



10 Best Film Schools in Los Angeles



For those looking to embark on the journey in one of the best film schools for an exciting career in the film industry, there's no better place to start than at a Los Angeles film school in sunny California! As the hub of the entertainment industry since 1912, and with all of the major film studios currently residing there, Los Angeles is the clear choice for students looking to get a quality education at a vocational school that will improve their chances of finding work in this rapidly-changing field.

The career choices available to those who graduate from a Los Angeles film school can vary widely depending on the specific program that students choose to enroll in. Students who complete a Bachelor of Science in Animation may find work as 3D artists, animators, lighting artists, and character modelers, while others who complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film could find themselves working in screenwriting, music video production, documentary production, or editing.

Because of the wide range of careers available to LA film school graduates, average annual salary figures may also vary. To give you some idea, however, salaries for some of the upper level positions such as art director, film editor, and screenwriter may range from \$75,000 to over \$100,000 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Methodology for Ranking the Best Film Schools in LA

We have judged and ranked all of the film schools in the Los Angeles area. The criteria we used to rank each school includes:

33.3%: Program Quality (as determined by student feedback, Freshman Retention, and Graduation Rate);

33.3%: Course Variety and;

33.3% School and Faculty Accolades;

After scoring each film school based on this particular ranking criteria, we compared each of the best film schools in Los Angeles against one another to determine which of them are best able to cater to students choosing this vocation.

To gather the information that we required to rank each film school based on our aptly

selected ranking criteria, whenever possible we used each of the film school's websites to obtain their Freshman Retention Rates, and Graduation Rates. These rates are strong indicators of program quality.

We looked at various websites where students provide feedback on their educational experience and utilized course lists provided by each LA film school. Additionally, the film school's website was used to determine what, if any, awards the institution or faculty have received.

How we scored each of the best film schools in LA was based on a fairly straightforward formula. We added the Freshman Retention Rate to the Graduation Rate and used this as a score, ranking each school from highest to lowest based upon these outcomes. In any case where there was a tie between two schools, the course variety and awards received were used as the tie breaking criteria.

The reason we chose this ranking criteria for the best film schools in LA is also fairly straightforward. The importance of each of these four criteria is as follows:

Freshman Retention Rate: A school's Freshman Retention Rate is a strong indicator that students attending a school are satisfied with the quality of education that they are receiving.

Graduation Rate: A school's total Graduation Rate is a further indicator of how satisfied the attending students are with the quality of the education that they are receiving. The amount of students that stick with a school for the entirety of their academic career strongly indicates that the school is a capable and quality educator.

Course Variety: A school's course variety is a strong indication of quality when it comes to fields of study such as the film industry. Having a diverse educational background is vastly important to the success of someone who wishes to pursue a career in the entertainment industry. Any school that can provide students with a varied selection of courses is one that will allow for their course load to cater to their future career and encourage success.

Awards or Accolades Received: The number of film schools in the Los Angeles area is considerably high. In order to further narrow down the list of best film schools, awards or

previous accolades received by schools or faculty were used. In the film industry, having your talent or dedication recognized with an award is a pinnacle moment, and we wanted to reflect that adequately in this ranking by including this criterion. Any school or faculty member that has been recognized for their work in the film industry is going to be able to propel their students down the same path.

You may also enjoy our ranking of the top 100 [best online colleges](#) in America.

So here it is: our list of ten of the best film schools in Los Angeles & Hollywood:

10 Best Film Schools in Los Angeles

#1 – The Los Angeles Film School

Tuition: \$33,100 (Associates Degree) to \$76,100 (Bachelors Degree)

Program length: 18-36 months

Notable alumni: Kyle Newacheck (one of the creators of the Comedy Central show *Workaholics*), Brandon Trost (cinematographer for *This is the End*, *Neighbors*, and *The Interview*)

The Los Angeles Film School offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs that can help students achieve the filmmaking career of their dreams. Whether you're interested in film production, animation, and visual effects, or the business side of the entertainment industry, The Los Angeles Film School has a film degree program that's right for you.

The Los Angeles Film School was founded in the spring of 1999 when a group of Hollywood professionals decided to create a school where current industry professionals could share their knowledge of the industry with a new generation of filmmakers. The school was established in the same building where artists like Elvis Presley, The Rolling Stones, and Henry Mancini had recorded their hit albums. Since that time, The Los Angeles Film School has introduced degree programs in Computer Animation and Game Production in addition to Music Production and Digital Filmmaking programs.

As a student at this educational institution, you'll be situated right in the heart of the entertainment industry, as the school is located near major studios and production houses. Students also have access to the industry-standard facilities, equipment, and instruction they need to be fully prepared to succeed in a career in film, television, entertainment business, or music.

Congratulations to The Los Angeles Film School for ranking #1 of the Best Film Schools in Los Angeles.

