“POETRY INTO FILM:” CURRICULAR INNOVATION
ENGAGING THE ARTS

Overview

This proposal seeks curriculum development support for “Poetry into Film,” an innovative new class for 2014-2015 designed to meet the goals of the Creative Expression element of the Ways of Thinking / Ways of Doing undergraduate breadth requirements.

“Poetry into Film” as a class grows out of an initiative sponsored by the Creative Writing program for the past three years (2012-2014) that encourages undergraduates of all majors and backgrounds to make short film interpretations of published poems. To date, over 50 films have been entered and shown at our annual film screening. The contest provides an interdisciplinary way for students to creatively engage in an investigation of the interaction and intersection between the visual medium of film and the verbal medium of poetry.

“Poetry into Film” as a course will provide a structured opportunity for students without a specific background in film or poetry to explore the artistic possibilities of both mediums. Collaborative learning will be an integral part of the classroom experience.

I. Goals

In “Poetry into Film,” students will work in teams to produce short films based on both published and student-authored poems. From script to screen, small student-led groups will read poetry, discuss strategies for transforming poems into film, then concept, storyboard, and visually design each production before filming, editing, and screening the film for class.

Rationale and Learning Outcomes

“Poetry into Film” fully supports the rationale and learning outcomes of the Creative Expression requirement. Film is not a spontaneous art; the creation of a film requires planning, artistic sensibility, inspiration, willingness to fail and experiment, a degree of technical expertise, and an ability and interest in working with others. In short, the process of building a film mirrors the collaborative way in which we expect many of our undergraduates will eventually work in a variety of industries, where creativity is team-focused as a norm rather than the product of a single individual.

Learning outcomes
“Poetry into Film” will fulfill the Creative Expression learning outcomes as identified by Stanford’s Breadth Governance Board. Most specifically, the class will give students an opportunity to:

- Engage in artistic collaboration and the creative reinterpretation of art made by others

The class will also develop the capacity of each student to:

- Explore their own potential to produce original creative projects
- Take creative risks beyond their comfort zones
- Experience what it is to make the unimagined possible and real
- Appreciate how experimentation, failure, and revision can play a valuable role in the creation of successful and innovative works
- Consider multiple and possibly divergent solutions to a problem

“Poetry into Film” complements and extends the current offerings within the Creative Writing program of the English Department. Currently, the Creative Writing program offers “Fiction into Film,” a cross-listed course with the program in Film & Media Studies, and the Graphic Novel, a two-quarter course where students write and illustrate a complete book. These three classes demonstrate the Creative Writing program’s innovative commitment to visual storytelling. “Poetry into Film” will bridge student interest in film studies with the Creative Writing program’s other courses and our foundational classes in Reading and Writing Poetry.

Anticipated enrollment for the course is 12 students. The course will initially be offered in the Spring Quarter of 2014-2015 with the possibility of further classes in 2015-2016.

II. Oversight

Project oversight will be managed by Eavan Boland, Director of the Creative Writing Program. Budgetary oversight will be handled by Christina Ablaza, Program Manager for the Creative Writing program.

III. Implementation and Reporting

**Implementation Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course planning</td>
<td>Summer, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film editing software class for course instructor</td>
<td>Summer, 2014</td>
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### Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan for “Poetry into Film” will include a syllabus along with a detailed course description that includes lesson plans, student assignments and readings, and student evaluation methods.

### IV. Team Workshop Elements

By its nature, filmmaking is a collaborative art. Different students will bring different skills and interests to the table in their decision to take this course. Working in groups of three, students will share responsibility for planning, shooting, and editing their short films.

Students will meet regularly both in class and outside of class to plan and execute their films, to view the results of their effort and revise (re-edit) with the goal of crafting a film that artistically responds to a given poem.

### V. Department / Program Support

A separate letter of support on behalf of the Creative Writing program will be forwarded by Eavan Boland, Director of the Creative Writing Program.