

SCWR Introduction to Pitching

When: Thursday · 1:30pm to 4:45pm

Where: ONLINE via D2L and ZOOM

Instructor: Anna Hozian · ahozian@depaul.edu

Office hours: via ZOOM on Wednesdays from 9:00am – 3:00pm (you must first make an appointment on BlueStar)

Summary of Course

This course asks students to create an inventory of new material for future writing projects by developing and pitching stories for independent and studio films, as well as cable, streaming, and network television series. Through lectures, guest speakers, and workshop exercises, we will analyze the vital role of pitching in the entertainment industry and build a foundation to help students master professional pitching techniques.

Course Objectives

- Describe the genres and styles of projects that speak to and inspire them
- Discuss how they wish to be seen as content creators by industry professionals
- Analyze story ideas to determine market viability and depth of personal interest
- Practice the pitch development process for a set of several diverse projects
- Create one-page story treatments that are ready to move to the outline phase

Prerequisites

None

Grading

Online Participation including Feedback Workshops and Discussion Forums	10%
Eight Pitch Assignments (Write-ups and Videos)	80%
FINAL: Revised Pitch (Write-Up and Video) and Artist Statement	10%
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.	

Texts

Provided by Instructor

Online Participation (Zoom meetings including preparation for workshop and Discussion Forums)

Participation is mandatory. An absence from the workshop or not responding to discussion (where applicable), which is defined as not showing up online, not responding to posts, or arriving more than 10 minutes late to the online session, 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.

Course Outline

Week 1 – April 2nd

ONLINE CLASS: Course Intro and Expectations

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: What is a Pitch? What is an Open Writing Assignment? What elements comprise a teaser film pitch? What does a one-page write-up entail?

ASSIGNMENT: Open Writing Assignment Film Pitch - Video (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 2 – April 9th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Notes for OWA Film Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: What is IP and How to Find It? The Importance of Your Take

ASSIGNMENT: IP/Public Domain Film Pitch – Video (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 3 – April 16th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Notes for IP/Public Domain Film Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: High-Concept Films and Their Pitches

ASSIGNMENT: High-Concept Film Pitch - Video (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 4 – April 23rd

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Notes for High-Concept Film Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: Character-Driven/Low-Concept Films and Their Pitches

ASSIGNMENT: Character-Driven/Low-Concept Film Pitch - Video (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 5 – April 30th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Character-Driven/Low-Concept Film Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: TV Pitches – How they are Different from Film Pitches. How to Make a Reboot or Spin-off Original and Relevant to Today

ASSIGNMENT: TV Reboot or Spin-off Pitch – Video (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 6 – May 7th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Notes for TV Reboot or Spin-off Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: An Original TV Series and Its Pitch

ASSIGNMENT: Original TV Series Pitch (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 7 – May 14th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Original TV Series Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: Limited and Anthology Series and Their Pitches

ASSIGNMENT: Limited or Anthology Series Pitch (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 8 – May 21st

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Limited or Anthology Series Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: Developing the Web Series Concept and Their Pitches

ASSIGNMENT: Web Series Pitch (submitted to Discussion Forum) and Write-Up (submitted to Submissions Folder)

Week 9 – May 28th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Web Series Pitches

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

POSTED LECTURE: Who are you as an artist and how it will define your career.

ASSIGNMENT: Preliminary Questions for Your Artist Statement (bring to workshop with you – you do not need to turn these in online this week).

Week 10 – June 4th

ONLINE WORKSHOP: Defining yourself as an artist and what to do with that knowledge

Group A: 1:30 to 2:30PM

Group B: 2:35 to 3:35PM

Group C: 3:45 to 4:35PM

Lecture: The Revising Process and Your Final

FINAL: Revised Pitch (via Zoom with me during the week of June 8th) and Write-up (posted to Submissions Folder) plus Your Artist Statement and Next Steps (posted to Submissions Folder)

Weekly Assignments

Eight Weekly Assignments are worth 10 points each (5 for each part), broken down into the following two parts:

- Video Pitch – You will create a three to four-minute verbal pitch and post it to your assigned group's Discussion Forum on D2L by Tuesday at 5PM.*
- One-Page Write-Up (single-spaced, PDF, 11-pt. font) – Submitted to D2L on the appropriate Submissions Folder by 5PM on Tuesday.*

Pitch Videos and Group Workshops

Feedback is an essential part of the writing process. To facilitate this, every student will be assigned to one of three groups: Group 1, Group 2, or Group 3. You will post your pitches by Tuesday at 5PM each week to the appropriate Discussion Forum for the week for your group within D2L. You are then required to watch ALL NINE of your peers' pitch videos prior to coming to class, developing questions and feedback for each of them to improve and revise their work. Not providing feedback to a fellow filmmaker who is helping you is a cardinal sin in this business. If you want and expect others to give you feedback, you must provide feedback for them. No exceptions.

Weekly Write-Ups

In addition to posting pitch videos each week, you must submit a write-up for each pitch on D2L to the appropriate Submission Folder by Tuesday at 5PM each week.

Final

Your final has three elements:

- Revised Pitch:
You will be assigned one of your previous pitches to refine and present live with the professor via an individual meeting on ZOOM during the week of June 8th.*
- Revised One Sheet – the accompanying one-sheet to the revised pitch must be submitted to the corresponding D2L Submission link by Thursday, June 11th at 1PM.*
- Artist Statement (single-spaced, PDF, 11-pt. font) must be submitted to the corresponding D2L Submission link by 1:00PM on Thursday, June 11th. The aim of the Artist Statement is to articulate the purpose, philosophy and inspiration of your creative work. Questions to consider when crafting your statement:*
 - What genres and styles of projects inspire you?*
 - How do you wish to be seen as a content creator by industry professionals?*
 - What recurring storylines and themes are exhibited in your work?*

- *Who is your audience and why does your work appeal to that audience?*
- *What are your next steps in working toward your goals?*

No Late Assignments (PITCHES nor WRITE-UPS nor the FINAL) will be accepted.

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.

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>

Name & Gender Pronouns

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.