



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAI'I®  
MĀNOA

Office of the Provost

July 15, 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Debora Halbert  
Vice President for Academic Strategy

VIA: Michael Bruno [REDACTED]  
Provost

FROM: Laura E. Lyons [REDACTED]  
Interim Vice Provost for Academic Excellence

SUBJECT: Authorization to Plan for MFA in Cinematic Arts

Attached please find an Authorization to Plan (ATP) for a Master of Fine Arts in Cinematic Arts from the College of Arts, Language, and Letters. I believe you will find this program is responsive to state and industry needs, and positively contributes to the systemwide array of ACM credentials. Per the current review procedures, the proposal will be presented to the UH Officers for discussion and review, and then taken to the Council of Chief Academic Officers (CCAO).

I recommend review by the UH officers and CCAO, and would greatly appreciate your written feedback and suggested revisions for the program. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Director Quinn at [agoodwin@hawaii.edu](mailto:agoodwin@hawaii.edu)

Attachment

c: David Lassner, President  
April Nozomi Quinn, Director of Program Development and Review

Authorization to Plan  
ACM: The School of Cinematic Arts: Master of Fine Arts  
College of Arts, Languages & Letters

**1. Campus, school/college and department/division proposing the new program**

ACM: The School of Cinematic Arts, College of Arts, Languages & Letters.

**2. Degree Proposed and Program Objectives**

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Cinematic Arts with two tracks: (1) Digital Cinema Production, and (2) Animation Production. The MFA is the terminal degree for art practitioners and top graduate schools in filmmaking such as the University of Southern California, New York University, The American Film Institute and The University of California at Los Angeles offer an MFA. For each track, a minimum of 60 credits will be required, of which 30 credits can be at the 300 or 400 level.

**There are a few core graduate courses that all MFA students will be required to take. We will also make the program requirements in each track as flexible as possible by allowing elective courses. The degree will incorporate the use of stacked courses, which we can do with classes such as ACM 485 (Seminar in Creative Media), an upper division Critical Studies course. We can also integrate upper-level and graduate classes from other UHM programs in order to ground the program in a critical understanding of film, Hawaiian aesthetics and culture. Possible courses include HWST 620 ('Ike Pono-Visual/Cultural Interpretations), ES 486 (Peoples of Hawai'i), AMST 445 (Racism American Culture & Film/Media), and ART 496 (Topics in the History of Cinema).**

In addition, we intend to create a BAM Program Pathway to recruit candidates from the current ACM-BA tracks at UHM, as well as a Pathway for students coming from UH West Oahu (UHWO) who may not yet have the core production courses required to advance in this degree. This Pathway will include 300 and 400 level courses which will also count towards their degree.

The degree and objectives of all tracks align with the Advanced Degree Institutional Learning Objectives. The MFA program in Cinematic Arts will:

- (1) Prepare skilled, professional, creative artists and critical thinkers who will be able to join and contribute significantly to the growing film and television workforce in Hawai'i.
- (2) Further develop the cinematic skills and storytelling abilities of Native Hawaiian and local filmmakers so that they can create new and engaging stories about Hawai'i. Through the art of cinematic communication, these filmmakers will alter and expand upon the mainstream vision of the islands and their peoples.
- (3) Provide professional opportunities to students enrolled in the program. As MFA students engage in these opportunities, they will understand how to operate within the world of filmmaking. They will learn about the professional and ethical expectations of members of this field of study and practice.

### 3. Alignment with Campus and UH Mission and Strategic Plan

The creation of an MFA in Cinematic Arts aligns with the mission and vision of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and the UH system. The MFA allows local students to pursue an advanced degree in Cinematic Arts. The MFA will be dedicated to fulfilling the university’s mission of academic and research excellence through a comprehensive, cutting-edge curriculum and hands-on experience as well as student engagement with the film community. The diverse array of students who pursue this degree will strive to improve the quality of life with innovation and collaboration in the Cinematic Arts. In furtherance of the university’s goal of being a *Hawaiian Place of Learning*, the MFA in Cinematic Arts will nurture the explorations of multicultural media forms rooted in personal experience and cultural awareness with emphasis on Hawai‘i, as well as the Pacific and Asia.

