

Centering Student Voices: Comprehensive BFA and MFA in Film Survey

Department of Film and Media Arts | College of Visual and Performing Arts | Syracuse University

Prepared by Alex Mendez Giner

Program Facts

220

BFA STUDENTS

14

MFA STUDENTS

12

FT FACULTY

9

PTI FACULTY

Introduction

The Film Program conducted its first comprehensive student surveys in decades, directly engaging BFA and MFA students. These surveys provided critical information that can help evaluate the curriculum, assess program strengths, and inform strategic planning.

🏆 BEST USE OF RESULTS AWARD — 2024

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness recognized the Film Program for effectively applying assessment findings to program decision-making, providing the foundation for this expanded survey initiative.

Assessment Type

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) served as the guiding framework, ensuring that survey questions were directly aligned with each program outcome and that responses could be linked to measurable indicators of program effectiveness.

This initiative expanded our traditional assessment model by incorporating direct student feedback, transforming assessment from a mere documentation exercise into a collaborative dialogue between students and faculty.

BFA Student Learning Outcomes

- ✳️ **Technical Skills**
Demonstrate proficiency in process and technique knowledge in Film Production.
- ✳️ **Conceptual Skills**
Understand abstract ideas and complex processes while thinking creatively
- ✳️ **Critical Thinking**
Analyze theoretical, critical, and historical concepts effectively through film.
- ✳️ **Filmmaking Proficiency**
Produce quality films with cohesive, compelling production management.
- ✳️ **Collaboration Skills**
Function effectively as a team member of a production.

MFA Student Learning Outcomes

- ✳️ **Technical Skills**
Demonstrate proficiency in process and technique knowledge in Film Production.
- ✳️ **Conceptual Skills**
Understand abstract ideas and complex processes while thinking creatively
- ✳️ **Critical Thinking**
Analyze theoretical, critical, and historical concepts effectively through film.
- ✳️ **Filmmaking Proficiency**
Produce quality films with cohesive, compelling production management.
- ✳️ **Professional Practice**
Produce quality films with cohesive, compelling production management.

Assessment Method

Separate surveys for BFA and MFA students assessed satisfaction across SLOs, identified areas for curricular attention, and captured student interests and career intentions.

BFA SURVEY

- ◆ Respondents: 147
- ◆ Response Rate: 73%
- ◆ Questions: 20 items
- ◆ Format: Quantitative+Qualitative

MFA SURVEY

- ◆ Respondents: 16
- ◆ Response Rate: 89%
- ◆ Questions: 20 items
- ◆ Format: Quantitative+Qualitative

Instruments:

filmmaking modes · SLO satisfaction · curriculum coverage · desired new courses · career planning · Keep / Stop / Start feedback

Assessment in Action

Our approach is giving voices to the students, transforming assessment from a documentation exercise into a catalyst for renovation.

- **Student Voice at the Faculty Table**
Survey data gave faculty concrete, program-specific evidence to anchor curriculum conversations — moving debate from opinion to informed, participatory decision-making.
- **Shared Priorities Across Both Programs**
BFA and MFA students independently surfaced the same areas for attention — strengthening the case for coordinated, cross-program curricular development.
- **Curriculum Revision in Progress**
Findings on mode preferences, production management, career preparation, and emerging technologies are actively informing the ongoing faculty-led curriculum revision process.
- **Faculty Search Alignment**
Data provided meaningful context for the need of new faculty in Production Management and Production Design.
- **Assessment as Institutional Resilience**
Robust internal assessment positions the program to demonstrate value and respond to accountability requirements with evidence.
- **A Replicable Model for Program Review**
This initiative establishes a precedent for participatory assessment cycles — connecting student experience to SLO performance and strategic planning.



DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND MEDIA ARTS