

DC 201 Introduction to Screenwriting
Winter 2014 | Tuesday/Thursday 9:40am – 11:10am | STDCT 330

Instructor: James Choi
Office: STDCT 330
Office Hours: By appointment or STDCT 330 Tuesday/Thursday 11:10am – 12:40pm
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Course Description:

This course is an introduction to and overview of selecting and developing story concepts, developing an outline and writing a short film screenplay. Emphasis is placed on proper character development, effective use of conflict and adherence to three act structure. The cornerstone for this class is the “writer’s workshop.” Each week, writers’ work will be read and given constructive analysis to help each writer reach a solid short script screenplay that showcases his or her unique voice.

Goals For This Course:

By the end of this course you will have a fundamental understanding of the structure of a typical Three-Act screenplay. You will also be introduced to visual storytelling through the screenplay form and will see how key incidents, story progressions, conflict and resolution and character arcs affect a film. Ultimately you will utilize these concepts to complete an 8-12 page screenplay for a short film.

Text:

(Recommended Text) The Screenplay by Syd Field

Programs:

Celtx screenwriting program

Grading:

Assignment 1: Initial 3 Loglines	5%
Assignment 2: 3 Act Structure Analyses	10%
Assignment 3: Outline	10%
Assignment 3: Character Bios	5%
Assignment 5: Opening	10%
Assignment 6: Rough Draft	10%
Final Screenplay due 3/20	30%
Attendance/Participation:	20%

A = 110-93, 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

Attendance – Attendance is mandatory. **Anyone who misses 5 classes will not get receive 20% for participation and attendance.** If you have to miss class, contact me PRIOR to class time to discuss excusing the absence. Please email me at james@beachwoodpics.com.

****Online students will have peer review assignments which will take place of attendance**

Class Participation—Along with showing up, you are expected to join in class discussions, and critique other people's work. Remember, this is your class, you will get out of it what you put in it.

Requesting an incomplete grade:

An incomplete grade may only be assigned to a student if the student has experienced an extenuating circumstance near the end of the term, the student is in good standing in the class, and the request is made in advance. This being said it is solely up to the discretion of the instructor to grant an incomplete.

Assignments and Exercises – Class Work Assignments must be handed in on time. There is a 10% penalty for each day past the due date for up to three days. Then, your assignment will not be accepted.

Written Assignments: Must be typed.

COLWEB—In an attempt to save some trees and cash, all assignments will be turned in via COLWEB. If you are unfamiliar with COLWEB please see me. In some cases, you must print and bring in an assignment. I will indicate in the syllabus how each assignment must be turned into me.

Special Accommodations: If you have any special considerations please see me.

BACK UP YOUR WORK: Failure of computer software and or Hardware will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for late projects or incomplete grades so back up your work daily.

Examinations – Students who do not take exams during the regularly scheduled time will receive a failing grade for the exam unless they have contacted the instructor in advance to arrange for a make-up exam. Make-up exams will be administered by the College according to its make-up exam schedule.

Plagiarism – Plagiarism on assignments or cheating on exams are serious offenses and earn the student a failing grade for the class. Please read the Academic Integrity Policy (AIP) at: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/>

Cell Phones—Use of cell phones in the class is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class. Mistakes will happen (to me too), but repeated failure to turn your phone off will result in a lowered grade for the class. Absolutely no texting in class!

Course Lectures/Reading Assignments – The assigned readings offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class. It is not my intention to overwhelm you with reading, but rather to use the textbook as a way to support and reinforce the concepts we learn in class.

Content Changes – Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling. I will contact you via email with any deviations from the syllabus. Please ensure that mail sent to the email address that you provided to the school is readily accessible.

Schedule for the Class (Subject to Change)

Class 1

Tuesday, January 7

Class Introduction and Loglines

Class 2

Thursday, January 9

Loglines Due

Class 3

Tuesday, January 14

Structure

Class 4

Thursday, January 16

3 Act Structure Analysis Due

Class 5

Tuesday, January 21

Character

Class 6

Thursday, January 23

Outline

Character Bios Due

Class 7

Tuesday, January 28

Outline Due

Outline Review

Class 8

Thursday, January 30

Outline Review

Class 9

Tuesday, Feb 4

Outline Review

Class 10

Thurs, Feb 6

Formatting

Class 11

Tues, Feb 11

Opening Due

Class 12

Thurs, Feb 13

Opening Review

Class 13

Tues, Feb 18

Opening Review

Class 14

Thurs, Feb 20

Opening Review

Class 15

Tues, Feb 25

Rough Draft Due

Class 16

Thurs, Feb 27

Rough Draft Review

Class 17

Tues, March 4

Rough Draft Review

Class 18

Tues, March 6

Rough Draft Review

Class 19

Tues, March 11

Rewrites

Class 20

Thurs, March 13

Individual Meetings

Final

Thursday, March 20 – 9:40am – 11:10am

Final Script Due