SCWR 122: Script to Screen
Winter 2022
In-Person and Online Asynchronous
Sections 501, 510

In-Person: TUESDAYS, 1:30-4:45
CDM Center, 243 S. Wabash Ave., Room 218
Instructor: Ilisa Aaron (she/her/hers)
E-mail: IAARON@depaul.edu
Office Hours via Zoom: Mondays 9:00-10:30AM, starting 1/10, or by appointment
(Zoom link on D2L)

Course Description:

This analytical course examines the screenplay's evolution to the screen from a writer's perspective. Students will read feature length scripts of varying genres and then perform a critical analysis and comparison of the text to the final produced versions of the films. Storytelling conventions such as structure, character development, theme, and the creation of tension will be used to uncover alterations and how these adjustments ultimately impacted the film's reception.

Prerequisites

None

Course Outcomes

In addition to weekly writing assignments, students will complete a final analysis paper, writing 5-7 pages.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Recognize the role of the screenwriter in the creation of a film
- Interpret standard screenplay format
- Compare the writing styles of individual screenwriters
- Relate the process in which a screenplay is developed and ultimately produced
- Identify and analyze story alterations between a screenplay and its final film

In addition to these stated course learning outcomes, we will have specific outcomes within each module, available on the D2L page for each module.

Reading

All required readings will be provided on D2L under Content in PDF format and readings must be completed by the date specified in the course schedule below.

Additional articles and links as needed.

Please examine the following websites that report on the newest developments in this thriving industry: *VARIETY, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, DEADLINE HOLLYWOOD*

<u>Learning Domain Description</u>

This course is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Arts and Literature domain. Courses in the Arts and Literature domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts by developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning and through critical and/or creative activity to come to experience art with greater openness, insight, and enjoyment. These courses focus on works of literature, art, theatre, or music as such, though the process of analysis may also include social and cultural issues. Students who take course in this domain choose three courses from such choices as literature, the visual arts, media arts, music, and theater. No more than two courses can be chosen from one department or program.

<u>Learning Outcomes</u>

Students will be able to:

- Explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and how it was produced (i.e. they should be able to articulate and explain the "content" of that work and its methodology of production).
- Comment on the relationship between form and content in a work. How does the 14-line sonnet both enable and inhibit its practitioner, for example? What are the generic expectations of a particular form? How does an artist complicate, enrich, or subvert such expectations?
- Assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words, using, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.
- Contextualize a work of art. They will be able to do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre. They will also be able to contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social, or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work's reception and how that reception might differ amongst various peoples and historical periods.

<u>Course Management System</u>

D2L

<u>Grading:</u>

Response Papers (8)	40 points (5 each)
Attendance/Participation & Discussion Board Posts	30 points (3 points per week)
Final Paper	30 points
Total	**100 points**

<u>Grading Standards:</u>

Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points	Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points
A	93	C+	78
A-	90	C	73
B+	88	C-	70
B	83	D+	68
B-	80	D	60

Response Papers

Students will write **8** weekly response papers exploring the changes made to a film between the week's assigned screenplay and the final filmed version of that written work. The specific topic for each paper will be detailed on D2L in the corresponding week.

In general, these responses must be 500-600 words in length and presented in Times New Roman 12 pt. font—approximately one single-spaced typed Word document page. File names should appear in the following format: **LastName_FirstName_Assignment**

Response Papers must be submitted to the appropriate D2L Submission Folder in PDF format by the due date/time listed on D2L.

Final Paper

For this paper, you will choose to write about one of a selection of unproduced feature film scripts, provided by me, at a later date. You will write a 5 to 7-page paper exploring the ways in which your chosen script would fail to satisfy audience expectations for a narrative feature film as presented, drawing on concepts from throughout the quarter. Make sure your analysis includes your assessment of the script's story structure, character development, theme, dialogue, tone, and tension. The analysis should not be a retelling of the script's plot.

See D2L for more details.

Papers must be double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, and have one-inch margins on all sides with file names formatted: **LastName_FirstName_Assignment**. Papers must be uploaded to the D2L Submissions Folder in PDF format by the date/time specified on D2L.

Notes on the Evaluation of Student Work

Individual Response Paper prompts and grading rubrics according to which written assignments are assessed will be available on D2L under Content. In order to obtain the desired grade on any assignment, students must review and adhere to these guidelines. In general, written work will be evaluated according to the clarity of your writing, adherence to assignment guidelines, and basic mechanics (i.e. spelling, grammar, and punctuation). Please allow up to 7- 10 days for the return of graded materials.

