

FILM A106: INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA WRITING

| Item | Value |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Curriculum Committee Approval Date | 02/12/2025 |
| Top Code | 061220 - Film Production |
| Units | 3 Total Units |
| Hours | 54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54) |
| Total Outside of Class Hours | 0 |
| Course Credit Status | Credit: Degree Applicable (D) |
| Material Fee | No |
| Basic Skills | Not Basic Skills (N) |
| Repeatable | No |
| Open Entry/Open Exit | No |
| Grading Policy | Standard Letter (S) |

Course Description

Basic introductory course in writing for the film and electronic media. Emphasis on preparing scripts in proper formats, including fundamental technical, conceptual and stylistic issues related to writing fiction and non-fiction scripts for informational and entertainment purposes in film and electronic media. Includes a writing evaluation component as a significant part of the course requirement. Transfer Credit: CSU.

Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Develop a script for a short-form project by crafting a concise and engaging narrative that effectively communicates the intended message or story within a limited timeframe.
2. Research and critically evaluate produced script scenes by examining their content and style, assessing how effectively they convey the intended narrative, tone, and emotional impact.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of elements involved with writing for broadcast, multi-media, and new media platforms.

Course Objectives

- 1. Analyze and critically assess the mechanics of clear and concise writing to enhance effectiveness and readability.
- 2. Differentiate between technical and aesthetic considerations in writing for film and electronic media, addressing how each impacts the overall quality and style.
- 3. Apply fundamental principles of narrative fiction screenwriting to develop engaging and structurally sound scripts.
- 4. Compose scripts in various formats, including commercial, PSA, webisode, short film, news feature, or mini-doc, demonstrating versatility and adaptability.
- 5. Research, evaluate, and construct a comprehensive treatment for a range of formats such as commercial, PSA, webisode, short film, news feature, or mini-doc, showcasing a thorough understanding of each project's unique requirements.
- 6. Analyze, evaluate, and critique both peer and personal written work to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and effective storytelling techniques.

Lecture Content

A. Introduction to the writer 1. The role of scriptwriter 2. How to write visual B. Introduction to content for the various media 1. Commercials (:30, :60, :90 sec) 2. Public Service Announcements 3. Corporate productions 4. Interviews 5. Documentaries 6. Web sites 7. Fictional narratives (film, half-hour TV comedy, one-hour TV drama) C. Writing regardless of medium or format 1. Clarity 2. Economy 3. Grammar 4. Style D. Fundamentals of dramatic structure, including conflict 1. Three act structure - for film and television 2. Other structures for narrative E. Fundamentals of character creation F. Fundamentals of dialogue writing G. Issues specific to writing 1. For radio (writing for the ear) 2. Film and television (writing for the eye) 3. Multimedia (writing for the ear, the eye, and interactivity) H. Script formats 1. Movies/Film 2. Television - sitcom 3. Two-column video 4. Radio I. Process and methodology of script writing 1. the outline 2. treatments 3. presentation J. Project analysis 1. The breakdown 2. The budget 3. Production schedule 4. Production needs K. Writing for New Media 1. Mobile media 2. Interactive Entertainment 3. Interactive Communication L. The Creative Process Applied (7 steps) 1. Define the problem 2. Define the audience 3. Define the objective 4. Define the strategy 5. Define the content 6. Define the medium 7. Creation of the concept M. The Script Development 1. Research 2. Interviews 3. Locations 4. Brainstorming 5. Concept

Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)

Instructional Techniques

Writing assignments Oral presentations (pitches, e.g.) Oral critiques by peers and instructor Written critiques by instructor Quizzes and/or exam(s)

Reading Assignments

Read a newspaper articles, journal or magazine, and be able to discuss and critique the content. Research a film critic and write a report summary about them. Students will need to spend 1 to 2 hours per week on course reading.

Writing Assignments

To write a :15 second, :30 second, and :60 second Public Service Announcement script for production. To write a :30 second Commercial/ Advertisement for a product, brand or other for production. To write a trailer for a movie or television concept. To write a feature news story intended for production. To write a press release for a movie, television, or entertainment concept. Write a short outline or script for a social media blog entry. Write a treatment for a television, movie, news show or talk show concept. Students will need to spend 3 to 5 hours per week on written assignments.

Out-of-class Assignments

Screen a new release film and then write a critical review Prepare and write a list of 20 questions for a feature interview. Research film critics. Research interview subjects. Students will need to spend 1 to 2 hours per week on out of class assignments.

Demonstration of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking skills will be evaluated on the quality of students' written responses to published works and on their participation during in-class text analyses and workshops.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration

Student writing skills will be evaluated on the quality and effort put into their drafts and revisions of original writing, fiction, non-fiction and dramatic ideas, as well as on their in-class writings, oral presentations, projects and written responses to published works, peer review sessions and overall participation.

Eligible Disciplines

Media production (also see broadcasting technology): Any bachelor's degree and two years of professional experience, or any associate degree and six years of professional experience.

Textbooks Resources

1. Required Friedmann, Anthony . Writing For Visual Media , 5th ed. Burlington, Massachussets: Focal Press, 2021