

UNL film major offers history, variety

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history of films, production areas are currently expanding in the journalism and theater departments. Classes strictly for the production of films, cinematography and videography, will contribute to the film education.

"Typically, in most film programs, you have both facets of history and production. It is important to know how to analyze a film before you can make a film - a good film," Foster said.

Resources available to film majors contribute to the organic process of creating and learning about the good films Foster describes. Film majors will have access to internship opportunities, departments within the theater and journalism colleges that focus on production and viewings at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater for classes.

Also, UNL's film department is one of about 30 programs in the country that runs the films on film, not video. This aspect of the film studies program distinguishes UNL.

The prestige of the film department will increase after a recent donation of films is counted and added to the archives. Dixon and Foster first established the first few hundred films through their donation to the Ross. The new donation, between 500 and 700 films, comes from a family-owned film distribution company in Chicago. Hundreds of prints were donated to

UNL after the distribution company went out of business.

"We have had a big jump in our collection," said Dan Ladely, director of the Ross. "The Jensen family primarily distributed to universities and non-commercial institutions, and one member in the family contributed to the Friends of the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater."

The films are in 16mm format and range from the silent era through the 1980s. Ladely said the films were a huge benefit to the university. Currently, construction is under way for a new building with a film archive and vault to house all these films.

With all of the opportunities and benefits of the program, it is difficult to realize the evolution and struggles the program has undergone. The process the film studies program underwent to be considered as a major has been long, intense and fueled by Dixon.

Dixon came to UNL in 1984, when there was only a film studies minor, and he recognized the need to upgrade the department. Dixon worked on drafting at least 15 proposals for a film major.

Together, with Arts and Sciences Dean Brian Foster, Associate Arts and Sciences Dean Michael Steinman, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs David Brinkerhoff, Dixon organized and synthesized the proposal, which included five departments in three colleges. Finally, the major was accepted and has already

"You never really look at films the same way, and then you become inspired to work and write films."

GWENDOLYN FOSTER
filmmaker and UNL film professor

demonstrated results.

"We have had 30 sign-ups in the 30 days we have officially been considered a major," Dixon said.

Because of the young status of the program, UNL's film studies department lacks the competition and some of the prestige of other film schools. Yet the increasing student interest in the film studies program at UNL offers a few positive differences to schools such as UCLA and NYU.

First, a bachelor of arts degree from UNL is more cost-effective than one from schools such as NYU or UCLA, which not only charge big bucks for tuition but also for production fees.

Second, Dixon said, "We don't require a thesis film, like other schools, that will just sit on a shelf. Instead, we rely on internship opportunities to place you into the industry and other resources."

Many students who graduated from UNL with a film minor have successfully broken into the film industry with

internships. Former UNL student Michael Hofacre has worked as an editor of feature films such as "City of Angels." John Rood, another UNL graduate, serves as the head of promotions at Warner Bros. Studios.

Currently, the film studies program offers only a bachelor of arts, leaving graduates to either dive on into the industry or consider graduate school.

The achievement of the film studies program isn't enough to keep Dixon from setting goals in the future.

"We want as many people to major in film studies as possible, we want to provide a solid historical and theoretical background, we want more aggressive production, and we strongly encourage students in the program to double major in a related course of study," Dixon said.

For film aficionados, Dixon offers some advice: "Take advantage of the Ross Film Theater, the Turner Classic Movie Channel and now, the availability of the film major."

Dysfunction: It's what's for dinner

DINING from page 12

The appearance and value of the table are determined by its outward appearance. The woman and the carpenter crawl under the table to discover it's just wood. Like families, essentially we need to discover that foundation and substance is all the same. Together, it is essential to recognize the need for repair in order to restore value.

Costumes utilized in "The Dining Room" should not be overlooked. Guest costume designer Janis Martin created an impressive range of costumes suggesting the roles of family life but also reflecting time periods from the 1930s to '80s. A few times, the costumes symbolize emotions. In one scene, the women are all clad in some sort of green as if to suggest envy.

All the elements of a successful production are present in "The Dining Room." Numerous scenes depict family life through a mix of humor and drama. The play succeeds in providing powerful social commentary.

"The Dining Room" will play through Oct. 8 in the Howell Theatre.

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