



SCHOOL OF

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

3D Animator Advertisement Designer Advertising Director
Advertising Photographer Animator App Designer Art
Consultant Art Critic Art Dealer Art Director Art Educator
Art Historian Art School Director Art Therapist Artist Agent
Arts Administrator Arts and Cultural Planner Audio Engineer
Book Designer Book Illustrator Camera Operator Casting
Director Cinematographer Commercial Artist Concept Artist
Conservationist Copywriter Creative Director Curator Design
Entrepreneur Design Manager Design Researcher Digital
Illustrator Director of Photography Documentary Filmmaker
Elementary School Teacher Exhibition Designer Fashion
Photographer Film Director Forensic Photographer Editor
Special Effects Designer Film Producer Fine Artist Foley Artist
Food Photographer Food Stylist Gallery Manager Gallery
Owner Game Designer Graphic Designer Graphic Novelist
Illustrator High School Teacher Industrial Designer Landscape
Photographer Logo/Brandng Designer Magazine Layout
Designer Makeup Artist Marketing Director Motion Graphics
Designer Multimedia Artist Museum Curator Narrative
Filmmaker Packaging Designer Photo Retoucher Photo
Stylist Photographer Photojournalist Picture Framer Portrait
Photographer Printmaker Product Developer Production
Designer Prop Master Screen Writer Set Designer Sign Writer
Sketch Artist Social Media Artist Social Media Director Sound
Effect Artist Sound Technician Stock Photo Seller Story Board
Illustrator Storyteller Technical Writer Television Producer
Textile Designer UI/UX Designer Underwater Photographer
University Professor Video Camera Operator Video Director
Video Editor Video Game Designer Video Installation Artist
Virtual Reality Artist Web Content Producer Web Designer
Web Developer Website Manager Website Blogger Wedding
Photographer Wildlife Photographer YouTube Video Creator

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Kellie Swanson showing her 3D tricolor gum bichromate prints during class critique, 2017. Swanson is an alternative process photographer and artist based in Bozeman, Montana. She received a BA in Film and Photography from Montana State University in 2018. After taking time off to travel and ski, she has refocused her work on handmade fine art printing and sustainable, one-of-a-kind, artistic fashion. In her KSX clothing line, Swanson explores the relationship between nature, photography, handmade prints, and self-expression. To see more of her work follow her @ksx-art and kelliesswanson.com.

Fondest memory of SFP: My fondest memory from SFP has to be the long days and nights in the lab. I made some of my best, lifelong friends in that lab. I learned to love the process of creating in there. The most valuable lesson I learned in the program. To keep pushing creative boundaries. I am always trying hard to come up with something new. What you wish you would have known starting the degree: Take every class. You will miss the program when you're gone. What are you doing now? I am now in my second year of owning my own art business. I followed my dream to make alt process my full-time job. I use the cyanotype process to upcycle secondhand clothing. Starting this business and using my skills from the photography program have been the most rewarding and best decisions of my life. My degree turned into my full-time job and I could not more thankful for the skills I learned in college. My degree gave me the tools and confidence to turn my passion into success.

Message from Our Dean



Dean Adams, photo courtesy of Kelly Gorham, MSU University Communications

Welcome to the School of Film & Photography at Montana State University! We are looking forward to working with you as you pursue your future, whether in motion pictures, photography, or integrated lens-based media. Our engaging faculty and staff will help prepare you for your future as a creative thinker, image maker, storyteller, and interdisciplinary collaborator.

You will work with faculty who are known around the world as leaders and innovators in their fields. They will lead you through experiences integrating theory with history and both historical and contemporary practices, providing you with a broad and deep knowledge of your discipline.

In addition to outstanding staff and faculty, you will have access to state-of-the-art camera, computing, production, and printing equipment to make your work. You will have numerous opportunities to share your work, your perspectives, and your skills through exhibitions, screenings, and social media platforms.

Montana State University remains committed to providing a world-class educational experience for all our students. In photography classes you will learn special processes rarely found at other universities. In both film and photography, you will explore all aspects of image production, including lighting and professional practices.

If you choose to pursue film as your main area of study, you will work alongside experienced industry professionals as you explore fiction, non-fiction, experimental and science and natural history filmmaking. You will learn to work as an effective team member as you participate in production, post-production, direction, choreography, visual effects, sound design, lighting, screenwriting.

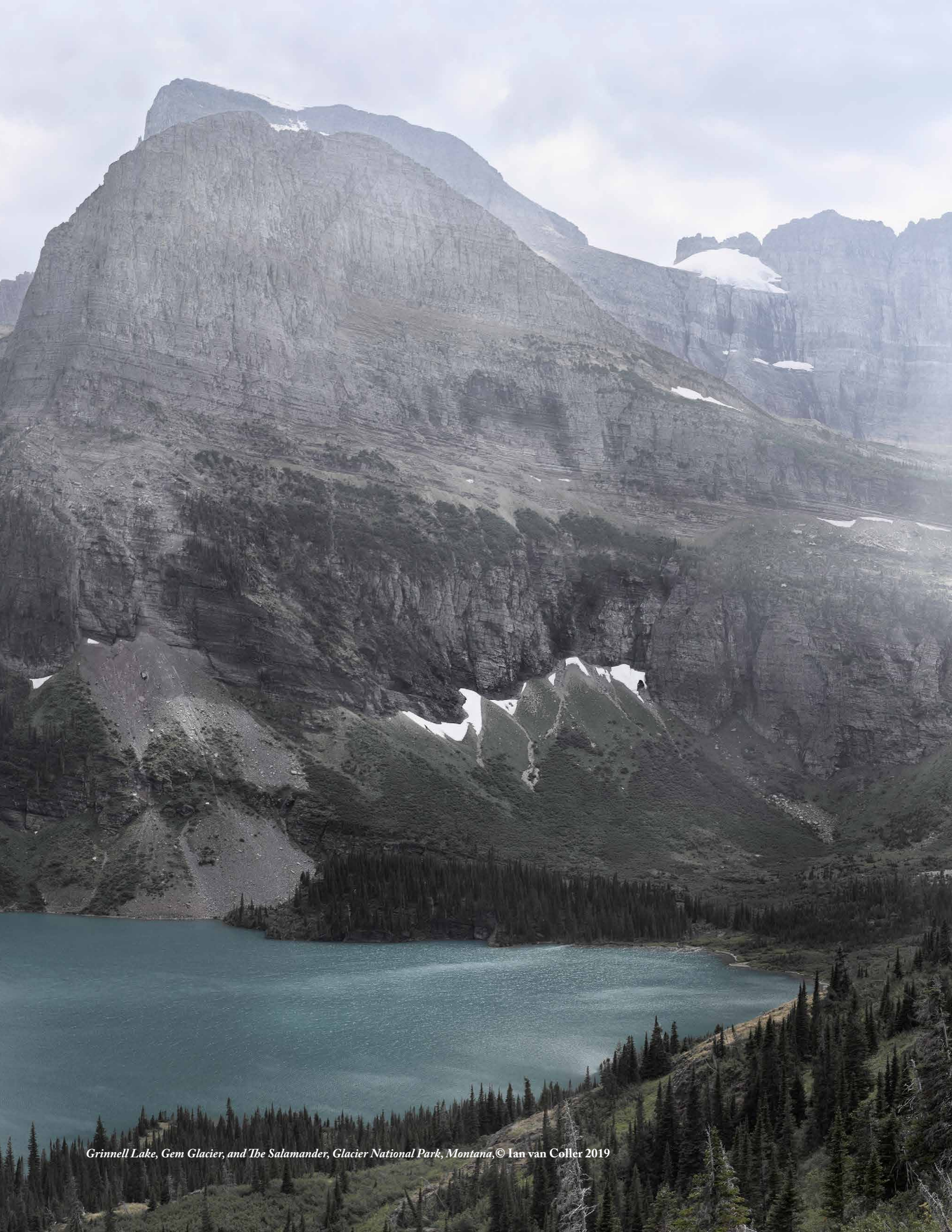
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is impacting our lives and careers in numerous ways. At MSU we are preparing students to work with AI, as well as ways to make creative work that distinguishes itself from AI. We also teach the ethics around working with AI.

In the School of Film & Photography, you will explore your creative vision and ambitions supported by connections to both local and global communities. You will immerse yourself in a welcoming community of scholars and creatives deeply interested in your success. Wherever your creative dreams may take you at Montana State University, we are excited to work with you and thank you for making us part of that special journey!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dean Adams'.

Dean Adams
Dean, College of Arts & Architecture
Montana State University



Grinnell Lake, Gem Glacier, and The Salamander, Glacier National Park, Montana, © Ian van Collier 2019

Message from Our Director



Welcome to the School of Film & Photography! As you consider applying to Montana State University it is important to find a program that fits your needs and passion. What sets us apart is we are more than just a degree—we are a community. From the mentors and friends you will meet, we provide a creative space of exploration with lifelong support.

The School of Film & Photography is the oldest and largest film and photography school in the Northwest, with more than sixty years of experience training young filmmakers and photographers for successful careers as media creators. We offer a Bachelor of Arts in Film and Photography, and an innovative interdisciplinary Bachelor of Fine Arts in Integrated Lens-based Media.

Our courses are taught using state-of-the-art equipment by a diverse faculty that includes award-winning filmmakers and photographers, all prominent scholars. Our students also benefit from a large, active alumni network that supports current students and recent graduates with internships and entry-level work opportunities.

What makes our undergraduate programs remarkable is our hands-on approach as soon as you start in the program. All freshmen in film and photo will have a camera in their hands their first term at MSU. We pride ourselves on offering a comprehensive course of study combining hands-on technical training, artistic exploration, professional development, and the study of media history and criticism. The scope and depth of our programs are what set this program and our students apart from the competition. With opportunities to work alongside faculty and use industry standard equipment, you will master the medium without breaking the bank to attend college. When you graduate from the School of Film & Photography, you will have the experience employers are looking for in this competitive market. Your degree will provide you with the skills to be a creative problem solver.



Jim Zimpel standing alongside his sculpture *Flourish*, Story Mill Community Park, Bozeman

If you have questions, please reach out. We are here for you as you consider your options. For more information about the School of Film & Photography, visit our website sfp.montana.edu. On our site you will find a virtual tour for a preview of what you will experience as a student. In addition, you can follow the School of Film & Photography on Instagram [@montanastate_filmphoto](https://www.instagram.com/montanastate_filmphoto).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JZ' with a long, sweeping underline.

Jim Zimpel (he/him/his)
Associate Dean | College of Arts & Architecture
Interim Director | School of Film & Photography
Associate Professor of Sculpture | School of Art
jimzimpel.com





Emilia Lane from the Montana State Rodeo Team runs on the straightaway during the Bobcat Preview Rodeo on Sunday, August 18, 2024. Photograph courtesy of Photography alumnus Jack Power who interned for MSU Athletics.

Our Mission

“As a diverse community of media professionals, artists and scholars, we are united by our understanding of the relevance of media in an increasingly inter-connected world, and by our commitment to prepare students to meet the future challenges of an expanding media environment as informed, culturally aware critical thinkers and professionally trained creative artists.

We challenge our students to develop their own voices as tomorrow’s leaders through a hands-on exploration of motion picture, photography, theatre and new media production.

We are committed to the principles that teaching, learning, and creating media and theatre are group activities that require teamwork and mutual respect and these values shape our interactions as an academic community.

As artists, scholars and media professionals living and working in the unique environment of Montana, we strive to enrich our local, national and international communities through the dissemination of our creative activities and scholarship.”

Est. 1893 as the state’s land-grant university, Montana State integrates education, creation of knowledge and art, and service to communities.



PROGRAMS OF STUDY



Film 499 students go out on location bringing their stories to life and pushing their filmmaking skills to the next level. On the production of *Cheyenne Creation Story*. Pictured from left to right: Nellie Whiteman, Anna Bouressa, and Maddison Whitaker-Barnett. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Gibson, FILM 499 student under instructor Alexa Alberda.



FILM





Set photographs from *ScienTTTs*, a film by Cat Dale, photographs by Marina Adelman

BA Film & Photography — Film Option 2026

FRESHMAN YR (9 cr)**

**WRIT 101W and US core must be taken Fr yr

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 101IH** Understanding Film & Media (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 112** Aesthetics of Film Production (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 113RA** Magic of the Darkroom I (3)

SOPHOMORE YR (16 cr)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 212** Aesthetics of Film Production II (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 251** Scriptwriting (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 254** Acting for Film (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 201D** Film History I: Origins to 1960s (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 202D** Film History II: 1960s to Present (3)

JUNIOR YEAR (14 cr)

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENT, TWO OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 304** Live Production and Camera (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 371** Nonfiction Film Production (4)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 372** Fiction Film Production (4)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 373** Experimental Film (4)

STUDIES REQUIREMENT, TWO OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 381** Studies in Film (3, repeatable)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 481** Adv. Studies Film (3, repeatable)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 301** Photo: Global Histories and Perspectives (3)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 401** Contemporary Issues in Photo (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **OTHER**¹: _____

1. Other recommended film studies electives taught in departments across the University include: ARTH 391 Visual Analysis of Film and Video (3), GRMN 422IH German Text & Cinema (3), JPNS 361IH Japanese Text and Cinema (3), LS 451 Film, Photos, and Culture: A Global Perspective (3), NASX 360 Native Americans and Cinema (3), PHL 328 Philosophy and Film (3), SPNS 352IH US Latino Text and Cinema (3), and PSYX 263CS The Psychology of Film (3).

ANY YEAR SFP ELECTIVES (12 cr)

Any additional 100–400 level PHOT FILM studies and production courses. Film-centric suggestions are:

- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 253** Television Production (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 333** Production Management (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 341** Special Effects Makeup for Film (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 351** Advanced Script Writing (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 352** Editing (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 353** Advanced Television Production (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 354** Lighting (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 355** Cinematography (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 356** Production Design (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 357** Directing (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 359** Sound Design (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 370** Color Grading for Film & TV (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 394/494** Seminar (1-4, repeatable, 12 cr max)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 490R** Undergrad Rsrch (1-6, repeatable, 12 cr max)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 498** Career Internship (2-12, repeatable, 12 cr max)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **Other**: _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **Other**: _____

ANY YEAR NON-SFP ELECTIVES (9 cr)

Any courses offered outside SFP that are not already fulfilling CORE or other program requirements. Easily fulfilled by a minor.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

SENIOR CAPSTONE (5 cr)

Entry into Senior Capstone requires senior standing in FILM, an accepted proposal, and completion of the Junior Production Requirement. If pursuing a role as Director, Producer, Cinematographer, Editor, Sound Designer, Production Designer or Lighting Designer, please take the corresponding 300-level production elective prior to FILM 499.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 499** Senior Production (5)

CORE REQUIREMENTS (30 cr)

1. UNIVERSITY SEMINAR – US (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **US Core is a Freshman requirement for the degree

2. COLLEGE WRITING – W (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **WRIT 101W is a Freshman requirement for the degree

3. QUANTITATIVE REASONING – Q (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

4. DIVERSITY – D (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by FILM 201/202D Film History I/II)

5. CONTEMP. ISSUES IN SCIENCE - CS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

6. NATURAL SCIENCES - IN (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

7. ARTS – IA or RA (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I)

8. HUMANITIES – IH (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by FILM 101IH Understanding Film & Media)

9. SOCIAL SCIENCES - IS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

10. RESEARCH CORE – R, RA, RH, RN or RS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I)

TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS 56

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS 120

Students must meet university requirements of 42 upper division credits (300–400 level courses).



