

ADVANCED WRITING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

**FALL 2014
RTV 3101 03D4**

**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.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 an 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 students develop analytical skills for evaluating dramatic structure and presentation skills for pitching story ideas. 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 Tuesday, December 16 from 10 a.m.-noon in our regular classroom, 3020, 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.

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	E

Readings

Readings are posted on the Sakai 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 last spring completion of the readings counted up to 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.

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

Week 1	August 27	Introduction to course Scripts, scripts, and more scripts Stages of script development Reading 1 and 2
Week 2	September 3	Stages of developing a creative concept Reading 3
Week 3	September 10	Storyboarding and writing TV commercials Examples of TV commercials Reading 4
Week 4	September 17	TV commercials Reading 5

Week 5	September 24	In-class presentation of commercials Corporate and instructional video Reading 6
Week 6	October 1	Corporate and instructional video
Week 7	October 8	Documentary film Reading 7
Week 8	October 15	Dramatic structure for documentary and fiction film Reading 8
Week 9	October 22	Plot driven versus character driven documentary Pitfalls of the observational film Pitching a story idea Reading 9
Week 10	October 29	In-class documentary pitch Reading 10
Week 11	November 5	Characters and dialogue The characters of <i>Casablanca</i> Reading 11
Week 12	November 12	Writing dialogue

Reading 12

Week 13	November 19	Adaptations
Week 14	December 3	Comedy writing
Week 15	December 10	Comedy writing
Week 16	December 16	Presentation and discussion of final projects 10 a.m.- 12 (in our regular classroom)

DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

September 24	In-class presentation of commercials
October 8	Corporate video script
October 22	Documentary visual treatment
October 29	In-class documentary proposal (pitch)
November 19	Character sketch/dialogue assignment
December 16	In-class presentation of final projects Monday, 3-5 p.m. in 3020