

DC 304
TOPICS IN SCREENWRITING – HORROR
Winter 2013
Tuesdays 5:45 - 9:00 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Gary Novak
Office: CDM 405
Office Hours: Tue. 4:45 - 5:30 pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Advanced study in screenwriting focusing on a specific genre each quarter such as: Science Fiction, Film Noir, Comedy, Action-Adventure, Nonfiction. This course may be repeated for credit.

PREREQUISITES: DC 101, DC 201 or by consent of the instructor

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The following topics will be covered:

- Basic screenplay structure in three acts
- In-depth study of characters, storyline, and dialogue
- Plot structure and its relation to conflict and rising action
- The use of metaphor in screenwriting
- Proper screenplay format
- Critical analysis of screenplays

REQUIRED TEXTS:

On Writing Horror: A Handbook by the Horror Writers Association
Readings Posted on D2L & Handouts

RECOMMENDED TEXTS/SUPPLIES:

Final Draft 7 Screenwriting Software
(Or any other functional screenwriting software)
Netflix Subscription

COURSE POLICIES:

-Attendance:

Each week's class consists of lectures and screenings; attendance is mandatory. For the purposes of this class an absence is defined as not showing up for class or showing up 15 minutes, or more, late for a class. All absences will result in a reduction of the attendance/participation grade.

-Assignments:

Reading assignments must be completed by the date to which they are assigned in the syllabus. Reasonable deadlines are given for completion for each assignment. Consequently late assignments will not be accepted without prior consent of the instructor.

-Plagiarism:

Plagiarism on assignments or cheating on tests are serious offenses and earn the student a failing grade for the class. There are no exceptions to this rule. If you are in doubt about the definitions of plagiarism, consult your student handbook.

-Course Lectures/Reading Assignments:

Lecture presentations will occur weekly. The textbooks offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lecture presentations. The instructor will use both the classroom and the textbooks. Lectures may introduce additional material not available in the readings, and the readings may explore concepts not mentioned in class. BOTH SOURCES ARE NEEDED.

-Content Changes:

Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling.

-Sexual Harassment:

The policy as specified in the student handbook will be adhered to in this class.

GRADING:

Class attendance and participation	10%
Rough Drafts/Assignments	30%
Final Draft of Outline	30%
Final Draft of First Act of Screenplay (25 – 30 pgs.)	30%

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0. A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work.

COURSE OUTLINE**WEEK ONE**

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE AND REQUIREMENTS

FEEDING THE MUSE

- Promoting Creativity
- Where Stories Come From
- Artist Dates & Morning Pages

Read: *On Writing Horror* – Part 1 & 2

WEEK TWO

THE NATURE OF HORROR

- Defining Horror
- Fantastic Biologies
- The Structures of Horrific Imagery

Read: *On Writing Horror* – Part 3

WEEK THREE

METAPHYSICS & HORROR

- Fearing Fictions
- Character Identification

DEVELOPING HORROR CONCEPTS

- Dark & Disturbing Ideas
- Looking into the Mirror

DISCUSS STORY IDEAS

Read: *On Writing Horror* – Part 4

WEEK FOUR

THE CRAFT OF HORROR

- Setting & Character
- Eerie Events & Horrible Happenings

GENRES & SUBGENRES

- Characteristic Horror Stories
- Horror and Suspense
- The Fantastic

FIRST ACT OUTLINES DUE

- Works in Progress

Read: *On Writing Horror* – Part 5

WEEK FIVE

WHY HORROR?

- The Paradox of Horror
- Horror and Ideology

INNOVATION

- Innovation in Horror
- Visceral Horror
- Standards of Excellence

SECOND ACT OUTLINES DUE

- Works in Progress

Read: *On Writing Horror* – Part 6

WEEK SIX

BLACK & WHITE IN COLOR

- The Monster in Our Times
- Sense and Sensibility
- The Possibility of the Impossible

FIRST DRAFT OF OUTLINES DUE

Read: Screenplay posted on D2L

WEEK SEVEN

PAGES DUE

- First Ten Pages

Read: Screenplay posted on D2L

WEEK EIGHT

ROUGH DRAFTS DUE

- First Acts (25 to 30 pages)

WEEK NINE

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

- Meet one on one to discuss First Acts & Outlines.

WEEK TEN

INTO THE SHADOWS

- The Future

WEEK ELEVEN

FINAL DRAFT OF FIRST ACTS & OUTLINES DUE

- Your script must be in my hand by the scheduled final exam time.