

DC 403 Writing the Feature II

When: Tuesday · 5:45pm - 9:00pm
Where: Daley Room 207 Loop Campus

Instructor: Matt Quinn · mquinn@cdm.depaul.edu · 312-362-5807 · CDM 509
Office hours: M 11:00am – 2:00pm, T 11:00am – 1:30pm & 4:45pm – 5:30pm, TH 11:00am – 1:30pm

Summary of Course

This course focuses on completing the first draft of a feature length screenplay. Students will bring their vetted concepts to life on the page by focusing on a foundation of character, theme, structure, and plot. The lectures, in-class workshops, and weekly page deadlines are designed to culminate in a spec script that showcases the writer's voice and command of screenwriting conventions. The feature length screenplay written in this class should be revised and polished in DC 404.

Learning Outcomes

- Devise realistic goals and meet strict submission deadlines
- Apply the sequence approach to craft the second and third acts of a feature length screenplay
- Evaluate constructive criticism received in workshops from the instructor and peers
- Use effective setups and payoffs to enhance the screenstory
- Create viable subplots to round out the main conflict of the feature length screenplay

Prerequisites

DC 402 or DC 405

Grading

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Sequence Breakdown	10%
Workshop Pages First Half	10%
Pages 1–50	20%
Workshop Pages Second Half	10%
Final Draft	40%

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.

Textbooks

Assigned readings provided by the instructor

Attendance

Attendance and participation is mandatory. An absence, which is defined as not showing up to class or arriving more than 10 minutes late to class, constitutes a reduction in your overall grade.

D2L

You will be using D2L extensively in this course. To log on, go to:

<https://login.depaul.edu/ldap/login?service=https%3a%2f%2fd2l.depaul.edu%2fd2l%2fcustom%2fcas> and enter using your campus connect logon and password. Once you are logged on, click on the course number link and you will find links to the syllabus, course outline, video lectures, discussion forums, weekly assignments, etc.

In-Class Workshops

Feedback is an essential part of the writing process. To facilitate this, every student will have two 45-minute workshop sessions. The first session will focus on a table read of 15-20 pages from the first half of the script and the second on 15-20 pages from second half of the script. Specific workshop times will be assigned by the instructor.

Course Outline

Week 1 – March 28th

Lecture: Course Intro, Sequence Approach

Assignment: Sequence Breakdown, Individual Meetings

Week 2 – April 4th

Lecture: Act II

Assignment: Pages 1–30, Individual Meetings

Week 3 – April 11th

Workshop: Group 1

Lecture: Scene Work - Group 2

Assignments: Pages 30–40

Week 4 – April 18th

Workshop; Group 2

Lecture: Subplots/Character Growth

Assignments: Pages 40–50

Week 5 – April 25th

Workshop: Group 3

Lecture: Midpoint

Assignments: Individual Meetings

Week 6 – May 2nd

Workshop: Group 4

Assignments: Pages 50–60, Individual Meetings

Week 7 – May 9th

Workshop: Group 1

Lecture: Culmination / Second Act Turning Point

Assignments: Pages 60–70

Week 8 – May 16th

Workshop: Group 2

Lecture: Act Three

Assignments: Pages 70–80

Week 9 – May 23rd

Workshop: Group 3

Lecture: Climax

Assignments: Pages 80–90

Week 10 – May 30th

Workshop – Group 4

Lecture: Resolution

Assignments: Final Pages

Week 11 – June 6th

Assignments: Final Pages Due by 11:59pm

Assignments**Sequence Breakdown (10% of Final Grade)**

Using the lecture on the sequence approach, complete a sequence breakdown for your feature length screenplay using the template provided. This should be saved as a PDF and submit it to the corresponding D2L link before class on Tuesday, April 4th.

Workshop Pages First Half (10% of Final Grade)

You must submit a PDF file for 15–20 pages from the second act of your feature length screenplay to the corresponding Dropbox link before class on your assigned group workshop date. This should be a 15–20 segment of your story – No random excerpts please.

No late assignments will be accepted. A few things to keep in mind:

- Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation count - Proofread your work, proofread it again and then proofread it one more time just to be sure
- Re-read your narrative for clarity - It may be a good idea to have a friend/family member look over the script as well
- Standard screenwriting formatting is required. Refer to your instructor for assistance
- Action description should be lean - only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Use your plot points as a guide
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"

Page 1-50 (20% of Final Grade)

You must submit a PDF File for pages 1-50 of your feature length screenplay to the corresponding D2L Dropbox link before class on April 25th. No late assignments will be accepted. A few things to keep in mind:

- Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation count - Proofread your work, proofread it again and then proofread it one more time just to be sure
- Re-read your narrative for clarity - It may be a good idea to have a friend/family member look over the script as well
- Standard screenwriting formatting is required. Refer to your instructor for assistance
- Action description should be lean - only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Use your plot points as a guide
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"

Workshop Pages Second Half (10% of Final Grade)

You must submit a PDF file for 15-20 pages from the second/third act of your feature length screenplay to the corresponding Dropbox link before class on your assigned group workshop date. This should be a 15-20 segment of your story – No random excerpts please.

No late assignments will be accepted. A few things to keep in mind:

- Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation count - Proofread your work, proofread it again and then proofread it one more time just to be sure

- Re-read your narrative for clarity - It may be a good idea to have a friend/family member look over the script as well
- Standard screenwriting formatting is required. Refer to your instructor for assistance
- Action description should be lean - only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Use your plot points as a guide
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"

Final Draft (40% of Final Grade)

You are expected to submit a PDF File of the final draft of your entire completed feature length screenplay by 11:59PM on Friday, June 10th via the corresponding Dropbox link on D2L. Late submissions will not be accepted. A few things to keep in mind:

- Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell. Show don't tell
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation count - Proofread your work, proofread it again and then proofread it one more time just to be sure
- Re-read your narrative for clarity - It may be a good idea to have a friend/family member look over the script as well
- Standard screenwriting formatting is required. Refer your instructor for assistance
- Action description should be lean - only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Use your plot points as a guide
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"

Attitude

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Changes to the Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

Online Course Evaluations

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue – the quality of teaching at DePaul.

Changes to the Syllabus

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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

Excused Absence

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>.

Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

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