



2018 - 2019

**Thesis Student
Guidelines**

Film



Letter from the Thesis Committee

Dear Thesis Students,

In our opinion, you all have the potential to become significant artists. From the beginning of your experience at SVA, you have shown talent and originality. Your thesis year can be the culmination of your hard work.

The SVA Film Thesis Program is a unique experience, which can become the foundation of a successful career. The members of the Thesis Committee and the Thesis Advisors have prepared program that combines the best of their experience in all areas of film.

You will be dedicating a full year your project. A large amount of your time, effort, and financial resources will be put into this endeavor. We urge you to choose a subject that you are passionate about.

The School of Visual Arts will encourage and support any type of project you choose to undertake; narrative fiction, documentary, experimental, etc. — as long as the work demonstrates commitment, an advanced level of content, craft, technique, and quality.

We have the highest expectations for you as individuals, and as a class. We look forward to working closely with you. We want to help you realize the success you have already worked so hard to achieve.

Sincerely,

The Thesis Committee

Mary Lee Grisanti, Acting Chair

Ed Bowes

Joan Brooker-Marks

Kamil Dobrowolski

George LaVoo

THESIS ADVISORS 2018-2019

All thesis students must choose a thesis advisor from this list. Any other advisor requires the permission from the Thesis Committee.

Please be aware that no advisor may accept more than 8 students. **Your completed advisor agreement must be submitted by April 27th.**

1. Bowes, Ed	edbowes@aol.com
2. Brooker, Joan	joanbrooker@gmail.com
3. DiGiacomo, Angelo	digiphocus@gmail.com
4. Dobrowolski, Kamil	kamildobrowolski@gmail.com
5. Georgevich, Dejan	dgeorgevich@att.net
6. Goldfried, Michael	goldenfried@gmail.com
7. Grisanti, Mary Lee	maryleegrisanti@gmail.com
8. Hillier, Larry	hillier@verizon.net
9. Katz, David	davecutsvideo@gmail.com
10. LaVoo, George	georgelavoo@gmail.com
11. Newman, Chris	cnsound55@gmail.com
12. Petrosino, Sal	spetrosino@sva.edu
13. Robinson-Lee, Sherese	srobinson@sva.edu
14. Ricker, Jenna	jenna.ricker@hotmail.com
15. Simopoulos, Nana	nana@nana.net
16. Stephens, Todd	toddjstephens@gmail.com
17. Sunara, Igor	igsun@earthlink.net

THESIS COMMITTEE: Mary Lee Grisanti, Ed Bowes, Joan Brooker. Kamil Dobrowolski, George LaVoo

*Any student who wishes to choose a thesis advisor who is NOT a current SVA Film Faculty Member must get approval from the Chair.

REQUIREMENTS

Directors

Directors are required to direct one 10-20 minute production that demonstrates an advanced level of craft and technique. Music videos and advertisements are not permitted. You must turn your script in for Thesis Committee evaluation at least 5 weeks prior to principal photography.

Editors

Editing Specialists are in general required to edit two SVA Thesis projects. However, one project will be considered based on length and complexity - only the Thesis Committee can decide if the project qualifies. Editors are responsible for supervising and planning all stages of post-production.

Editors may produce and edit their own projects as a fulfillment of the above requirement. **

Cinematographers

Cinematographers must function as Director of Photography on two SVA Thesis Projects. As such, they are responsible for the visual interpretation of the project, lighting, the camera crew, camera equipment selection and operation.

Cinematographers may direct their own projects as a fulfillment of this requirement.**

Sound Recordists & Designers

Sound Designers must receive written approval from the Committee to concentrate in this area. Sound designers must design and execute the production sound on 3 SVA thesis projects and design the post-production sound on 2 thesis projects.

Screenwriters

Screenwriters must complete a polished final draft of a full – length 90 to 120 page screenplay.

All students must know the deadlines that occur throughout the year. If you have any questions, contact filmthesis@sva.edu

****Editor and Cinematographers making their own projects must follow the same guidelines and deadlines that Directors do.**

THESIS DEADLINE DATES 2018-2019 (Directing/Cinematography/Editing)

PLEASE NOTE: ANY EDITOR OR CINEMATOGRAPHER MAKING HIS OR HER OWN FILM MUST FOLLOW ALL DATES FOR DIRECTORS. THOSE WORKING ON OTHER PROJECTS MUST SUBMIT REPORTS AND PLANS AS DETAILED BELOW.

