

SCWR 101-405 Screenwriting for Majors
DePaul University School of Cinematic Arts
Autumn Quarter 2023
Tuesdays, 10 AM-1:15 PM CT
Location: 14 E. Jackson, Room 209 (Loop)

Instructor:

Carolyn Kras (she/her)

Email: ckras@depaul.edu

*If you do not receive a response to your e-mail within 24 hours, assume I did not receive it.

Office Hours: Mondays 3:45-5:15 PM and Tuesdays 2:15-5:15, all in Daley 200B. Please wear a mask when visiting my office hours as it is a small space. Or, request a Zoom appointment during office hours.

Course Description:

This course introduces digital cinema majors to dramatic writing for motion pictures. The topics covered include theme, plot, story structure, character, and dialogue. Emphasis is placed on telling a story in visual terms. Films and scenes examined in this class will highlight creators and characters from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and intersectional identities.

Prerequisites:

None.

Course Outcomes:

In addition to completing several writing assignments, students are expected to develop, outline, and write a short screenplay.

Learning Objectives:

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

- employ standard screenplay format
- identify elements of scene craft, character development, and narrative structure
- demonstrate expanded visual writing skills
- identify how diverse backgrounds and perspectives uniquely affect story and character development
- apply a workflow process to their creative writing
- produce original writing projects on a deadline
- revise their writing based on feedback from the professor and their peers
- evaluate the work of their peers and formulate helpful feedback

Required Textbooks:

Tools of Screenwriting by David Howard and Edward Mabley

The Hollywood Standard by Christopher Riley

It is also expected that you have all of the following resources: Netflix, a DePaul library card, and a public library card.

Recommended Resources for Further Exploration of Craft and the Industry:

Scriptnotes Podcast, Go Into the Story Blog on The Blacklist, Deadline.com

Previous Course Number:

DC 201

Course Schedule:

Each class may include a lecture, screening, guest speaker, workshop, in-class writing exercises, group work, pitching, etc. Always bring materials with which to write scenes and take notes.

Course Management:

This course is housed and managed on D2L. Additional reading content, lecture slides, attendance records, grades, discussion boards, submissions, and assignment/calendar updates can be found there.

Screenwriting Software:

You will be required to use screenwriting software. Final Draft, Fade In, and Movie Magic Screenwriter are among the best available. You can often get a student discount at the company's web site. Free options include Writerduet, Highland 2, & Celtx. **All assignments are to be delivered in PDF.**

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. Each unexcused absence beyond the first equates to a loss of ten points from the student's final score. Sleeping in class, doing non-class work in class, and using social media in class will count as an unexcused absence.

Excused Absences:

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness, religious observance, 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 instructor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence. Three unexcused absences will constitute course failure. If you have an excused absence during an in-class pitching day, you will be required to turn in a digital video recording of your pitch instead.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Precautions:

The health and safety of everyone at DePaul depend on the cooperation of all who come to campus. By taking care of yourself, you protect the entire community. DePaul's COVID-19 response plans are based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Chicago Department of Public Health and the university's medical advisor from AMITA Health. Mandatory protocols must be followed by DePaul students, faculty and staff at all times on both campuses <https://resources.depaul.edu/coronavirus/guidance/health-safety-practices/Pages/default.aspx>.

Mask Policy:

DePaul is a mask-friendly campus. Please always have a mask ready as someone may ask you to mask. Students who have a medical reason for not complying with masking requests should register with DePaul's Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD). If you visit my office hours, please wear a mask as it is a small space. If you do not wish to wear a mask at my office hours, you may ask to schedule a Zoom appointment.

Food and Drink:

Only water is allowed to be consumed during class unless there is a documented medical reason to eat/drink that is registered with CSD. During break periods, students will comply with the building's current policies on food and drink.

Disability Services:

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

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

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.

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.

Content Labels

This course recognizes that to engage with media is to engage with historic and ongoing problematic representation, as well as the ways that harmful representation impacts students in different ways. Therefore, the instructor aims that any course content displaying racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, and otherwise violent or socially violent material will be made known in writing (*or wherever the professor plans to put those warnings, such as on the modules, via the newsfeed, or via email, etc.*) prior to the readings/viewings, so that students may make informed decisions about their mental and emotional health and well-being. Students whose work contains potentially sensitive material are encouraged to give content labels to their classmates. Students may inform the professor of any material that they cannot engage with to find a suitable alternative.

