

**The Ohio State University
Colleges of the Arts and Sciences New Course Request**

FilmStudies

Academic Unit

FLM ST

Book 3 Listing (e.g., Portuguese)

680 Screenwriting and the Business of Cinema

Number

Title

Screen Bus.

U G

05

18-Character Title Abbreviation

Level

Credit Hours

Summer

Autumn

Winter

Spring

X

Year 2008

Proposed effective date, choose one quarter and put an "X" after it; and fill in the year. See the OAA curriculum manual for deadlines.

A. Course Offerings Bulletin Information

Follow the instructions in the OAA curriculum manual. If this is a course with decimal subdivisions, then use one New Course Request form for the generic information that will apply to all subdivisions; and use separate forms for each new decimal subdivision, including on each form the information that is unique to that subdivision. If the course offered is less than a quarter or a term, please complete the Flexibly Scheduled/Off Campus/Workshop Request form.

Description (*not to exceed 25 words*): This course examines screenwriting as both a literary art form and a challenging profession.

Quarter offered: SU, AU, WI, SP

Distribution of class time/contact hours: 1 x 3

Quarter and contact/class time hours information should be omitted from Book 3 publication (yes or no): yes

Prerequisite(s): Theatre 636 or Permission of Instructor

Exclusion or limiting clause: Not open to students with 10 hours in Theatre 636; class limit 18

Repeatable to a maximum of 5 credit hours.

Cross-listed with:

Grade Option (Please check): Letter S/U Progress What course is last in the series? _____

Honors Statement: Yes No

GEC: Yes No

Admission Condition

Off-Campus: Yes No

EM: Yes No

Course: Yes No

Embedded Honors Statement: Yes No

Service Learning Course*: Yes No *To learn more about this option, please visit

<http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/currofc/>

Other General Course Information:

(e.g. "Taught in English." "Credit does not count toward BSBA degree.")

B. General Information

Subject Code 500504 Subsidy Level (V, G, T, B, M, D, or P) Level D

If you have questions, please email Jed Dickhaut at dickhaut.1@osu.edu.

1. Provide the rationale for proposing this course:

Many film studies majors desire a focus area concentration (15 hours) in screenwriting, but at present only one course exists (Theatre 636 – Beginning Screewriting). This proposal will make permanent a course that has been taught successfully as a group. Film Studies 680 will offer the first step toward a full-fledged focus in screenwriting, to be augmented eventually by an advanced screenwriting senior seminar (Film Studies 690) to be proposed.

2. Please list Majors/Minors affected by the creation of this new course. Attach revisions of all affected programs. This course is (check one):

- Required on major(s)/minor(s) A choice on major(s)/minors(s)
 An elective within major(s)/minor(s) A general elective:

3. Indicate the nature of the program adjustments, new funding, and/or withdrawals that make possible the implementation of this new course.
This course is foreseen in Film Studies' annual report to the Executive Dean and in its assessment plan. FTEs will pay for the instructor to staff this course.

4. Is the approval of this request contingent upon the approval of other course requests or curricular requests?

Yes No List:

5. If this course is part of a sequence, list the number of the other course(s) in the sequence: NA

6. Expected section size: 18 Proposed number of sections per year: 2

7. Do you want prerequisites enforced electronically (see OAA manual for what can be enforced)? Yes No

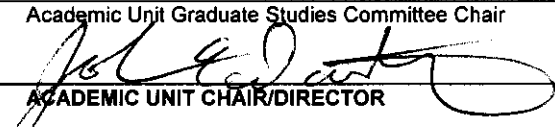
8. This course has been discussed with and has the concurrence of the following academic units needing this course or with academic units having directly related interests (*List units and attach letters and/or forms*):

Not Applicable

The group studies form of this course has been discussed with and approved by Theatre, which currently offers the only screenwriting course on the books. A copy of the current proposal has been sent to Theatre as well.

9. **Attach a course syllabus that includes a topical outline of the course, student learning outcomes and/or course objectives, off-campus field experience, methods of evaluation, and other items as stated in the OAA curriculum manual and e-mail to asccurrofc@osu.edu.**

Approval Process The signatures on the lines in ALL CAPS (e.g. ACADEMIC UNIT) are required.

1. Academic Unit Undergraduate Studies Committee Chair	Printed Name	Date
2. Academic Unit Graduate Studies Committee Chair	Printed Name	Date
 3. ACADEMIC UNIT CHAIR/DIRECTOR	John E. Davidson Printed Name	10/29/07 Date
4. After the Academic Unit Chair/Director signs the request, forward the form to the ASC Curriculum Office, 4132 Smith Lab, 174 West 18th Ave. or fax it to 688-5678. Attach the syllabus and any supporting documentation in an e-mail to asccurrofc@osu.edu. The ASC Curriculum Office will forward the request to the appropriate committee.		
5. COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE	Printed Name	Date
6. ARTS AND SCIENCES EXECUTIVE DEAN	Printed Name	Date
7. Graduate School (if appropriate)	Printed Name	Date
8. University Honors Center (if appropriate)	Printed Name	Date
9. Office of International Education (if appropriate)	Printed Name	Date
10. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS	Printed Name	Date

Film Studies 680
SCREENWRITING AND THE BUSINESS OF CINEMA
Course Syllabus

Class Location and Times: 71 Hagerty Hall, TR 4:30 – 6:18
Instructor: Andy Rose
Contact Info: rose.928@osu.edu
Office Location and Hours: To be announced

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines screenwriting as both a literary art form and a challenging profession. Each student will take an original premise for a movie and develop it into a logline, a treatment, a step outline, and ultimately, a polished first act of a feature-length screenplay. During this process, you will learn about three-act dramatic structure and proper script formatting, as well as ways to create distinct plot points, meaningful themes, intriguing characters, and realistic dialogue. Classmates will critique your work and you will lend constructive criticism to theirs. You will also view acclaimed films and analyze their scripts to better understand the screenwriting process.

