

## **SCWR 1120 – STORYTELLING FOR THE SCREEN**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The elements of storytelling as applied to the screen, which include learning screenwriting basics by writing multiple scenes and a short film script.

**COURSE GOAL:** Students will learn a strong foundation for character-based narrative storytelling regardless of screen format or length.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Students will learn how to find ideas
- Students will learn how to develop these ideas into stories appropriate for the screen through outline and treatment
- Students will understand the principles of character and the role character plays in story development
- Students will recognize the importance of visual writing and cinematic dialogue
- Students will understand scene construction into a narrative with a beginning, middle and end
- Students will acquire basic knowledge of classic three-act structure and adapt that to a short film
- Students will execute dramatic storytelling using conflict and plot complications
- Students will utilize standard screenplay format
- Students will learn basic narrative terms
- Students will learn the value of the collaborative process functioning as a ‘writers’ group’ for constructive criticism

### **COURSE DELIVERABLES:**

Students will complete six weekly 2-3 page scenes focusing on core elements in narrative storytelling. Each scene will build on the topics covered in previous exercises and will **require correct screenplay format**. At least one will be written entirely without dialogue, in order to learn the skill of visual writing. Recommended topics, which can be taught in any order, are:

1. Motivation (want/goal)
2. Need/arc
3. Conflict
4. Plant and payoff
5. Perspective/point of view
6. Dialogue/exposition/subtext

Students will take an assessment of the departmental Narrative Terms.

### **Signature Project:**

Students will develop an idea for a short film (no longer than 10 pages). Development of this project will include the following:

- Three loglines that present protagonist, goal and obstacle. Based on class discussion, the students will choose the short film idea from one of these loglines.
- Character biographies for the major roles
- A scene outline for the project broken down into a three-act structure
- A script in proper industry standard format that is proofread for spelling and grammar
- A demonstrated understanding of each of the six major topics covered earlier in the semester: motivation (want/goal), need/arc, conflict, plant/payoff, perspective/point of view and dialogue/exposition/subtext

This script must be rewritten at least twice based on notes from the writer's workshop. The rewritten scripts will be submitted as the 'Signature Project' via digital folder which should include all the project's development documents.

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