Film Alumni Speak



– Justin White –

Fondest memory of SFP: When I was introduced to the beauty that is 16mm film through the Cinematography and Experimental Film classes. My most fond memory was TA-ing the Acting for Film class during Stephanie Campbell's last semester teaching. I learned so much about acting but also life itself.

Most valuable lesson you learned in the program: Hearing how we needed to let ourselves make mistakes; that it's okay to not be perfect 100% of the time.

Side note: Karl Swingle taught me how to properly wrap cable and that came in handy during my first few gigs in the film industry where I wrapped dozens of cables, hundreds of feet, every day.

What you wish you would have known starting the degree: I don't think there's really anything that SFP didn't prepare me for. I was given the tools to succeed and realistic expectations for what the industry looks like. I have SFP to thank for my success. I wish I would've focused more on learning about directing. I direct a lot now in my current job.

Where has your degree taken you? I took a chance and came to Atlanta, Georgia almost immediately following graduation. I landed my first job working on projects like *Goosebumps 2* and *The Walking Dead*. Just before the pandemic started, I stepped into a full-time position working on cameras, both photo and video. My knowledge from MSU helped me move up the ladder fairly quickly. While in that position I dipped my toe into the freelance world of sports broadcast. From there, I landed a position with Kennesaw State University as a Broadcast Producer. After a year with KSU I received a promotion and I now oversee the whole broadcast team as the Manager of Broadcast Services. I am looking into possibly earning another degree so I can teach film in higher education. I wasn't always sure if film school was the true route that I wanted to take but being in the industry now, I spent my time wisely. I learned a lot professionally and personally; I made great connections that have helped guide me through my career and life in general.



– Sara Misner –

Fondest memory of SFP: Directing my junior film. I had an amazing team who worked very hard in pre-production which made production a breeze. I had more fun on that set than any film I've ever worked on since.

Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:

I would not have discovered my love for the Theatre if I had not gone through film school at MSU. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** It's all about who you know.

Make friends, put in late nights and get with the right group of people. Then those long nights will turn into great bonds that will give you connections as you go out into the world. Also, take TV production courses, they are the best. **Where has your degree taken you?** The amazing thing about MSU is that you are steps from Montana PBS and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (MSIP). I have worked for both companies since I graduated. The connections I made in college led me to getting gigs on the last several MSIP productions as a board operator, ASM, and most recently, Stage Manager. I now work with several of the local theatres around Bozeman.

“MSU challenged me to try on every creative hat so when I entered the workforce, I had a wealth of knowledge that allowed me to find work while I continued to pursue my writing.”

– Brian, Film major



– Peter Dauscavage –

Fondest memory of SFP: The first nights of the one-act plays and the senior film screenings. There was such an exciting, nervous energy in the air.

Most valuable lesson you learned in the program: To work on as many of the student films as you can. Nearly all of the disciplines intertwine and

understanding and respecting each one will make you a better filmmaker. Some people I met on student film sets are still in my network today and many others played a part in shaping my career in some form or another.

What you wish you would have known starting the degree: I came in freshman year a little competitive. Once we all started to understand how collaborative everything is,

we really leaned on each other and got to be a close-knit group. **Where has your degree taken you?** I moved to LA with 4 other film grads. We all found odd jobs as PAs or Grips on commercials, music videos, short films and reality TV. After about a year I met a post producer. At his office, the post team was busy and they had an extra computer, so I offered to help. I started coming back every day and before long I was offered the Editor position.

After 4 years of commercials and music videos I wanted to get into longer, narrative work, so I found my way over to Funny or Die as an Assistant Editor on a few of their shorts and then eventually some shows they produced. (*American Vandal*, *No Activity*, *Brockmire*). I worked as an Assistant Editor on the Showtime show *Who is America?* with Sacha Baron Cohen, and those hours allowed me to join the union. From there I got the opportunity to edit 40 episodes of the revival of *Crank Yankers* on Comedy Central. But I will still edit music videos every chance I get! Montana State prepared me by giving me a well-rounded film education. We have a reputation in the “industry” as humble and hard working. I hope future students keep that alive.



– Sasha Joseph Neulinger –

Fondest memory of SFP: Senior year I was taking 21 credits, working forty hours a week at Buffalo Wild Wings, and I was producing, shooting, and acting in a multi-media play. I was exhausted, but deeply engaged in every facet of my life. Our opening show was a huge success, and I remember feeling a true sense of confidence in myself. It was the most rewarding of a long list of experiences I had at SFP, where I could see hard work and intentionality equating to tangible success. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** What you receive from your education is a reflection of what you put into it. SFP provides access to everything, but turning that access into future career opportunity directly depends on the energy and effort you invest into the experience. Do more than is required for your grade. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** Don't let your fear of judgment stop you from being your authentic self. And ego defeats growth. Film school is the perfect place to take creative chances. You're not working for a paying client here, YOU are paying for an education. Use that opportunity. Sometimes students don't take chances because they are concerned about what their peers may think. Disregard that concern as best you can. Growth isn't achieved within one's comfort zone. **What are you doing now?** Shortly after I graduated (2012), I co-founded Step 1 Films out of Bozeman, and used the company as a way to keep food on the table while I developed, co-produced, and directed my first feature length documentary, *Rewind* (2019). *Rewind* premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival, where it received a Special Jury Mention. The film toured internationally before having its US TV Premiere on PBS' Independent Lens. *Rewind* also received a Critics Choice Nomination along with three EMMY Nominations, including Outstanding Direction, and is now streaming on Hulu. While I was working on my film, I produced and directed over a hundred commercial videos. The momentum of *Rewind* also led to a TEDx Talk titled, "Trauma is Irreversible. How it Shapes Us Is Our Choice." That talk has since lead to a motivational speaking career that I am deeply committed to.



– Alexa Alberda –

What you wish you would have known starting the degree: It's difficult to understand how much group work is involved. Filmmaking is highly collaborative. Take every opportunity to learn what you like and dislike about filmmaking. This will help you figure out your strengths and weaknesses. If you combine your strengths with your peers' you'll be able to create amazing work! **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Many filmmaking opportunities happen outside of the classroom! Get onto upperclassmen film sets as soon as possible. You'll start with grunt work, but it will give you the experience to decide where you want to take your career. **Where has your degree taken you?** Outside of teaching, I am a Producer of short and feature length narrative films. Two of the short films I produced are currently working their way through the film festival circuit. Clara Boone, an independent narrative feature film, is currently in pre-production.

"Don't be a filmmaker. Be a human being who makes films. You are more than your craft. Your self-worth already exists and shouldn't be dependent on what you produce. When you know your worth, independent of your craft, you will do well."

–Sasha, film alum



– Brian McCauley Johnson –

Fondest memory of SFP: The film sets. The School of Film & Photography is at its best a production-based program which should allow you to enter the work force with a toolbox. That begins and ends with getting on set. My fondest memories were being out in the field, making movies with the people I loved and grew with, taking part in the experiment and supporting each other along the way. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** "Embrace the chaos." Dennis Aig always taught me that filmmaking in all of its myriad parts can be chaotic, but that doesn't mean it should end in disaster. You have to enjoy the ride, and that means shedding yourself of the need for perfection. It doesn't exist. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** Ask every question you don't know the answer to without fear. **Where has your degree taken you?** I knew early on that I wanted to be a writer. So, when I graduated, I moved to Los Angeles and worked production crew gigs on everything from commercials to reality television to pay the bills. I eventually landed a Writers' Intern job on *CSI: Miami* that gave me my first glimpse into a working television Writers' Room. And I was hooked. From there, I worked my way up into a handful of Showrunner's Assistant jobs, basically helping the show creator in their day-to-day (keeping calendars and schedules, fielding calls, reading scripts, etc). It gave me a front row seat to the job and allowed me the opportunity to learn everything I could. I eventually landed a team of Literary Reps. I ended up creating and selling my own fantasy series called *The League of Pan* and have spent the past few years in TV development bringing that to life. I also have a horror/western feature screenplay that my Lit Reps are taking out to the marketplace. And I am currently a Writer on the one-hour ABC drama *Big Sky*. **PS:** Stay close with your classmates and alumni! Some of my best, most memorable and lucrative jobs have come from SFP Alumni and I try to pay that back every chance I get.



PHOTOGRAPHY



Alexis Pike's PHOT 352 Advanced Lighting Practices class working on collaborative location lighting



BA Film & Photography — Photography Option 2026

FRESHMAN COURSES (12 cr)**

**WRIT 101W and US core must be taken freshman year.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 101IH Understanding Film & Media (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 112 Aesthetics of Film Production (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) PHOT 213 Magic of the Darkroom II (3)

SOPHOMORE COURSES (8 cr)

- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 255 Intro to Color Photography (4)
- ☐ (F) PHOT 258 View Camera (4)

JUNIOR PRODUCTION ELECTIVES (8 cr)

- ☐ (F) PHOT 331 Professional Practices (4)
- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 350 Landscape and the Book (4)
- ☐ (F) PHOT 352 Advanced Lighting Practices (4)
- ☐ (F) PHOT 355 The Experimental Color Darkroom (4)
- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 359 Alternative Photo Techniques (4)
- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 371 Portraiture (4)
- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 373 Image & Text (4)
- ☐ (F) PHOT 374 The Experimental B&W Darkroom (4)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) PHOT 494 Seminar (topic varies) (4)

ANY YEAR STUDIES ELECTIVES (12 cr)

(Must include PHOT 301)

- ☐ (F) FILM 201D Film History I: Origins to 1960s (3)
- ☐ (Sp) FILM 202D Film History II: 1960s to Present (3)
- ☐ (Sp) PHOT 301 Photo: Global Histories & Perspectives (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 381 Studies in Film (topic varies) (3)
- ☐ (F) PHOT 401 Contemporary Issues in Photo (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 481 Adv. Studies in Film (topic varies) (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) OTHER¹: _____

¹. Photography students are strongly encouraged to take ARTH 200IA Art of World Civilization I (4) and/or ARTH 201IA Art of World Civilization II (4) as well as other Art History classes especially if graduate school is planned. Other recommended film studies electives taught in departments across the University include: ARTH 391 Visual Analysis of Film and Video (3), GRMN 422IH German Text & Cinema (3), JPNS 361IH Japanese Text and Cinema (3), LS 451 Film, Photos, and Culture: A Global Perspective (3), NASX 360 Native Americans and Cinema (3), PHL 328 Philosophy and Film (3), SPNS 352IH US Latino Text and Cinema (3), and PSYX 263CS The Psychology of Film (3).

ANY YEAR SFP ELECTIVES² (12 cr)

Any additional 100–400 level PHOT or FILM studies and production courses, including independent studies, undergraduate research, internships, overseas photo and film classes, 291/491 special topics, 295/395 work study credits, or a second Senior Production.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

². Photography students are strongly encouraged to take at least one of ARTZ 105IA Visual Language-Drawing (3), ARTZ 109IA Visual Language-Comprehensive Foundation (3), or ARTZ 110RA Visual Language: Ideation and Creativity (3) especially if graduate school is planned. Art courses can substitute for SFP Electives.

ANY YEAR NON-SFP ELECTIVES (9 cr)

Any courses offered outside SFP that are not already fulfilling CORE requirements. Easily fulfilled by a minor.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

SENIOR CAPSTONE (5 cr)

Entry into Senior Capstone requires an accepted proposal, completion of Freshman courses, Sophomore courses, Junior Production electives, a minimum of 3 of the 4 required Studies electives, and completion of at least 2 SFP Electives. Core and Non-SFP electives can be taken at any time.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____PHOT 499 Senior Production (5)

CORE REQUIREMENTS (30 cr)

1. UNIVERSITY SEMINAR – US (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **US Core is a Freshman requirement for the degree

2. COLLEGE WRITING – W (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **WRIT 101W is a Freshman requirement for the degree

3. QUANTITATIVE REASONING – Q (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

4. DIVERSITY – D (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

5. CONTEMP. ISSUES IN SCIENCE - CS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

6. NATURAL SCIENCES - IN (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

7. ARTS – IA or RA (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I

8. HUMANITIES – IH (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) Fulfilled by FILM 101IH Understanding Film & Media

9. SOCIAL SCIENCES - IS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

10. RESEARCH CORE – R, RA, RH, RN or RS (3)

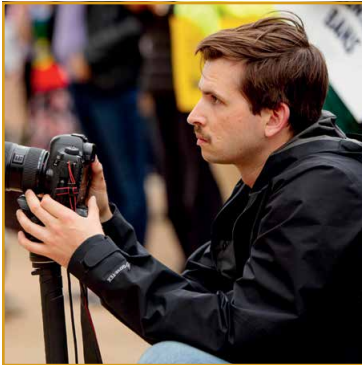
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I

TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS 57

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS 120

Students must meet university requirements of 42 upper division credits (300–400 level courses).

Photography Alumni Speak



– Colter Peterson –

Fondest memory of SFP: I am a 2018 grad from both Photo and Film, currently employed as a staff photographer at Montana State University. I always think back on the late nights and long days in the darkroom and edit labs. I made so many good friends by spending time with classmates critiquing each other's work as we went. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Don't say you can't do something. Accept the job, then freak out about how you will pull it off afterwards. **What you wish you would've known starting the degree:** I wish I would have known a wider range of what I could do with my degree. I found my path pretty quickly, but that was partly luck. I remember so many people not really finding their passion until super late in school and having very little time to explore it in a risk-free environment. Also worth a reminder to treat a lot of assignments as "risk free"—yes it sucks if you mess up an assignment because you tried something super wild or challenging. But better to mess up and learn in school rather than when someone is paying you to do said task.



– Jack Power –

Fondest memory of SFP: The first time I saw one of my photos come out of the printer at 40" x 60". **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Looking at the work of other photographers to get inspiration. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** Take chances and apply for internships ASAP. The experience you gain from internships will help you grow as a creator and improve your work. **Where has your degree taken you?** To the White House as a White House Photo Office Intern during the summer of 2025. Since my freshman year I have been a photography intern with the athletics department and have had the opportunity to travel to some amazing events such as the 2025 FCS National Championship Football Game and March Madness in 2023 and 2024 as the Team Photographer for our Men's Basketball Team.

