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
Professor of Telecommunication
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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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A- to A</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B- to B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C- to C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D- to D+</td>
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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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Scripts, scripts, and more scripts</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stages of script development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 1 and 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Stages of developing a creative concept</td>
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<td>Reading 3</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Storyboarding and writing TV commercials</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Examples of TV commercials</td>
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<td>Reading 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>TV commercials</td>
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<td>Reading 5</td>
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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 *Casablanca*
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