

ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

FALL 2017
RTV 3101 0451

Time periods 7-9 Wednesday
1:55 p.m.-4:55 p.m.
Weimer 3020

Instructor Churchill Roberts
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Documentary Websites

<http://www.pbs.org/harrymoore/>
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/negroeswithguns/>
<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/documentary/angelofahlem/angelofahlem.html>
<http://www.petrinz.com/>

Current film: *The Curse of the Terracotta Warriors* [in post-production]

<http://www.mintagenciadigital.com/terracota/> [in production]

Office hours **Monday, 10-11 and 2-5 or any other day or time by appointment**

Description of the course

This course is designed to provide an overview of the principles of scriptwriting, and to instruct students in how to apply these principles through practical applications involving commercials, corporate videos, documentaries, feature films, and television genres such as comedy and drama. Another objective is to help students develop analytical skills for evaluating dramatic structure and presentation skills for pitching story ideas. The course will be comprised of lectures, readings, presentations, in-class and out-of-class exercises, screenings, analyses, and discussions.

Handouts

All materials are available on Canvas. No trees will be sacrificed!

Grading

Television commercial/presentation	15%
Corporate video script	15%
Documentary visual treatment	10%
Documentary proposal/presentation	15%
Character sketch/dialogue exercise	15%
Final project/presentation	20%*

Attendance and in-class exercises	5%
Readings reports	5%

*The final project, which will be presented and handed in at our last regular class meeting on Wednesday, December 6, will be either the beginning of an original screenplay or screenplay adaptation of a book or a television drama/situation comedy.

Warning: Punctuality is most important in this industry. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend and participate in all classes. The only way to receive full credit for attendance is to have no unexcused absences. **Note: There is no such thing as an excused absence to do something for another course.** No incompletes will be given without a medical reason.

Information on current University of Florida grading policies can be found at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Grade scale

90-100	A- to A
80-89	B- to B+
70-79	C- to C+
60-69	D- to D+
Below 60	E

Readings

Readings are posted on the Canvas website. Several years ago, I replaced a textbook (and a test based on the textbook) with selected readings and an additional writing assignment. RTV3101 is, after all, a writing course. The good news was it saved students a considerable amount of money. The bad news was students for the most part ignored the readings. Feedback from previous classes suggested the remedy was to provide an incentive, so beginning year before last completion of the readings counted as much as five points toward the final grade. There are 12 readings, most of them quite short. To receive complete credit, you should e-mail me a short note (a paragraph or two will do) about each reading—what it was about and what you got from it. The e-mail is due the Tuesday after the reading is assigned. Students who complete all 12 readings will receive 5 points. Fewer completed readings will result in fewer points.

University Honor Code

The University of Florida has a standardized code for instructors which states:

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

As students, you have a commitment to academic honesty as well, and it is as follows:

I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the university.

There are six specific types of violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines: cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy and fabrication.

I hope you take this commitment to academic honesty and integrity seriously.

Accommodation for 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.

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>.

Prerequisites

To take this course, you must have a grade of C or better in RTV 2100 and RTV 3000, and have junior standing in Telecommunication.

Course schedule

Week 1	August 23	Introduction to course Scripts, scripts, and more scripts Stages of script development Reading 1 and 2 (due Tuesday, August 29)
Week 2	August 30	Stages of developing a creative concept Reading 3
Week 3	September 6	Storyboarding and writing TV commercials Examples of TV commercials Reading 4 and 5

Week 4	September 13	In-class presentation of commercials
		Reading 6
Week 5	September 20	Corporate video
Week 6	September 27	Documentary Film
		Reading 7
Week 7	October 4	Dramatic structure for documentary and fiction film
		Reading 8
Week 8	October 11	Plot driven versus character driven documentary
		Pitfalls of the observational film
		Pitching a story idea
		Reading 9
Week 9	October 18	In-class documentary pitch
		Reading 10
Week 10	October 25	Characters and dialogue
		The characters in <i>Casablanca</i>
		Reading 11
Week 11	November 1	Writing dialogue
		Reading 12
Week 12	November 8	Writing dialogue and adaptations
Week 13	November 15	Adaptations and comedy writing
	November 22	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Week 14	November 29	Comedy writing
Week 14	December 6	Presentation of final projects

DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

September 13	In-class presentation of commercials
September 27	Corporate video script
October 18	Documentary visual treatment
October 18	In-class documentary proposal (pitch)
November 15	Character sketch/dialogue assignment
December 6	In-class presentation of final projects