

**Lafayette College Film and Media Studies**  
**Scholarship Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion**  
**Updated August 2021**

Film and Media Studies (FAMS) is devoted to the critical study and original production of all forms of media. FAMS embraces the academic study (history, theory, form) and/or the making of media, including: film, video, images, audio, television, radio, live performance and online, plus combinations of these and other arts/forms of communication.

Candidates in the interdisciplinary FAMS program must demonstrate an ongoing pattern of scholarly activity and engagement relevant to both FAMS at Lafayette and to the larger profession of Film and Media Studies. This activity must be of high quality, be disseminated to audiences via appropriate mechanisms, and be suitably peer-reviewed. In general, scholarship in FAMS produces performance text, critical text, creative text, or visual text, and that product is presented to or shared with an audience and evaluated by qualified individuals and/or organizations. Since the field of Film and Media Studies is rapidly changing and interdisciplinary, the scholarly activity of its faculty will be diverse and evolving.

Scholarship in FAMS can be either analytical or creative in nature, or a combination of the two. As an interdisciplinary field, it is common for scholarly work in FAMS to move beyond and between established disciplinary boundaries—this fact is desirable and must be taken into account when identifying peer reviewers. FAMS work may also be part of larger artistic or scholarly productions; for example, a short film that is an integral part of a live theatrical performance. As a highly-collaborative practice, FAMS scholarship may be expected to involve working in teams and necessitates the integration of other contributors across and within disciplines. FAMS work can also be highly individual and the production of a single author. FAMS scholarship may be disseminated either within or outside the academy, including via various emergent platforms. Significant research and scholarly work are major and inseparable components of all FAMS production, and the scholarship of discovery is often integral.

Although each candidate's record is unique, the following are significant markers of scholarly production in FAMS:

**First Rank:**

- Directing or producing a film, video, audio, television or live program. Emphasis is on completed works, not necessarily on length; differentiation depends upon the form, the subject, and the venue in which it appears.
- Technical film or video production work, including editing, camera, and sound on individual or collaborative projects that are professionally distributed or screened.
- Public screenings, broadcasts or live performances of original works of film, video, audio, or mixed media arts shown at selective and respected national/international/ and local venues. Differentiation of the relative value of specific venues, such as broadcast vehicles, is part of this process; for example, a festival with a national or international reputation and a more selective acceptance rate is more substantive than a local or regional festival; a higher frequency of broadcasts on national television or in cinema venues is more valuable than fewer broadcasts in

local markets; a large number of invited screenings at top-tier University and College venues and conferences indicates significant scholarly recognition.

- Publication of books of scholarship.
- Publication of peer-reviewed articles.
- Authorship of digital media projects accepted for publication in peer-reviewed on-line venues.
- Editing/Co-editing a book of scholarship accepted for publication.

## **Second Rank:**

A candidate's file may also demonstrate evidence of ongoing and engaged scholarship through a number of other activities that, while important to the overall contributions of the candidate, are understood as secondary in importance to the significant markers of scholarly production listed above. These kinds of scholarship include:

- Lafayette College-based activities, such as directing, screenings, performances, etc., that are limited to College performance. These should be peer-reviewed if they are to count as scholarship rather than teaching, but are weighed as secondary in comparison to national/international distribution, screenings and juried festivals for tenure and promotion.
- conference presentations;
- non-refereed articles;
- invited reviews;
- grant writing;
- marketing and distribution of media and forms of publicly-engaged scholarship.

It is important that candidates make clear how such activities enhance and help shape their overall body of work. Because the forms and venues of FAMS scholarship are evolving, the candidate (along with the FAMS program) assumes responsibility for contextualizing the candidate's work so that its quality and value may be clearly understood.

As with scholarship in other Arts programs and departments, FAMS will solicit peer reviews for tenure and promotion by circulating scholarship for critique and comment by academic and professional experts in the discipline. While the form of peer review will vary from case to case, the FAMS program will, where appropriate, solicit written critiques from qualified individuals of the candidate's creative scholarly production at screenings and festivals. While the candidate may supply a list of potential reviewers for individual works, it is the program chair's responsibility to solicit and manage such professional peer reviews as part of the candidate's file.

For local and Lafayette College screenings, the program chair will invite local professionals to consult with the candidate and provide a review for the candidate's file, similar to the procedure used by the Theater Program. For published scholarship, the review process is analogous to that of other academic departments: articles in high-ranking peer-reviewed journals are excellent evidence of continuing scholarship. In many cases, published reviews of film and media projects in newspapers, journals, and discipline-specific periodicals also serve as evidence of peer-review. If appropriate, the candidate will arrange for and provide recordings of ephemeral works, as well as reviews of publications, exhibits, and performances for inclusion in her/his file.

## **Best Practices:**

In order to ensure best practices in evaluating the production and dissemination of FAMS scholarly work, it is important to consult processes articulated by such leading professional organizations as the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) and the University Film and Video Association (UFVA). Relevant quotations and references from these professional organizations follow:

### [From the BEA,](#)

While published research tends to follow a traditional form, aesthetic conventions vary for each medium and are constantly changing. Assessment of the work should address the appropriateness and integration of the aesthetic conventions and the content. In addition, originality and innovation in the use of aesthetic or technical processes should be noted.

Since one person working in isolation completes few media projects, evaluators should expect the participation of others (including students). For example, the role of executive producer is often analogous to a researcher in traditional scholarship that leads a team of assistants in a project. The faculty member's input into the work under evaluation should be addressed.

### [From the UFVA,](#)

It should be noted that multiple showings of the same film are not the equivalent of reprints of a scholarly work. In the case of reprints of books or articles, the original printing is often still available through libraries. Reprinting of an article is primarily for the convenience of the readers of a particular periodical. There is generally no such easy access to media works; thus, in most circumstances each showing of a media work makes the production available to a new, previously inaccessible audience.

Film and video works may be disseminated through distribution agencies and companies, although this system is considerably less comprehensive than the equivalent dissemination of published scholarly works. Some distributors are highly selective, and the inclusion of a faculty member's work within their inventories can be considered an indication of quality. However, most film and video distributors are commercial, and the exclusion of a faculty member's work from such distribution is not necessarily an indication that it has little or no artistic or social value. It must be remembered that faculty works must compete for distribution with works produced by individuals whose careers are exclusively dedicated to creative film and video production.

Some professional associations, including the University Film and Video Association, regularly provide written evaluations of works selected for showing at their conventions. The judges of some festivals also will provide written critiques, if requested. Letters evaluating a faculty member's work can be requested from responsible individuals at museums, media centers, colleges and universities, and other institutions at which the work has been shown. As in the case of scholarly reviews, it is important to consider the reputation of the individual or institution contributing the evaluation.

## **Covid – 19 Disruptions:**

The department recognizes that the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our faculty members. Further, the FAMS program recognizes that the degree and significance of that

impact varies by each individual, in the arena of scholarly, teaching and service activities and overall productivity during the pandemic and for some amount of time after normal College operations resume. The program will consider these impacts during its reviews of faculty records and invites faculty members to articulate impacts that are particular to their individual situations and overall productivity.