

Academia on Screen: The World of Higher Education in Film and TV Series Across Cultures (March 20 & 21, 2025)

This conference aims to explore the multifaceted portrayals of academia and academics in films and TV series, in both fictional and documentary modes, across diverse cultural contexts. These multimodal media not only capture societal perspectives and moods but also play a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions. They can serve as catalysts for reflection on academic practice and societal discourse, fostering a deeper understanding of cultural imprints and trends, highlighting differences and similarities across cultures, raising critical awareness, challenging stereotypes, and promoting inclusivity.

We invite scholars from various disciplines and all continents, including but not limited to film and media studies, literary studies, linguistics, cultural studies, didactics and education, to dissect and discuss representations of academic environments, characters, and narratives in fictional and documentary films and TV series. Potential topics for exploration include:

- Case studies of specific films or TV series that offer unique insights into the academic world
- (Comparative) Analyses of academic portrayals in and across different national and cultural contexts
- The evolution of academic characters, practices and settings, whether within a single production or from a historical perspective
- Examination of stereotypes, tropes and themes associated with professors, researchers, scientists, students, and/or college or university life
- The impact of these portrayals on public perceptions of higher education
- The role of genre in shaping academic narratives, from drama to comedy to science fiction
- Intersectional analyses of e.g., gender, race, disability, and class/caste in on-screen academic portrayals
- Examination of power dynamics in academia
- Analyses of multimodal constructions within academic portrayals, exploring how linguistic, visual, auditory, and narrative elements shape meanings, interpretations, and audience perceptions
- Reception studies focusing on audience responses to on-screen depictions of academia, including engagement, interpretation, and the influence of cultural and social factors on viewer reception

- Comparisons of and intersections between on-screen and real-life discourses with reflections on societal developments
- Approaches to incorporating academic portrayals in educational settings

Contributions from researchers across all disciplines and cultural backgrounds are equally encouraged. By fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, this conference aims to deepen our understanding of how the academic world is represented and interpreted through the lens of film and television in different cultures and across them. We also seek to stimulate reflections on developments in real-world contexts.

A publication of the conference papers is planned.

Join us to explore cinematic representations of the academic experience and their implications for both the scholarly community and the general public.

Conference Details:

Language: English

Presentation: Each selected talk will be allotted 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion.

The conference will be held on-site on the picturesque campus of the University of Passau, Germany.

Abstract Submission Guidelines: Prospective presenters are invited to submit abstracts of no more than 300 words (excluding references). Submissions should include the presentation title, author(s)' name(s), title(s) and affiliation(s), email address, up to five keywords and a short biographical note (no more than 100 words).

The deadline for submission is November 4, 2024. Please submit abstracts via email to academia-on-screen@uni-passau.de. Notification of acceptance will be sent by December 4, 2024. We encourage submissions from scholars across all disciplines and cultural backgrounds to contribute to an enriching dialogue.

Conference Organizers:

Prof. Dr. Daniela Wawra, English Language and Cultural Studies, University of Passau, daniela.wawra@uni-passau.de

Prof. Dr. Lucia Krämer, English Cultural and Media Studies, University of Passau, lucia.kraemer@uni-passau.de

Conference Website: <https://www.geku.uni-passau.de/en/english-language-and-culture/academia-on-screen>

Important Dates:

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