



## **SCWR 366**

501

### **Showrunning II**

Winter 2021-22

Thursdays, 1:30 to 4:45 pm

Instructor: Jose A. Soto

Type of Course: In Person

Course Management System: D2L

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1.30 to 3 pm and  
Thursdays from 11.50 am  
to 1.20 pm (All via Zoom)

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#### **Course Description:**

This advanced course enables students to take on the role of the Showrunner for the packaging and preproduction of an original television or web series. Through hands-on exercises, students will use their creative sensibilities and business acumen to develop a viable show bible, style guide, budget and schedule for a self-produced production or as part of a network pitch package.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Create a vetted show bible, story pitch and style guide for an original television series.
2. Produce a pitch presentation and left behind document for the sale of the program.
3. Develop season as well as episode outlines and scripts for a short-form TV show.
4. Demonstrate the responsibilities of a professional Showrunner by creating a plan for the production of an original television show; gathering a cast and a crew; as well as scheduling and budgeting of said production.

#### **Reading:**

Suggested:

Landau, Neil (2013) **THE TV SHOWRUNNER'S ROADMAP**; Focal Press. ISBN-10 : 0415831679, ISBN-13 : 978-0415831673

Del Valle, Robert (2008) **THE ONE-HOUR DRAMA SERIES: PRODUCING EPISODIC TELEVISION**; Silman-James Press. ASIN : B00HK3D5QG

You are also invited to examine the **VARIETY & THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER** magazines that report on the newest developments in this thriving industry.

The lectures might be supplemented with handouts from the instructor over the course of the quarter.

**Grading:**

Final grades will be based on 6 partial assignments and a final assignment. Because it has to present shows on time every hour of every day, television is one of the most demanding industries, this charge carries over to those who are preparing for it, which is why missed deadlines will result in assignment failure (0%).

**MODULE 01: Project Presentation**

Assignment 1: Creating Pitch Presentations and Left Behinds 10%

**MODULE 02: Development**

Assignment 2: Developing and (Re) Writing the show. 30%

**MODULE 03: Casting**

Assignment 3: Gathering the Performing Talent. 10%

**MODULE 04: Crewing**

Assignment 4: Setting up Directing and Production crews. 10%

**MODULE 05: Scheduling**

Assignment 5: Planning the Production under multiple units. 10%

**MODULE 06: Budget**

Assignment 6: Establishing resource requirements and funding. 10%

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

The production book for multiple unit production. 15%

**PARTICIPATION**

In class and with the other projects in class. 5%

All assignments must be typed and free of grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. It's your work; you're responsible for its quality.



### **Grading Standards:**

Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points	Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points
A	92	C+	78
A-	90	C	72
B+	88	C-	70
B	82	D+	68
B-	80	D	60
		F	0

### **Course Policies:**

#### **1. Participation**

At this level, students should be interested in the subject of the course. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either taking part in the online activities, asking questions or adding constructive comments to other student's presentations and the instructor lectures.

#### **2. Attendance**

It does not constitute a specific part of your grade, but perfect attendance is required. Most of the information you need to complete your assignments will be discussed in-class; also, examples of what you have to do will be given there. Subjects and/or assignments will not be discussed outside of the programmed zoom meetings. This makes attendance critical, and thus not an issue to be negotiated. However, if you have to miss a zoom meeting or a deadline, make sure to plan ahead, and inform the instructor in advance. Calling in advance does not automatically excuse an absence or a missed deadline, but it is the only way to present your case. If you fail to communicate before the next class period to explain an absence or a missed deadline, they will not be excused. Please note that work, non-emergency medical and dental appointments, hangovers, intramural games, visitors from out of town, fixing your roommate's computer, fraternity/sorority events, arguments with boyfriends or girlfriends and studying for other classes do not constitute excused absences or missed assignments.

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.



### **3. Tardiness**

One true thing in all professional fields is the lack of tolerance for tardiness. Employers do not generally tolerate such behavior, and employees who offer weak, irritating excuses frequently find themselves unemployed and unemployable. We will be working under the same rules.

Remember it is your responsibility to make the arrangements when a deadline or a class has to be missed. I will treat you professionally, expecting of you a responsible attitude. This means that it is you who must be worried about solving the problem, not me.

### **4. Missed Assignments**

Since television creation is a cumulative effort, if you fail to turn in any of the assignments you will fail it with 0%. There will be no exceptions. This is a zero-tolerance policy. Turning-in an assignment does not guarantee you will have a passing grade, although the opposite will be true: Not turning them in will fail you inevitably.

### **5. Attitude**

We are going to be spending a lot of time discussing other student's or your own work. This will be made in an orderly fashion, no matter how vehemently we feel for an argument, we have to be able to provide it in a disciplined manner. It is better to wait and later speak than not speaking at all. My evaluation of your attitude and attention will be based on your participation during discussions, as much as it will be based on your assertiveness when making a comment.

### **6. Zoom Etiquette**

The DePaul Code of Student Responsibility applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior. The following are policies for the course meetings with Zoom:

- General – Sign in with your preferred first name and last name. If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class. This is not optimal; 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 when 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.

## **7. Uncivilized Behavior**

Even though you are students who must constantly thrive to grow, we need to start acting professionally. Therefore, there will be no tolerance for uncivilized behavior. I require an orderly ambiance to be able to make the most of each session.

By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand my expectations for students concerning attitude and work ethic.

I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she has excessive absences (more than four, and if he/she doesn't participate in any of the assignments), engages in disruptive behavior, has a poor attitude, or in any other way is clearly not taking the class seriously.

