SCWR 403 Rewriting the Feature

When: Tuesday · 5:45pm - 9:00pm
Where: 14 EAS RM 207 Loop Campus

Instructor: Matt Quinn · mquinn@cdm.depaul.edu · Room 509 CDM Building
Office hours: Monday · 11:00am – 1:00pm & Wednesday · 11:00am – 1:00pm

Summary of Course

This class focuses on rewriting the feature film screenplay. Through workshops and course discussions, students will learn how to identify missteps in their writing and develop a practical means to efficiently address these issues moving forward. Students must possess a complete feature length script to rewrite in order to enroll in the course.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Develop a solid understanding of the craft and tools of screenplay revision.

- Formulate a viable rewriting plan for their feature length screenplay.

- Analyze peer scripts to identify narrative concerns and articulate constructive feedback.

- Create a polished professional feature length spec screenplay.

Prerequisites

SCWR 402 Writing the Feature II

Grading

Attendance & Participation	10%
Note Overview	10%
Rewrite Plan	20%
Pages 1-50	30%
Pages 50-100	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.

Textbooks and Printed Resources

"Screenwriting is Rewriting: The Art and Craft of Professional Revision" by Jack Epps Jr. ISBN-10: 1628927402 (Recommended)

Attendance

Attendance and participation are 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 six workshop sessions that will focus on the development and rewriting of your feature length screenplay. Specific topics for each workshop session are provided in the course outline. Workshop groups assigned by the instructor.

Course Outline

Class 1 – March 29th
Lecture: Course Intro, Writing is Rewriting
Assignment: Self Evaluation, Script Reading

Class 2 – April 5th
Lecture: Development
Workshop: Self Evaluation
Assignment: Read Group Screenplays, Individual Meeting Sign-up

Class 3 – April 12th
Lecture: Interpreting and Implementing Feedback
Workshop: Group Feedback
Assignment: Note Overview

Class 4 – April 19th
Lecture: Rewrite Plan, Foundation Pass
Assignment: Rewrite Plan

Class 5 – April 26th
Lecture: Character Pass
Workshop: Rewrite Plan
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 1–15)

Class 6 – May 3rd
Lecture: Setup, Story and Theme Pass
Workshop: First Ten
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 15 – 30), Individual Meeting Sign-up

Class 7 – May 10th
Lecture: Structure and Plot Pass
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 30 – 50)

Class 8 – May 17th
Lecture: Complications and Relationships Pass
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 50 – 65), Read Group Screenplays
Due: Pages 1 – 50

Class 9 – May 24th
Lecture: Dialogue and Consistency Pass
Workshop: First 50
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 65 – 80)

Class 10 – June 7th
Lecture: Next Steps
Workshop: Final Check-In
Assignment: Rewrite Feature (Pages 80 – 100)
Due: Pages 50-100 on Tuesday, June 14th 5:45PM

Assignments

Note Overview (10% of Final Grade)

Complete the Note Overview template (available to download on D2L) using feedback on your feature length screenplay from the instructor, workshop, and self-evaluation. These vetted concerns should be listed as bullet points under each category heading. Feel free to edit the headings to align with the notes you received and order them by severity. It is important to do a thorough job on this, as the overview will act as the foundation for your rewrite plan. You are expected to submit a PDF copy of the note overview to the corresponding submission link on D2L before class on Tuesday, April 19th.

Rewrite Plan (20% of Final Grade)

Complete the Rewrite Plan template (available to download on D2L). Each chart heading is broken into two categories (Concerns/Solutions). The concerns should be taken from your Note Overview assignment, broken into the appropriate categories, and then order by severity. Across from each concern, list possible solutions. The length of your Rewrite Plan will depend on the amount of work

that needs to be done. Keep the cause-and-effect nature of cinematic storytelling in mind. You must consider the effect these alterations will have on the rest of the narrative. It is important to do a thorough job on this overview, as it will act as the foundation for your feature length rewrite. Please submit a PDF copy to the corresponding submission link and to your assigned group discussion forum on D2L before class on Tuesday, April 26th.

