

DePaul University

School of Cinematic Arts

SCWR 301 Story Development

Spring 2019/20

ONLINE: Tuesday 1:30 – 4:45PM (scheduled face-to-face workshops will occur at this time for the class, broken down into three groups)

Professor Anna Hozian: ahozian@depaul.edu

Office Hours: (ONLINE via ZOOM - all appointments scheduled through BlueStar) Wednesday 9:00AM TO 3:00PM

Description

This course is designed to help the emerging writer focus their creativity into a viable original project for a feature film. The lectures, workshops, and assignments are designed to enable the student to identify and develop material to which they have a strong personal connection.

Emphasis is placed on extensive research of the subject matter, creating memorable characters, and crafting a strong dramatic through-line. Students will write a vetted step outline for a feature length film that should be completed in SCWR 302.

Learning Objectives

- Create and analyze multiple story concepts, prior to selecting one upon which to focus for this class.
- Apply character develop tools to create multi-dimensional characters with feature-length arcs.
- Develop a feature-writing process from Concept to Step Outline.
- Analyze creative work, providing critical analysis for peers' work and to interpret and apply feedback from classmates.
- Deliver assignments on deadline.

Outcomes

Multiple assignments leading to the development of a Detailed Step Outline for a Feature Film

Required Reading

Provided by Professor

Course Management

This course is housed and managed on D2L.

Schedule

Week One: March 31st

ONLINE CLASS INTRO via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: What makes a Feature Work. Finding a Concept.

VIEWING ASSIGNMENT: Watch *Sing Street* (Link on D2L)

ASSIGNMENT ONE: Five Possible Concepts for a Feature Film due in class, ready to pitch on Tuesday, April 7th.

Week Two: April 7th

ONLINE WORKSHOP for Pitching Three of Your Concepts. (Have the other two in your back pocket just in case) via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Who is Your Main Character? And Why?

ASSIGNMENT TWO: Main Characters, Brainstorming, and Theme due Sunday, April 5th at 5:00PM

Week Three: April 14th

ONLINE WORKSHOP on Main Characters, Brainstorming, and Theme via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Story Structure: Where to Begin and The Main Steps of the Journey

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Loglines and Preliminary Main Character Arc/Transformation due Sunday, April 19th at 5:00PM

Week Four: April 21st

ONLINE WORKSHOP on Loglines and Preliminary Main Character Arc/Transformation via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Who is your Supporting Cast and Why? Continuing to Think Theme/ Journey/What You are Trying to Say

ASSIGNMENT FOUR: Supporting Cast due Sunday, April 26th at 5:00PM

Week Five: April 28th

ONLINE WORKSHOP on Supporting Cast via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

LECTURE: Summaries and Main Beats

ASSIGNMENT FIVE: Summaries due Sunday, May 3rd at 5:00PM

Week Six: May 5th

ONLINE WORKSHOP Summaries via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Beat Sheets

ASSIGNMENT SIX: Beat Sheets due Sunday, May 10th at 5:00PM

Week Seven: May 12th

ONLINE WORKSHOP Beat Sheets via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Treatments

ASSIGNMENT SEVEN: Treatments due Sunday, May 17th at 5:00PM

Week Eight: May 19th

ONLINE WORKSHOP Treatments Outlines via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Sequences

ASSIGNMENT EIGHT: Sequence Outlines due Sunday, May 24th at 5:00PM

Week Nine: May 26th

ONLINE WORKSHOP Sequence Outlines via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Step Outlines

ASSIGNMENT NINE: First Draft Full Step Outline due Sunday, May 31st at 5:00PM

Week Ten: June 2nd

ONLINE WORKSHOP First Draft Full Step Outlines via ZOOM (Broken down into three groups):

Group A: 1:30 to 2:15

Group B: 2:15 to 3:00

Group C: 3:15 to 4:00

Group D: 4:00 to 4:45

POSTED LECTURE: Refining and Tightening Outline around Theme

FINAL: REVISED STEP OUTLINE due 9th by 1:00 PM

For Weekly Assignments:

With the exception of Week One (Concepts), **YOUR MUST POST YOUR ASSIGNMENTS to the SUBMISSIONS FOLDER and to the DISCUSSION FORUM for your Assigned Group EVERY WEEK.** You must also be ready to take notes during your workshop time. Thus, be sure to have a copy of your work and/or a notebook to write down verbal feedback from your peers and instructor.

For Workshops:

Active participation is requirement in this class. You **MUST READ ALL ASSIGNED STUDENT WORK PRIOR TO CLASS** and **BE PREPARED TO WORKSHOP IT.** Come prepared with the following feedback:

- What you liked about the story / what worked for you.
- What issues or problems you experienced in considering the story.
- What suggestions you have to resolve those issues and make the story better.

As a screenwriter, receiving feedback but failing to return the favor is a cardinal offense, as is dominating or disrupting the conversation, or personally attacking a writer.

Grading

Late work will not be accepted without prior approval of instructor. If you miss a deadline for an emergency, you may be asked to provide documentation.

Workshop Preparation/Participation (Ten): 4 points each (40)

First Eight Weekly Assignments: 5 points each (40)

First Draft of Full Step Outline 10 points

FINAL: Revised Full Step Outline: 10 Points

TOTAL POINTS: 100 points

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.

Work that contains grammatical errors, misspellings, or generally poor and unclear writing will rarely if ever achieve a grade of A or B.

Changes to 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.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Incomplete Grades

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. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

Gender Pronouns & Preferred Name

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this information early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

Decorum and Civil Discourse

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be socially responsible leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Creative Subject Matter

As this is a creative writing class, controversial subject matter may make its way into the conversation. Students have every right to express themselves artistically in their writing and address challenging issues so long as the work does not glorify hate of any kind. If you become uncomfortable with a conversation for personal reasons, you may be excused from the remainder of that class without penalty. Obvious inclusion of individuals from the class will not be tolerated in submitted material.

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 <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx> 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.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Please see <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

Students with Disabilities

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gregory Moorhead, Director of the Center, privately to discuss how he may assist in facilitating the accommodations to be used in a course. This is best done early in the term. The conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Please see <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx> for Services and Contact Information.