The MFA’s curriculum will foster excellence in creative work by advancing the students’ storytelling skills and artistic vision, while furthering their expertise in cinematography, editing, sound design, producing, screenwriting, animation, and directing. The MFA will emphasize industry standard professionalism, which benefits students entering the film and television industries, creating or working in independent production companies, or seeking employment in any other media-related industry in Hawai‘i. We hope that the MFA degree will also enhance student success by building future relationships with Hollywood studio professionals who may film in Hawai‘i. Such relationships will provide MFA students with on-set experiences as they complete their degrees. These experiences can lead to future industry employment. We also anticipate qualified students from across Hawai‘i to apply to pursue their MFA in Cinematic Arts.

The MFA program will at times request the use of the ACM building at UHWO. UH President Lassner and UHWO Chancellor Benham have strongly encouraged ACM: The School of Cinematic Arts to have the proposed MFA program utilize UHWO ACM's extensive facilities.

### 4. Justification of Need

Currently, there are no MFA programs in Cinematic Arts anywhere in the UH system. The MFA program in Cinematic Arts will thus provide a unique opportunity to residents of Hawai‘i for advanced education and training in advanced digital storytelling and media production, which will position them for both introductory and advanced employment within the growing film and television production industries here on Hawai‘i, with potential for substantial cultural and economic impact. In this regard, the MFA program will empower students to create films that represent Hawai‘i from a local perspective and challenge mainstream misrepresentations of the islands and its peoples.

The social and financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hawai‘i further illuminated the challenges of an economy primarily based on a few major industries, most notably the heavy reliance on tourism. According to the State of Hawaii's Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT), “(m)ore recently, development interest has focused on biotechnology, digital media and creative industries”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://dbedt.Hawai'i.gov/economic/reports\\_studies/emerging-industries/](http://dbedt.Hawai'i.gov/economic/reports_studies/emerging-industries/)

While many production companies choose Hawai‘i as a filming location, they often bring their staff/crews with them. Hawai‘i can develop a robust population of media professionals who will be fully competent to work in essential positions in the film industry: producing, directing, cinematography, editing, sound design and animation. Graduates should also be able to find employment in local industries that rely more on media to run their businesses, or they can create their own start-ups.

Attaining a graduate degree in cinematic arts can lead to a variety of industry jobs and salaries whose entry level and earning potential will more quickly surpass those who have earned an undergraduate degree or enter the industry with no experience. The graduate degree will also lead to the potential of getting jobs in both “above the line” and “below the line” positions. The “line” literally refers to where a particular position is placed on the budget line of a production. “Above the line” jobs are directly related to the initial creative and development process of film and television productions these include the screenwriters, executive producers, producers, casting directors and some cinematographers who are well known for their artistry and skill within the industry. These are fixed amount and well-paid careers and are individually negotiated with productions.

Below the line careers are equally lucrative and the minimum earnings are negotiated through the representative unions. These positions include the assistant directors, line producers, directors of photography, art directors, special effects and visual effects crews, editors and sound mixers/designers. The following are examples of the minimum salary for sample careers. Rates depend on the types of productions independent productions have a lower rate while major studios must pay a higher rate. Most external productions that come to Hawaii are from major studios.

Minimum Rates of Jobs with in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians and Allied Crafts (IATSE/MPTAAC)  
[https://www.icg600.com/Portals/0/PDFs%20%28Public%29/LBA%202022%20WAGE%20SCHEDULE%2001\\_31\\_23\\_YEAR%20ONE.pdf](https://www.icg600.com/Portals/0/PDFs%20%28Public%29/LBA%202022%20WAGE%20SCHEDULE%2001_31_23_YEAR%20ONE.pdf)

#### IATSE/MPTAAC Career Example Minimum Starting Salaries

Directors of Photography \$62.02hr.

Sound Mixers: \$63.33hr.