Creative Subject Matter and Civil Discourse:

DePaul is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be socially responsible leaders. Controversial or sensitive subject matter may find its way into our conversations. Students have every right to express themselves artistically and address challenging issues so long as the work itself does not glorify hate, discrimination, or violence of any kind – or involve the professor or another member of the class without their written permission. Conversely, it is the right of the audience, or in this case, the class, to express how work makes them feel, and to do so respectfully and constructively. If you become uncomfortable with a conversation for any reason, you may be excused from the remainder of class without penalty. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course will be civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility will 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.

Respect for Diversity and Inclusion at DePaul University as aligned with our Vincentian Values:

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.

DePaul University's Land Acknowledgement:

At DePaul University, we acknowledge that we live and work on traditional Native lands that are home to well over one hundred different tribal nations. We extend our respect to all of them, including the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Odawa nations, who signed the Treaty of Chicago in 1821 and 1833. We also recognize the Ho-Chunk, Myaamia, Menominee, Illinois Confederacy, and Peoria people who also maintained relationships with this land.

We acknowledge that these sacred homelands were ruptured by the European invasion of the Americas. In 1493, Pope Alexander VI promulgated the Doctrine of Discovery, which seized Native lands and resources with impunity. This doctrine has been used by countries throughout the Americas, including the U.S., to legitimize colonial policies of displacement and genocide toward Native peoples and to justify colonial legacies of white superiority and global capitalism.

We appreciate that today Chicago is home to the sixth-largest urban Native population in the United States. We further recognize and support the enduring presence of Native peoples among our faculty, staff, and student body. And in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, we reaffirm our commitment, both as an institution and as individuals, to help make our community and our society a more equitable, welcoming, and just place for all.

Your Gender Pronouns & Preferred Name:

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals' identities as well as topics regarding race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or your gender pronouns. 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 update records, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at: <https://offices.depaul.edu/secretary/policies-procedures/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: <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Student-Resources/Pages/Enrollment-Policies.aspx>

Changes to Syllabus:

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be posted under Announcements in D2L. Students will also be notified via email.

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](https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online%20teaching-evaluations.aspx) for additional information.

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 other areas for the next group of students. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable. As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. 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. Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback!

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://catalog.depaul.edu/student-handbooks/undergraduate/undergraduate-academic-policies/academic-integrity/#:~:text=Violations%20of%20academic%20integrity%20include,%3B%20academic%20misconduct%3B%20and%20complicity>

ChatGPT/AI Policy:

The use of ChatGPT and AI for activities in this course is not allowed. All work, whether it be academic essay, pitch, synopsis, treatment, format, script pages, etc., must be of your own creation. Do not use AI to generate ideas, either. This course is a course on creativity, and you must learn to be creative independent of AI technology. If caught using AI, it will be treated as an instance of plagiarism. The one exception to this AI policy is that you may use AI to generate properly formatted MLA citations on a Works Consulted page. Please note: my AI policy is more restrictive than DePaul's general university policy. While you may be allowed to use AI for limited purposes in other courses, you must adhere to my policy banning AI for this course.

In-class Workshops:

By enrolling in this course, you agree to share your ideas and writings with the instructor and other students in the class. Feedback is essential to the writing process. As such, you will participate in workshop sessions. Students will be divided into groups, and you must read and prepare written notes on your group's pages before class. Show your classmates the courtesy of reading their material as they will yours. Be truthful but sensitive when giving notes. Identifying problems and describing your experience of the work is helpful. Always be prepared to offer solutions to problems, but do not offer solutions unless the writer invites possible solutions (this etiquette keeps the writer in control). If desired, writers are encouraged to invite their classmates to propose solutions to problems. But sometimes, writers prefer to reflect and invent their own solutions. If invited to offer solutions to the writer, use the language of possibility ("what if x" or "there is an opportunity to do x") as opposed to the language of demanding ("you need to do x"). Writers are free to ask questions about their work to their classmates. For example: "Was it clear that Character A wanted X to happen?"

