up on Advanced Directing I and Senior Thesis. Please remember that you must graduate with a total of **122** credits or over

CODES	Department/subject
211	Film
175	Cinema Studies (CS)
081	Art & Design (A&D)
355	English

## Helpful Websites

RU COVID-19 Updates

[coronavirus.rutgers.edu](https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu)

Academic Calendar

[scheduling.rutgers.edu/academic.htm](https://scheduling.rutgers.edu/academic.htm)

Degree Navigator

[nbdn.rutgers.edu](https://nbdn.rutgers.edu)

Directions to campus

[maps.rutgers.edu](https://maps.rutgers.edu)

Financial Aid

[studentaid.rutgers.edu](https://studentaid.rutgers.edu)

Health Services–Counseling (CAPS)

[health.rutgers.edu](https://health.rutgers.edu)

Learning Centers

[rlc.rutgers.edu](https://rlc.rutgers.edu)

Libraries

[libraries.rutgers.edu](https://libraries.rutgers.edu)

Mason Gross School of the Arts

[masongross.rutgers.edu](https://masongross.rutgers.edu)

Parking

[rudots.rutgers.edu](https://rudots.rutgers.edu)

Registrar

[nbregistrar.rutgers.edu](https://nbregistrar.rutgers.edu)

RU Connection ID Cards

[ruconnection.rutgers.edu](https://ruconnection.rutgers.edu)

RU-info

[ruinfo.rutgers.edu](https://ruinfo.rutgers.edu)

RU General Search

[search.rutgers.edu](https://search.rutgers.edu)

Schedule of Classes	<a href="https://acs.rutgers.edu/soc">acs.rutgers.edu/soc</a>
Student Employment	<a href="https://studentwork.rutgers.edu">studentwork.rutgers.edu</a>
Web Registration (WebReg)	<a href="https://webreg.rutgers.edu">webreg.rutgers.edu</a>
Writing Centers	<a href="https://wp.rutgers.edu">wp.rutgers.edu</a>