

Syllabus FALL 2025

RTV 3101: SCREENWRITING

Professor Michael Carvaines

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:00am – 12:00pm

Wednesday/Friday 12:50PM

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Office: 3115 Weimer Hall

Course Description:

Students will learn and practice the essentials of visual storytelling. Throughout the course, students will develop, write, and finish an original short script for a narrative fiction film.

Course Goals:

1. Students will practice self-expression through creative writing.
2. Students will learn how to harness their imaginations and develop a story idea.
3. Students will learn proper dramatic story structure.
4. Students will develop multi-dimensional characters.
5. Students will write authentic, unique dialogue.
6. All students will practice image-driven writing for a visual medium.

Schedule of Classes:

Class 1: Friday, August 22: Class Intro: Story Ideas and Self-Expression
Assignment: Brainstorm ideas for original films

Class 2: Wednesday, August 27: Dramatic Structure
Assignment: Prepare to pitch ideas

Class 3: Friday, August 29: Film Pitches
DUE: STORY IDEA PITCHES
Assignment: Begin writing script outline

Class 4: Wednesday, September 3: Genre
Assignment: Continue writing script outline

Class 5: Friday, September 5: Case Study: THE TWILIGHT ZONE
Assignment: Continue writing script outline

Class 6: Wednesday, September 10: Character
Assignment: Finish writing script outline

Class 7: Friday, September 12: Outline Review
Assignment: Start writing full treatment
DUE: FIRST SCRIPT OUTLINE/DRAFT

Class 8: Wednesday, September 17: Conflict
Assignment: Continue writing full treatment

- Class 9: Friday, September 19: Treatments
Assignment: Begin writing Script
DUE: FINAL TREATMENT
- Class 10: Wednesday, September 24: Format
Assignment: Character development and act structure
- Class 11: Friday, September 26: Case Study Student Films
Assignment: Write and re-write dialogue
- Class 12: Wednesday, October 1: Action
Assignment: Continue writing beginning, middle and end of script
- Class 13: Friday, October 3: Script Review
Assignment: Revise and expand script
DUE: FIRST 5 PAGES
- Class 14: Wednesday, October 8: Dialogue
Assignment: Revise and expand script
- Class 15: Friday, October 10: Case Study: THE SIMPSONS & SEINFELD
Assignment: Enhance character dimensions
- Class 16: Wednesday, October 15: Rough Draft Review
Assignment: Develop subplots
DUE: COMPLETE ROUGH DRAFT

HOMECOMING: OCTOBER 17

- Class 17: Wednesday, October 22: Style
Assignment: Explore themes and symbols
- Class 18: Friday, October 24: Case Study: Tarantino, The Coen Brothers, Charlie Kaufman
Assignment: Write second draft
- Class 19: Wednesday, October 29: Themes and Symbols
Assignment: Finish second draft
- Class 20: Friday, October 31: Second Draft Review
DUE: RE-WITTEN SECOND DRAFT
- Class 21: Wednesday, November 5: Descriptive Writing
Assignment: Begin revising second draft
- Class 22: Friday, November 7: Case Study: The Hero's Journey
Assignment: Hone dialogue

Class 23: Wednesday, November 12: Writing for other Media
Assignment: Foreshadowing

Class 24: Friday, November 14: Foreshadowing
Assignment: Character quirks and traits

Class 25: Wednesday, November 19: Marketing Screenplays
Assignment: Continue perfecting original dialogue

Class 26: Friday, November 21: Writing as a Career
Assignment: Review and polish final script

THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS NOVEMBER 26 & 28

Class 27: Wednesday, December 3: Last Day of Class
DUE: FINAL COMPLETE SCRIPT

Grading Opportunities:

Story Ideas/Pitches	10%
First Script Outline/Draft	10%
Final Treatment	15%
First 5 Pages	10%
Complete Rough Draft	15%
Rewrite (2 nd Draft)	15%
Final Complete Script	25%
Total	100%

100	A
93	A-
89	B+
87	B
83	B-
79	C+
77	C
73	C-
69	D+
67	D
63	F

Required Materials:

Students need access to Screenwriting Software: Final Draft, Celtx, Studio Binder, etc.

Recommended Textbook: *THE SHORT SCREENPLAY* by Dan Gurskis

ISBN: 978-1-59863-338-2

Final Project Description:

Students will create and write an original narrative fiction script. It should be 10-20 pages, properly formatted in industry standard style.

LATE WORK POLICY:

If an assignment is not submitted on-time, your grade will be dropped 10% for every 24 hours. After 10 days, you will receive a ZERO.

Attendance Policy:

This class is based on 100% attendance. Each class builds on the previous lesson.

For every **THREE** unexcused absences, the final grade will be reduced one letter. (example: B+ becomes a C+).

Excused absences are those where the student has notified the professor **in writing** in advance – before the start of class. This may include illness, participating in a university-sanctioned activity, or a documented personal, family, or medical emergency.

Use of AI/ChatGPT:

When utilizing ChatGPT for assignments, maintain academic integrity. Do not use ChatGPT to plagiarize or present others' work as your own. Use the tool as a reference, but ensure your contributions are original and properly attributed/cited.

View UF academic policies and resources here: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>