You must acquire express written consent from any writer in the class should you wish to share their work with someone who is not enrolled in this course.

NOTE: Students will be divided into six groups and will be expected to provide feedback on their fellow group members' writing assignments in the D2L Discussion forums. Failure to do so will affect the class participation grade.

Late Work Policy:

Work is late if it is submitted past the due date and time (even if it is submitted one minute past the deadline as there needs to be a clear cutoff). Late work will not be accepted for full points without a valid excuse of illness or significant personal circumstances. Students must submit documentation to validate such an excuse. Out of fairness to all, late work might not be workshopped in class. Keep in mind that your groupmates need time to read each of your submissions, so treat all deadlines as hard deadlines. If you do not submit your development draft to your groupmates on the D2L discussion board on time, it means the late work policy will apply to your final draft's grade.

Any work that is submitted late without a valid excuse will receive a 20% grade deduction if submitted in the 24 hours following the deadline; after that, the submission will receive a grade of zero. In the professional industry, turning in work late creates a negative impact on your reputation and can sometimes cost a production millions of dollars. Aim to complete assignments the day before they are due so that if challenging circumstances arise on the deadline day, you can still turn in the work on time. Also, be sure to back up your work so a computer crash does not impact your grade. Printed submissions of your work or submissions by email will not be accepted.

Copyright Statement:

The materials provided by the instructor in this course are for the use of the students enrolled in the course. Copyrighted course materials may not be further disseminated.

Technology Statement:

Phones, tablets, and laptops are great resources, but they can also be a distraction. It is important that you remain focused, giving your eyes and ears to workshops, in-class writing assignments, and lectures. If you are caught using tech for any purpose other than class work and taking notes (i.e., checking your e-mail, using social media, etc.), you will forfeit your ability to use phones, tablets, and laptops in class for the rest of the quarter. Also, you will receive an unexcused absence for the day.

Zoom Policies:

If circumstances necessitate moving a class to Zoom, the following policies apply:

- The DePaul Code of Student Responsibility applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior: <https://catalog.depaul.edu/student-handbooks/code-student-responsibility/university-policies-applicable-students/>
- General – Sign in with your preferred first name, last name, and pronoun preferences (if you so choose). If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class. This is not optimal, so try to locate an internet-enabled device to use for this course. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.
- Video – Turn on your video whenever possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class. You may elect to turn off your video if you have limited internet bandwidth, no webcam, or if you're unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions.
- Audio – Mute your microphone when you are not talking. Be in a quiet place when possible and turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

Important University Dates:

Please refer to the DePaul University Calendar link for the current dates regarding:

Last day to add/swap classes

Last day to drop classes with no penalty

Last day to select pass/fail option

Last day to withdraw from classes, receiving a grade of “W”

<https://academics.depaul.edu/calendar/Pages/default.aspx>

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 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. 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.

Emergency Statement:

An emergency can occur at any time, suddenly and without warning. Proper planning is essential to minimize the impact of any emergency on the university community, operations, and facilities. The link <https://offices.depaul.edu/public-safety/campus-services/Pages/emergency-response.aspx> provides detailed information on Emergency Evacuation and Fire Alarm safety. The University will use the DPU Alert to announce school closing or other emergencies. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the primary outdoor assembly area for CDM will be Grant Park (Southeast corner of Jackson and Michigan Ave).

Grading:

Assignments Summary	Percent of grade
1. Weekly Class Participation, Class Exercises, & Group Work	10%
2. Get to Know You Slide	5%
3. Writing Assignment 1 - World & Mood	10%
4. Writing Assignment 2 - Plot	10%
5. Writing Assignment 3 - Character	10%
6. Writing Assignment 4 - Dialogue	10%
7. In-class Pitch for Short Script	5%
8. Step Outline	10%
9. Short Script Draft 1	10%
10. Short Script Final Draft	20%

Total

100%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	62-60
F	59-0

Screenwriting assignments must demonstrate professionalism, showcase techniques and ideas discussed in class, offer a unique take with a clear voice, and present a proper grasp of grammar, format, and style. I consider the DePaul SCA Screenwriting Grading Rubric areas of concept, character, plot, market, and technical. A key question when assessing the holistic grade is: is the script of a quality level that is ready to film? Or, does it need significant development/refinement first?