"Critique is hard to hear but important because it allows you to think critically about your work."
– Finn, Photo major



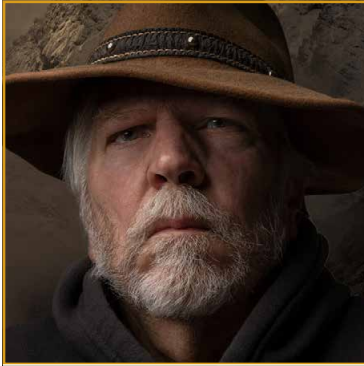
– Brittany Nelson –

Fondest memory of SFP: The around-the-clock hours I spent in the darkroom and the camaraderie with all of my peers who were also die-hards. I still find the darkroom the place I feel the most excited and the most at ease. This is due to the supportive environment I had at SFP. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Go big or go home. No matter what I was doing, I learned to earnestly put everything I had into the task and make it the best work it could possibly be. I tried to take every assignment and run with it, make it my own, and to push boundaries. This lesson has helped me immensely in my career. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** I tried to remain open and absorb absolutely everything when I entered the program. That would be my advice to anyone wanting to be an artist—be open to changing anything and everything, take risks, and experiment as much as you can. And if you ever fail, make sure it's not for lack of work ethic.

– Megan Crawford –

Fondest memory of SFP: There's a slew of things that come to mind (most revolving around long days in the alt lab), but the one I think of on a regular basis is when Chris emailed the Alt class to let us know she was stuck in a Taco John's drive-through and, therefore, would be late to class. Kelsey emailed back, jokingly saying not to come back unless she had potato olés for the whole class. Several trips to Bridger Brewing come to mind, too. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Apart from InDesign, which I use in all my work—self-assurance. It's something that I will continue to learn forever but being in the program accelerated it by a few years. Your ideas—whether it's a critique, concept, hypothesis, etc.—have value. Share them. **What you wish you would've known starting the degree:** That it would go by faster than I could imagine—to savor the moments. Remind yourself to be present, intentional. Step back every now and then and appreciate the cacophony of art and ideas happening around you. Also, take a business class.





– Clark Dunbar –

Fondest memory of SFP: Sitting on the grass under the trees (in an outdoor class session) discussing the philosophy of images with Rudy Dietrich. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Listening and understanding what the needs/goals of the requested image are—fulfilling the clients needs not your own. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** For the freelance photographer, the real world workings of that side of the industry and business practices (not just the photo technical aspects). **Where has your degree taken you?** 50 years as a photographer/cinematographer—some of the worlds largest clients from Apple to PBS Nature, locations around the country/world. Advertising, Corporate, Editorial assignments, personal projects on subjects and locations of interest.



– Eli Hausman –

Fondest memory of SFP: Working at checkout, talking to classmates in the VCB, being on sets, giving tours to prospective students, and graduating with my SFP friends. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** You get out what you put in. All the necessary gear, facilities, and support is there, you just have to use it. **What you wish you would've known starting the degree:** Just how much I would miss the program. Enjoy every second of it! **Where has your degree taken you:** Media manager and assistant camera on the set of National Geographic's *Port Protection Alaska*.



– Jessica Hays –

Fondest memory of SFP: I look back most fondly on the camaraderie and community we formed as students between the finishing room and alt lab spaces. Everyone was working and there was always someone you could talk to about your project from your overall concept to the nitty gritty of print quality and troubleshooting. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Caring about what you are doing and sharing that passion with your community is so so important. Working hard and delivering on your goals will go a long way to building a creative career. SFP gave me so many skills that prepared me for my career, and just as many lessons on work ethic, passion, and receiving feedback. **What you wish you would've known starting the degree:** Sometimes, it is more valuable to collaborate and/or delegate rather than trying take care of things yourself. Photography can become solitary but it doesn't have to be, and it is so rewarding when you work collaboratively. **Where has your degree taken you:** Since graduating, I have pursued a career as an artist and educator. I earned an MFA in Photography from Columbia College Chicago, and have taught at various institutions and workshops in Chicago, Indiana, Tennessee, Montana, and other places. My work is exhibited nationally and internationally in museums, galleries, and biennials, and I regularly present on topics of art, climate change, and psychology at conferences and as a guest lecturer in classrooms. I recently participated in an artist fellowship, spending the summer making work in the Alaskan bush, and I am publishing a photobook, *The Sun Sets Mid-afternoon*, with Fall Line Press this year — jessica-haysart.com



– Justin L. Stewart –

Fondest memory of SFP: I lived in the darkroom. Somebody would always be playing music in there and we'd all be developing new film and prints. Outside the darkroom, people would be matting new projects or trying to sequence images for a series and looking for input from other people. It was just a great space for creativity, learning, and friendship. I also had a great appreciation for my teachers. Our classes were all so intimately sized and it really let us all get to know each other well. My teachers did a good job of critiquing my work in a way that helped me grow instead of feeling crushed. They were there when I needed help and direction and are still people I keep in touch with today. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** There's perfection in imperfections. You can't control everything, but there's magic in the unknown. Doing work like mordancage or other experimental projects taught me how to appreciate "happy accidents" and to accept some of the uncontrollable elements of photography. It really encouraged me to experiment and play with photography, which is one of the things I still do to keep this work fun and from being too repetitive. School created a safe place to take risks and play. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** I wish I'd approached the work differently. When I was given homework in the program, I faced it with the same mentality with which I approached my high school homework, which was to get it done and out of the way. It wasn't until I went to grad school some years later that I realized my assignments shouldn't inform my work, but my work should inform my assignments. Make the homework fit around whatever you're interested in. Let it be a way to further explore your interests. And it's school. It's practice. Take risks. Fail trying to do cool or fun things. You'll learn something, you could make something great, and as long as you're sincerely trying, your teachers aren't going to beat you up about it or flunk you.



INTEGRATED LENS BASED MEDIA



On the set of *Do Not Develop* written by Alara Jones and Sam Overturf



BFA Integrated Lens Based Media (ILBM) 2026

FRESHMAN COURSES (15 cr)

**WRIT 101W and US core must be taken freshman year.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 101IH** Understanding Film & Media (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 112** Aesthetics of Film Production (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 113RA** Magic of the Darkroom I (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 213** Magic of the Darkroom II (3)

ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **ARTZ 105IA** VL-Drawing (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **ARTZ 109IA** VL-Comprehensive Fdns (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **ARTZ 110RA** VL-Ideation and Creativity (3)

SOPHOMORE COURSES (15 cr)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 212** Aesthetics of Film Production II (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 255** Intro to Color Photography (S) (4)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 258** View Camera (F) (4)

ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ (F) **FILM 201D** Film History I: Origins to 1960s (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 202D** Film History II: 1960s to Present (3)

JUNIOR AND SENIOR COURSES (49 cr)

STUDIES REQUIREMENTS (6 cr)

- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 301** Photo: Global Histories & Perspectives (3)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 401** Contemporary Issues in Photo (3)

STUDIES ELECTIVES, TAKE TWO (6 cr)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 381** Studies in Film (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 481** Advanced Studies in Film (3)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **OTHER¹**

¹Other recommended film studies electives include: ARTH 391 Visual Analysis of Film and Video (3), GRMN 422IH German Text & Cinema (3), JPNS 361IH Japanese Text and Cinema (3), LS 451 Film, Photos, and Culture: A Global Perspective (3), NASX 360 Native Americans and Cinema (3), PHL 328 Philosophy and Film (3), SPNS 352IH US Latino Text and Cinema (3), and PSYX 263CS The Psychology of Film (3).

PRODUCTION ELECTIVES, TWO FILM/TWO PHOTO (12 cr)

Pay attention to prerequisites for classes marked with an asterisk. Some courses are only offered fall or spring, some every other year. Discuss a course plan with your advisor.

- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 251** Scriptwriting (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 253** Television Production (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 254** Acting for Film (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 304** Live Production and Camera (4)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 331** Professional Practices (4)
- ☐ (F)* **FILM 333** Production Management (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 341** Special Effects Makeup for Film (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 350** Landscape and the Book (4)
- ☐ (F) ***FILM 351** Advanced Scriptwriting (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 352** Editing (3)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 352** Adv. Lighting Practices (4)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 353** Advanced Television Production (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 354** Lighting (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 355** Cinematography (3)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 355** The Experimental Color Darkroom (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 356** Production Design (3)
- ☐ (Sp)***FILM 357** Directing (3)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 359** Sound Design (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 359** Alternative Photo Techniques (4)

- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 370** Color Grading Film & TV (3)
- ☐ (Sp) **FILM 371** Nonfiction Film Production (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 371** Portraiture (4)
- ☐ (F) ***FILM 372** Fiction Film Production (4)
- ☐ (F) **FILM 373** Experimental Film Production (4)
- ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 373** Image & Text (4)
- ☐ (F) **PHOT 374** The Experimental B&W Darkroom (4)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **PHOT/FILM 494** Seminar (3-4)

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT COURSES (15 cr)

Discuss with your advisor which courses throughout the university will be relevant to your proposed course of study to fulfill 15 remaining credits. Courses can be SFP courses over and above requirements for the degree or non-SFP courses.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

SENIOR CAPSTONE (2 classes/ 10 cr)

Entry into Senior Capstone requires senior standing in FILM, an accepted proposal, and completion of the Junior Production Requirement. If pursuing a role as Director, Producer, Cinematographer, Editor, Sound Designer, Production Designer or Lighting Designer, please take the corresponding 300-level production elective prior to FILM 499. Entry into PHOT Senior Production requires senior standing.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM 499** Senior Production (5)
- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **PHOT 499** Senior Production (5)

A Research capstone can substitute for a Production capstone if desired; it is the student's responsibility to find a faculty member to oversee.

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **FILM/PHOT 490R** Senior Research Thesis (5)

CORE REQUIREMENTS (30 cr)

1. UNIVERSITY SEMINAR – US (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **US Core is a Freshman requirement

2. COLLEGE WRITING – W (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) **WRIT 101W is a Freshman requirement

3. QUANTITATIVE REASONING – Q (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

4. DIVERSITY – D (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by FILM 201/202D Film History I/II)

5. CONTEMP. ISSUES IN SCIENCE - CS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

6. NATURAL SCIENCES - IN (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

7. ARTS – IA or RA (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I)

8. HUMANITIES – IH (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by FILM 101IH Understanding Film & Media)

9. SOCIAL SCIENCES - IS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) _____

10. RESEARCH CORE – R, RA, RH, RN or RS (3)

- ☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) (Fulfilled by PHOT 113RA Magic of the Darkroom I)

TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS 79

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS 120

Students must meet university requirements of 42 upper division credits (300-400 level courses).



Integrated Lens Based Media Alumni Speak



– Jaiden Turner –

Fondest memory of SFP: I think my favorite SFP memory was getting to direct a script that I wrote, bringing it all the way from concept to the festival circuit. It was so incredibly cool getting to see a project I was passionate about come to life, especially when I had never really considered directing before. I have so many stories from the time spent making my film, and now I have this awesome showcase of my work! **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Take opportunities and make connections. Getting involved on productions is the best way to grow your skills and be presented with more opportunities. One of the first films sets I worked on led me to work on professor films where I met upperclassmen who became my close friends (and whose sets I later worked on also). Moral of the story, don't be afraid to put yourself out there! **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** Push yourself out of your comfort zone! You'll never learn anything new if you just sit in your little bubble. Going out and pushing yourself is the best way to grow and get the most out of your time in SFP. **Where has your degree taken you?** After an internship with a hybrid creative agency and video production studio, I was hired full time as an Assistant Editor. The well-rounded hands-on experience I gained while at SFP has also allowed me to work on shoots running sound and camera outside of my roles as an Assistant Editor. SFP really prepared me to step right into the industry and I'm excited to see where my career takes me!



– Thomas Callahan –

Fondest memory of SFP: I'll never forget the acting class I took where, one day in the middle of the semester, we had Matthew Lillard come in for a guest lecture. Getting to learn about acting from someone with so much experience and having him direct us through a few acting exercises was incredible. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Never be afraid to try new things! Failure isn't the end; many times it's the start of a new idea. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** I wish I would've known how long I'd end up staying at MSU! If I did, I would've taken more electives outside my major and minors. **Where has your degree taken you?** Having a BFA has been valuable in the process of applying to graduate schools and I'm happy to say that the education I received has kept me creatively inquisitive!



– Allie Bonthius –

Most valuable lesson you learned in the program: At SFP, I found myself thriving most when being open with those around me about any struggles or confusion I was experiencing at the time. There seemed to have been an unspoken truth that no one had it figured out. Whether that was finding your artistic voice and vision or planning life after school, the present should be used to ask questions and collaborate with those in the same boat. **Where has your degree taken you?** My degree in lens-based media has given me the tools to create a magazine dedicated to promoting sustainability in the cannabis industry. During my time in the program, I had the freedom to bring my photography into the cannabis space, which really opened my eyes to how much I enjoyed reshaping the narrative around this industry, moving beyond the typical "stoner" stereotypes toward something more intentional and holistic. Today, I use my degree to capture media for cannabis brands, photograph products and spaces for stores featured in the magazine, and design packaging for manufacturers. I'm grateful my education gave me the creative foundation to pursue this meaningful work.

– Sam Overturf –

Fondest memory of SFP: Being able to experiment with alternative processes and grow creatively with supportive teachers and classmates. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** The extent of the resources offered to students before entering the program. **Where has your degree taken you?** I am a photographer and filmmaker focused on storytelling and capturing emotion. See @analogoverturf and samoverturf.com.





– Mallory Erickson –

Fondest memory of SFP: The first time I saw my very own 4" x 5" negative come out! View camera was one of my favorite classes, and little did I know at the time but that photo to this day, almost a year later, is still my favorite image I've ever taken! **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** The importance of inclusion of your work as a photographer. I have been in the arts almost my whole life and never felt the need to work with others, however since being at MSU I have learned just how much it helps me as an artist. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** When I started, I wish I would have known that it is all worth it. All the time in the darkroom, all the failed prints and wasted rolls, it makes you a better photographer, and appreciate it more than you ever could without the lessons you learned! **Where has your degree taken you?** I am booking as many graduation portraiture shoots as I can!

“There is so much material/equipment that the VCB has to offer, and endless insights that TAs and professors are constantly sharing, but it takes avid listening and questioning to absorb it all.”