## **8. Ethics**

Although your grade does not contain an ethics component like some other courses, I require complete honesty in producing your work. By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize there will be serious sanctions if it is proven that you have engaged in such behavior. You are also indicating that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty; I will not tolerate an excuse that claims the student did not know he/she was engaging in academic dishonesty.

## **9. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, cheating and/or fabrication will not be tolerated. They are serious offenses – both in course and in media careers. Thus, I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate.

Plagiarism is useless to you anyway. By having someone else do the work for you, you are missing an opportunity to immerse yourself in the television industry. You are also waiving your right to learn. If you are willing to do that, then you have to evaluate if it's worth the aggravation and the time you invest in this course.

More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.



## **10. 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.

For more information on DePaul's withdrawal policy visit: <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/late-withdrawal-process.aspx>

## **11. Special Accommodations:**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should inform 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

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296

## **12. 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>



### **13. Production Policies:**

#### SCA Production Office:

The Production office, located in LL Daley Building and at [production@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:production@cdm.depaul.edu) is an invaluable resource to all DePaul student filmmakers. The office can answer general questions about navigating filming inside or outside of DePaul, SCA facilities and equipment, and provide resources for casting, insurance, crew calls, etc. Office hours are listed on the CDM Production Resources page [here](#).

#### SCA Central:

Run by The Production Office, SCA Central is our online information hub, filled with resources including the SCA Production Handbook, pre-production templates, waivers/contracts, job listings, SCA events, local production community news & events, internship opportunities, etc. Find it on D2L and make it your home page.

#### SCA Production Handbook:

Required reading for all SCA Students prior to equipment/stage/studio reservations, The SCA Production Handbook is an invaluable resource to all DePaul student filmmakers. Guidelines, policies, and procedures for filming at DePaul; using SCA facilities and equipment; and answers to questions regarding SCA resources and building contacts, are found inside. The handbook is updated regularly on SCA Central and linked to the CDM Production Resources page [here](#).

#### Talent Waivers:

Talent waivers must be signed by any outside talent (non-DePaul students) and submitted to The Production Office prior to camera rolling for any projects. Waivers and other commonly used forms can be found on SCA Central under "Info & Forms".

#### DePaul Production Insurance:

DePaul production insurance does not cover the use of fire (including pyrotechnics and fireplaces), use of vehicles for shooting (moving or stationary), or animals of any kind and is therefore not permitted for SCA projects unless proof of personal production insurance is provided.

Read more about DePaul's requirements via the SCA Production Handbook. Any questions about DePaul's insurance should be directed to The Production Office well before shooting begins ([production@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:production@cdm.depaul.edu)).



### Use of Prop Weapons:

Rules and regulations MUST be followed when using prop weapons, including firearms. The instructor must approve the appearance of a prop weapon in any student film, including class syllabus assignments. An approved/signed Prop Weapon Request Form must be submitted to the Production Office prior to filming (find it on SCA Central under "Info & Forms"). For safety purposes, The Production Office may also review the filmmaker's plan for transportation of prop firearms prior to receiving approval for use.

### ABC - Always Be Careful:

Film and video production shoots can be hazardous. Above all, work safely in all situations and always think before you act. Please don't hesitate to ask faculty if you're unsure about anything regarding your shoot, in or out of class.

### **Course Organization and Schedule:**

We will meet Thursdays from 1:30 to 4:45 pm. Students should've reviewed all the pertinent material, we will begin by answering questions that students may have regarding the content of the class or upcoming assignments, then we will proceed to the presentations by the instructor and the workshop of the different items that need to generate for the class. We will have a break at 3 pm and reconvene at 3.15 pm. Towards the end of the class we will leave a few minutes to answer specific questions of the projects you will be handling.

This syllabus is subject to modification; there may be several circumstances that will most likely change it. I reserve the right to amend the class schedule, or the syllabus, if circumstances make it necessary. You may receive at least one revised syllabus or schedule before the quarter is over. If assignments or deadline dates change, I will inform you well in advance. Constantly reviewing D2L announcements and emails is recommended for these purposes.

### ***Schedule***

#### **Module 01**    PRESENTATION FOR INVESTORS AND PARTNERS

06-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Introduction to the course & Pitch Presentation
13-Jan	Assignment 1: Pitch & Presentation (first draft)	
14-Jan to 19-Jan	3 peer review	
19 Jan	Feedback Session (Zoom meeting in class)	
26 Jan	Assignment 1: Pitch & Presentation (Final Submission)	

#### **Module 02**    DEVELOPMENT

13-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Rewriting and Polishing
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14-Jan – Feb 02      Assignment 2: Development (Bible, Outlines and Scripts)

03-Feb                      Assignment 2: Submission (Bible, Outlines and Scripts)

**Module 03      CASTING**

03-Feb                      Zoom Meeting              The Casting Process

10-Feb                      Assignment 3: Cast Approval (Due)

**Module 04      CREWING**

10-Feb                      Zoom Meeting              Crew of Multiple Episode Production

17-Oct                      Assignment 5: Crew Approval (Due)

**Assignment 6:              Establishing resource requirements and funding. 10%**

**Module 05      SCHEDULING**

24-Feb                      Zoom Meeting              Multi episode schedule

03-Mar                      Assignment 6: Schedule (due)

**Module 06      BUDGET**

03-Mar                      Zoom Meeting              Budgeting

10-Mar                      Assignment 7: Budget (Due)

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

17-Mar (11.30 am)      Production Book and Notes for Crew Meetings