ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

SPRING 2015
RTV 3101 7408

Time periods 3-5 Thursday
9:35 a.m.-12:35 a.m.
Weimer 3020

Instructor
Churchill Roberts
Professor of Telecommunication
3040A Weimer Hall
392-1545
371-7969 (home) 352-284-2557 (cell)
crobert@ufl.edu

Documentary Websites

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

Office hours
Tuesday 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.-5 p.m., Thursday 3 p.m.-5 p.m. or almost any time by appointment

Description of the course

This course is designed to provide a thorough understanding and overview of the principles of scriptwriting, and to instruct students in how to apply these principles through practical exercises involving commercials, corporate videos, documentaries, feature films, and television genres such as comedy and drama. Another objective is to help develop students' critical faculties, enabling them to examine and evaluate the scriptwriting projects of others, as well as their own. The course will be comprised of lectures, exercises, screenings, analyses, and discussions.
Handouts

All materials are available on Sakai. 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 class meeting on Monday, April 28, from 3-5 p.m., will be either the beginning of an original screenplay or screenplay adaptation or a television drama/situation comedy.

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

Readings

Readings are posted on the Sakai website. Several years ago I replaced a
textbook (and 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 selected 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 the week in which 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.

**Course Evaluations**

To ensure that you receive a grade as soon as possible after completing the course, please be sure to fill out the online course evaluation form.

**Prerequisites**

In order 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 9</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scripts, scripts, and more scripts</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Stages of script development</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Stages of developing a creative concept</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>January 23</td>
<td>Storyboarding and writing TV commercials</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Examples of TV commercials</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>TV commercials</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>February 6</td>
<td>In-class presentation of commercials</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Corporate and instructional video</td>
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Reading 6

Week 6  February 13  Corporate and instructional video

Reading 7

Week 7  February 20  Documentary film

Reading 8

Week 8  February 27  Dramatic structure for documentary and fiction film

Reading 9

Week 9  March 13  Plot driven versus character driven documentary

Pitfalls of the observational film

Pitching a story idea

Week 10  March 20  In-class documentary pitch

Reading 10

Week 11  March 27  Characters and dialogue

The characters of Casablanca

Reading 11

Week 12  April 3  Writing dialogue

Reading 12
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>Adaptations, comedy</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Comedy writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Presentation and discussion of final projects</td>
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**DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

- **February 6**
  - In-class presentation of commercials
- **February 20**
  - Corporate video script
- **March 13**
  - Documentary visual treatment
- **March 20**
  - In-class documentary proposal (pitch)
- **April 10**
  - Character sketch/dialogue assignment
- **April 28**
  - In-class presentation of final projects
  - Monday, 3-5 p.m. in 3020