– Allie, ILBM major



– Kael Van Buskirk –

Fondest memory of SFP: The senior exhibition at the end of spring semester May 2021. Both the photo department and the film department collaborated for one of the first times ever to host an exhibition. I was able to show both of my semester-long projects. The night was a huge celebration of all the hard work students put into the creative process and it really put the cherry on top of my schooling. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** In Dr. Bob Arnold's Experimental Production course where we came to the conclusion that film is still a truly liberating art form. The class fueled my inquisitive nature and pushed me to play around with feelings deep inside to try and nail them down with audio-visual expression. My perspective on the film medium as well as my experience in college would be radically different if not for this course. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** I started out in film, but became disillusioned with the Hollywood-style narrative film curriculum, since I favored documentary filmmaking and telling real stories about real people. I switched to Integrated Lens Based Media to incorporate more photo with film. **Where has your degree taken you?** I am selling collections of fine art prints in addition to doing freelance marketing, documentary, and other work with my camera. I worked for MSU's Center for Bilingual and Multicultural Education with a former professor, Dr. Lucia Ricciardelli, on a project about English language acquisition on tribal lands in Montana. I also completed a few projects for myself, submitting them to film festivals far and wide. My education of the cinematic process never ceases.



– Riley Sabo –

Most valuable lesson you learned in the program: In both still photography and moving cinema, there is an innate power to shape how the audience sees the world. It is my responsibility to use this power with care. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** I should have taken more cinema classes early on in my degree. Finding the balance between photography and film can be difficult. Film sets are the place where I have learned the most about this craft. I would also target a specific kind of photography to focus on and pick the classes that furthered that knowledge. There is not enough time in four years to take all of the incredible classes offered within the program. **What are you doing now?** Over the past four years I have prepared myself for this leap of faith into the professional world and it is paying off. With only two months left in my time here at MSU I am excited to graduate and feel well prepared for what comes next. **Where has your degree taken you?** My degree has taken me through so many highs and lows. Through doubt in my work to pure joy in that same art. It has given me a set of professional skills and experience with industry standard equipment in photography and cinema that I would have never received without this degree.

“The Integrated Lens Based Media major is challenging, yet rewarding, as you get to see where your interests fit in both the film and photo worlds.”

– Tyler, ILBM major



SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY FILMMAKING



Swiftcurrent Lake, Glacier National Park, Montana © Ian van Coller 2019



Background photograph, *Rainbow Over the Steppe* © Corey Elliot. A rainbow stretches across the sagebrush steppe at North Bridger Bison Ranch during production of *Captain of the Sagebrush Sea*, alumna Olivia Gorham's film. Right, *Olivia in the Field* © Corey Elliot. Director Olivia Gorham reviews footage out in the field while filming *Captain of the Sagebrush Sea*.



MFA Science & Natural History Filmmaking 2026

The Master of Fine Arts Program in Science and Natural History Filmmaking at Montana State University is a unique, world-renowned graduate program dedicated to this field of filmmaking. Our mission is to train aspiring filmmakers with an interest and background in scientific and the natural world to develop the creative, technical, and critical skills needed to create work that will contribute to the public understanding of science. The mission statement conveys the Program's emphasis on finding creative ways of expressing scientific information primarily through nonfiction filmmaking and related media. Scientific research is often based on innovation, and the faculty believe scientific media can and should challenge and transform traditional media models to work on more profoundly creative levels.

Graduates have pursued successful careers as award-winning independent filmmakers, staff creators at major agencies and organizations, production leaders at major channels and streaming platforms, communications executives with foundations, NGOS, and government agencies, and full-time faculty positions at major universities.

Students have produced films for the National Park Service, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Agriculture, NOAA, NASA, National Geographic, Discovery, and non-profit organizations such as the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Field Museum and the Boston Museum of Science. Students' work has also been featured in numerous festivals internationally. Students and alumni have received several student Emmys and multiple Primetime Emmy Awards along with numerous honors at festivals and juried competitions.

Our students have also been awarded Fulbright scholarships, a Fred Rogers Scholarship from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Webby awards, and many other honors. They have documented the work of explorers and scientists in almost every field from astrophysics to zoology and on every continent in the world including Antarctica.

Candidates for the MFA take courses that include film and video production, the history and theory of documentary, cinematography, sound, production management, editing and writing. All students must also work at one or more production internships during their time as MFA students. Our students are in great demand, even before graduation, and most leave the program with their first professional credits as well as their MFA degree.

Contact information:

SNHF@montana.edu
406.994.3902

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The curriculum consists of a minimum of 60 semester credit hours of study, written thesis, and thesis film taken over three years. To graduate, a student should complete the course of study in good academic standing and produce and defend a written thesis and thesis film.

FIRST YEAR

☐ (F) FILM 504 Film and Documentary Theory	4
☐ (F) FILM 510 Fundamentals of Filmmaking	3
☐ (F) FILM 519 Post Production Workflow	3
☐ (F) FILM 581 Special Prof Prjcts- Sound	3

☐ (Sp) FILM 505 Crit Apprch Nat Hst Filmmaking	4
☐ (Sp) FILM 515 Science and Nat'l History Film Prod.	4
☐ (Sp) FILM 517 Production Management	3
☐ (Sp) FILM 518 Writing for Doc and Non-Fiction Film	3

SECOND YEAR

☐ (F) FILM 513 Advanced Cinematography	3
☐ (F) FILM 523 Second Year Film Prep	2
☐ (F) FILM 526 Alternative Nonfiction	3

☐ (Sp) FILM 525 Second Year Film Prod	3
☐ (Sp) FILM 528 Nonfiction Film Performance	3
☐ (Sp) FILM 560 Post Production: Info Design	3

☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 592 Independent Study	1-3
<i>1-3 max 3 credits, may be repeated</i>	
or	

☐ (F) ☐ (Sp) FILM 598 Professional Internship	1-6
<i>1-6, max 6 credits, may be repeated</i>	

THESIS YEAR

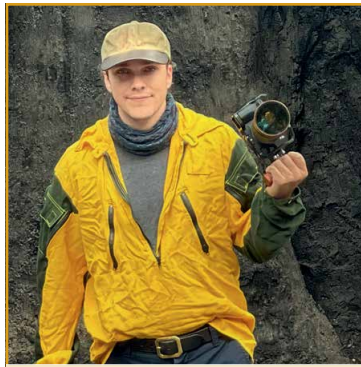
6 ☐ (F) 9 ☐ (Sp) FILM 590 Master's Thesis	1-15
<i>1-15, may be repeated</i>	

SNHF MFA Alumni Speak



– Andie Madsen –

Fondest memory of SFP: I have certainly enjoyed some late-night editing sessions with my classmates, exchanging cuts and watching experiments into the wee hours. Having a designated space to edit together allowed us to bond and collaborate in ways that working alone in an editing room doesn't provide. This is what I miss the most as a graduate. **Most valuable lesson:** During my time in the MFA program, I frequently found myself in situations where my expectations of a shoot or participant mismatched the actual situation. It took a few tries, but I learned how to go into a shoot or topic with an open mind, and how to resist forcing a narrative onto a real-life situation, instead trying to represent what I witness as I see it in front of me. **What I wish I had known starting the degree:** Starting out, I assumed that the topics we could explore in our projects would be limited to the hard sciences, and would focus on making typical factual documentary films. However, I found that the program was very open to exploring other topics, such as cultural practices, folk tales, and even clowning. I loved the opportunity to dive into such a wide variety of topics, and to learn how to express what I've found in a way that works for me and my artistic sensibilities. **Where has your degree taken you:** I visited Gloucestershire, England, to shoot my thesis with a group of women folk dancers for six weeks. During that time, they made me feel so at home and comfortable shooting with them, and my hope is that they felt the same in return. Right now I am entering the film we made together into festivals in the United Kingdom in hopes that we can all watch the film together on the big screen.



– Johnny Holder –

What is your fondest memory of the SFP? It's hard to pick just one, but it would probably be seeing a pack of wolves up close at Yellowstone during our class trip to the park to make a video during a blizzard! A close second would be my time doing internships with the Hubble Communications Team at NASA in DC. **What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the program?** Choose topics and subjects which I could connect with and learn from. This enabled me to make necessary pushes during production and post-production with the understanding that every project was a process of personal growth. **What do you wish you would have known starting the degree?** How much time is spent editing vs. filming, and how important the pre-production process is in allowing a smooth workflow. **Where has your degree taken you?** Many places, between attending festivals in different states and countries, filming my thesis in Colombia, doing internships in DC and Colorado, taking a job doing video for wildland fires on Indian reservations across the West, to currently doing video production and science communications for NOAA Fisheries in Washington DC. However, I hope to continue to evolve my career into making feature-length documentaries.

“I remember feeling so lucky to be included in such a talented group of individuals, and inspired by what we had all accomplished in our first year.”

– Nick, SNHF major



– Christi Cooper –

Fondest memory of SFP. My time in the program provided me with lifelong colleagues that I love working with and have learned so much from. Our shared struggles and our successful experiences while in the program were moments that created strong bonds between us. Traveling together to Jackson Wild each year was definitely a highlight. **Most valuable lesson:** I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to have Ronald Tobias as one of my professors. He infused the program with a sense of ethics and challenged us philosophically in ways I hadn't expected when joining the program. In addition, while the program was challenging and oftentimes required long hours (and all-nighters that I never did with my previous graduate degrees!), it gave me a sense of dedication and the ability to pull through hard times with projects, knowing that the outcome will be rewarding. **What I wish I had known starting the degree:** I wish I had known it would take me 5 years to finish! **Where has your degree taken you?** Having an MFA from MSU has opened a lot of doors for me and provided me with filmmaking knowledge that has been invaluable. The people I met and the connections I made while a graduate student set me on a journey and a path that has been life-changing. I just recently finished my first feature documentary (with 11 colleagues from the graduate and undergraduate program as some of my crew!) that has been very successful in the festival circuit and we look forward to sharing more widely very soon.



– Ed Watkins –

What is your fondest memory of the SFP? Spending time in Montana. It's a place like no other, and where I met my exceptionally talented wife (in the MFA program). **What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the program?** The necessity to just start creating things. It's all too easy to talk about the films you'll make one day. It's entirely another to do it now. Also, that films are never truly finished, just lovingly abandoned. **What do you wish you would have known starting the degree?** That there are many routes into the film industry and no two people will take the same one. It's easy to fall into the trap of comparing yourself to the success of others, but the truth is different opportunities will present themselves at different times throughout your career, and some folks may get them sooner. **Where has your degree taken you?** I work in television as a producer/director in Bristol, UK and have made films for the BBC, Discovery, National Geographic, PBS, Apple TV+ and many others. My degree gave me the skills I would need to make a start in the industry, and a network of talented friends to call upon. My career path started atypically. I did a wide range of jobs in television ranging from camera work to animation, and editing, before finally settling on directing. Since then, I've made films about all sorts of things from the smallest animals in the world to the largest objects in the universe, and lots in between.



– Karly Noetzel –

Fondest memory of SFP: Filming my thesis film at NASA with Olivia (MFA '24) and Andrew (current MFA thesis student) was unforgettable. It was the most fun I've ever had on a project, and it showed us how much we could grow together as filmmakers. I hope to experience that kind of creative teamwork again. **What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the program?** I learned to believe in my creative instincts and to keep challenging myself through experimentation with form. **What do you wish you would have known starting the degree?** Looking back, I wish I had realized earlier on that the time to experiment and play is now. School is the perfect place to take creative risks and grow without fear of failure. **Where has your degree taken you?** My degree has taken me into full-time video production and science communication with a Montana watershed conservation nonprofit. It's been rewarding to use my creative and technical skills to tell stories that connect people with their local environment. To see more of my work visit karlynnoetzel.com.

“Documentary is a lot more than just cookie-cutter nature shots and orchestral music. There is a lot of room to get creative and find new ways of communicating your topics.”

–Andie, SNHF major



– Olivia Gorham –

Fondest memory of SFP: The long days spent outdoors learning to work with the rhythms of the land and wildlife. I especially valued the mentorship and sense of community that developed with the faculty and cohorts throughout the program. **Most valuable lesson you learned in the program:** Documentary filmmaking is as much about relationships as it is about storytelling. Building trust with participants, with your crew, and with place. The program taught me how to approach every project with respect, curiosity, and a willingness to listen. **What you wish you would have known starting the degree:** That uncertainty is part of the process. I used to think I needed to have my creative voice figured out right away, whether for a project or as an artist in general, but I've learned that it emerges authentically through experimentation, patience, and community. **Where has your degree taken you?** My thesis film *Ani* is coming to the end of its festival circuit after screening at festivals across the country. I'm now directing *Captain of the Sagebrush Sea*, a documentary supported by the Big Sky Film Grant that follows a regenerative bison ranching family in Wilsall, Montana. I'm also currently in residence at the Flathead Lake Biological Station, in production of a short film about Northern Saw-whet Owl migration research in collaboration with the Owl Research Institute. Website: oliviagorham.com. Instagram: [oliviagdocfilm](https://www.instagram.com/oliviagdocfilm)

My favorite part? The resources we have. The tools we have access to, and the people I've met along the way. — Ethan Ash

TAKE EVERY CLASS YOU CAN, TAKE YOUR TIME, TALK TO YOUR PEERS AND PROFESSORS, AND CREATE WORK YOU WANT TO SEE.
— ZACH BEGLER

My favorite part of the program is the intimate class sizes. Learning in a photo production setting with small groups of classmates is a very meaningful experience because I think it establishes an environment where it's easy to engage with other classmates and the professor. I'm confident in saying that engagement has helped me grow significantly as a photographer. — Gabe Barnard

I really love the community. Professors remember my name and care about me as a person. My classmates are also focused and give great feedback. Many of my classmates have become good buddies of mine.
— Julianne Hutley

Push yourself outside of your creative comfort zone. It can be easy to stick with a style or content that you are familiar with and know you can do well, but when you push yourself to try new things and experiment, you learn so much about yourself and you'll probably surprise yourself with what you can do! — Natalia Eigner

Try new things and put off doing what you already know or love for as long as you can. Real learning, especially foundational learning, happens when you intentionally get as far out of your wheelhouse and comfort zone as possible. — Jennifer O'Connor

My favorite part about the program is probably the comradery and the professors. It's also a plus that Burt is always out and about. I love that we also have one of the only programs in the country that still teaches analog photography because that has impacted me a lot.
— Anja Frost

Get good at giving and receiving critique. I had no idea almost every assignment is followed by a critique. It's something you pick up and get good at quickly, but being able to give feedback constructively is key to improving not just others work, but your own.
— Alexander Glenn

It's really beneficial to let students get their hands on cameras, editing equipment, lighting and more right when they come in to better their overall understanding of production. As a cinematographer, I was so happy to be able to get right on a camera and start filming starting the first semester of freshman year. I have learned so many technical things about cameras by getting to continually use them each year in the program. ~ Dylan Epstein

I have met more like-minded people that share similar interests and views as I do which has helped me develop both my social skills and networking abilities more than any other time in my life. - Tom Anders

My favorite part of the program is the community aspect that develops in the upper levels starting around junior year. All the collaboration, love, and support is what makes this place feel special and is something that should be emphasized and supported by the program. - Eli Hausman