In order to emphasize the importance of a professional writer's attention to detail, one point will be deducted for each writing assignment:

- If you do not upload as a PDF
- If you don't save the file with this exact file name:
 - For writing assignments: WA[#] space Last Name (for example, WA1 Kras)
 - For Step Outline: SO space Last Name (for example, SO Kras)
 - For Short Script Draft 1: SSD1 space Last Name (for example, SSD1 Kras)
 - For Short Script Shooting Draft: SSSD space Last Name (for example SSSD Kras)

Development drafts and final drafts BOTH need to be turned in to BOTH a) the discussion board AND b) the submission folder. Failure to put the document in both places will result in the late work policy being applied to the final draft.

Submitting development drafts to your group discussion board is ungraded. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to submit them to your group's discussion board on time in order to give your groupmates time to read and provide feedback. If you submit a development draft late to your group's discussion board, it means your final draft will be subjected to the late work policy deductions when receiving the assignment's grade.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Class Participation and Group Work.

Holistically graded on a 100-point scale. Worth 10% of total grade.

Contributing to the class discussion in a meaningful way. I assess both quantity and quality.

Demonstrating knowledge of assigned readings and lectures (additional readings and screenings not already listed in the syllabus may be added and posted to D2L).

Enthusiastically completing in-class exercises and group work.

Being a prepared, collaborative, and respectful team member.

Arriving on time to class.

Providing:

- a) at least **one point of feedback** for every member of their group each week in their respective online discussion boards. Feedback should be provided to your group no later than **Sunday at 10 AM CT** to give time for your classmate time to revise before the Tuesday at 10 AM final draft deadline. Vague praise such as, “I think this is really good,” does not count as a point of feedback. It must be specific and call the writer’s attention to a concrete issue.
- b) feedback during the workshop segments of each class session.

2. Get to Know You Slide

Holistically graded on a 100-point scale. Worth 5% of total grade.

Fill out a “Get to Know You” slide based on a provided template posted on D2L.

Due Friday 9/15 at 10 AM CT.

3. Writing Assignment 1 – World & Mood/Visual Writing

Based on a 100-point scale. Worth 10% of your total grade.

Write a scene (4-5 pages) with no dialogue. Convey a character or two in a clear world that has obstacles and a distinctive tone/mood. Use strong visual writing.

Development Draft Due: Friday 9/22 at 10 AM CT

Final Draft Due: Tuesday 9/26 10 AM CT

4. Writing Assignment 2 – Plot/Stakes/Obstacles

Based on a 100-point scale. Worth 10% of your total grade.

1. Revise your Cup of Coffee scene (5 pages) that was started in class.
2. Clearly LABEL the below 8 plot points as they occur in your script. Using a pen to write labels on your printed script paper and then scanning your paper into one PDF is

probably the best way to do this (unless you have an electronic pen to write on your script page on a tablet, etc.). As always, the work must be turned in via one PDF.

A brief setup/stasis

An inciting incident/intrusion

An attack (establishing: what is the character's want, and what major dramatic question are we answering?)

A complication (usually, an obstacle gets in the way of the character's want OR there is a surprise or a reversal)

A bleak moment (further complication or all is lost)

Crisis (the point of no return; metaphorically, picking up the sword)

Climax (the character gets or doesn't get the goal; the major dramatic question is answered)

Future projection (the result; what briefly happens next?)

Development Draft Due: Friday 9/29 at 10 AM CT.

Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/3 at 10 AM CT.

5. Writing Assignment 3 - Character

Based on a 100-point scale. Worth 10% of your total grade.

Write a 5-page scene in which a character is confronted with an obstacle and has to make a difficult choice that reveals one of the character's core traits.

Development Draft Due: Friday 10/6 at 10 AM CT.

Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/10 at 10 AM CT

6. Writing Assignment 4 - Dialogue

Based on a 100-point scale. Worth 10% of your total grade.