- April 9** Completed advisor agreement.
- June 8** FEATURE FILM PROJECTS MUST BE APPROVED BY JUNE 8. PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY MUST BE FINISHED BY NOVEMBER 3rd.
- Writing majors who are also making films must submit a synopsis and/or first draft by June 8th.
- September 15* *Advisor Reports due.*
- October 15* *Advisor Reports due.*
- October 12** Directors – story synopses or first drafts of scripts due, A reminder that this also includes all other majors who are shooting films.
- Documentarians** are required to submit an in-depth proposal for their projects. Samples available upon request.
- November 2** PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY for all students making feature films must be completed.
- November 2** **FILM AND ANIMATION DEPARTMENT PRE-PRODUCTION GRANTS** (judged on scripts only). STUDENTS MUST HAVE 3.5 GPA AND U.S. CITIZENS MUST SHOW PROOF OF VOTER REGISTRATION.
- November 15* *Advisor Reports due. Please indicate those students who are not meeting their thesis obligations.*

November 16	Cinematographers, Editors, and Sound Majors must submit an in-depth report that specifies in detail the projects they are working on, and the status of each.
December 10	All students making films must submit a completed draft of their script.
<i>December 15</i>	<i>Advisor Reports due. Students grades will be either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory</i>
<i>January 15</i>	<i>Advisor Reports due.</i>
February 2	Principal photography must be completed. Thesis priority for equipment ends.
<i>February 15</i>	<i>Advisor reports due.</i>
February 22	FILM AND ANIMATION DEPARTMENT POST-PRODUCTION GRANTS: (Judged on the basis of TEN minutes of edited footage from the film - No dailies and no trailers).
<i>March 15</i>	<i>Advisor Reports due. Please detail student's progress and completion date(s). Indicate those students who are not meeting their thesis obligations.</i>
<i>April 15</i>	<i>Advisor Reports due. Please give YOUR students a letter grade.</i>
TBA	Thesis films due

THESIS DEADLINE DATES FOR SCREENWRITERS 2018-2019

- June 8** Writers who are making films must submit a synopsis and/or first draft of script or proposal.
- July 6** Writers who are making films must submit final drafts of scripts/ proposal.
- September 10** First Day of Masterclass – Outlines due to advisors, filmthesis@sva.edu, and PCloud.
- October 26** First Acts Due to advisors, filmthesis@sva.edu, and PCloud.
- December 14** Second acts due to advisors, svafilmthesis.com, and PCloud.
- January 18** Rough Draft of Features Due to advisors, svafilmthesis.com, and PCloud.
- March 22** First acts of scripts due in hand to Thesis Box in the film Chair's Office for Dusty Festival Screenwriter's Grants.
- April TBD** **Final Drafts of Feature Due to the film Chair's Office.**
Electronic submissions due to advisors, svafilmthesis.com, and PCloud.

STATEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

SVA does not have any ownership or other interest in any “Works” (including any artwork, writing, research, animation, film, video, design, software, application or other works that may be protected by copyright) created by a student while enrolled at SVA, unless the student agrees otherwise in writing, except that SVA has a limited right to use the student’s Works for educational, promotion and accreditation purposes.

Students must clear all rights to any source materials used in their projects.

STUDENT RESOURCES

- **Film Department Web Page:** filmandanimation.sva.edu
- **Music Library:** www.audionetwork.com --
Email nyoffice@audionetwork.com, say you're from SVA, and they will create an account for you.