The teachers and students that make up this program are, for the most part, completely devoted to what they came to school to do. I have developed strong connections with amazing photographers and creatives and I learn to push myself with the support of other students right behind me. We all care about each other and our achievements, we all help each other when we are down, and get excited about each other's work. - Mason Mukhar

Professors encourage and push their students in their work. It helps us to develop our styles and what we enjoy doing. I also like how we start out with film (analog) for the photography program because it allows students to slow down when taking photos, and understand where photography came from and its fundamentals. Emma Culrell

I loved having the freedom of exploring different processes; there was structure in what I could do but what I did with it was completely up to me - it was cool to see what everybody else came up with, too. I feel like I have learned the most from my peers in seeing what their creative vision is. - Danika Wolf

I love how the program is a small close community. Every time I go to the darkroom, digital printing room, or just to study in the VCB, it's never crowded and I typically know everyone there. - Henry Hedlund

I love being able to check out cameras, tripods, shutter releases, sound gear, lighting gear, and more. We're able to push the boundaries of our creativity rather than worrying about gear. I also love the variety of classes we can take once we get further into the major. There are so many classes and electives to choose from that it opens the many possibilities and opportunities for us to learn what interests us. - Matthew Di Loreto



SFP FACULTY



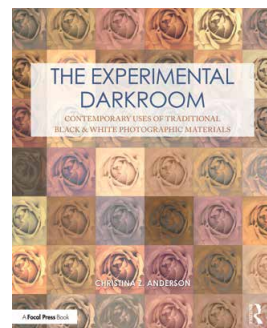
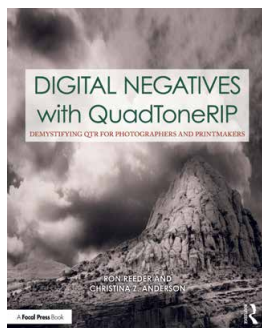
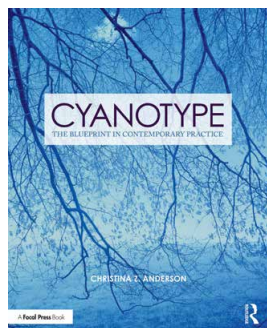
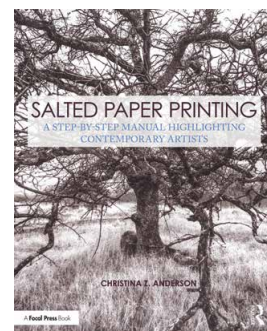
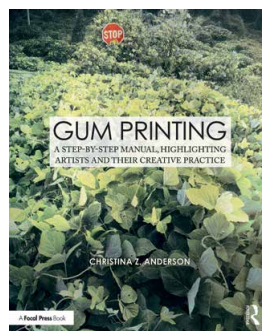
Christina Z. Anderson

Professor of Photography

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I've been teaching at MSU since 2000, first as a non-tenure track and then as a tenure track professor.

What is your favorite class you teach? It's a toss up between 359 Alternative Photography Techniques and 374 Experimental Photography. Both are handmade print processing, one in the dimroom and one in the darkroom, but both have a lot of experimental nature to them.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? I am a firm believer in a "liberal arts" education which has the purpose of broadening the mind in multiple areas. A degree is not just for getting a specific job in a specific field. Certainly when I got my second and third degrees (painting and photography) I had no



idea that it would lead to twenty-five years of teaching. That said, our Film and Photography degree is immensely employable after graduation in any visual or creative field that may arise.

What makes our program unique? We are what I term a "full meal deal" in that we lay the foundation in the analog black and white darkroom ("slow photography") but are also fully digital and analog for four years.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? A student is as successful as they choose to put in the effort. The more effort, the more success. We are a tight-knit program and I would advise all students to get to know their faculty well. Faculty are available and approachable.

What are some of your professional achievements? I am an artist at heart, but for the last decade I have written books (six currently in print,

a seventh and final book on the way Fall 2026) on alternative process and experimental photography. I had no idea I would be an author when I began my teaching career. This authorship began because I typed up handouts for my classes. One day I decided to spiral bind the handouts to save time at the Xerox machine. The rudimentary spiral bound manuals became books illustrated with student work published professionally which in turn led to my editorship of the *Contemporary Processes in Alternative Process Photography* series with Focal Press/Routledge. It always surprises me, the trajectory life takes us if open and willing to say "yes" and then put in the work. "The harder I work, the more luck I seem to have" is my favorite quote.



Jennifer Boles

Assistant Professor of Film

What is your background and why did you choose MSU? I am originally from a coal-mining town in northeastern Wyoming. I loved photography and painting as a young person as it helped me to navigate the difficulties of my hometown. I veered away from these interests in early adulthood and only came back to them later in life. It's interesting how that happens! I didn't go to college right away. I moved away from Wyoming, worked in restaurants, traveled, read voraciously, and got involved with social justice activism, all of which inspired me to get a BA in History and Political Science at the University of Colorado-Denver and later, to pursue a PhD in History at Indiana University with a minor in Film Studies. For my doctoral research, I focused on the history of the global 1960s and 1970s through the lens of an experimental super-8 film movement in Mexico City. It's a complicated story, but through this

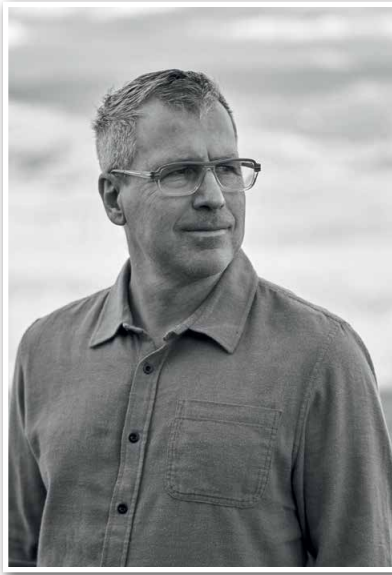
research experience, I found myself inspired by my subjects to use film to speak about my own changing world. A growing awareness of climate change and other contemporary challenges pushed me toward open-ended, experimental artistic forms of inquiry and expression and away from specialization and conventional knowledge structures and narratives. In 2017, while working and teaching film studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago, I decided to pursue an MFA at Northwestern University and a teaching and research career that was more interdisciplinary and expansive.

What inspires your teaching? My teaching and my creative work is always grounded in a desire to learn and share. What I teach students is to start with questions and curiosity rather than conclusions. "Certainty is anathema to art." You learn more about yourself and the world through the process of trying to answer them. You also discover your own formal approach as a pathway, rather than a formula. Later, you can figure out what your work is about and let it inspire new projects

and experiments. We are products of our time, motivated by all kinds of things, much of it is beyond our rational comprehension. The process of exploration and experimentation and the growth that happens along the way is what matters. It should be messy.

What are some recent professional achievements and are you working on anything new? I just opened a multi-channel audiovisual installation using early film archives and I am in production on a feature-length experimental nonfiction film.





Ian van Coller

Professor of Photography

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I am currently in my 20th year teaching at MSU.

What is your favorite class you teach? I am always excited to teach Landscape and the Book because it most closely aligns with my own creative endeavors. I am passionate about the environment and those passions are expressed artistically in making photographic based artist books. This class brings those two things together. Students gain knowledge of landscape theory as well as the traditions of photography in the American West. They also learn to make several handmade book structures and then fill them with their own photographs. A book is an ideal vehicle for the encapsulation of a coherent body of photographs, and the greater Yellowstone ecosystem is the ideal place to be thinking about and making photographs in the environment.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? The School of Film and Photography is a hands-on program and students get to work with highly technical equipment from day one. While the technology in the Film and Photography industries is always changing, at MSU students gain problem-solving skills so that they are able to adapt to any work environment.

What makes our program unique?

The MSU photography program teaches the widest range of photography skills of any program that I know of. From learning Alternative Processes with Christina Z. Anderson, one of the foremost practitioners in the world, to working with state-of-the-art lighting equipment in our large studio, as well as learning extensive layout design and bookmaking skills, the program allows students to explore their own creativity across almost two centuries of photographic knowledge.

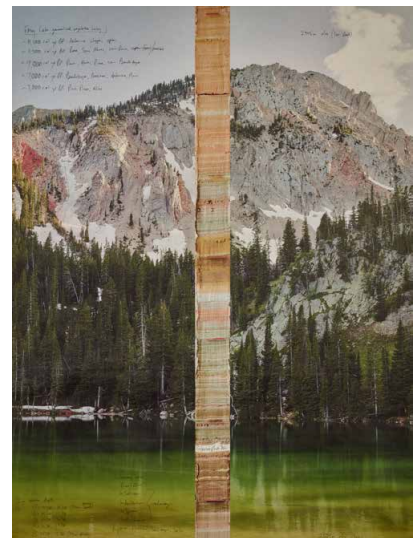
What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? MSU has incredible facilities and equipment that students can use. We also have fantastic faculty who are excited to teach. For students to succeed here, they need only bring a willingness to explore their own creativity across a multitude of disciplines and experiences.

What are some of your professional achievements? In 2018 I was selected as a John Simon Guggenheim Fellow in Photography. This was an incredible honor to be selected by such a prestigious organization, and without any doubt has been the highpoint of my career. Through the

generosity of MSU, I was able to spend a year traveling and collaborating with scientists around the globe to complete the fellowship. This included two expeditions to the Arctic, one to Antarctica, as well as Uganda and Senegal. I am still working on a variety of projects made over the course of that year.



Cerro Montezuma, Colombia, 40" × 50" pigment print © Ian van Coller 2018



Fairy Lake Mud-core, Montana, 30" × 40" handwriting on pigment print, unique collaboration with James Benes © Ian van Coller 2016



Cat Dale

Associate Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I've been teaching at MSU since 2018 and love the tightknit Bozeman community.

What is your favorite class you teach? My favorite course to teach is Senior Capstone Production, because it's a class where we put everything students learn into practice. We produce beautiful, thought-provoking short films that push students to get out of their comfort zone, problem solve real-world situations, and build bonds that last beyond film school.

How does our program (Film or Photo) prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? Our program not only emphasizes technical knowledge, but also idea development behind the art. Developing a creative practice takes much

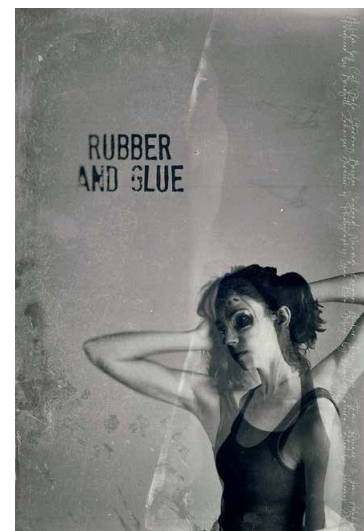
inner examination and community support to sustain a career in the arts. We help students translate their thoughts and ideas into compelling projects that are seen on both the national and international stages.

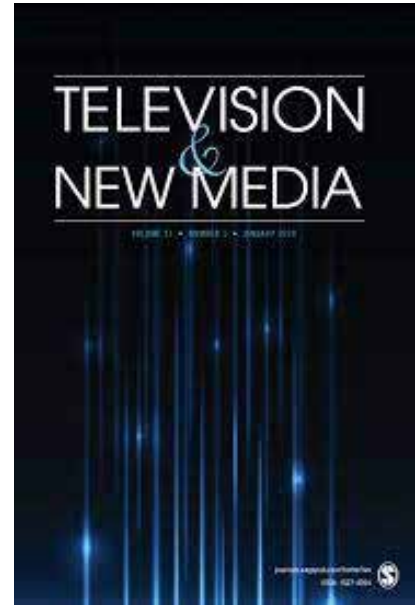
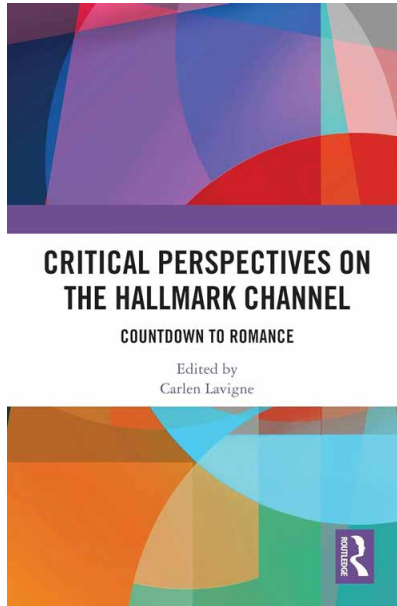
What makes our program unique?

Our program is small and close-knit. With so many opportunities to work hands-on with gear, in the lab, or with a professor on a creative project, this program gives students the opportunity to get out of the classroom and dive into real film and photo production.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? Go for it. Film is all about taking creative risks, putting yourself out there, and finding people with the same passion for storytelling. Dedicate yourself to actively pursuing every opportunity that comes your way.

What are some of your professional achievements? My writing has been featured on The Black List, part of the CANNESFILM UNLIMITED writing residency, been a quarterfinalist in The Academy's Nicholl Fellowship, and won the ScreenCraft Pilot Launch. As I shift to producing my own writing, I recently directed three short films, all crewed by film students and alumni. I am also developing two feature films for production that will be shot in Montana (one of which is in partnership with the Jim Henson Creature Shop and Myriad Pictures).





Kayti Lausch

Assistant Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I have been teaching at MSU since Fall 2024.

What is your favorite class you teach? This is a tough one, but it's probably What is Film? Film Theory & Criticism. It's fun to help students think about film and media from different perspectives and teach them how to engage productively with how folks have thought about movies since Hugo Münsterberg wrote the first piece of "film theory" in 1911 in which he's basically grappling with what makes film a unique medium—a question people still debate! Discussing digital cinema and the merits of CGI is particularly fun.

What are some of your professional achievements? My biggest achievement so far was winning the Society for Cinema and Media Studies' Dissertation Award in 2022 for my work on evangelical television in the United States, which is the basis for my current book project. I

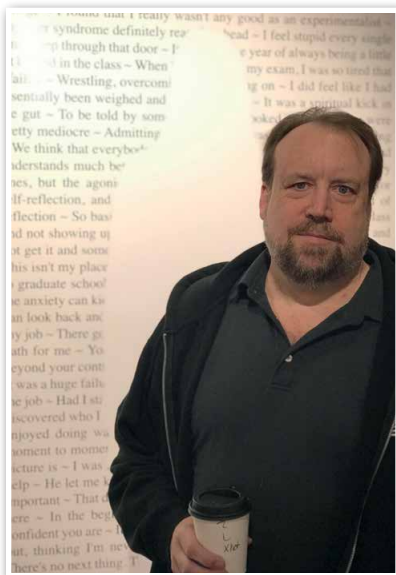
am also currently the senior co-chair of the Television Studies Scholarly Interest Group for the Society of Cinema and Media Studies.

