

Screenwriting: Film 458Z-01

Faculty: Susan Youssef, syoussef@wesleyan.edu

Class location: Zoom / Virtual

Phone: 720 757 3213 (cell)

Office Hours: By appointment

<https://wesleyan.zoom.us/j/4839319692>

Meeting ID: 483 931 9692

Session: 1 May 26 - June 23, 2022

Schedule: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8:30-10:35am

Course Description

This course is a mix of lecture and writing workshop. The first half of the class focuses on defining the screenplay in relation to other forms of creative writing, using in-class writing exercises to illuminate different aspects of the medium. The second half consists of workshoping a final twelve-page script with the instructor.

I may implement changes to the syllabus according to the workshop's need for the semester.

Assignments ALL DUE IN PDF

1st Assignment – due Thurs. Jun. 2, due 8:30 am by email

2nd Assignment - due Tues. Jun. 14, due 8:30 am by email

3rd Assignment - final draft due Thurs. Jun. 23, due 8:30 am by email

Late assignments are not accepted.

COVID SAFETY IS THE PRIORITY, but you must still let me know if you are not feeling well. Email syoussef@wesleyan.edu or phone at 720 757 3213.

If you're not sick, be here on time.

I don't accept late assignments. Turn in whatever you have for partial credit.

Grading:

First Assignment: 30%

Second Assignment: 30%

Third Assignment: 30%

Participation: 10%

Readings

We will read one feature screenplay and excerpts from Robert McKee's *STORY*. Not required but you are welcome to acquire Syd Field's *SCREENPLAY* as a compliment to the class.

Accommodations

Wesleyan University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should provide documentation and schedule an appointment with the Office of the Dean of the College at least two weeks before services are needed. In each class where a student requests academic accommodations, the student must meet with the faculty member teaching the course at least one week prior to the requested accommodation. PLEASE! do not hesitate to discuss with us your needs for any accommodation.

Honor System

Students are expected to abide by the Honor System in regard to all work and participation in this class. For details, http://www.wesleyan.edu/acaf/policy/sc_honor_system.htm

Class 1 May 26, 2022

- What is the screenplay? Intro
- Syllabus run-thru
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Screening: first five minutes of *Thelma & Louise*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJTW--FibXc&ab_channel=VeroniqueLaurent

Reading of first five pages of *Thelma & Louise* script to discuss formatting of script:

<https://www.screenwritersnetwork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Thelma-Louise-Script.pdf>

Class 2 May. 27, 2022

In class exercise: write one page of script using screenplay formatting and sharing

Reading, Chapters 2, 3, 5, 7, *Story* by Robert McKee available online as PDF, also available on Audible, and the book is at bookstores

Class 3 May. 30, 2022

The Inciting Incident, Progressive Complications, Crisis Climax, and Resolution of a movie

Class 4 May. 31, 2022

Brainstorm three ideas for a short film and share

1st Assignment – due Thurs. Jun. 2, due 8:30 am by email

Watch for Class: *Your Favorite Movie (narrative feature or short)*

Write out: the Inciting Incident, Progressive Complications, Crisis Climax, and Resolution of your favorite movie

Class 5 Jun. 2, 2022

Create logline and synopsis of your short

Class 6 Jun. 3, 2022

Write one page of script using CONFLICT and share

Class 7 Jun. 6, 2022

What is the character's significant want?

Exercise: Long synopsis of short (one or two pages maximum, including Inciting Incident, Progress Complications, Crisis, Climax, Resolution)

Reading, Chapter 8, 13 *Story* by Robert McKee

Class 8 Jun. 7, 2022

Read and discuss long synopsis of short

Reading: Chapter 11, *Story* by Robert McKee

Class 9 Jun. 9, 2022

Problem areas: Voiceover, Flashback, Dream sequences, Offscreen, Telephone, Multiple language, Inserts, Credits, Music, Montage

watch LOOP for more short film analysis

Exercise: A version of your script with no dialogue OR an outline including each scene (no dialogue)

Class 10 Jun. 10, 2022

CHARACTER development, watch BLACK HAIR LOVE, DIALOGUE BEATS: CASABLANCA

In class assignment: WRITE CHARACTER backstory and story arc for change at climax

Class 11 Jun. 13, 2022

THE STUTTERER : ANTAGONISM

In class writing exercise: write a dialogue scene

Continue to read scripts without dialogue or outlines

2nd Assignment - FIRST DRAFT - due Tues. Jun. 14, due 8:30 am by email

Class 12 Jun. 14, 2022

Consultations over Script - first draft meeting: GROUP A

Class 13 Jun. 16, 2022

Consultations over Script with Dialogue - first draft meeting Group B

Class 14 Jun. 17, 2022

Trouble shooting: considering excerpts of your scripts

In class consultations, second draft Group A

Class 15 Jun. 20, 2022

NEIGHBOR'S WINDOW: Image Systems

In class consultations, second draft Group B

Class 16 Jun. 21, 2022

How to Pitch

3rd Assignment - final draft due Thurs. Jun. 23, due 8:30 am by email

Class 17 Jun. 23, 2022

Final reading of scripts