

DC 201 Introduction to Screenwriting
Winter 2014 | Tuesday/Thursday 4:20pm – 5:50pm | STDCT 330

Instructor: James Choi
Office: STDCT 330
Office Hours: By appointment or STDCT 330 Tuesday/Thursday 11:10am – 12:40pm
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Course Description:

This course is an introduction to and overview of selecting and developing story concepts, developing an outline and writing a short film screenplay. Emphasis is placed on proper character development, effective use of conflict and adherence to three act structure. Constructive analysis will be used in discussing produced scripts and group readings with writing assignments to help each writer develop and write a short script screenplay that showcases his or her unique voice.

Goals For This Course:

By the end of this course you will have a fundamental understanding of the structure of a typical Three-Act screenplay. You will also be introduced to visual storytelling through the screenplay form and will see how key incidents, story progressions, conflict and resolution and character arcs affect a film. A major goal for this course is collaboration within the class to help foster everyone's work. Ultimately, you will utilize these concepts to complete an **8-10 page screenplay** for a short film.

Text:

The Short Screenplay by Dan Gurskis	ISBN-10: 1598633384
The Writer's Journey by Christopher Vogler	ISBN-10: 193290736X
The Screenplay by Syd Field	ISBN-10: 0385339038

Software:

Celtx screenwriting program – desktop version – free for mac and pc
Word Processing program (MS Word, Pages, etc)

Grading:

Assignment 1: 3 Loglines	5%
Assignment 2: 3 Act Structure Analyses	10%
Assignment 3: Script Outline	10%
Assignment 3: Character Bios	5%
Assignment 5: Opening Scenes	10%
Assignment 6: Rough Draft	10%
Final Screenplay due 3/20	30%
Attendance/Participation:	20% (<i>Online students will have specific requirements below</i>)

A = 110-93, 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

Attendance — Attendance is mandatory. An absence is defined as not showing up for class, or arriving more than 15 minutes late, or missing any 15-minute period during class time. I take attendance every class. If you arrive less than 15 minutes late, and do not hear your name called, make sure you let me know you are present so I do not mark you absent. **Anyone who misses 5 classes will not receive 20% for participation and attendance.** If you have to miss class, contact me PRIOR to class time to discuss excusing the absence. Please email me at jchoi26@cdm.depaul.edu

****Online students will have peer review assignments which will be announced during class and posted to Colweb**

Class Participation—Along with showing up, you are expected to join in class discussions, and critique other people's work. Remember, this is your class, you will get out of it what you put in it. **Also, be advised that many of the assignments that you write for this class, will be read aloud.** My intention is not to embarrass anyone, but rather, have a fostering and openly creative environment where people are comfortable sharing their work.

Assignments and Exercises – Class Work Assignments must be handed in on time. **There is a 10% penalty for each day past the due date for up to three days. Then, your assignment will not be accepted.**

Written Assignments: Must be typed.

Critiques: Due to limited class time, not everyone's work will get a full review during class. If you'd like more feedback, arrange to discuss your work with me during my office hours.

COLWEB—In an attempt to save some trees and cash, all assignments will be turned in via COLWEB. If you are unfamiliar with COLWEB please see me. In some cases, you must print and bring in an assignment. I will indicate in class how each assignment must be turned into me.

BACK UP YOUR WORK: Failure of computer software and or Hardware will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for late projects or incomplete grades so back up your work daily.

Special Accommodations: If you have any special considerations please see me.

Electronic devices—Use of cell phones/laptops/tablets in the class is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class.

Examinations – Students who do not take exams during the regularly scheduled time will receive a failing grade for the exam unless they have contacted the instructor in advance to arrange for a make-up exam. Make-up exams will be administered by the College according to its make-up exam schedule.

Course Lectures – This course has a joint online section. All lectures will be recorded and available on the course home page on COLWEB under the lectures tab.

Content Changes – Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling. I will contact you via email with any deviations from the syllabus. Please ensure that mail sent to the email address that you provided to the school is readily accessible.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (<http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>). Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM. The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter

Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter

Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Summer Terms: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. CDM policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in [MyCDM](#).

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.
- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor.
- An incomplete grade does NOT grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370
Phone number: (773)325.1677
Fax: (773)325.3720
TTY: (773)325.7296

Schedule for the Class (Subject to Change)

Class 1

Tuesday, January 7

Introduction to class and syllabus

Lecture: Loglines

Class 2

Thursday, January 9

[Loglines Due](#)

Read loglines and choose which story you will develop for your short screenplay

Class 3

Tuesday, January 14

Lecture: Three Act Structure

[Online Students: 5 Peer Review of Loglines due](#)**

Class 4

Thursday, January 16

[3 Act Structure Analyses Due](#)

Lecture: Outline/Treatment

Class 5

Tuesday, January 21

Lecture: Character Development

Class 6

Thursday, January 23

[Character Bios Due](#)

Lecture: Formatting

Class 7

Tuesday, January 28

[Outline Due](#)

Presentation/Discussion of Outlines

Class 8

Thursday, January 30

Presentation/Discussion of Outlines

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Outlines due**

Class 9

Tuesday, Feb 4

Presentation/Discussion of Outlines

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Outlines due**

Class 10

Thurs, Feb 6

Lecture: Opening and endings

Class 11

Tues, Feb 11

Opening Scene Due

Presentation/Discussion of Opening Scenes

Class 12

Thurs, Feb 13

Presentation/Discussion of Opening Scenes

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Opening Scenes due**

Class 13

Tues, Feb 18

Presentation/Discussion of Opening Scenes

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Opening Scenes due**

Class 14

Thurs, Feb 20

Lecture: Scene development and dialogue

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Opening Scenes due**

Class 15

Tues, Feb 25

Rough Draft Due

Presentation/Discussion of Rough Draft

Class 16

Thurs, Feb 27

Presentation/Discussion of Rough Draft

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Rough Drafts due**

Class 17

Tues, March 4

Presentation/Discussion of Rough Draft

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Rough Drafts due**

Class 18

Tues, March 6

Presentation/Discussion of Rough Draft

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Rough Drafts due**

Class 19

Tues, March 11

Lecture: Rewriting

****Online Students: 3 Peer Review of Rough Drafts due**

Class 20

Thurs, March 13

Individual Meetings

Final

Thursday, March 20 – 4:20pm – 5:50pm

****Final Script Due****