SCWR 365

Showrunning I

Instructor: Martha McGee

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| Fall 2022 |  |
| Th 1:30 – 4:45pm |  |
| Office Hours: By appointment - can be in person or on Zoom  Please make appointments on BlueStar  Course Management System: D2L  Email: [mmcgee9@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:mmcgee9@cdm.depaul.edu) |  |

I respond to emails within 48 hours.

**Course Description:**

This course provides an overview of the evolution of the Showrunner in network television, cable, and streaming media. Students will analyze how the success of a series is dependent on an astute Showrunner who knows how to handle the creative, financial, and managerial aspects of putting on a show. Emphasis will be placed on the vital role these executive producers play in the three stages of production to ensure the actualization and continuity of their artistic vision.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Identify the knowledge and abilities that a showrunner requires to carry a TV show.
2. Recognize the managerial styles that could be applied when running a show and determine which of these is better suited for themselves.
3. Apply the best strategies to effectively communicate with executives and colleagues during the development and production of a TV series.
4. Identify the basic managerial tools to effectively budget and schedule a show.

**Suggested Reading**:

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 asked to examine from the following magazines that report on the newest developments in this industry:

**Variety**

**The Hollywood Reporter**

Lectures will be supplemented with handouts on D2L from the instructor over the course of the semester.

Any assignments/reading/watching that is mandatory will be on D2L content and require you to check it off of the checklist. Anything that is not mandatory will not have a check next to it and will be supporting materials.

**Grading:**

Final grades will be based on 5 presentations, 6 module assignments, a reflection video and the creation of a Pitch and Bible for an Original Show. 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: The 5 Pillars**

Assignment 1: What you need...  
*Research and Discussion* – 10%

**MODULE 02: The Writer**

Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part I & II) – 10%

Presentation 1: Showrunner as a Writer – 5%

**MODULE 03: The Producer**

Assignment 3: Coin Assignment – 5%

Presentation 2: Showrunner as a Producer – 5%

**MODULE 04: The Director**

Assignment 4: Visualizing – 10%  
Presentation 3: Showrunner as a Director – 5%

**MODULE 05: The Manager**

Assignment 5: The Boat – 10%  
Presentation 4: Showrunner as a Manager – 5%

**MODULE 06: The Leader**

Assignment 6: Profiling your Leadership – 10%

Presentation 5: Showrunner as a Leader – 5%

**FINAL ASSIGNMENTS**

Reflection Video – 5%  
Pitch and pitch Bible of an original Show – 15%

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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 | 93 | C+ | 78 |
| A- | 90 | C | 73 |
| B+ | 88 | C- | 70 |
| B | 83 | D+ | 68 |
| B- | 80 | D | 60 |
|  |  | F | Below 60% |
|  |  |  |  |

**Course Organization and Schedule:**

We will leave few minutes before the class ends 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.

**All keynotes and television shows for the class are on D2L under “Content”.**

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***Schedule***

**Module 01**

THE 5 PILLARS  
Sep 8th- Meeting - Introduction to the course.

Assignment 1: What you need... - Due Sept 13th   
Comments on peer’s posts due - Due Sep 15th

**Module 02**

THE WRITER  
Sep 15h- Meeting -The Showrunner as a Writer pt. 1

Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part I) - Due Sept 22nd

Sep 22nd - Meeting - The Showrunner as a Writer pt. 2

Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part II) - Due Sept 29th

**Module 03**

THE PRODUCER  
Sept 29th - Meeting - The Showrunner as a Producer pt. 1

Assignment 3: Coin Assignment – Due Oct 20th

Oct 6th - Meeting - The Showrunner as a Producer pt. 2

**Module 04**

THE DIRECTOR  
Oct 13th - Meeting - The Showrunner as Director pt.1

Assignment 5: Visualizing (Part I) - due Oct 29th

Oct 20th - Meeting -The Showrunner as Director pt. 2

Assignment 5: Visualizing (Part II) - Due Oct 27th

**Module 05**

THE MANAGER  
Oct 27th - Meeting -The Showrunner as a Manager pt. 1

Nov 3rd - Meeting -The Showrunner as a Manager pt. 2

Assignment 6: The Boat - Due Nov 10th

**Module 06**

THE LEADER  
Nov 10th - Meeting -The Showrunner as a Leader pt.1  
Assignment 7: The Profiling your Leadership Due Nov 17th

Nov 17th - Meeting -The Showrunner as a Leader II

Reflection Video & Final Pitch and Brief for Original Show - Due Nov 17th

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT -** Due Nov. 17th

**Course Policies:**

1. **Participation**

At this level students should be interested in the subject of the class. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either asking questions or adding constructive comments to other student’s presentations.

1. **Attendance**

It does not constitute a specific part of your grade, but perfect attendance is part of participation. Most of the information you need to complete your assignments will be discussed in-class. Subjects and/or assignments will not be discussed outside of the programmed sessions. This makes attendance critical, and thus not an issue to be negotiated. However, if you have to miss a class or a deadline, make sure to plan ahead, and inform the instructor in advance. Calling or emailing 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.

1. **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.

1. **Missed Assignments**

Do not miss your assignments. Turn them in on time and put them in the correct D2L dropbox.

1. **Attitude**

We are going to be watching and discussing television programs and culture. This will be made in an orderly fashion. 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.

1. **Use of Technology**

Cellular phones and other similar devices will not be tolerated. I recommend students to turn off or switch to silence mode such devices. Students whose phones and/or computers make noise during class may be asked to leave immediately.   
(obviously this does not apply to use of computers in an online course)

1. **Uncivilized Behavior**

Even though you are students who must constantly thrive to grow, we need to start acting professionally. This is why 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 if he/she has excessive absences, engages in disruptive behavior, has a poor attitude, or in any other way is clearly not taking the class seriously.

1. **General Trigger Warning**

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, 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 viewings, so that students may make informed decisions about their mental and emotional health and well-being. Students may inform the professor of any material that they cannot engage with to find a suitable alternative.

1. **Ethics**

Although your grade does not contain an ethics component like some other courses, I require complete honesty in producing your work. 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 your are willing to do that, then you have to evaluate if it’s worth the aggravation and the time you invest in this course.

By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize I will impose the harshest sanctions possible if I can prove 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.

1. **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 if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate.

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

1. **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.

1. **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

1. **Special Accommodations:**

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

Fax: (773)325.3720 TTY: (773)325.7296

1. **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

## Course Information

**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.

**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> for additional information.

**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](https://academics.depaul.edu/calendar/Pages/default.aspx).  Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.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>

**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. Gergory 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.

## Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office (optional)

Class Discussion: Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day’s topic. Participation allows the instructor to “hear” the student’s voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

Civil Discourse: DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be [Socially Responsible Leaders](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/sli/about/framework.asp). 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.