EMAILS:

Film Thesis Committee- filmthesis@sva.edu

Chair’s Office General inquiries- svafilmanimation@gmail.com

THESIS STUDENT / ADVISOR CONTRACT

Student Name: _____
Student ID#: _____
Specialization: _____
Advisor Name: _____

I have selected the following individual as my thesis advisor for the 2018-19 thesis year. I understand that my obligations to my thesis advisor and the Thesis Committee are as follows:

- Communicate with my advisor on a weekly basis
- Attend monthly thesis review meetings scheduled with my Thesis Advisor
- Notify the Chair's Office or filmthesis@sva.edu if I am unable to meet with my advisor
- Submit copies of all materials pertaining to my thesis to my advisor AND the Chair's office
- Inform filmthesis@edu.com AND the Chair's office if my contact information changes
- Submit 2 copies of my script, with Thesis Advisor approval, at least 5 weeks before principal photography, for approval by the Thesis Committee. Approval takes approximately 14 days.
- Submit all required materials to the Dusty Film Festival Office by their established deadlines
- Failure to comply with Thesis Guidelines, requirements, and due dates will adversely affect thesis status, final grade, and eligibility for grants.
- **THESIS ADVISORS will be provided a thesis report form that will be sent to advisors at the 1st of each month.**

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Advisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Thesis Committee Member: _____ **Date:** _____

THESIS APPROVAL FORM

1. Thesis Student: _____
2. Specialization: _____
3. Phone: _____
4. Email: _____
5. Project Title: _____
6. Thesis Advisor: _____
7. Thesis Advisor Email: _____

THESIS ADVISOR: As Thesis Advisor to the above named student, I have found the FINAL VERSION of the above named project the best it can be in relation to my advisee's abilities.

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

Thesis Advisor: _____

Thesis Committee Member: _____

PLEASE TAKE NOTE:

In order to schedule and book equipment, thesis approval must be obtained and the Production Office must have a copy of this signed form. Thus, you must carefully schedule your shooting date(s) and allow enough time for both Thesis Approval and equipment request/coordination with the Production Office.

At least 5 weeks prior to principal photography, and with your advisor's signed approval, please submit this form to the Thesis Box in the Film Chair's office.

At the same time, the script should be submitted in PDF format to filmthesis@sva.edu with a note informing the Thesis Committee that you are seeking Thesis Approval, and that you have placed the Thesis Approval Form into the Thesis box in the Chair's office.

Thesis committee review and approval will take a minimum of 14 days. Once approved, make sure the Production Office has a copy of this signed Thesis Approval form so that you can begin the process of equipment request(s) and scheduling pick-up dates.

Thesis * **TEST SHOOT** *Approval

1. Name: _____
2. Specialization _____
3. Phone _____
4. Email: _____
5. Project Title: _____
6. DETAILED Equipment List:

THESIS STUDENT: With the approval of either a Thesis Committee member or the Film Chairman, I would like to take out the following equipment which is required for the completion of the test shoots for my thesis project.

I agree that I, the will be the only one using this equipment to shoot tests with my cinematographer, and will not begin my actual thesis shoot until I have obtained thesis approval.

THESIS ADVISOR: I approve the release to my thesis advisee all to conduct a Thesis test shoot.

***REQUIRED SIGNATURES ***

Thesis Student: _____

Thesis Committee Member: _____

*If students want to check out equipment on additional dates, i.e. pick ups, etc. They must have their advisor contact the Production Office indicating their approval

Film Grants

Pre-Production Grants are awarded in the fall semester and Post-Production Grants and the Screenwriter's Grant are awarded in the spring semester. All thesis students with a cumulative 3.5 GPA are eligible. The Film Thesis Committee will choose the recipients of Production Grants based on the quality of the work submitted via PCloud.

Pre-Production Grant Deadline

Friday, November 2, 2018 by 4:00PM

Required Materials

1. Script
2. PDF of students' transcript showing a minimum 3.5 GPA
3. Proof of voter registration (required from US citizens only). Can be found at rockthevote.com
4. Acceptance of grant must be acknowledged in your credits.

Grant Application Link: <https://goo.gl/forms/8bi9VgqyWBXrHS1p2>

Post-Production Grant Deadline

Friday, February 15, 2019 by 4:00PM

Required Materials

1. 10 minutes of your film as a Quicktime file.
2. PDF of students' transcript showing a minimum 3.5 GPA
3. Proof of voter registration (required from US citizens only). Can be found at rockthevote.com
4. Acceptance of grant must be acknowledged in your credits.