Where are you from and what was your educational process? I'm originally from Pennsylvania, and I graduated from Cornell University with a BA in American Studies. I then went to the University of Texas at Austin for an MA in Radio-Television-Film and then the University of Michigan for a PhD in Film, Television, and Media from 2013–2020. (Not an ideal year to graduate!)

What inspires your teaching? I'm grateful and inspired when students cite my classroom as a welcoming space—to be themselves, to grapple with challenging ideas, and to receive support as they grow. I think for students who take a mix of studies and production classes, it's a great opportunity for them to learn about history and theory and think about how to make the industries better once they get there. Part of my goal in the classroom is to set students up to make their future workplaces better and more equitable.

What are some recent professional achievements and are you working on anything new? I'm currently working on a project on Great American Family, the television channel that brands itself as the "anti-woke" Hallmark Channel with made-for-TV movies and other programming. It's still somewhat early stages, but I'm interested in how conservative entertainment outlets like GAF position themselves in the marketplace and who they imagine their viewers to be.

Tell us about yourself. Before joining SFP, I spent three years as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Film Studies at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. My research explores how religious, conservative, and/or evangelical media industries have reshaped American culture and politics. My work has been published in *Television and New Media*, *Media Industries*, and the edited collection *Critical Perspectives on the Hallmark Channel* (Routledge, 2024). In my spare time, I love going to the movies (with Raisinets, of course), trying new restaurants, traveling, and playing tennis.



Theo Lipfert

Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I've been teaching at MSU for almost twenty years now (that makes me sound so old!).

What is your favorite class you teach? It is so hard to pick! I love everything to do with film post-production like editing, sound, and color correction. That said, I also love teaching Fiction Film because I get to really help students manifest their stories as short films. I love the energy our students bring to class.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? Our students are trained using the same technology that is used professionally. They learn to work on creative projects as a team: how to communicate a vision and how to orchestrate all the pieces of a production into a finished film. Both of those components—the technical and the interpersonal—help prepare students to be successful in the workforce.



What makes our program unique?

We are more hands-on than many programs, and we live and work in a stunning location.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program?

Be the reliable person that others can turn to for help. If you are good at editing, volunteer to cut someone's project. If you want to learn camera, volunteer to help on a Senior film. Introduce yourself to your faculty. It doesn't have to be a big deal—just say hi and tell them something you enjoyed in class. Or something you have a question about. If you are an introvert, don't worry. So are many of us! We are friendly!

What are some of your professional achievements? My films have screened at major festivals here, and abroad including Tribeca, SXSW, and Ann Arbor. I recently made a 360 degree film that plays in planetariums around the world. My screenplays have placed in the top 20% by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

What is your favorite place in Bozeman? The Treeline Coffee Roasting Room. Some of the best coffee anywhere in the world. Rumor has it that I may occasionally work there as a barista.



Tell us a bit about your background:

I grew up on Long Island, New York. As a kid, I lived in Norway and Belgium for a bit. I went to school in Amherst, Massachusetts and to graduate school in New York City. I lived in New York for about fifteen years before moving to Bozeman. I was a Fulbright Scholar and lived on the African island of Mauritius where I taught at the university and made a film about giant tortoises.



Ben Leonberg

Assistant Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I'm new as of Fall of 2024!
Where are you from and what was your educational process? I grew up in south New Jersey, originally just making "movies" on VHS tape. It wasn't until grad school that I held a real cinema camera. I studied communication as an undergrad at UMass Amherst, then got an MFA in Film Directing at Columbia University. But perhaps the most meaningful step in my education was becoming a teacher myself—it really is true that you learn from your students while they learn from you.

What are some of your professional achievements? While my journey as a professional filmmaker began by directing apparel commercials, narrative filmmaking, particularly genre, is my preferred creative



outlet. At the center of my films are relatable stories; conveyed through practical effects, pragmatic filmmaking, and strong collaborations. The titular bears from *Bears Discover Fire* were achieved by creating a one-of-a-kind bear puppet with a "YouTube celebrity" artist, animated by puppeteers from the theatrical cast of *War Horse*, and finally brought to photorealistic life by post-production wizards from my immersive media studio. In addition to a career as a commercial filmmaker and director of independent films, I helped build and then run a VR/immersive media studio. I've had the opportunity to shoot 360° video all over the world, send a camera to the edge of space, and work with partners at Fashion Week, NASA, and The International Rescue Committee.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? Collaboration is key! Filmmaking is inherently

collaborative, so find people you like working with and make lots of stuff together. And help out on as many fellow students' productions as you can. They'll repay the favor when you need crew for your own projects.

What inspires your teaching?

In everything I teach, be it a film production class, introduction to virtual reality, or set safety basics, I inform my classes with personal experience and practical demonstrations. I love sharing work from past students to inspire my current classes. I'm also always reminding students that learning filmmaking is a long journey. It's rarely a straight line. Projects which might feel like failures are usually how you end up really learning. I even make a point of screening some of my own early "failures" as way to both encourage students and demonstrate practical filmmaking principles.



Alexis Pike

Professor of Photography

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I've been teaching at MSU for sixteen years, and at the college level for over twenty-eight years.

What is your favorite class you teach? I love teaching any class that involves color photography, especially analog color, from developing film to printing in the darkroom. I also enjoy teaching students how to digitally print in color. I've honed my eye for color balance and am grateful to share my expertise.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? Imagery is a language. We guide students to understand this language and prepare them to speak their unique dialect of image making. We provide a foundation of creative problem solving—our degree is the diving board into the pool of success.

What makes our program unique? The range of visual interests of faculty and students. We embrace a diverse range of styles and techniques.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? Tap into your passion for inspiration. Everything will fall into place if you love what you are doing.

What are some of your professional achievements? I grew up in Idaho, which is similar to Montana—wide open spaces, less populated, a sense of survival in the history and development. My geographical spirit has led to professional achievements in publishing, exhibiting work, and lecturing about my work. I've embraced the West to create art and it has opened doors because people are fascinated by this region and our mythologies. I've fine-tuned my visual voice for a place I am from and telling the story of a region I am proud to call home.

What is your favorite place in Montana? I enjoy going to White Sulphur Hot Springs for mini vacations—from the windshield time I can stare at vast landscapes to the experience of soaking in the pools. It's magical and provides space to recharge. On the drive home after soaking, it's a must to stop for dinner at the Bank Bar and Vault in Wilsall. Their grass-fed beef is local; the cattle are raised just down the street! True Montana cuisine.

Tell us a bit about your background. Growing up, I split my time between Idaho Falls and Stanley, Idaho. I went to Boise State University for my BFA in Visual Art. I moved to Iowa City to attend the University of Iowa for my MFA degree. Following graduate school, I moved to Portland, Oregon where I lived for seventeen years and established myself in the photography community, teaching and exhibiting work.



Top to bottom: University of California Riverside Museum of Photography, *Color Me Lucky* exhibition (2022); *Evel's Chest Hair*, Las Vegas, Nevada (2015); *Color Me Lucky*, monograph © Alexis Pike 2019



R.J. Sindelar

Assistant Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I have been formally teaching at MSU for 3 years, but as a graduate of the Science and Natural History Filmmaking program, I have been a teaching assistant for many of the undergraduate and graduate courses in the School.

What is your favorite class that you teach? I enjoy teaching all production and post-production classes. My favorite part of teaching is to help students develop their creative and technical skills, so they can craft films that share their stories and creative visions. For the undergraduates, I have recently enjoyed teaching Cinematography and for the graduate students, Science and Natural History Film Production.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? Our program gives students the ability to explore all aspects of filmmaking from scriptwriting and production management to sound classes and color grading. At the same time, most students will work on student film sets during their time at MSU. This gives students the ability to explore areas of filmmaking they are passionate



about, while also ensuring they know how to be a contributing member of a film crew right after graduation.

What makes our program unique?

Our diverse faculty, commitment to practical education, and access to equipment. Our faculty are immersed in all aspects of film from film theory to scriptwriting to production. This exposes students to a wealth of creative and practical knowledge that they can use as they craft their own films and search for jobs after graduation.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? Push yourself creatively on your assignments, help on as many other films as you can, work on side projects, and make time to learn all the gear the school has available for you. Film school is the time to experiment (and sometimes fail!). At no other time will you have such a large group of faculty, staff, and peers willing to help you and provide feedback on your projects. Use the time to grow creatively because when you graduate and are working for someone else, you may not get so much creative freedom.

What are some of your professional achievements? I have worked with Yellowstone National Park twice to create educational documentaries. My first film, *Thermophiles: A Hidden World*, shined a light on microscopic organisms that are responsible for all the colors visitors

see around hot springs and geysers. For my second film, I made a piece about elk, which helped highlight an often overlooked species that is quite remarkable even if it is common. I am currently working on a documentary, *One in Five Hundred*, that chronicles the historic flooding that affected Yellowstone National Park in June 2022.

What are some of your favorite places in Bozeman? Anywhere outside! Bozeman has such easy access to miles of trails to enjoy. I regularly hike and backpack in the spring and summer, and ski in the winter. It is amazing to be only 30 minutes from the wilderness even if you are right in downtown Bozeman.

Tell us a bit about your background. I grew up mostly in Houston, Texas, where I developed a love of outdoor and wildlife photography. I went on to do my undergraduate work in Environmental Engineering at Lafayette College and then completed a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering at University of Florida. While there, I became interested in combining my science background with my photography hobby, so I came to MSU for the Science and Natural History Filmmaking Program. After graduating, I knew I wanted to stay in Bozeman for the amazing outdoor access, and I also knew I wanted to teach, so I feel fortunate that I am now part of the tenure track faculty at MSU.



Cindy Stillwell

Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I have been at MSU for twenty-six years!

What is your favorite class you teach? My 16mm Workshop. We work hands-on with 16mm negative motion picture film and Bolex cameras. The focus of the class is “place-based filmmaking.” It’s a class I developed to incorporate my filmmaking practice into the teaching I do: working with 16mm and hand-processing it. I have thought a lot about taking time to embrace the process itself and making films that reflect my own questions about how to live and be in relation with humans and non-humans. After the pandemic hit and spiked everyone’s screen time, it felt like a good time to try the course and that students might be interested in this slowing down, hands-on, tactile material-based practice. What is really amazing is to see how quickly students master the details of loading film into the Bolex, using the light meter and jumping into creatively using the tools to make expressive, poetic works that explore their ideas about “place” and the environment.

How does our program prepare students to go into the workforce after graduation? We help students think critically about all forms of media. They are exposed to film history as well as filmmaking techniques and the various modalities of film production early in the curriculum. We also offer courses focused on the different crafts that go into making films. Through these encounters they make a series of films and projects, write papers, articulate their thoughts in both written language and in visual media. They get to taste a bit of everything and discover their strengths along the way. I think what also happens, less explicitly, is that they learn what it means to create a community of peers and to function within that community. Films are usually collaborative endeavors and students have multiple opportunities to work as part of a team; they discover that if they want to create a complex project, they have to put a team together, collaborate, share and inspire.

What advice would you give prospective students to be successful in our program? Never make the assumption that you know everything! There is always more to learn and the more you stay open to what presents itself around you, the more you broaden your horizons. I think it’s wise to soak in new experiences and new knowledge, from your professors, your peers, the films you encounter in school, and the culture of university life. It’s a great time to expand your idea of what is possible in life.

What are some of your professional achievements? I have made a wide variety of films, from short experimental handmade 16mm and super 8 films that have shown at well-known and obscure festivals here in the U.S. and internationally, as well as more general audience

documentaries broadcast nationally through American Public Television across the nation. I think my highest achievement is being able to do what I love for over twenty years.

What is your favorite thing about Montana? I feel like I have fallen in and out of love with Montana multiple times. I love the open skies of the northeastern Montana prairies and the Hi-Line. The Missouri River breaks country blows me away every time I visit. Dillon and the basin and range country, sage and juniper, I love the Beaverhead and the Grasshopper creek country. And then Yellowstone, which still blows me away every time I go. Never gets old. And these are just the tip of this amazing place.

Tell us a bit about your background. I have a BFA in Photography from the University of Georgia where we hand-built pinhole cameras. I started making films on super 8 and was introduced to experimental filmmaking and the whole idea of an underground scene, film and music in Athens, Georgia. I then studied fiction filmmaking and cinematography at New York University where I received my Masters of Fine Arts degree and also where I continued to uncover what “filmmaking” really means, what the “industry” was, ideas about how to make a life making films, and just what it might look like. My time in New York City, studying and learning about the film industry, working on sets for fiction films and meeting other filmmakers, visiting museums, underground shows, dance clubs and artists, NYC in the 90s! It all helped me expand my ideas of what is possible. To me this is key, expansion. If we are lucky enough to live a long life, we have to keep expanding our art practice and our realms of experience to understand how to be a good human being.



Tom Watson

Professor of Film

How long have you been teaching at MSU? I have been teaching at MSU for the last 28 years.

What is your favorite class you teach? I enjoy all of the classes that I teach for various reasons. This includes Acting, Lighting, Theatre Production, Production Design, and working with seniors on their final film projects. But, I particularly get a kick out of teaching the FX Makeup course. It is fun to experiment with techniques to create wild, creative and eye-popping makeup projects. One of the projects I call Blood, Guts and Gore, where the students create scary and horrific creations that will scare their friends and family!

What are some of your professional achievements? I have been an integral part of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks as a scenic designer and theatre artists for the last 25 years. During this time, I co-directed *Bard in the Backcountry*, a backstage documentary that aired on

PBS and was nominated for a Regional Emmy Award. I also wrote and directed *The Scottish Play*, a short narrative film that was selected and awarded at various national and international film festivals.

What is your favorite thing about Mon-

tana? One of many lovable aspects about living in the Gallatin Valley area is being so close and accessible to spectacular scenic outdoor environments. One early Sunday morning, during the warm weather months, my family and I decided to take an impromptu leisurely drive around the area. During that unplanned day, we were able to drive to Livingston, down through Paradise Valley to the town of Gardiner, the northwest entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Then, after a brief pause, we continued on our Sunday drive through the Park and back to our house in Belgrade. What an amazing day! We regularly buy a yearly pass so that we can drive into the park or explore Yellowstone at a moment's notice.

Tell us a bit about where you are from, your education. I am originally from Littleton, Colorado, where I developed an infectious fandom for the Denver Broncos. Despite spending most of my school days in Colorado, I graduated from Dillard High School of Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I quickly returned to the West and earned my BFA in Theatre at the University of Idaho and my MFA in Theatre Technology and Scene Design at the University of Nebraska. I have worked for a variety of theatre companies around the country including: Arrow



Rock Lyceum Theatre, Country Dinner Playhouse, Champlain Shakespeare Festival, Idaho Repertory Theatre, Horse feathers and Applesauce Dinner Theatre, and Snowy Range Summer Theatre. I have always been involved in dramatic arts and theatre alongside a continuous passion for film and filmmaking. I spent a good deal of my youth making super 8 movies with the family movie camera. When I arrived at MSU I spent several summers attending the Maine Media Workshops to continue honing my craft in film lighting. I thoroughly enjoy being the dramatic arts contribution to this illustrious School of Film and Photography.