#2 – University of Southern California – School of Cinematic Arts

Tuition: \$51,442 per year

Program length: 2-4 years

Notable alumni: Ron Howard (director of many movies including A Beautiful Mind, Apollo 13, and The Da Vinci Code), Miranda Cosgrove (singer and actress starring in iCarly and Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs)

At USC-SCA, students receive an education that opens the door for them to create compelling, in-demand content for screens of every size. With an impressive roster of alumni, including current President of Marvel Studios Kevin Feige, it's clear that the school does an excellent job of preparing its students for the modern world of film and television. The school is widely considered one of the best film schools in the U.S.

The faculty at USC-SCA bring ample experience to the table, as they all either have previously worked or are currently working professionally as directors, editors, writers, producers, animators, and more. This contributes to the school's teaching philosophy that is based on the understanding that people learn best by doing, which leads the school to provide programs structured around providing students with ample hands-on experience.

Some of the programs offered by USC-SCA include:

* Bachelors and Masters of Arts in Animation degrees

- * Bachelors and Masters of Arts in Cinema & Media Studies degrees
- * Bachelors of Arts in Cinematic Arts, Film & Television Production degree
- * Bachelors of Arts in Interactive Entertainment

#3 – American Film Institute Conservatory

Tuition: \$45,625 for first year, \$57,096 for second year

Program length: 2 years

Notable alumni: Darren Aronofsky (director of Noah, The Black Swan, and The Wrestler), Edward Zwick (filmmaker and producer involved with The Last Samurai, Pawn Sacrifice, and Blood Diamond)

The American Film Institute (AFI) is an organization dedicated to honoring the heritage of the moving picture arts in the U.S. One of the ways in which they do this is through their Conservatory, which is a graduate school unlike any other. Instead of a primarily classroom-based education, the AFI Conservatory uses hands-on collaboration as its primary teaching tool.

As a graduate school, the AFI Conservatory only offers a Master's level program, although applicants without an undergraduate degree may be accepted to the program and be able to complete the same curriculum while receiving a Certificate of Completion instead of a Master's Degree. The Master of Fine Arts degree offered by the school features six disciplines for students to choose from, including:

- * Cinematography
- * Directing
- * Editing
- * Producing
- * Production Design
- * Screenwriting

Graduates of this Los Angeles-based film school are likely to receive employment upon graduation, with 81% of graduates reporting that they had found work after leaving the

program.

#4 – University of California Los Angeles – School of Theater, Film, and Television

Tuition: \$12,816 (resident) to \$39,498 (non-resident) per year

Program length: 4-5 years

Notable alumni: Jack Black (actor in School of Rock, Kung Fu Panda), Francis Ford Coppola (director of The Godfather trilogy)

UCLA-TFT is a prestigious film school in California that has produced Oscar, Emmy, and Tony-winning filmmakers, storytellers, and artists. The school, which has an average annual acceptance rate of just 8.2%, ranks as one of the top five most selective institutions of higher education in the United States. The school is easily one of the best film schools in the country.

The school's Film, Television, and Digital Media department offers degree programs, which includes Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees. UCLA-TFT also offers fully-transferable online courses, with enrollment open to professionals, non-students, and even high school students.

A feature of the school that students are able to take advantage of is its annual awards process held every spring. All students are able to apply, and approximately \$1,000,000 of merit-based awards are given out every year.

#5 – California Institute of the Arts – School of Film/Video

Tuition: \$45,030 per year

Program length: 4-5 years

Notable alumni: Tim Burton (director of Edward Scissorhands and Alice in Wonderland), John Lasseter (animator, filmmaker, and Chief Creative Officer of Pixar Animation Studios)

At the California Institute of the Arts' School of Film/Video, students are able to choose from one of four Bachelor/Master of Fine Arts degree programs:

- * Program in Film and Video (BFA, MFA)
- * Program in Experimental Animation (BFA, MFA)
- * Program in Character Animation (BFA)
- * Film Directing Program (MFA)

The film school's emphasis is strongly placed on independent artistic and intellectual vision, with a renowned faculty of professionals who have distinguished themselves at the highest levels. Students at CalArts enjoy a high degree of personal attention from their teachers, with the school offering a low student-faculty ratio. Each student also is also able to take advantage of having a faculty member personally assigned to them as a mentor and academic advisor.

During the course of education at CalArts, students will get to experience interaction with visiting artists that the school invites to lecture and meet with students.

#6 – Relativity School

Tuition: \$39,600 (baccalaureate) to \$44,985 (post-baccalaureate) per year

Program length: 1-5 years

Relatively School is innovative and unique because it is the first and only school of its kind to be created with a Hollywood studio, Relativity Media. Because of this special relationship, the school's accredited degree and certificate programs are uniquely positioned to provide students with real-world knowledge about the entertainment and media industry.

Instead of the traditional, rigid, top-down academic structures found at many schools, Relativity's curriculum is career focused, with cross-disciplinary collaboration, innovation,

and entrepreneurship at the core of the program. Students will master the professional vocabulary, understand both traditional and emerging concepts, and demonstrate mastery in their chosen area of concentration.

