COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number: CMN144
Course Title: Screenwriting
Credits: 3

Hours: 2 Lecture/ 2 Lab
Co- or Pre-requisite: Implementation
Semester & Year: Fall 2022

Catalog description: Aimed at the conception, planning and writing of screenplays. Through a series of writing exercises, scenes, short scripts and treatments, the student is expected to complete a 20 page short film script. The basics of character development, narrative, structure, texture, genre and the ability to visualize in writing are explored.

General Education Category: Not GenEd
Course coordinator: Barry Levy, 609-570-3465, levyb@mccc.edu

Required texts & Other materials:
Save the Cat, Blake Snyder, Michael Wiese Productions, 2005, ISBN: 1932907009

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):
Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:
1. Discuss the importance of story [Supports ILG #1, 6, 8, 11 ; PLO #1, 3, 6 ]
2. Illustrate the importance of conflict in screenplay [ Supports ILG #1, 6, 8, 11 ; PLO #1, 3, 6 ]
3. Establish a methodology for screenwriting [Supports ILG #1, 6, 10, 11 ; PLO # 1, 3 ]
4. Develop an understanding of storytelling through critical concepts such as structure, substance and style [Supports ILG #1, 8, 10 ; PLO #1, 3, 6 ]
5. Develop new vocabulary related to screenwriting [Supports ILG #1, 8 10 ; PLO #1, 3, 6 ]
6. Demonstrate the ability to write dialogue in a screenplay [Supports ILG #1, 8; PLO #1,3,6 ]
7. Deconstruct and analyze current and historical screenplays [Supports ILG #1, 6, 8; PLO # 3 ]
8. Illustrate how to properly format a screenplay [Supports ILG #1, 4; PLO #1, 6]
9. Research, develop and write a 20-25 page screenplay [Supports ILG #1, 4, 6, 8; 10 PLO #1, 3, 6 ]

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.
Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.
Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples
Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.
Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.
Program Learning Outcomes for Digital Film & Television (PLO)

1. Write, produce, direct, and edit a variety of digital films and video productions.
2. Utilize digital and audio editing software to express their creative visions through vision and sound.
3. Analyze Films representing a wide range of historical and cultural perspectives.
4. Demonstrate technical proficiency in all aspects of a broadcast studio.
5. Manage the collaborative creative process, working within all aspects of the production process.
6. Create a professional portfolio to serve in the pursuit of further education or employment.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I  Screenplay  [Supports Course SLO # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ]

Learning Objectives
The student will be able to:
• Identify and define status quo in screenplay
• Define the function of settings on a narrative in a screenplay
• Identify key terms associated with screenplay writing.
• Research examples of well written screenplays
• Research examples of poorly written screenplays
• Deconstruct a beat, scene, sequence, act and story of a screenplay
• Describe the evolution of screenplay through different generations and the impact on our society & culture

Unit II  Elements of Story [Supports Course SLOs #1, 2, 3, 4 ,5, 6 ,7, 8]

Learning Objectives
The student will be able to:
• Explain the structure spectrum in screenplay writing
• Describe the value of each act in a screenplay format.
• Describe and detail the difference between a full-length feature film and a short film.
• Describe and detail the importance of setting in screenplay structure
• Explain the importance of genre in screenplay structure
• Explain the importance of character in screenplay structure

Unit III  Principles of Story Design [Supports Course SLOs #1, 2, 3, 4 ,5, 6 ,7, 8]

Learning Objectives
The student will be able to:
• Describe the substance of a story
• Create an effective inciting incident
• Analyze their own scenes
• Deconstruct scenes from classic films
• Establish conflict in scenes
• Deconstruct a scene looking for changes in emotional conflict
• Discuss the importance of crisis, climax and resolution

**Unit IV** Structure [Supports Course SLOs #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8]

*Learning Objectives*
*The student will be able to:*
- Describe and discuss the principle of antagonism
- Describe and discuss the importance of a protagonist
- Illustrate the value of expectational gaps in scenes
- Differentiate between exposition and dialogue
- Create a “empathetic” character
- Describe the importance of act breaks in a screenplay
- Develop a step outline
- Describe the difference between text and subtext

**Unit V** Writing the Screenplay [Supports Course SLOs #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9]

*Learning Objectives*
*The student will be able to:*
- Research, defend and present a story concept
- Describe the importance of theme in a screenplay
- Write a step outline and treatment
- Recall and demonstrate proper screenplay formatting
- Write a properly formatted 20 page screenplay

**Evaluation of Student Learning**

Students’ achievements of the course objectives will be evaluated through the use of the following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Tools</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Entries &amp; Film Analysis Reports</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes, formatting assignments &amp; Oral Presentations (Pitches)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignments</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Film Research, Outline &amp; Treatment</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project – Write a 20 minute short film screenplay</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Growth</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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