Grant Application Link: <https://goo.gl/forms/E11B9SNT3zXk7NsF3>

Screenwriter's Grant Deadline

Friday, March 22, 2019

Required Materials:

1. Submission of the first act of your feature film. Please leave your name off of your script so judging can remain anonymous.
2. PDF of students' transcript showing a minimum 3.5 GPA
3. Proof of voter registration (required from US citizens only). Can be found at rockthevote.com
4. First and second submission to the Dusty Program Book

Grant Application Link: <https://goo.gl/forms/iX4pJOJBsqkH1QY42>

All application material must be submitted to PCloud via upload links distributed by the Thesis Committee. Additionally, an online application form must be completed alongside required materials submission.

NOTES ON THESIS SHOOTS

Principle Photography

- Prior to reserving equipment, Thesis students must receive a clearance signature from their Thesis advisor and one Committee member. You must also be in good financial standing with the school.
- Thesis students will be allowed a maximum booking period of 21 days.*
- Thesis students reserving equipment must submit equipment request forms to the Reservations Coordinator a minimum of two weeks prior to scheduled pick-up and meet with the Reservations Coordinator during office hours and confirm your order one week prior to the reservation.
- Thesis students lose priority to equipment and studios on February 1, 2019.
- **All thesis students must contact the reservations coordinator, Roxanne Miller (ext. 2183) to discuss projects prior to planning and scheduling your shoots. It's possible some equipment might not be available.**
- You must have a completed and signed approval form before you can reserve equipment.
- Thesis students must have written approval from their advisor every time equipment is requested.
- For details on all approvals, see the Thesis Students Guidelines, available in the Film Chair's Office on the 5th floor.

***Any exceptions to the 21 day limit must be approved by the Thesis Committee.**

Thesis Test Shoots

- Test shorts allow you to plan how you will work with the camera and filters in your location(s).
- Test shoot approval is an investigative tool to help you prepare, and is not approval for your actual shoot.
- Test shoot approval only allows you to check out: a camera, tripod, basic sound and filters, on only for a reservation period of Friday to Monday.
- We recommend test shoots, especially for a project as important as your thesis.
- Thesis Test Shoot approval sheets must be signed by your Thesis advisor and one Thesis Committee member.
- Refer to the Thesis Guidelines booklet for specific instructions (available in the Film Chair's Office on the 5th floor).
- Test shoots for the Arri AMIRA, Red Epic, and Sony FS7 are possible, but depend on camera availability and they must be conducted in one of the department's studios over a single weekend or overnight.

Thesis Crowd-Funding Shoots

- Equipment request for crowd-funding will be limited to a camcorder and a tripod for Friday to Monday checkouts only.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Precautions that Safeguard Equipment and Improve Performance

- If your production is located at the beach, desert, and/or has proximity to water, it is incumbent on filmmakers to take extra precautions.
 - a) Sand floats freely in the wind and penetrates throughout the camera, tripod, sound recorder and lens creating damage to internal mechanics. If this happens, equipment will have to be serviced at great cost – to you. Make sure the equipment is always protected; wrap all equipment thoroughly to protect it when anywhere near water, sand, or dirt.
- Clean lenses with professional lens cleaning tissue and cleaning solution only.
- Do not try any cleaning procedures without asking our advice.
- Never attempt to feed electrical current to film or video camera connectors using nonstandard power sources, as it will damage camera motor and electronics. Never connect a battery belt to a camera while charging.
- Never leave a camera unattended on a tripod and walk away. If you take a break from shooting, take the camera down from the tripod. Place it back in the case or somewhere safe where it cannot be dropped and damaged.
- Theft is an ever-present danger. Be aware of your surroundings, and always assign a crewmember the specific task of watching equipment. Rope off the area where equipment will be stored and never work alone or leave equipment unattended. This includes cars, vans, trucks, and any other vehicles. Theft is common, and you are responsible for replacing any items lost during production.
- Exchanging and/or sharing equipment with other students should not be considered. Never exchange or lend equipment listed on your contract with other students. YOU are responsible for any damage or loss of equipment checked out under your name on the contract.
- Air Travel: Please consult your carrier ahead of time when travelling with production equipment.
- You can also speak to the Production Office for advice on this matter.