Dialogue Exercise:

1. Record two people having a conversation for around 5 minutes (first obtain their written consent via an e-mail to you). At least one person should talk about one thing he/she/they want(s).
2. Write the dialogue from the recording verbatim into a scene format using Character A and Character B as the names. Use cutoffs and overlaps where necessary.
 - A. Rewrite the verbatim scene, adapting the speech to mostly second-level and third-level dialogue.
 - i. After lines that are second-level dialogue, write #2 after the line.
After lines that are third-level dialogue, write #3 after the line.
 - ii. For example:
CHARACTER A
If you were a food, you'd be cotton candy. #2

Development Draft Due: Friday 10/13 at 10 AM CT.
 Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/17 at 10 AM CT.

7. In-class Pitch for Short Script

100-point scale. Worth 5% of your total grade.

Present a 2-minute pitch (max) for your short film. Must include a) inspiration/personal connection followed by b) logline. Then, tell us a bit more, perhaps about the plot, character, and message/theme. Make us excited about your project!

Do not go over your time or you will be cut off and receive a mandatory 5-point deduction.

Due: Tuesday 10/24 in class

8. Step Outline

100-point scale. Worth 10% of total grade.

Write a scene-by-scene synopsis that includes visual detail for your short script. Make sure the world, plot points, characters, and tone are clear and compelling.

Example of one scene:

AMERIGO BONASERA, an undertaker, tells DON VITO CORLEONE, the aging head of the successful Corleone crime family, the sordid story of how his daughter was brutally assaulted by two men. In the dim room, Don Corleone offers to deal with Amerigo's problem in exchange for a favor in the future. The businesslike meeting takes place during the wedding of Corleone's daughter.

General Guidelines

- Use 12 pt. Courier New Font in a word/pages file
- Make sure your scene descriptions are in present tense
- Use all CAPS when introducing a new character.

Development Draft Due: Friday 10/27 at 10 AM CT
 Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/31 at 10 AM CT

9. Short Script Draft One

100-point scale. Worth 10% of total grade.

You will workshop your first draft of your short screenplay (5-10 pages) with your peers in live class sessions.

A few things to keep in mind as you write your scripts:

- Show, don't tell. Show, don't tell. Show, don't tell. Show, don't tell.
- You must include a cover page.
- 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/colleague 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.
- Use your plot points as a guide.
- Avoid exposition-heavy dialogue - Always ask yourself, "Is there a way I can communicate this information visually?"
- Ask questions or come to office hours 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.

Development Draft Due: Friday 11/3 at 10 AM CT

Final Draft (of Short Script Draft 1) Due: Tuesday 11/7 at 10 AM CT

10. Short Script Shooting Draft

100-point scale. Worth 20% of total grade.

A few things to keep in mind as you REWRITE your 5-10 page scripts:

- The rewrite of your script needs to be a marked improvement over your first draft.
- You must include a cover page.
- Use notes you received from the instructor, workshops and self-evaluation in order to craft your revised draft.
- Characters, dialogue, structure and scene work should be completely reevaluated and enhanced.
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation count - Proofread your work, proofread it again, and then proofread it one more time just to be sure.
- Standard screenwriting formatting is required. Refer to the textbook for this class, the scripts we read in class, and your instructor for assistance.

Development Draft Due: Friday 11/10 at 10 AM CT

Class Workshop Draft Due--Everyone: Tuesday 11/14 10 AM CT

Final Draft Due: Tuesday 11/21 at 10 AM CT. Earlier submissions are encouraged!

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1 (9/12):

Student Introductions

Intro Syllabus

Intro Loglines

In-class Project: Logline Team Contest

Intro: What is a Screenplay?

WGA Strike – discuss and answer questions

Homework:

1. Reading due by 9/19:
 - a. Christopher Lockhart on Loglines Documents in D2L
 - b. *Tools of Screenwriting*: About Screenwriting & Basic Storytelling; Visuals
 - c. *The Hollywood Standard*: Script-Typing Software & Proofreading, Appendix A Sample
 - d. Read any screenplay of your choice! Check out this link for some options:
<https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/10-great-websites-download-movie-scripts/>
 Make sure you are reading the writer's actual screenplay and not a transcription!
2. Write loglines for three ideas for your short film script. Be prepared to casually pitch these to your group in the next class. This counts towards class participation.
3. Take online tutorials on YouTube about how to use your chosen screenwriting software. You are responsible for knowing how to correctly use and format with your software.