Art Directors \$3439.45 weekly

#### Minimum Rates for Picture and Sound Editors

On a high budget film, cable or streaming production, the minimum an editor can be paid is \$4095.84; assistant editor is paid \$2289.18 per week, the minimum a sound editor or foley artist is paid is \$2773.12 per week. Animation editors make a minimum of \$2317.20. Motion Picture Editors Guild contracted salaries can be located here: <https://www.editorsguild.com/Wages-and-Contracts>

#### Minimum Rates: Directors

Directors working on theatrical productions are guaranteed at minimum ten weeks of employment per project and can earn \$21,675 a week. Directors working on an hour-long network prime time television programs can make \$50,764 per episode for a 15-day shooting period. The complete Directors Guild of America Minimum Salary Schedule 2022-2023 can be

found here. <https://www.dga.org/-/media/Files/Contracts/Rate-Cards-2022-thru-2023/DGA230203Rates2022thru2023.pdf>

Minimum Rates: Positions Within Animation

Most animators are brought on at an apprentice rate of 6-12 months of \$1648.80 per week  
Storyboard Artists \$1961.12-\$7477.33 per week depending on project length; shorts to features  
CGI Animators/Modelers \$1419.60-\$2064.00 per week  
Production Technical Directors \$1419.60-\$2064.00 per week

Animation Guild Rates: <https://animationguild.org/contracts-wages/> and  
<https://animationguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2021-24-Local-839-WAGES-v02.pdf>

**5. Demand for the program**

- a. **Student Demand:** In a Spring 2022 survey taken of alumni and current students, 82.8 % of the respondents said that they would apply to an MFA offered by UH Mānoa. The remaining 9.2% were undecided about future plans, but had a positive response to the idea. As there is as noted, no MFA programs in Cinematic Arts in the UH system, students who wish to attain this degree are currently forced to move to the Mainland to attend very expensive film schools, which are not affordable for many if not most Hawai'i residents. Here are some sample comments from the survey.

*“Additional courses in screenwriting and production would be excellent. I have been hoping that a Master’s degree would be offered!! Thanks for reaching out. Also, more networking/alumni interaction would be terrific since it is a small community here on Oahu, and there’s every indication there will be increasing production from Hollywood projects in the next coming years. Thank you.”* **ACM Alumni**

*“To have the option to continue my education in film at home would be amazing, and something I would SERIOUSLY be interested in. Right now the only option for an MFA in film is to go to the mainland, which is a pretty hefty investment. Ideally I’d want a graduate program at home to offer us more opportunities to practice our craft in a specific role, work in more advanced facilities, and prepare us even more for finding work in the local film industry here. I know it’s not going to happen all at once though, and even just having the option to continue my education here would be an excellent start!”* **Current ACM student**

*“I would definitely be interested however my major is not in the ACM department. I would still love to attend the graduate program if it’s possible to do that with a degree from a different major, provided I complete the fundamental classes required for the graduate program.”* **Current UH Student**

*“I think this MFA program is essential to students here in Hawai'i wanting to be a part of the local community without going too far and distance places. This is especially important since we're between America and Asia, and the rise in popularity in Anime, Video games, and the potential partnerships that ACM and the students can have in supporting the program. Indigenous animation and storytelling can help to pave a way to show audiences a new look on Hawai'i and the reality of living here. . .”* **Current ACM Student**

- b. **Demand for Services/Employer Demand:** According to the most recently available DBEDT report “Hawai'i's Targeted and Emerging Industries,” “Film, TV, Video Production /Distribution” was one of the eight industries that was considered high performing—high

performing in the report being defined as exhibiting “positive job growth combined with a job growth rate that was higher than the nation for the same activity.” The average annual job growth rate for this industry from 2009-2019 was 5.8%.<sup>2</sup>

The most recent Creative Industries Report (2020) reports the Hawai‘i’s Film and Television Industry metrics as follows: \$405 million in estimated production expenditures generated an estimated \$707 million of economic impact, \$43.7 million in estimated tax revenues and total job impacts of 3,303 jobs.<sup>3</sup> This expanding job market in Film, TV, Video Production/Distribution will provide numerous employment opportunities for MFA students with a degree in Cinematic Arts.

#### 6. **Non-Duplication of Programs**

There is no MFA program in Cinematic Arts production in the UH system.

#### 7. **New Resources**

Personnel: Due to a large number of undergraduate majors (about 300), all ACM faculty (N=12) are currently fully engaged in undergraduate education. ACM is among the fastest-growing undergraduate majors at Mānoa. While core faculty will be required to teach in both the undergraduate and graduate programs, to launch the proposed two-track MFA program, the department may need additional faculty positions as well as part-time lecturers. CALL will provide additional lecturers to cover essential core and elective classes. However, it is premature to estimate accurate lecturer needs without having a fully-developed MFA curriculum. If the present ATP is approved, the Department and the Dean’s office will revisit the lecturer needs when the MFA requirements and a three-year academic plan are fully developed.

