

Proposal to change the status of the Cinema Studies Institute

September 26, 2011

The Faculty of Arts and Science is proposing that the status of the Cinema Studies Institute (CSI) be changed from an Extra-Departmental Unit B (EDU:B) to an EDU:A. CSI is a prominent and well-regarded centre for cinema studies in North America that engages in a wide range of research and teaching endeavours related to cinema and media. The proposed change in status is a product of the maturation of Cinema Studies at the University of Toronto since its establishment as an EDU:B in 2007. At that time, after more than thirty years as a strong college-based undergraduate program, Cinema Studies broadened its mandate by expanding into graduate instruction with the establishment of the Cinema Studies M.A. program.

Cinema Studies offers a cohesive and high-demand undergraduate program with over 300 program students and 1,500 undergraduate enrolments in its courses. At the core of the undergraduate curriculum there are over 50 courses devoted to film and media study that are offered through the Institute. These courses are designed to train undergraduates in the fundamentals of the history and theory of cinema and cover a wide range of approaches to film study that incorporate the cultural, economic, technological, and aesthetic dimensions of the medium. At the graduate level, fifteen M.A. students engage in a demanding one-year course of study that culminates in either a major research paper or an internship placement at one of a select number of Toronto-based film institutions. Consistently praised in external reviews as “clearly among the top two or three [undergraduate film studies programs] in Canada,” CSI has confirmed its pedagogical and curricular strengths by expanding into graduate study.

Cinema Studies has continued to heighten its research profile and has seen its cross-appointed tenure-stream faculty base increase to 8 core faculty and 23 affiliated faculty members. These faculty members are based in a diverse range of academic units, including the Departments of Art, Comparative Literature, East Asian Studies, English, French, German Languages & Literatures, History, Slavic Languages & Literatures, and Sociology; the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama; UTM History and Visual Studies; UTSC Humanities and English; and OISE. The Institute has also recently become the graduate home for two appointments in Cinema Studies at UTM.

CSI is in the process of expanding its graduate instruction through the development of a proposal for a new PhD program in Cinema Studies that is being brought forward for governance approval in the 2011-12 academic year. Thus, the transition to EDU:A status is a logical and welcome progression in the evolution of the unit. The transition to an EDU:A will facilitate CSI’s growing research ambitions, allow it to function as the administrative home for faculty members, and provide a base for the proposed PhD program.

The proposed PhD in Cinema Studies has undergone external appraisal and is set to move through governance during the Fall 2011 term. Pending Quality Council and Ministry approval, the aim is for the program to admit students in 2012-13. Based on the strong and steady increase

in the number of applicants to the CSI master's program and the quality of applicants, the Institute estimates that it will enrol 20 PhD students when the program reaches steady state.

Consultation with core faculty, students and the chairs of all departments with which CSI has contractual cross-appointments (French, English, German Languages and Literatures, History at St. George and Visual Studies at UTM) has occurred. Both the proposal document and a cover letter offering additional explanation of the proposed change of status were sent out early in September to all the heads of units affiliated with CSI. Responses to the proposal have indicated enthusiastic endorsement of this initiative.

Financial and planning implications

As per the *Guidelines for Administrative Functions and Protocols of Extra-Departmental Units*¹ EDU:A's have a well-established and defined area of scholarship as a focus. CSI has attained a critical mass of interdisciplinary scholarship on cinema studies that will allow for it to engage in the appointment of teaching staff, admission of students to programs of graduate and undergraduate study, and engage in interdisciplinary research.

Currently, all CSI tenure-stream faculty are cross-appointed to other academic units designated as the primary appointment unit. The change in status of the Institute from an EDU:B to an EDU:A will enable CSI to be the unit of primary appointment of tenure-stream faculty. Where appropriate, appointments will continue to be held jointly.

There are no significant changes to Faculty of Arts and Science budget allocations to CSI that will result from the proposed change. All revenues and costs associated with CSI will be part of the budget of the Faculty of Arts and Science and will be subject to the budgetary procedures of the Faculty. The change in status to an EDU:A does not require additional space allocation. Students in undergraduate and graduate programs associated with the Institute will not be affected by the change in status.

Cinema Studies has enjoyed a strong and productive relationship with Innis College. The infrastructure of dedicated projection equipment and trained audiovisual technicians has been supplied by the College and Innis continues to provide a uniquely equipped environment for the instruction of cinema. In the spirit of cooperation designed to ensure that the mutually beneficial relationship between Innis and CSI is maintained as the latter becomes more autonomous, the College and the Institute entered into a Memorandum of Agreement in 2010. This MOA ensures that both entities will continue to respect the terms of their previously established relationship regardless of the changes the future might bring. CSI will remain housed at the College, with many of the supports that it has benefited from in the past to be supplied by Innis in the future.

The status change is proposed effective January 1, 2012 pending approval by Arts & Science Council and Governing Council.

¹ <http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/Assets/Provost+Digital+Assets/Provost/guide100.pdf>