Course Format

Each week will consist of a combination of lectures, the reading of a feature-length screenplays, Discussion Board participation, screening a feature film, and writing Response Papers. All of these will be found on our D2L course page under Content.

Notes on Screenplays/Films

Links to all screenplays/films will be provided to you on D2L under Content. Assigned screenplays/films will be derived from a variety of genres, but some WILL include graphic language, violence, & sex of an R-rated nature.

Discussion Board Guidelines

All students from both sections are expected to **post three times per week** on the Discussion Board, one response to the discussion prompt and two responses to your peers' posts. Late posts will not receive full credit. A late post is defined as a post made after that week's module is complete and a new discussion prompt has been posted.

Participation in each week's discussion topic is mandatory and graded. You will be expected to show your peers respect, tolerance, courtesy, open-mindedness, positive thinking and professionalism in these discussions, in keeping with DePaul's Vincentian Mission. Students exhibiting unprofessional behavior may find themselves in violation of the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

As you participate in these discussions, follow these guidelines:

- **Adhere to the prompt(s).** Look for the specific instructions associated with each week's Discussion prompt. These prompts are intended to serve as building blocks for your weekly Response Papers. You will be expected to have done the week's reading prior to responding. Therefore...
- **Plan ahead and do not wait.** For your own benefit and out of respect for your peers, avoid waiting until the last minute to post your initial response to each week's prompt. This will give your peers the opportunity to engage with and learn from you, as your early participation allows you to mutually engage with and learn from them.
- **Write with substance.** In addition to merely meeting the 200-300 word requirement for your initial Discussion posts, take the time to contribute substantively to the Discussion in your initial response and replies to your peers both. Be specific in referencing the readings and lectures in your responses, and in your replies, go beyond merely agreeing/disagreeing and actively engage intellectually with their ideas to push this discussion forward. And be sure to read all replies to a peer's initial post before responding to ensure that you're not echoing other sentiments in that thread.
- **Think of this as you would small group discussions in the classroom.** This is your chance to talk to each other and LEARN from one another! However, know that I will be reading all your posts in time, so be respectful, thoughtful and thorough in your discussion posts knowing that I am popping in and out throughout the week.

Attendance

For in-person students, an absence is defined as failing to attend class, arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early.

For asynchronous online students, an absence is defined as failing to include the SECRET PHRASE from the week's lecture on your Response Paper. "Secret phrases" are a technique to make sure students are watching and paying attention to the lectures. Each week's "secret phrase" must be included at the top of your Response Paper.

Each absence will result in a reduction in the participation grade; if you are absent more than three times, you fail the course.

Late Work

Assignments/Discussions must be completed and uploaded to the appropriate D2L Submission Folder by the date and time specified. **Any Response Paper submitted late will receive a 1 point grade deduction for each day it is late. Discussion Posts and your Final Papers, however, must be completed by the assigned due date/time or you will receive a grade of zero.** Submissions by email will not be accepted given that we will be using Turnitin Originality Check throughout the course. I also suggest backing up your work online as computers crash.

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.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at https://offices.depaul.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-resources/academic-integrity/Documents/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy_Spring%202016.pdf

If the instructor finds a student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy/plagiarized their work, the student will fail the course, receiving an automatic F grade. (Note: Turnitin is used to check the originality of submissions on D2L.) Actions taken by the instructor in this regard do not preclude the university from taking further action, including dismissal from the university.

Important Dates

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://academics.depaul.edu/calendar/Pages/default.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

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
policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332

Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the policy of DePaul University that no person shall be the object of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, family relationship status, physical or mental disability, military status, genetic information or other status protected by local, state, or federal law in its employment or its educational settings.

View a full description of DePaul's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy here.

Please note: Students should report any incidents of behavioral misconduct (including harassment) in video conference meetings to their instructor. Any incident of harassment and/or behavioral misconduct that impedes the teaching and learning environment may be reported to the Dean of Students Office for referral to the student conduct process. This includes sharing meeting links, passwords, screenshots, recordings, or other meeting information in a way that could facilitate harassment or misconduct by others.

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.

Additional Accommodations

This course may include instructional content delivered via audio and video. If you have any concerns about your ability to access and/or understand this material in its default format, please notify me within the first week of the course so accommodations can be made.

Assistance with Writing – The Writing Center

Consider contacting or visiting the Writing Center to discuss your writing. Writing Center tutors are undergrad and graduate students across disciplines who would love to help you at any stage of the writing process with any kind of writing you're working on. In each appointment, tutors collaborate with you to set an agenda focused on one, two, or three specific topics for revision. Online appointments are available through audio and video or text-based chat or through written feedback where you upload a draft and a tutor provides feedback that is emailed to you. All writing center services are free.

