

## ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

SPRING 2020 RTV 3101 20779 (7408)

Time periods 3-5 Thursday  
9:35 a.m.-12:35 a.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.petriginz.com/>  
<http://www.mintagenciadigital.com/terracota/>

### **Most recent documentary**

*The Curse of the Terracotta Warriors*—a film about the farmers who discovered the magnificent collection of Terracotta soldiers, horses, and chariots near the tomb of China's first emperor, Xin Shi Huang.

UF Screening Harn Museum, Thursday, March 14, 2019, 6 p.m.  
Speaker: Eugene Wang, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art, Harvard University

**Office hours** Thursday 2 p.m.-5 p.m. or almost any 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	20%
Attendance and in-class exercises	5%
Readings reports	5%

The final project, which is due Monday, April 18, will be either the beginning of an original screenplay or a 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.

## 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 **completion of the readings will count as much as five points toward your 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 on Wednesday following the week during which it was assigned. Readings 1 and 2, for example, are assigned Thursday, January 17. Your e-mail about Readings 1 and 2 is therefore due Wednesday, January 16. **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**

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>January 10</b>	<b>Introduction to course Scripts, scripts, and more scripts Stages of script development</b>
		<b>Readings 1 and 2 (due Wednesday, January 16)</b>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>January 17</b>	<b>Stages of developing a creative concept</b>
		<b>Reading 3</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>January 24</b>	<b>Storyboarding and writing TV commercials Examples of TV commercials</b>
		<b>Readings 4 and 5</b>
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>January 31</b>	<b>Corporate and instructional video</b>
		<b>Reading 6</b>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>February 7</b>	<b>Documentary Film</b>
		<b>Reading 7</b>
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>February 14</b>	<b>Dramatic structure for documentary and fiction film</b>
		<b>Reading 8</b>
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>February 21</b>	<b>Plot driven versus character driven documentary</b>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>February 28</b>	<b>Pitfalls of the observational film</b>
	<b>MARCH 7</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>March 14</b>	<b>Characters and Dialogue Reading 9</b>

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>March 21</b>	<b>In-class documentary pitch</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>March 28</b>	<b>Character traits</b>  <b>The characters and character traits in Casablanca</b>  <b>Reading 10</b>
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>April 4</b>	<b>Writing dialogue/Introduction to Adaptations</b>  <b>Reading 11</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>April 11</b>	<b>Adaptations/Comedy Writing</b>  <b>Reading 12</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>April 18</b>	<b>Comedy writing</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>(Wed.) April 24</b>	<b>No class but final projects are due by 5 p.m. on this date</b>

#### **DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

<b>January 31</b>	<b>Commercial</b>
<b>February 14</b>	<b>Corporate video</b>
<b>February 28</b>	<b>Documentary visual treatment</b>
<b>March 21</b>	<b>Pitch</b>
<b>April 11</b>	<b>Character sketch/dialogue assignment</b>
<b>April 24</b>	<b>Final project due</b>