Equipment: One-time start-up funds (estimate: \$98,221) for additional cameras, sound equipment, and lighting for MFA students will also be necessary (see the appendix for details). CALL's current budget would not be able to absorb these costs, and we would therefore seek assistance in funding them. While UHWO's facilities are purpose-built and well equipped with built-in infrastructure, additional lighting and sound equipment are needed in order to sustain the proposed MFA program. Much of the needed equipment is available at UHM but they cannot simultaneously serve students on two campuses.

#### 8. **List of potential risks**

ACM: The School of Cinematic Arts has monitored the production of films since its inception. Risk Management is routine for the BA program and will continue for the MFA. Whenever students are out in the field shooting film, there is the chance of injury or damage to the equipment. ACM Mānoa provides an annually-updated production and safety manual for all undergraduate students which will also serve the MFA. Based on industry best practices these manuals are reviewed in classes before any production and serve as a required guide to students. For example, there are limits to locations where students are able to film, based on their experience behind the camera. Faculty also review shot lists and storyboards, and therefore assess any potential dangers before the students go into the field. Students and everyone who participates in our undergraduate student productions sign waivers that were reviewed and

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<sup>2</sup> [https://files.Hawai'i.gov/dbedt/economic/data\\_reports/emerging-industries/Hawai'i\\_Targeted\\_Emerging\\_Industries\\_2020\\_Update\\_Report.pdf](https://files.Hawai'i.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/emerging-industries/Hawai'i_Targeted_Emerging_Industries_2020_Update_Report.pdf) /

<sup>3</sup> [https://files.Hawai'i.gov/dbedt/economic/data\\_reports/Hawai'i-creative-report/HI\\_Creative\\_Ind\\_2019.pdf](https://files.Hawai'i.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/Hawai'i-creative-report/HI_Creative_Ind_2019.pdf)

approved by legal counsel at UH; this practice will carry over to the MFA. At this time, the department provides insurance for the equipment for our undergraduate program and the MFA would be included within this insurance coverage.

## 9. Timeline





Spring 2023: Submission of Authorization to Plan

Spring 2024: Submission of Final MFA Proposal and new course proposals

Fall 2025: Inaugural MFA class in Cinematic Arts.

### Signature Page

*Signature indicates that the person has reviewed the ATP and supports the proposed program. Signature page is to be completed prior to submission to the VPAPP.*

	Christine Acham	4/18/2023
Department/Division Chair	Print Name	Date
	Peter Arnade	4/18/2023
Dean	Print Name	Date
	Julienne K. Maeda	06.05.2023
Dean Graduate Division	Print Name	Date
	Laura E. Lyons	06.07.23
Interim Vice Provost for Academic Excellence	Print Name	Date
Provost	Print Name	Date