SFP Non-Tenure Track Faculty

The School of Film & Photography brings in a wonderful group of non-tenure track faculty (NTTs), professionals from the community, so students can benefit from their specialized areas of expertise.



Heather McKenney – Photo



Alexa Alberda – Film



David Samollow – Film



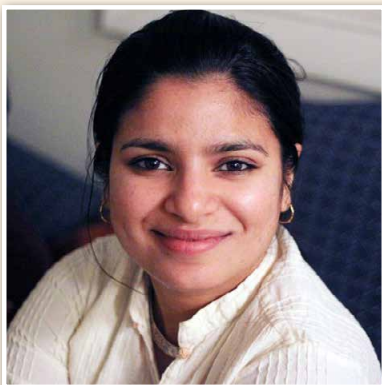
Jess Portuondo – Film



Joshua McKendry – Film



David Shannon-Lier – Photo



Vandana Sood-Giddings – Film



Tyler Duke – Film



Paul Heitt-Rennie – Montana PBS

“The faculty have so much wisdom to offer if you only take the time to ask questions, and it’s just as valuable to bounce ideas off of and learn from your classmates, who will also grow to be friends.”

– Gabe, Photo major



Ashley Lobao – Film



Tonya Andrews – Film



Ryan Parker – Photo



Josh Aaseng – Film



Caleb Fey – Photo History



Tony Purpura – Film



Sara Kremer – Photo



Karl Swingle – Film



Ari Laskin – Film

SFP Staff

The SFP staff handle the day to day business of the school. They are responsible for behind-the-scenes operations that keep the program running smoothly.



← **Kat Carney – Academic Advisor.** I am so happy to be a part of the amazing SFP team as the Academic Advisor. I started my role in January of 2024 and have gotten to be a part of the best group of staff and faculty on campus. I enjoy being able to connect with students and be a resource they can use for any of their concerns or questions. It's important to me to get to know every student's personal goals so that we may work together to create an individualized plan for their academic success. Helping and empowering students to reach their fullest potentials is the best part of my job!

**Shelley Fleming →
– Business Operations
Manager.** I started at SFP August of 2021. My job has many facets, but mainly financial. I am a Montana Native, originally from Wilsall. Earned my BA in History with a Teaching Option, English Teaching Minor, Native American Studies Non-teaching Minor, Masters of Arts in History, and a Masters of Public Administration, all from MSU. I enjoy traveling with my husband and daughter exploring new areas and new cultures.



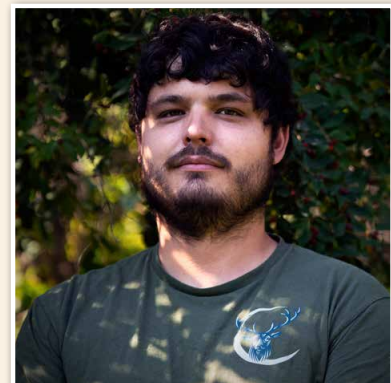
“My favorite part of the program is the staff. Everyone is more than willing to help/inspire you if asked to do so!”

– Allie, ILBM major



↑ **Aidan Slider – SFP Film Assistant.** Fresh out of the School of Film and Photography program as an ILBM major, I am now a part-time Film Checkout assistant. With my four years experience behind the window, I am here to help where I am needed to maintain the function of our equipment checkout facilities. If I am not behind the window, you may find me working on a film set, outside making pinhole photographs, or working on another stop motion animation. I am so excited to continue helping make the VCB a better place for our picture-loving community.

**Tyler Croft →
– SFP Repair Technician.** I graduated from Montana State University Spring 2024 with a BFA in Integrated Lens-Based Media. I started working as the Repair Technician here at SFP the summer following graduation. I get the opportunity to work on a variety of equipment that ranges from film processing and darkroom equipment to Arri Alexa cinema cameras and other industry standard tools. I am proud to be part of such a wonderful and talented team of people.



Tony Purpura – Technology Coordinator. For 15 years I have been managing the purchasing, maintenance, inventory, equipment and strategic planning for the School of Film and Photography. I supervise an amazing team of full-time staff members and student employees. I also teach Sound Design and Color Grading for the school. Before my time at MSU, I was a post-production sound engineer in Burbank, California.



↑ Sarah Ferdinand – Photography Coordinator. I joined the SFP team in 2024 as the Photography Coordinator, where I oversee the photographic facilities, equipment, and chemistry. I also co-manage our fantastic team of student employees and Checkout staff. I am continually impressed by the incredible work SFP students create and feel grateful for the opportunity to ensure our spaces and equipment remain state-of-the-art, safe, and clean—so that students can continue bringing their artistic visions to life! I grew up in Maine and earned my BA in Studio Art and Psychology at Hamilton College in New York before moving to Montana. Outside of photography, I enjoy exploring Montana's public lands and playing Skyjo and cribbage with friends.

“The staff are the very foundation of the School. Without them tirelessly working in the background supporting faculty and students we would be nothing.”
– Chris, Photo major



↑ Colette Campbell – SFP Program Coordinator. A 2008 SFP Film Alum, my smiling face will likely be the first you encounter in the VCB lobby. I give most facility tours. I schedule, register, plan, problem solve, coordinate and keep digital files and documents churning through the processes of our school's higher ed system on a regular basis. When not reading, writing, or evaluating screenplays, I can frequently be found on a motorcycle, in my garden, or next to a bonfire.



← Makayla Camel – Photo Checkout Assistant. As a recent graduate from the photography program, I am excited to continue my journey with the SFP as the Photo Assistant where I help oversee equipment, labs and employees. I love being a part of a community full of creatives and seeing what students are making throughout the semester. Being able to provide support and be a resource to students and faculty is one of my favorite parts of the job! Outside of the SFP you can find me working on my own projects, specifically alternative processes and large format photography or playing video games and spending time with my friends.

SFP Equipment, Facilities, and Checkout Staff





The School of Film & Photography Equipment Checkout exists to help students find the right tools for their project. From computers to cameras, sound gear and scanners, we have it all! Equipment Checkout houses, maintains, and facilitates the use of over **17,000** pieces of industry standard film and photography equipment. The staff maintains the high-end equipment and state-of-the-art facilities, keeping everything up-to-date. Here's the facts:

- Equipment Checkout utilizes an online system to reserve equipment, filled with images, tutorials, and tips and tricks for each piece of gear.
- Equipment Checkout hires students with Work Study attached to their Financial Aid packages to aid in the high volume of equipment circulation. These students are the first to learn about our gear and gain closer relationships to their faculty.
- The newly renovated SFP darkrooms are equipped with enlargers for printing various film formats from 35mm up to 4x5.
- Individual labs are creative spaces for students to produce analog color and or black and white images.
- The photo studio is equipped with a back-to-back cyclorama walls and industry-standard Profoto strobes.
- The alternative process lab is a one-stop-shop for a wide range of alt photo processes and digital negatives.
- The two digital labs include new large format printers, flatbed scanners and a state-of-the-art drum scanner.
- Our bookmaking facilities provide an area where students can bind and edit their own handmade books.

- The film studio is equipped with a green and blue screen, fully functional lighting grid, and a sound stage.
- We have a sound theater for final sound mixing in stereo or surround sound. This includes a recording booth for voice overs, dubs, and Foley work.
- The non-linear film editing lab is configured with high-end computer workstations, accessible 24/7.
- For film seniors, we have private editing suites equipped with sound insulation, high end monitors, and enhanced computer workstations.
- We have a film scanning room allowing students to digitize motion picture film to incorporate both analog and digital filmmaking.
- Our screening room contains the same projection systems used in movie theaters with Dolby 7.1 surround sound, utilizing the standard DCP file format. This access provides students a means to finalize their projects for industry standards

– Tony Purpura, Sarah Ferdinand, Makayla Camel, Aidan Slider, and Tyler Croft

“It is a hands-on program! Right off the bat you get state of the art equipment in your hands.”

– Mallory, ILBM major



Partnering with organizations such as Montana PBS and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, students in the School are provided the unique opportunity to explore a broad spectrum of career paths in the audio, visual, and performance industries. By providing internships and specially crafted electives, students gain knowledge and practical experience spanning the media communication career spectrum from live theatre performance to broadcast television.

SFP CAMPUS PARTNERS — PBS & MSIP



Montana PBS



SFP student Cameron Kopecy runs a studio camera during a Montana PBS production, *Montana AG Live*. Photo courtesy of Colter Peterson, MSU University Communications



Accompanist listens to test audio recording with Host/Artistic Director Tim Janis during a Montana PBS production, *Celebrate America Across Montana*; the crew are all SFP students. Photo courtesy of Aaron Pruitt, Montana PBS



Student crew getting ready for a Montana PBS live broadcast production, *Montana AG Live*. Photo courtesy of Colter Peterson, MSU University Communications



Behind the scenes, recording a "standup" during a Montana PBS production, *Celebrate America Across Montana*; the crew are all SFP students. The Belgrade High School Choir is in the background. Photo courtesy of Aaron Pruitt, Montana PBS



Adelaide Gustafson, as an incoming SFP Freshman, checks out a Top Game Cam at an MSU Bobcat Football game. Photo courtesy of Scott Sterling, Montana PBS



A student works at the Camera Shading station in the Montana PBS Control Room during an MSU Bobcat Football game. Photo courtesy of Scott Sterling, Montana PBS



Undergraduates, grad students, faculty, and staff attending a demonstration of a selection of audio equipment products in the Montana PBS Studio. Image courtesy of SFP faculty.

Montana PBS is a partnership between Montana State University, Bozeman, and the University of Montana, Missoula. Montana PBS offers public television programming to the entire state of Montana, broadcasting five distinct program streams 24/7/365. Our transmission facilities are located in cities across the entire state, with additional translators serving rural areas. The Montana PBS signal is also carried on subscription services including all the cable and direct satellite services in the state, plus a number of live linear streaming and OTT services.

Montana PBS is also a television production facility. We create a variety of award-winning television content for broadcast on Montana PBS including music performance and arts, history and documentary, news and public affairs, and more. We also provide production services, on a contract basis, for a number of public and private clients. With our fully equipped television studio and satellite uplink/downlink facility, our remote field production equipment, along with non-linear editing/finishing suites, we offer complete television production services from concept, through the production and post-production processes, to distribution and delivery.

Montana PBS maintains a close relationship with many departments on the MSU-Bozeman campus, particularly the MSU School of Film & Photography (SFP), housed together in the Visual Communications Building (VCB) on the MSU-Bozeman campus. Students are involved with everything we do from Engineering and

IT, Accounting, Marketing and Membership Development, Broadcast Operations, to Long and Short-Form Production, Social Media/Digital Audience Engagement, and Promotions. Students have an opportunity to work on television coverage of Bobcat Athletics, including Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Volleyball, Track and Field, and Rodeo. Students work on productions like *11th & Grant*, *Montana AG Live*, *Celebrate America Across Montana*, *Montana PBS Reports*, as well as a variety of other live and pre-produced programming. Students work in every production capacity: Grip/Utility, Stage Manager, Camera Operator, Slo-Mo Playback, Graphics, Animation, Editing, Audio Mixing & A2, Assistant Directing, Technical Directing, Directing and Producing.

Montana PBS also provides the laboratory space for two SFP courses in live television production. Taught by professional Montana PBS production staff, students are introduced to the fundamental concepts underlying the creation of video and audio signals. In the lab section of the course, students learn how to use the television production equipment, and then work together as a live production team to create television content. In the advanced TV Production class, students take the knowledge and skills to the next level, creating broadcast-worthy live-streamed content throughout the semester. The opportunity for students to get involved with actual content creation while going to school is a great complement to the rest of their coursework, and looks great on a résumé or reel.

Montana Shakespeare in the Parks



2025 *Henry V*, Summer Parks Tour

“To be celebrating 53 seasons of amazing performances is truly a special accomplishment. Our greatest pleasure comes from knowing that audiences can discover the magic of Shakespeare, where universal truths of mankind are united through stories that stretch beyond space and time.”

– Kevin Asselin, Executive Artistic Director



From left to right: 2025 Shakes! Elementary Schools program *Faithful Friends*; 2025 Summer Parks Tour performance of *As You Like It*; 2025 Shakespeare in the Schools performance of *Richard III*.

Born from aspirations to bring the timeless tales of William Shakespeare directly to rural and under-served communities, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (MSIP) has been enriching the lives of people in Montana and beyond for 53 years.

Last year's summer tour brought *Henry V* and *As You Like It* to communities across Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, and North Dakota, visiting 65 communities with **free** performances from June through September.

The company will kick off the 2026 season at the MSU Duck Pond Grove with free performances June 11th–14th and 18th–21st.

Founded in 1973 on the firm belief that Shakespeare belongs to everyone, the accomplished company of performers and staff work tirelessly to connect people, communities, and the arts, as they spread messages of unity and understanding.

In addition to their free summer tour, MSIP provides robust educational programs through their Shakespeare in the Schools and Montana Shakes! programs that reach thousands of students across Montana and Wyoming. This year's Montana Shakes! program brings *Good In Everything*, an original play based on *As You Like It*, to 60 elementary schools. The fall Shakespeare in the Schools tour will share *Richard III* to middle and high school students. Both education tours are accompanied by

a lively post-show talkback and professionally developed classroom workshops led by the actors that meet Montana core standards.

Ushering Shakespeare's immortal stories of life, love, and tragedy into a modern era, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks is dedicated to preserving the cultural traditions of theatre and literature. Through this artistic expression, MSIP is committed to providing live, professional performances for all people, for all time.

Each season MSIP looks to hire MSU students for work-study/intern positions. These positions work alongside our professional staff. Everything from set constructions to lighting, costume assistance to runners are needed to ensure the success of our season.

MSIP is committed to diversity and seeks to promote a positive model of inclusion. We encourage MSU students to submit their interest to the MSIP Production Manager, Adam Fedock, at: adam.fedock@montana.edu.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Why choose the MSU School of Film and Photography? MSU's School of Film and Photography (SFP) offers one of few comprehensive four-year film and photography degree programs in a sizable geographical area of the northwest United States. It is one of even fewer programs continuing to teach analog in both fields alongside all things digital. We offer comprehensive alternative photographic processes taught in the "dimroom."

The facilities are incredible! We also have a "program within a program" with our Black Box theatre, acting opportunities, Shakespeare in the Parks, and Montana PBS television.

What kind of undergraduate degrees do you offer? SFP offers two undergraduate degrees: a BA in Film & Photography (with either a Photography or Film option) and a BFA in Lens Based Media. Both require the same amount of credits (120), both require film and photography classes, but the BFA requires about 20 more film/photography credits within the 120.

