

DePaul University

School of Cinematic Arts

DC 300 Story Development

Winter 2018/19

Monday 1:30 – 4:45PM, Daley 207

Professor Anna Hozian: ahozian@depaul.edu

Office Hours: (CDM 463) MON 10:15AM-1:15PM and by appointment.

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 DC 301.

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 Logline 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: January 7th**

COURSE INTRO and LECTURE: What makes a Feature Work. Finding a Concept.

ASSIGNMENT ONE: Five Possible Concepts for a Feature Film due in class, ready to pitch on Monday, January 14th.

Week Two: January 14th

WORKSHOP: Pitching Three of Your Concepts. (Have the other two in your back pocket just in case.)

LECTURE: Who is Your Main Character? And Why?

ASSIGNMENT TWO: Main Characters, Brainstorming, and Theme due Thursday, January 24th at 11:59PM

Week Three: January 21st

NO CLASS

Week Four: January 28th

WORKSHOP: Main Characters, Brainstorming, and Theme.

LECTURE: Story Structure: Where to Begin and How to Hit the Main Steps of the Journey.

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Loglines and Preliminary Main Character Arc/Transformation due Thursday, January 31st at 11:59PM.

Week Five: February 4th

WORKSHOP: Loglines and Preliminary Main Character Arc/Transformation

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

ASSIGNMENT FOUR: Supporting Cast due Thursday, February 7th at 11:59PM.

Week Six: February 11th

WORKSHOP: Supporting Cast.

LECTURE: Summaries and Five Main Beats.

ASSIGNMENT FIVE: Write a one-page summary and find your first main beats due Thursday, February 14th at 11:59PM.

Week Seven: February 18th

WORKSHOP: Summaries and Main Beats

LECTURE: Treatments vs. Step Outlines

ASSIGNMENT SIX: Treatment or First Basic Step Outline due Thursday, February 21st at 11:59PM.

Week Eight: February 25th

WORKSHOP: Treatment or First Basic Step Outline.

ASSIGNMENT SEVEN: ROUND TWO: Treatment or First Basic Step Outline (Do the Opposite of Last Week) due Thursday, February 28th at 11:59PM.

Week Nine: March 4th

WORKSHOP: Treatment of First Basic Step Outline.

ASSIGNMENT EIGHT: First Draft Full Step Outline due Thursday, March 7th at 11:59PM.

Week Ten: March 11th

WORKSHOP: First Draft Full Step Outline

FINAL: REWRITE FINAL STEP OUTLINE due MARCH 18th by 1:00 PM

Assignments

There are Eight Weekly Assignments, Eight Workshops, and a Final.

For Weekly Assignments:

*****With the exception of Week One (Concepts), you must post your assignment to Submissions and Discussions, and also bring one hard copy to class.*****

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**. If you do not, you may be asked to leave. 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 and Participation: 10 points each (80)

First Seven Weekly Assignments: 10 points each (70)

First Draft of Full Step Outline 20 points

FINAL: Revised Full Step Outline: 30 Points

TOTAL POINTS: 200 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**.

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: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

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.

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 students will be notified via email.

Online Course Evaluations

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. 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 those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. 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! Riddell DC 346/445 | 4

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

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

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 <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>. 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. Riddell DC 346/445 | 5

Incomplete

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.

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: Student Center, LPC, Suite #370 Phone number: (773)325.1677