## Appendix: Estimated equipment cost

PACKAGE 1	Equipment	Cost per		
		QTY	Item	Total
<b>CAMERAS</b>				
	Sony PXW-FX9K XDCAM 6K Full-Frame Camera System with 28-135mm f/4 G OSS Lens	1	\$13 498 00	\$13 498 00
<b>CAMERA SUPPORT</b>				
	Sachtler Carrying Strap for Flowtech Tripod	1	\$45 00	\$45 00
	Sachtler System FSB 8 Mk Sideload and 75/2 Carbon Fiber Tripod Legs with Mid-Level Spreader and Bag	1	\$2 835 00	\$2 835 00
<b>CAMERA ACCESSORIES</b>				
	Sony 120GB G Series XQD Memory Card	2	\$150 00	\$300 00
	Sony MRW-G1 CFexpress Type B/XQD Memory Card Reader	1	\$100 00	\$100 00
	Rokinon Xeen 24 50 85mm T1 5 Lenses for Sony E Mount	1	\$4 485 00	\$4 485 00
	Tiltaing FF-T06 Mini Follow Focus	1	\$79 00	\$79 00
	Tilta Dual 18650 Battery Holder for Nucleus Nano Motor	1	\$55 00	\$55 00
	Tilta Nucleus-Nano Wireless Focus Control System	1	\$281 00	\$281 00
	SHAPE Bundle Rig and Follow Focus Pro Kit for Sony FX9 Camera	1	\$1157 00	\$1157 00
	SHAPE Baseplate with 15mm Rods for Sony FX9	1	\$148 00	\$148 00
	SmallHD Cine 13 UHD 4K High-Bright Monitor	1	\$4 699 00	\$4 699 00
	Pearstone 25' SD Video Cable - BNC to BNC	1	\$20 00	\$20 00
<b>MICROPHONES</b>				
	Sennheiser MKH 416-P48U3 Moisture-Resistant Shotgun Microphone	1	\$999 00	\$999 00
	Rode NTG2 Shotgun Microphone	1	\$269 00	\$269 00
	K-Tek Airo Booming ntro Kit 1	1	\$250 00	\$250 00
	Lectrosonics L Series ZS-LRLT Camera-Mount Wireless Omni Lavalier Microphone System (B1 537 to 607 MHz)	4	\$3 150 00	\$12 600 00
<b>MIXERS/RECORDERS</b>				
	Sound Devices 833 8-Channel / 12-Track Multitrack Field Recorder	1	\$5 250 00	\$5 250 00
	K-Tek Stingray Small-X Audio Bag for Sound Devices 833 888 and 633 Recorders (Orange interior)	1	\$400 00	\$400 00
<b>GRIP</b>				
	Dana Dolly Portable Dolly System Rental Kit with Universal Track Ends	1	\$1 285 00	\$1 285 00
	Dana Dolly Portable Aluminum Pipe Kit (6-Pack 39")	1	\$600 00	\$600 00
	Matthews Low Boy Double Riser Combo Stand	2	\$289 00	\$578 00
	Matthews Hollywood C-Stand Grip Arm Kit (Silver 10 5')	20	\$230 00	\$4 600 00
	mpact Filled Saddle Sandbag (15 lb Black)	25	\$22 00	\$550 00



	Matthews Set of Four Apple Boxes	4	\$159 00	\$636 00
	mpact 2" Steel Spring A-Clamp	10	\$3 00	\$30 00
<b>LIGHTS/ELECTRIC</b>				
	ARR Orbiter Combination Set	2	\$10 401 00	\$20 802 00
	ARR SkyPanel S30-C LED Softlight (Blue/Silver Edison)	2	\$4 900 00	\$9 800 00
	Kino Flo FreeStyle T44 LED 1-Light Kit with Soft Case (4')	2	\$3455 00	\$6 910 00
<b>FLAGS/REFLECTORS/FRAMES</b>				
	Matthews Floppy Top Hinge (40 x 40")	4	\$155 00	\$620 00
	Matthews 48"x48" Silk	4	\$145 00	\$580 00
	Matthews Scrim and Flag Kit (18 x 24" / 24 x 36")	2	\$1 832 00	\$3 664 00
	Raya 5-in-1 Collapsible Reflector Disc (42")	4	\$24 00	\$96 00



Tuesday, March 21, 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

**RE: Authorization to Plan  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
ACM The School of Cinematic Arts  
Master of Fine Arts College of Arts, Languages & Letters**

The University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (UHWO) supports this Authorization to Plan (ATP) and looks forward to working with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and The School of Cinematic Arts program faculty and staff to develop the Bachelor of Arts – Master of Fine Arts (BAMFA) pathways for our UH West O'ahu students who may seek to continue their educational development in an MFA program.

BA graduates from UHWO Creative Media may have the interest and requisite skills in either or both of these identified tracks included in the ATP: (1) Digital Cinema Production and (2) Animation Production. UH West O'ahu is also open to hosting MFA courses at the Academy for Creative Media Student Production Facility.

UH West O'ahu recognizes that nurturing the synergy of our academic programs with an emergent UH Mānoa MFA has the potential to produce combined possibilities that are much greater than if we operate as entirely separate entities. Students in our baccalaureate programs would stand to benefit from the opportunities afforded via a pathway relationship with the MFA proposed in this ATP.

  
Dr. Maenette Benham, Chancellor

Dr. Jeffrey Moniz, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs