

**DC 304**  
**TOPICS IN SCREENWRITING – HORROR**  
**Winter 2013**  
**Online**

**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:**

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 &amp; 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 &amp; 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.