

**RTV 3101**  
(Fall 2017)

**ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

**Instructor:** James Babanikos, Ph.D.  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:35-11:30; Wednesdays 12:50-2:45; Thursdays 1:55-2:45; and by appointment.

**Description of Course**

This course is designed to provide a thorough understanding and overview of the principles of scriptwriting, and to learn to apply these principles through practical exercises in various programs: commercials, sponsored and corporate videos, television and film documentaries, fictional works and adaptations. Another major objective is to help develop the students' critical faculties, enabling them to better examine and evaluate the scripts of others, as well as their own.

The course will be comprised of lectures, exercises, screenings, workshops, analyses, and discussions.

**Grading**

Commercial	10%
Corporate video/film script	15%
Documentary video/film proposal	15%
Character Sketches / Dialogue Exercise	10%
Test	25%
Final project	25%

Punctuality is most important in this industry. Late assignments will be penalized by one letter grade (i.e., 10%) per day.

Students are expected to attend and participate in all classes. A half point will be deducted from your attendance grade for each unexcused class absence.

Please refer to the official website at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> for an explanation of the letter grades.

## **Texts**

**Required:**     *RTV 3101 Course Packet*, available at Book It!, on the corner of University Avenue and NW 13 St., on the ground floor of the Holiday Inn, facing NW 13 St.

**Recommended:**     Armer, Alan. *Writing the Screenplay: TV and Film*  
                           Beveridge, James A. *Scriptwriting for Short Films*  
                           DiZazzo, Ray. *Corporate Scriptwriting: A Professional's Guide*  
                           Egri, Lajos. *The Art of Dramatic Wr!t!ng*  
                           Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*  
                           Friedmann, Anthony. *Writing for Visual Media*  
                           Lucey, Paul. *Story Sense: Writing Story and Script for Feature Films and Television*  
                           Rabiger, Michael. *Directing the Documentary*  
                           Walters, Roger L. *Broadcast Writing: Principals and Practices*

## **Students With Disabilities**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of students Office. The Dean of students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

## **On-Line Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

## **University Honor Code**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge that states:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code> ) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic

misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

### **Campus Resources: Health and Wellness**

#### **U Matter, We Care:**

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

<http://www.police.ufl.edu>

### **Academic Resources**

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

### **Prerequisites**

A grade of C or better in RTV 2100 and RTV 3007, as well as junior standing in Telecommunication.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1

Wednesday, 23 August

Intro to course  
 Film/video/audio terminology  
**Readings:** *Friedman, Anthony. (2014). "Describing One Medium Through Another" in Writing for Visual Media, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Burlington, MA: Focal Press, pp. 9-21.*  
*Mamer, Bruce. (2000). "Creating the shots" in Film Production Technique: Creating the Accomplished Image, pp. 3-26*

Friday, 25 August

Film/video/audio terminology  
**Readings:** *Douglass, John S. and Glenn P. Harnden. (1996). "Editing for Inspiration" in The Art of Film Technique, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 195-224.*  
*Terms you should know (1 page).*

### Week 2

Wednesday, 30 August

Film/video/audio terminology  
 Writing TV Commercials – An Introduction

Friday, 1 September

TV Commercials: structure and organization.  
**Readings:** *Friedman, Anthony. (2014). "A Seven-Step Method for Developing a Creative Concept" in Writing for Visual Media, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Burlington, MA: Focal Press, pp. 23-46.*  
*Jefferson-Pilot Insurance Telecommercial script (2 pages).*

### Week 3

Wednesday, 6 September

TV commercials: storyboarding and various approaches

Friday, 8 September

TV Commercials – Visualizing then writing

### Week 4

Wednesday, 13 September

TV commercials -- class presentations

Friday, 15 September

TV commercials -- class presentations

**Week 5**

Wednesday, 20 September

The sponsored/corporate film or video project:  
getting started.**Readings:** DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Program Design Research" and "Content Research" in Corporate Scriptwriting, pp. 30-39 and 40-48.

Friday, 22 September

The sponsored/corporate film or video project:  
conceptualization and visualization.**Readings:** DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Concept Thinking" and "Visualization" in Corporate Scriptwriting, pp. 49-61 and 62-70.**Week 6**

Wednesday, 27 September

The sponsored/corporate film or video project:  
writing the script.**Readings:** DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Structure and Transitions" in Corporate Scriptwriting, pp. 115-123.

Friday, 29 September

Writing the script

**Week 7**

Wednesday, 4 October

What is documentary? A discussion of documentary history and different documentary approaches.

**Readings:** Rabiger, Michael. (1998). "Introduction" and "A Brief and Functional History of the Documentary" in Directing the Documentary, pp. 1-12 and 13-34.

Friday, 6 October

No class - Homecoming

**Week 8**

Wednesday, 11 October

The making of documentaries: pre-production, production, and post-production

**Readings:** Rabiger, Michael. (1998) "Research Leading up to the Shoot" and "Interviewing" in

Directing the Documentary, pp. 127-142 and pp. 173-187.

Friday, 13 October

The making of documentaries: other approaches.

**Readings:** Rabiger, Michael. (1998) "The Paper Edit: Designing a Structure" in Directing the Documentary, pp. 249-254.

Beveridge, James A. (1969).

Scriptwriting for short films, No. 57, Reports and Papers on Mass Communication, UNESCO, Paris, pp. 19-20.

### Week 9

Wednesday, 18 October

Fictional programs -- fundamentals of dramatic structure

**Readings:** Swain, Dwight V. and Joye R. Swain. (1988). "The Film Story" in Film Scriptwriting: A Practical Manual, pp. 77-93.

Friday, 20 October

Fictional programs: writing the treatment; fleshing out the story.

**Readings:** Swain, Dwight V. and Joye R. Swain. (1988). "The Story Treatment" in Film Scriptwriting: A Practical Manual, pp. 117-135.

Lucey, Paul. (1996). "Writing the Plot" in Story Sense: Writing Story and Script for Feature Film and Television, pp. 67-108.

### Week 10

Wednesday, 25 October

Characterization

**Readings:** Egri, Lajos. (1960). "Character" in The Art of Dramatic Writing, pp. 33-43.

Dialogue

**Readings:** Swain, Dwight V. and Joye R. Swain. (1988). "Dialogue Devices" in Film Scriptwriting: A Practical Manual, pp. 161-174.

Armer, Alan. (1988). "Characteristics of Bad Dialogue" and "Some Observations on Dialogue" in Writing the Screenplay: TV and Film. Belmont, pp. 101-103 and 114-118.

Field, Syd. (1979). "Endings and

*Beginnings" in Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting, pp. 55-80.*

Friday, 27 October

Writing the screenplay.

**Readings:** Blum, Richard. (1980). "The Film Script Format" in *Television Writing*, pp. 90-107.

Lucey, Paul. (1996). "Writing Stage Directions" in *Story Sense: Writing Story and Script for Feature Films and Television*, pp. 254-272.

### **Week 11**

Wednesday, 1 November

Effective beginnings; developing tension and suspense.

Guidelines for writing effective short scripts

Friday, 3 November

Adaptations

### **Week 12**

Wednesday, 8 November

Review

Friday, 10 November

No Class (Veteran's Day)

### **Week 13**

Wednesday, 15 November

Test

Friday, 17 November

Presentation and discussion of final projects

### **Week 14**

Wednesday, 22 November &  
Friday, 24 November

No class – Thanksgiving

### **Week 15**

Wednesday, 29 November

Presentation and discussion of final projects

Friday, 1 December

Presentation and discussion of final projects

### **Week 16**

Wednesday, 6 December

Presentation and discussion of final projects