Week 2 (9/19):

FYI: The last Day to drop AQ2023 classes with no penalty is Tuesday, September 19, 2023.

Team competition: oral quiz on the syllabus (participation counts towards class participation grade).

Pitch: pitch 3 loglines for your short film ideas to your group. Classmates will serve as “development execs” and help you choose the most promising idea. Remember, consider your ability to film it!

World & Mood, Visual Writing

Homework:

1. Writing Assignment 1 (World & Mood/Visual Writing)
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 9/22 at 10 AM CT
 - b. Final Draft Due: Tuesday 9/26 10 AM CT
2. Readings due by 9/26:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: Planting & Payoff / Elements of the Future, Protagonist, Conflict, Obstacles (43-49), Characterization, Activity and Action (81-83)
 - b. *The Hollywood Standard*: Quick Start Guide & Single-Camera Format

Week 3 (9/26)

Workshop Group 1's Writing Assignment 1 (World & Mood/Visual Writing)

Plot Points, Stakes, Obstacles

Homework:

1. Writing Assignment 2 (Plot/Stakes/Obstacles)
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 9/29 at 10 AM CT.
 - b. Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/3 at 10 AM CT.
2. Reading due 10/3:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: Premise, Main Tension, Theme, Unity
 - b. *The Hollywood Standard*: Scene Headings

Week 4 (10/3):

Workshop Group 2's Writing Assignment 2 (Plot/Stakes/Obstacles)

Character

Answer a list of questions about your character

Homework:

1. Writing Assignment 3 (Character)
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 10/6 at 10 AM CT.
 - b. Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/10 at 10 AM CT
2. Reading due 10/10:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: The Dramatic Scene, Dialogue
 - b. *The Hollywood Standard*: Dialogue

Week 5 (10/10):

Workshop Group 3's Writing Assignment 3 (Character)

Dialogue

Homework:

1. Writing Assignment 4 (Dialogue)
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 10/13 at 10 AM CT.
 - b. Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/17 at 10 AM CT.
2. Reading due 10/17: D2L article about pitching

Week 6 (10/17):

Workshop Group 4's Writing Assignment 4 (Dialogue)

Introduction to Pitching

Homework:

1. Prepare Pitch for your Short Script, due 10/24 in class.
2. Reading due 10/24:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: Development of the Story, The Outline and Step Outline/Plausibility
 - b. *The Hollywood Standard*: Direction

Week 7 (10/24):

In-class Pitching for Short Script

Intro Step Outlines

Homework:

1. Step Outline for your Short Script
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 10/27 at 10 AM CT
 - b. Final Draft Due: Tuesday 10/31 at 10 AM CT
2. Reading due 10/31:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: Dramatic Irony

Week 8 (10/31):

Workshop Group 5's Step Outlines

Intro Rewriting

Intro the "stripes" method

Homework:

1. Short Script Draft 1
 - a. Development Draft Due: Friday 11/3 at 10 AM CT
 - b. Final Draft (of Short Script Draft 1) Due: Tuesday 11/7 at 10 AM CT
2. Reading due 11/7:
 - a. *Tools of Screenwriting*: Rewriting (95-97)
 - b. *The Hollywood Standard*: Special Pages (131-139), [revisit] Proofreading (160-163)

Week 9 (11/7):

Workshop Group 6's Short Script Draft 1

Industry Opportunities for Short Scripts; Finding Your Voice and Crafting Your Brand Narrative

Homework:

1. Short Script Shooting Draft:

- a. Development Draft Due: Friday 11/10 at 10 AM CT
- b. Class Workshop Draft Due--Everyone: Tuesday 11/14 10 AM CT
- c. Looking ahead: Final Draft Due: Tuesday 11/21 at 10 AM CT. Earlier submissions are encouraged!

Week 10 (11/14):

Workshop Short Script Shooting Draft (we will get through as many as we possibly can, but please note, we may not have time to do everyone's. Anyone whose script is not workshopped is welcome to come to office hours the same day).

Homework:

**Final draft of Short Script Shooting Draft due by 10 AM CT on Tuesday 11/21.
Earlier submissions are encouraged!**