Schedule your appointments on a weekly or as needed basis and bring your assignment sheets and other relevant materials to your appointments.

Student Interaction

Certain assignments may require students to collaborate or critique each other's work. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner; commentary should be respectful. Students are required to communicate with their partners frequently and execute their assignment responsibilities in a timely manner.

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. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Precautions

Keeping our DePaul community safe is of utmost importance in the pandemic. Students, faculty and staff are expected to (1) wear a cloth face covering at all times while on campus, both inside buildings and outside on the grounds; (2) maintain physical distance (at least six feet) in all DePaul spaces (including classrooms, meeting rooms, hallways, rest rooms, offices, and outdoor spaces); (3) conduct a daily self-screening process for the symptoms of COVID-19 using the #CampusClear app before coming to campus; (4) complete the online Health and Safety Guidelines for Returning to Campus training; and (5) abide by the City of Chicago Emergency Travel Order. By doing these things, we are Taking Care of DePaul, Together. The recommendations may change as local, state, and federal guidelines evolve. Students who have a medical reason for not complying should register with DePaul's Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD).

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 sent via email.

COURSE OUTLINE

For the purposes of this class, weeks will turn over on Tuesdays (the day we have in-person/Zoom class scheduled)

Everyone needs to read the script before watching the film. For in-person students, that means reading the script before class. For asynchronous students, that means reading the script before viewing the lecture/film.

Deadlines for Discussion Board posts, Response Papers, and Final Papers apply to both in-person and asynchronous class sections.

Week 1: Tuesday, 1/4 – Monday, 1/10
- Lecture/Discussion: Introductions. Review Course Materials and Syllabus. What is a Screenplay? How to Read a Screenplay. Elements of a Screenplay.
- Reading Due: N/A
- Screening: N/A
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 1/6 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 1/10 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: N/A

Week 2: Tuesday, 1/11 – Monday, 1/17
- Lecture/Discussion: Feature Film Development.
- Reading Due: Speed (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Speed
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 1/13 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 1/17 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #1 DUE: 11:59PM (CT) on Monday, 1/17**

Week 3: Tuesday, 1/18 – Monday, 1/24
- Lecture/Discussion: Conventional Cinematic Structure. Effective Cinematic.
- Reading Due: Sleepless In Seattle (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Sleepless In Seattle
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 1/20 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 1/24 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #2 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 1/24**

Week 4: Tuesday, 1/25 – Monday, 1/31
- Lecture/Discussion: Character Types. Understanding Character.
- Reading Due: Free Guy (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Free Guy

- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 1/27 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 1/31 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #3 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 1/31**

Week 5: Tuesday, 2/1 – Monday, 2/7
- Lecture/Discussion: Theme.
- Reading Due: Little Miss Sunshine (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Little Miss Sunshine
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 2/3 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 2/7 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #4 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 2/7**

Week 6: Tuesday, 2/8 – Monday, 2/14
- Lecture/Discussion: Tension & Narrative Causality.
- Reading Due: A Quiet Place (before class/lecture)
- Screening: A Quiet Place
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 2/10 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 2/14 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #5 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 2/14**

Week 7: Tuesday, 2/15 – Monday, 2/21
- Lecture/Discussion: Genre & Audience Expectations.
- Reading Due: Elf (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Elf
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 2/17 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 2/21 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #6 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 2/21**

Week 8: Tuesday, 2/22 – Monday, 2/28
- Lecture/Discussion: Unity. Alternative Approaches to Protagonists and Structure.
- Reading Due: The Breakfast Club (before class/lecture)
- Screening: The Breakfast Club
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 2/24 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 2/28 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #7 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 2/28**

Week 9: Tuesday, 3/1 – Monday, 3/7
- Lecture/Discussion: Adaptations & Remakes.
- Reading Due: Story of Your Life by Ted Chiang & Arrival (script) (before class/lecture)
- Screening: Arrival
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 3/3 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 3/7 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: **Response Paper #8 by 11:59 PM (CT) on Monday, 3/7**

Week 10 Tuesday, 3/8 – Monday 3/14
- Lecture/Discussion: Development Hell.
- Reading Due: Script for Final Paper

- Screening: Tales from the Script
- Participation: Discussion Board posts (Initial by 3/10 at 11:59PM (CT), Peer Replies by 3/14 at 11:59PM (CT)
- Writing Assignment: Final Paper

FINALS WEEK -- No Class Meeting
- **SUBMIT: Final Paper by 11:59 PM (CT) on FRIDAY 3/18**