Pages 1-50 (30% of Final Grade)

You are expected to submit pages 1-50 of your revised feature length screenplay saved as a PDF to the corresponding submission link and to your assigned group discussion forum on D2L on D2L before class on Tuesday, May 17th. A couple of things to keep in mind, as this assignment is 30% of your final grade:

- The revised draft should read as a marked improvement over your first effort.
- Use your rewrite plan in order to craft your revised draft.
- Your revised script must be at least 50 pages.
- 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 texts for the course, the scripts we read in class, and your instructor for assistance.
- Action description should be lean - Only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"
- Ask questions if you need help.
- Don't wait until the last minute. It takes time to develop a solid narrative - You won't be able to do it in one night.

Pages 50-100 (30% of Final Grade)

You are expected to submit pages 50-100 of your revised feature length screenplay saved as a PDF to the corresponding D2L submission link by 11:59PM on Friday, June 10th. A couple of things to keep in mind, as this assignment is 30% of your final grade:

- Please submit your entire revised screenplay for continuity.
- The revised draft should read as a marked improvement over your first effort.
- Use your rewrite plan in order to craft your revised draft.
- Your revised script must be at least 50 pages.
- 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 texts for the course, the scripts we read in class, and your instructor for assistance.
- Action description should be lean - Only revealing what can be heard/seen on screen.
- Avoid exposition heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"
- Ask questions if you need help.
- Don't wait until the last minute. It takes time to develop a solid narrative - You won't be able to do it in one night.

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.

Respect for Diversity and Inclusion at DePaul University

At DePaul, our mission calls us to explore "what must be done" in order to respect the inherent dignity and identity of each human person.   We value diversity because it is part of our history, our traditions and our future. We see diversity as an asset and a strength that adds to the richness of classroom learning. In my course, I strive to include diverse authors, perspectives and teaching pedagogies. I also encourage open dialogue and spaces for students to express their unique identities and perspectives. I am open to having difficult conversations and I will strive to create an inclusive classroom that values all perspectives. If at any time, the classroom experience does not live up to this expectation, please feel free to contact me via email or during office hours.

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.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. All students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy which prohibits cheating and other misconduct in student coursework. Publicly sharing or posting online any prior or current materials from this course (including exam questions or answers), is considered to be providing unauthorized assistance prohibited by the policy. Both students who share/post and students who access or use such materials are considered to be cheating under the Policy and will be subject to sanctions for violations of Academic Integrity.

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

Preferred 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 preference 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 preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred 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

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

Students with Disabilities

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

Loop Campus - Lewis Center #1420 - (312) 362-8002

Lincoln Park Campus - Student Center #370 - (773) 325-1677

Students can also email the office at csd@depaul.edu

Students who are registered with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact me privately to discuss how I may assist in facilitating the accommodations you will use in this course. This is best done early in the term. Our conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

University Counseling Services

DePaul University Counseling Services (UCS) is committed to providing a range of culturally aware and sensitive clinical services to help currently enrolled DePaul students remove barriers to academic and personal success by addressing emotional, psychological, and interpersonal concerns through multiple treatment modalities. Services offered include: group counseling, individual counseling, couples counseling, crisis management, consultation, referrals, and telereach/outreach workshops. All services are currently being offered on a virtual, remote basis with no fees due to COVID-19. To connect with the counseling center, contact our main number at (773) 325-7779 during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) to schedule an initial consultation, which is typically scheduled within 1-2 business days of your call.

If you need more immediate assistance or are in acute distress, you can call the main number during regular business hours and ask to speak with a counselor. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. The Counseling Services staff has extensive experience with providing support services to individuals of varying social identities and backgrounds. Further, our counselors know that commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and anti-racism is an ongoing and open-ended journey and, as such, our counselors frequently and

regularly engage in self-reflection and training opportunities to increase cultural awareness and to challenge one's own privileges and biases.