Relatively offers a Bachelors of Fine Arts with concentrations in directing, screenwriting, producing, documentary film, editing, sound design, visual effects, and cinematography. Some of the other degree programs offered by the school include Bachelors of Fine Arts in Commercial Dance, Acting, and Contemporary Musical Theatre, as well as a Bachelors of Arts in Entrepreneurship.

#7 – New York Film Academy – Los Angeles

Tuition: \$12,000-\$16,000 per year for undergraduate/graduate programs

Program length: 1 week to 5 years (school offers one-time classes and undergraduate/graduate programs)

Notable alumni: Naya Rivera (actress starring in the television show Glee), Camilla Luddington (actress starring in the television shows Grey's Anatomy and Californication)

The New York Film Academy has a satellite location in Los Angeles, which prides itself on being one of the top film schools in Los Angeles. The faculty at the school is one of the main reasons for this classification, as the roster of instructors includes working professionals who come from a wide range of backgrounds, including screenwriting, producing, and acting.

In addition to its Bachelors and Masters degrees in film and media studies, the school also offers a number of short-term film workshops ranging from 1-12 weeks that introduce students to the fundamentals of filmmaking.

Some of the specific courses offered within both the degree programs and the film workshops include the following:

- * Screenwriting
- * Cinematography
- * 35mm Filmmaking

- * The Director's Craft
- * Sound Stage Scene
- * Production Design

#8 – California State University Northridge – Department of Cinema & Television Arts

Tuition: \$2,736 (undergraduate) to \$3,741 (graduate) per semester

Program length: 4-5 years

Notable alumni: Directors Paul Hunter and Darren Grant, screenwriter Dale Launer

The CSUN Department of Cinema & Television Arts is located in Northridge, California, at the heart of the entertainment industry. With industry-standard facilities that include film and television sound stages, post-production and mixing suites, a new media lab, a digital visual effects and animation suite, and a 130-seat theater, the school is well-equipped to prepare its students for unparalleled opportunities in the exciting industry of film and television.

The school has many relationships with studios, networks, and production companies, which means that not only do students have access to many internship opportunities during their education, they're also able to find work in every facet of the entertainment industry after they graduate.

Some of the undergraduate programs offered by the Department of Cinema & Television Arts at CSUN include Bachelor of Arts degrees in Electronic Media Management, Film Production, Media Theory and Criticism, Multimedia Production, Screenwriting, and Television Production. A graduate level, Master of Fine Arts Degree in Screenwriting is also offered by the school.

#9 – Art Center College of Design – Pasadena

Tuition: \$19,365 (undergraduate) to \$20,466 (graduate) per term

Program length: 4 years

Notable alumni: Dan Bartolucci (visual effects artist for Captain America, Harry Potter, and Twilight Breaking Dawn Part 1), Michael Bay (filmmaker responsible for the Transformers movie series)

A core tenet at the Art Center College of Design-Pasadena is that learning comes from making. More specifically, learning is a result of a student taking his or her creative ideas all the way from conception to distribution. Because of this, the school's curriculum gives students strong foundational instruction in all aspects of storytelling, allows them to choose a specific track of focus, and, ultimately, gives them the opportunity to write and direct a film and develop a portfolio reel of their individual work.

The specific tracks that students at ArtCenter are able to choose from include cinematography, editing, or directing, and these tracks are all taught by faculty and guest speakers pulled from a selection of studio heads and A-list talent.

Some of the career paths that graduates of ArtCenter's programs go on to work in include:

- * Animation
- * Cinematography
- * Television
- * Online Filmmaking
- * Music Videos
- * Commercials

#10 – Loyola Marymount University – School of Film and Television

Tuition: \$42,576 per year

Program length: 4-5 years

Notable alumni: Barbara Broccoli (producer for the James Bond film series), Scott Eastwood (actor in Gran Torino, Fury)

Having been recognized as one of the top 10 film schools in the U.S. by The Hollywood Reporter, LMU's curriculum, facilities, and small class sizes allow students to finely tune their technical and creative skills, creating industry leaders in the world of entertainment.

Founded by industry moguls in the 1920s, the vocational school has a long and rich history of teaching film and television curriculum that helps students master technical and storytelling skills. The school boasts 400 partner companies, with close to 100 students per semester finding internship placements with these partners. In addition to premier-level internships, the education that takes place at the LMU campus itself is also top notch, as students enjoy focused attention in classes that feature a 12:1 student-teacher ratio.

Some of the undergraduate programs offered by LMU include bachelor degrees in animation, production, recording arts, and screenwriting. Graduate programs are also offered in areas such as writing for the screen, film and TV production, and writing and producing for TV.

Without a doubt, the ten schools included in this list are the best film schools for getting an education in filmmaking. We hope that you're now better prepared to make the right choice as you start down the path towards beginning an exciting career in the film industry.



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