

**RTV 3101**  
(Summer 2014)

**ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

**Instructor:** James Babanikos, Ph.D.  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays 2:00-3:30, 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. No incompletes will be given without a medical reason.

**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!ting*  
Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*  
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.

### **Prerequisites**

A grade of C or better in RTV 2100 and RTV 3000, as well as junior standing in Telecommunication.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1

Tuesday, 13 May

Intro to course  
Film/video/audio terminology.

Wednesday, 14 May

Film/video/audio terminology  
**Readings:** Mamer, Bruce. (2000). "Creating the Shots" in *Film Production Technique: Creating the Accomplished Image*, pp. 3-26.  
Douglass, John S. and Glenn Harnden (1996). "Editing for Interpretation" in *The Art of Technique: An Aesthetic approach to Film and Video Production*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 195-224.  
*Terms you should know (1 page).*

TV Commercials: structure and organization.

Thursday, 15 May

TV commercials: storyboarding and various Approaches; writing the TV commercial script; various examples.  
**Readings:** Walters, Roger L. (1994). "Commercials and Other Announcements" in *Broadcast Writing: Principles and Practice*, pp. 309-343.  
*Jefferson-Pilot Insurance TV commercial script (2 pages).*

### Week 2

Tuesday, 20 May

TV commercials -- class presentations

Wednesday, 21 May

The sponsored/corporate film or video project: getting started; concept and visualization.  
**Readings:** DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Program Design Research" and "Content Research" in *Corporate Scriptwriting*, pp. 30-39 and 40-48.  
DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Concept Thinking" and "Visualization" in *Corporate Scriptwriting*, pp. 49-61 and 62-70.

Thursday, 22 May

The sponsored/corporate film or video project: writing the script.  
**Readings:** DiZazzo, Ray. (1992). "Structure and

*Transitions" in Corporate Scriptwriting, pp. 115-123.*

Writing the corporate video script.

### **Week 3**

Tuesday, 27 May

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.

Wednesday, 28 May

The making of documentaries: pre-production.

**Readings:** Rabiger, Michael. (1998). "Research Leading up to the Shoot" and "Interviewing" in *Directing the Documentary*, pp. 127-142 and 173-187.

Thursday, 29 May

The making of documentaries: production and post-production.

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

Beveridge, James A. (1969).

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

Documentaries: various approaches.

### **Week 4**

Tuesday, 3 June

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.

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.*

Wednesday, 4 June

Characterization

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

Thursday, 5 June

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.

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 5

Tuesday, 10 June

Effective beginnings

Developing tension and suspense.

**Readings:** Field, Syd. (1979). "Endings and Beginnings" in *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*, pp. 55-80.

Wednesday, 11 June

Adaptations/Review

Thursday, 12 June

Test

## Week 6

Tuesday, 17 May

Presentation and discussion of final projects

Wednesday 18 May

Presentation and discussion of final projects

Thursday 19 May

Presentation and discussion of final projects