How much interaction is there between film and photography? We encourage film and photography majors to cross pollinate within the school and take both photography and film classes, though photography students tend to remain photocentric and film students filmcentric. The Integrated Lens Based Media major allows students to focus on film and photo concurrently.

What is the average class size? Class size varies, but production classes are limited to 16 so we maintain a high teacher/student ratio.

What equipment will I need to buy? Freshmen are required to have a bare-bones 35mm SLR analog film camera. A MAC laptop computer is required in Sophomore year. Otherwise, most equipment can be checked out from our program.

What equipment is available for checkout? Our Equipment Checkouts are staffed with two full-time managers and two staff plus student workers to maintain and check out 17,000 pieces of equipment through a state of the art Connect2 online checkout system.

Are scholarships available? There are university-wide scholarships to apply for through Cat Scholarships. See page 68.

What expenses are there outside of tuition? Majors are assessed a program fee of ~\$360 per semester. Class expenses over and above that vary, maybe from \$100-\$300 per class on books and supplies.

How much homework is there in college? The University standard is 1 credit = (3) 50-minute periods of inside/outside class time or "engagement with material" per week. Thus, 15 credits = ~37 hours devoted to school per week.

What GPA do you need? Though we would like all students to maintain a B average or higher, the University requirement to have a class count in a major is a C- or in some programs a C.

How long will it take for me to graduate? It takes four years to complete the degree if you register full time (15 credits per semester).

"A combination of freedom and experimentation that allows me to make art that I didn't know I was capable of."

– Michael, Photo major

Is there room for a minor outside of my major?

Yes! Your advisor will have suggestions for you, but some that might dovetail nicely are Art History, Business, English, Anthropology, Psychology, or Philosophy.

Is there room for a double major? There is room for another major within the 120 credit degree. You can also, if desired, pursue two *degrees* at once. This requires an additional 30 credits for a total of 150 credits, which usually takes an additional year, but looks great on a résumé.

Are summer courses offered? SFP offers some summer courses that vary from one summer to the next. More information can be found on our website.

I see you have internships; are they required? Internships are not required, but strongly encouraged for real-world experience. Faculty do not find internships for you, though internships are advertised through our newsletter *The SFP Snapshot*. Internship credits will count within the degree.

Is there a Study Abroad program? MSU has many Study Abroad options, and all credits earned abroad apply to the degree. We recommend study abroad during junior semester/year.

Do my photography/film credits taken elsewhere transfer? The university transcript evaluation team makes these decisions, and then you will meet with your school advisor to plug classes into the degree where applicable.

Is the program fine art or commercial? Most students plan on working in the field of film and/or photography. Both options require studies classes along with production because our goal is to teach students to become visually and conceptually “literate” in an increasingly visual culture. The Photography option, however, leans more fine art than commercial.

Do I need a four year degree to work in the field?

Working in the field does not require a degree, only knowledge. The purpose of a four-year liberal arts education is to get exposure to all kinds of knowledge. We encourage you to broaden your horizons by taking classes throughout the university, not just in our school, and also a minor or even a second major as discussed previously.

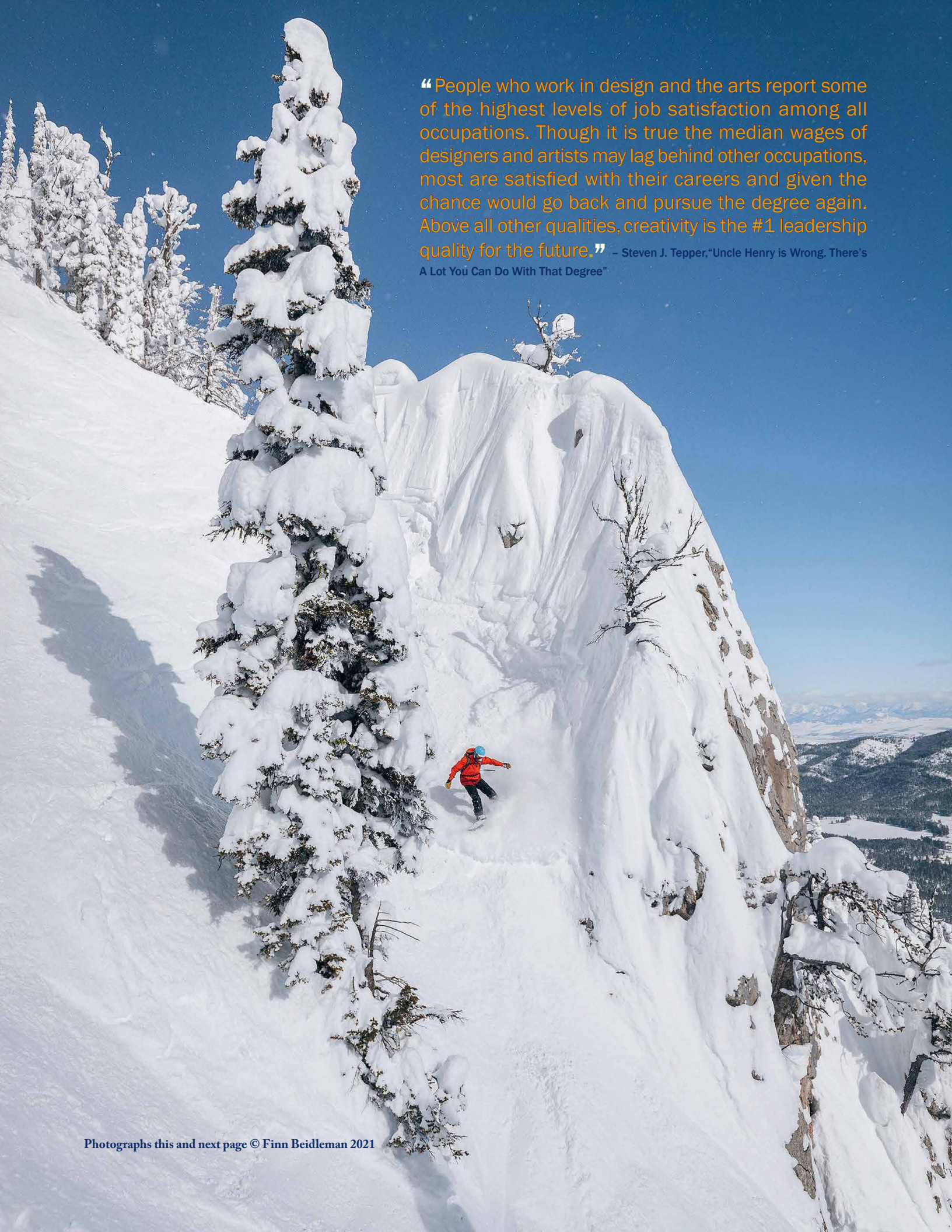
What kind of jobs can I get with my degree? The job possibilities vary widely over and above a working photographer or filmmaker. See the inside front cover for ideas!

Does the faculty do job placement? The faculty does not do job placement. That said, there is nothing better than forming a good relationship with your faculty so you can procure letters of recommendation. Faculty industry connections may be of future benefit to you.

Do students find work once they graduate? Many of our graduates stay in some sort of visual field, but a film and photography degree teaches creativity and visual/cultural literacy, both increasing in demand in all jobs.

How do I know your program is the right one for me? It is best to come for a visit and you will see why we think you will love it here. Bozeman is a trendy college town nestled in the beautiful Rocky Mountains, 90 miles from Yellowstone Park, 36 miles from Big Sky, and 16 miles from the Bridger Bowl ski area. Outdoor activities abound. You can make arrangements to visit through the Office of Admissions (1-888-MSU-CATS) or by emailing admissions@montana.edu. We look forward to meeting you in person! Please also visit sfp.montana.edu for further information.





“People who work in design and the arts report some of the highest levels of job satisfaction among all occupations. Though it is true the median wages of designers and artists may lag behind other occupations, most are satisfied with their careers and given the chance would go back and pursue the degree again. Above all other qualities, creativity is the #1 leadership quality for the future.” – Steven J. Tepper, “Uncle Henry is Wrong. There’s A Lot You Can Do With That Degree”



Why Bozeman?

- Population 58,000, a small town with big energy
- Cultural amenities of a much larger city (symphony, opera, ballet) with more than 40 restaurants downtown alone
- Endless skiing, hiking, camping, biking, climbing, and fishing options
- Surrounded by five mountain ranges
- Gallatin, Madison and Yellowstone Rivers within a half hour of campus
- 1.8 million acres of nearby wilderness
- Yellowstone National Park 90 miles away—our classroom, lab, and playground
- Annual snowfall: 86" in town
- Average days of sunshine: 300
- 17,000 students at MSU
- Top 10 student home states: Montana, Washington, Colorado, California, Minnesota, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, Wyoming, Illinois, + 69 countries

Scholarship and Grant Opportunities

The School of Film and Photography offers a number of different scholarships for incoming freshmen, transfer students, as well as current students. To find a full list of our available scholarships, please visit the following link: sfp.montana.edu/scholarships/scholarship.html

Freshman Portfolio Scholarship

This competitive scholarship is awarded to a student who shows originality, creative energy, and relative accomplishment of the work submitted. The application for this award can be found in Cat Scholarship: montana.academicworks.com

Cat Scholarships

Cat Scholarship also has other opportunities for scholarships from across the MSU campus. It is recommended that students fill out an application in Cat Scholarship each year. More information can be found on the Cat Scholarship website: montana.academicworks.com

Prospective Student Scholarship Opportunities

Montana State University offers specific scholarship opportunities for incoming freshmen and transfer students. These include scholarships for Resident and Non-Resident freshmen and transfer students. To learn more about the requirements please visit: montana.edu/admissions/scholarships

General scholarship information is available from the Office of Admissions at Montana State University. Please contact:

Office of Admissions

admissions@montana.edu

1 (888) 678-2287 or 1-(888)-MSU-CATS

CAA Student Opportunity Grants

Student Opportunity Grants are given to current students pursuing unique opportunities in the College of Arts and Architecture that will further their education and future career. Please contact:

Jennifer Dunn, Assistant Dean

jendunn@montana.edu

(406) 994-4370



Jennifer Dunn

MFA Scholarships

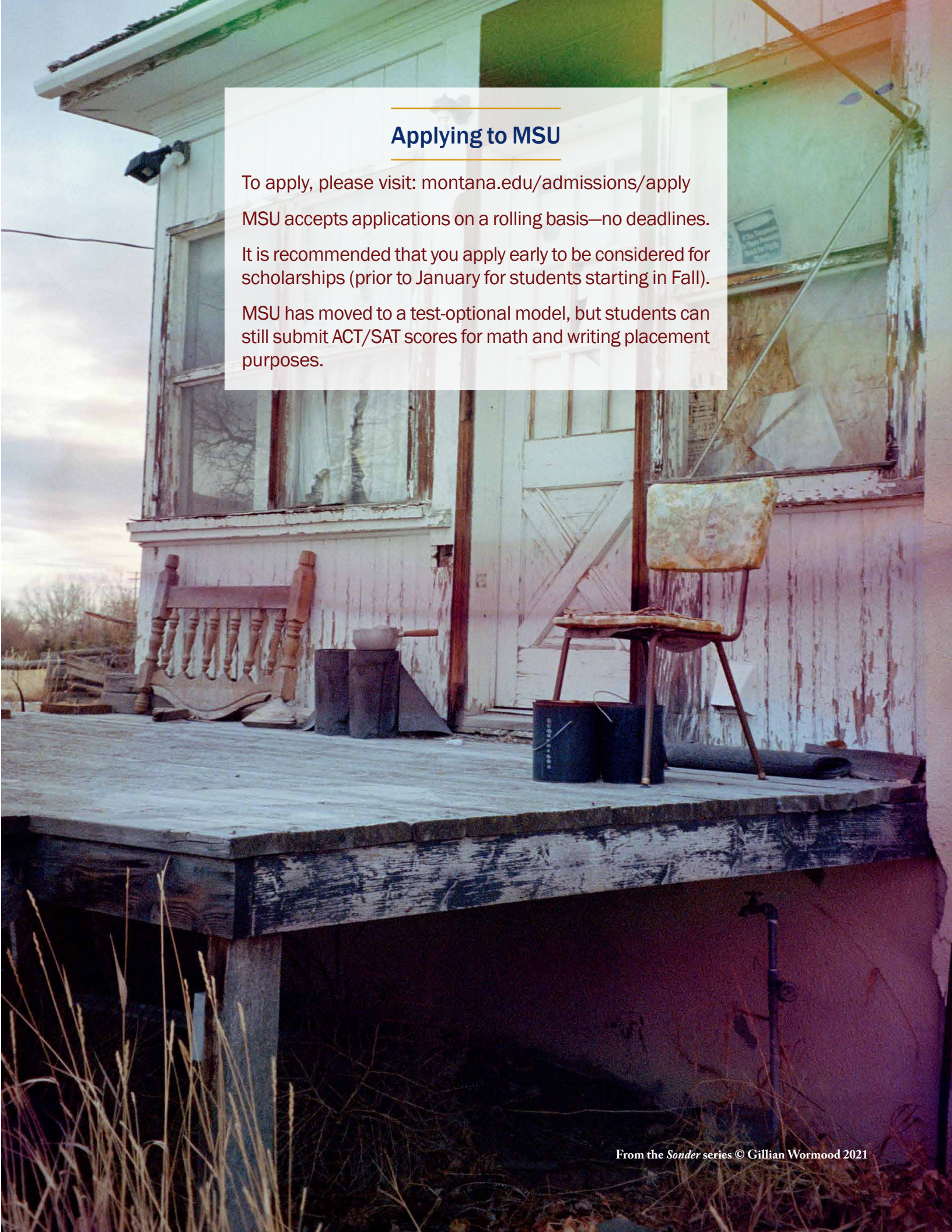
Incoming and continuing MFA graduate students can apply for Crawford Wildlife Habitat Scholarships to support their research and creative activities contributing to the understanding of wildlife habitat. The awards are \$10,000/year and can be received for up to three years. Continuing graduate students apply through Cat Scholarships and new graduate students apply through the MSU application portal. For more information, go to www.montana.edu/gradschool/fellowships/wildlife_habitat.html or contact the MSU Graduate School at gradschool@montana.edu.

Questions? Please contact:

The School of Film and Photography

SFP@montana.edu

(406) 994-3902



Applying to MSU

To apply, please visit: montana.edu/admissions/apply

MSU accepts applications on a rolling basis—no deadlines.

It is recommended that you apply early to be considered for scholarships (prior to January for students starting in Fall).

MSU has moved to a test-optional model, but students can still submit ACT/SAT scores for math and writing placement purposes.

VISIT:

Visual Communications Building
Montana State University
1051 West Grant St Bozeman, MT 59717

CONNECT:

sfp@montana.edu | snhf@montana.edu (MEA) | 406.994.3902

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