

EMB 450 / ENG 431 / TAR 482 – Screenwriting
Spring 2014
Monday/Wednesday 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.
GH 349

Professor: Bavand Karim
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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the craft of screenwriting. The course implements proven techniques for conceiving and writing a contemporary cinematic screenplay, with emphasis placed on telling a story in terms of action, developing elements of theme, plot, character, and dialogue.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will gain a fundamental understanding of screenplay act structure.
2. Students will learn how to develop a story idea and plot points, create authentic characters and dialogue, and incorporate meaningful action, conflict, and resolution.
3. Students will master the language of cinematic screenwriting and develop good judgment regarding language selection.

Course Text Materials

Required: Save the Cat by Blake Snyder
Suggested: The Screenwriter's Workbook by Syd Field
Suggested: "The Shooting Script" for your favorite film, by Newmarket

Course Requirements and Expectations

Preparation, attendance, and participation are the most basic and fundamental points of emphasis regarding requirements and expectations. This course covers a large quantity of material fairly quickly, and it is important for students to be prepared, be present, and be an active participant in the class. Asking questions and providing and receiving feedback are among the most important aspects of the creative process, and invariably lead to improved decision making in writing.

Assignments

1. Blackboard Quizzes Short and simple quizzes to review concepts from lectures and readings
2. Mid-Term Examination of critical vocabulary terms and screenplay form and content
3. Script An original feature-length screenplay that demonstrates your accumulated knowledge

Grading

-Attendance/Participation/Progress20%
-Reading Quizzes20%
-Mid-Term25%
-Script.....35%

Grading Scale

A	(93-100)	C	(73-76)
A-	(90-92)	C-	(70-72)
B+	(87-89)	D+	(67-69)
B	(83-86)	D	(60-66)
B-	(80-82)	F	(60-below)
C+	(77-79)		

Evaluating Art is Subjective

If we are to approach writing as an art form, it is reasonable to disagree on the aesthetic and intellectual caliber of any given work. In a classroom setting, ultimately the grading process requires me to qualitatively evaluate your art. The grade given to each script will be determined based on the strength of the piece as a whole, rather than on a finite set of individual criteria. You will not be evaluated on the worth of your idea, but on the thoroughness, depth, energy and commitment given to your work.

Blackboard

This course will be supplemented by NKU's Blackboard system, and all reading quizzes are assigned through Blackboard at <http://learnonline.nku.edu>.

Honor Code

The Student Honor Code is a commitment by students of Northern Kentucky University, through their matriculation or continued enrollment at the University, to adhere to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. It is a commitment individually and collectively that the students of Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage or avoid academic requirements. The complete Honor Code is located at:

http://deanofstudents.nku.edu/codes_and_policies/codeofstudent_rights/index.php

Disability Services

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services) for this course must register with the Office of Disability Services. Please contact the disability service office in University Center Room 101 or by calling (859) 572-6373 for more information. Verification of your disability is required in the disability services office for you to receive reasonable academic accommodations. Visit the disability services website at

<http://www.nku.edu/~disability/>

Syllabus Changes

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion. Students will be informed immediately of any changes to the syllabus and/or schedule.

Course Evaluations

Northern Kentucky University takes instructor and course evaluations very seriously. It is an important responsibility of NKU students as citizens of the University to participate in the instructor and course evaluation process. During the two weeks prior to the end of each semester classes, you will be asked to reflect upon what you have learned in this course, the extent to which you have invested the necessary effort to maximize your learning, and the role your instructor has played in the learning process. It is very important that you complete the online evaluations with thoughtfully written comments.

Script-Writing Resources

Celtx – A free program that will help you manage pre-production and script-writing.

www.celtx.com

Student Films Forum – Thousands of topics on a variety of filmmaking areas.

www.studentsfilms.com

John August – Dedicated to screenwriting, story development and filmmaking from a writer's perspective

<http://johnaugust.com>

Media College – Tutorials for all levels of visual media production

www.mediacollege.com

<http://www.script-o-rama.com/>

<http://www.sfy.ru/scripts.html?range=0>

<http://www.awesomefilm.com/>

<http://www.scriptfly.com/screenplays/index.shtml>

<http://www.simplyscripts.com/>

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Quizzes
Jan. 13	What to Write and How to Write It	Snyder Ch. 1	Story Idea Synopsis Beat Sheet	
Jan. 15	Structure and Genre	Snyder Ch. 2		
Jan. 20	MLK Holiday - No Class			
Jan. 22	Screenplay Physics	Snyder Ch. 6	Revised Beat Sheet	
Jan. 27	Characters	Snyder Ch. 3		Quiz 1
Jan. 29	Character Arcs and Archetypes Mythic Structure	Snyder Ch. 3	Character Bios	
Feb. 3	Screenplay Structure	Snyder Ch. 4-5		
Feb. 5	Dialogue			
Feb. 10	Step Outline and Screenplay Format			Quiz 2
Feb. 12	Scene and Sequence Analysis			
Feb. 17	Screenwriting Language	Snyder Ch. 7	Step Outline	
Feb. 19	Screening: 15 Minutes			
Feb. 24	Screening: 15 Minutes			
Feb. 26	Screening: 15 Minutes			
Mar. 3	Mid-Term Review session			
Mar. 5	Mid-Term Exam			
Mar. 10	Spring Break			
Mar. 12	Spring Break			
Mar. 17	Screening: Frantic			
Mar. 19	Screening: Frantic			
Mar. 24	Screening: Frantic			
Mar. 26	Comparison: 15 Minutes v. Frantic			
Mar. 31	Pitches: Title, Premise, and Logline	Snyder Ch. 8		Quiz 3
Apr. 2	Screening TBD			
Apr. 7	Screening TBD			
Apr. 9	Screening TBD			
Apr. 14	Screening TBD			
Apr. 16	Screening TBD			
Apr. 21	Screening TBD			
Apr. 23	Screening TBD			
Apr. 28	Screening TBD			
Apr. 30	Screening TBD			
May 5	Screening TBD			
May 7	Final Scripts due before 1 p.m. in GH 457			

1 .What to Write and How to Write It
http://prezi.com/n6od4zaidcgv/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
2. Structure and Genre
http://prezi.com/s0xdmqtgunby/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
3. Screenplay Physics
http://prezi.com/jrn2lum8h lc/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
4. Characters
http://prezi.com/4jjqkd_gbvqx/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
5. Character Arcs and Archetypes
http://prezi.com/krvkb9arhlok/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
6. Screenplay Structure
http://prezi.com/9w6awhjclw4u/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
7. Mythic Structure
http://prezi.com/9sfe7bjek2vu/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
8. Dialogue
http://prezi.com/tfw1ka8cayv_/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
9. Step Outline and Screenplay Format
http://prezi.com/o5_aw8rg5rwa/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
10. Scene and Sequence Analysis
http://prezi.com/2mcecitxxzvq/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
11. Language
http://prezi.com/blldtn8r1ee/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share
12. Pitches
http://prezi.com/zd5hdghzzrcq/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share