In addition, this class will teach you the essentials necessary to succeed in the highly competitive world of professional screenwriting. Topics discussed will include the writer's current role in Hollywood filmmaking, types of deals available to a screenwriter, how to protect your work, Writers Guild rules and regulations, ways to attain literary representation and more. You will also practice "pitching" your story to help you work on sales tools and self-confidence. This class should be informative, enlightening, rewarding and thought-provoking – as well as fun.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the time this class is over, you will:

- know how to write a professional, feature-length screenplay.
- be able to express your individual voice as a writer.
- understand that successful screenwriting requires discipline, imagination, learning the craft, lots of rewriting, and a collaborative effort.
- have developed oral skills needed to sell an idea to a producer.
- have learned how to accept criticism of your own work and critique the work of others.
- be aware of the current marketplace and strategies for selling not only your script, but yourself as a writer.
- have a better appreciation of film.
- realize that understanding the components of a good screenplay is crucial for any film related occupation you choose to pursue; be it writer, actor, director, producer, editor, studio executive, literary representative, etc.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is first and foremost a writing class, so everyone is expected to write. Five written assignments must be turned in during the quarter. Assignments handed in late will lower your grade. Also required will be an in-class oral pitch of the story you are writing. These assignments are as follows:

1) **TREATMENT** – Once you are satisfied you have a viable logline for your screenplay, you are to write a treatment (or synopsis) of your entire movie. It should be roughly five pages long and divided into three acts. Please make sure you include the major plot points discussed in class for each act.

2) **STEP OUTLINE** – This is a beat sheet that contains a list of all the scenes in your movie. Since we are only writing a portion of your script during this course, I only need to see the scenes in the first act.

3) **SCREENPLAY OPENING** – The first few pages are the most important pages of a screenplay. Everyone is to write the opening scene of their movie and hand it in. Hopefully, my comments will guide you in the right direction if you've gone astray. Be creative. Show me why a busy producer would want to read more. Make sure to use correct screenplay format. This assignment is like a test run.

4) **FILM ANALYSIS** – Watch one of the following four films and break it down structurally. Tell me the act breaks, the specific plot points we have discussed, and compose a character arc of the main character(s). The four films to choose from are: *North By Northwest* (1959), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *The Verdict* (1982), *Fargo* (1996).

5) **ORAL PITCH** – Once your treatment is finished, you will tell your entire story to the class as if you are trying to sell the idea to a producer. This pitch should be at least five minutes long but less than ten (though Hollywood pitches often run longer). Practice at home. Use notes if you have to but speak to your audience. The class' comments may give you new ideas to incorporate into your script.

6) **FIRST ACT OF SCREENPLAY** – Consider this your final exam. It should be no less than 20 pages, no more than 30. Make sure it is properly formatted without any spelling errors or typos. You should have rewritten this at least once, based on the one-on-one critique given to you by a fellow classmate.

7) **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION** – Working in the film industry requires reliability and full input of all involved. Showing up to class on time and prepared is the first way to demonstrate your ability to do this. If you miss lessons, you will not only miss important lectures (and my painfully amusing Hollywood war stories), but you will miss one of the most important aspects of this course – feedback. Throughout the quarter we will examine your work and the work of fellow students. For this to be successful, everyone must participate. I will allow each student two unexcused absences before I lower your grade. If you do miss class, please get notes from another student.

GRADING CRITERIA

Your final grade will be based primarily on how well you have learned the craft of screenwriting. This will be evident in the various writing assignments you turn in during the quarter. Also important is the hard-work and dedication you put into this class. This will be reflected by your participation in discussions, questions you ask, critiques you provide, and overall enthusiasm for the material. Naturally, my assessment of your work is subjective – which is exactly how the movie business works. Final grades will be determined in the following manner:

First Act of Screenplay – 30% of grade
Treatment – 15% of grade
Step Outline – 10% of grade
Opening Scene of Movie – 10% of grade
Film Analysis – 10% of grade
Oral Pitch – 10% of grade
Attendance and Participation – 15% of grade

GRADE MEANINGS

A: Great work! You have excelled at the craft of screenwriting. Your written work is well-structured, correctly formatted, and you have turned out some original and insightful work. Your energy and commitment is obvious to all. Keep writing, move to Hollywood, and sell a script for a million dollars – which in L.A. buys you a two-bedroom condo in a so-so neighborhood.

B: Good work! You learned a lot this quarter and it shows in your writings. The script you've been working on may not be brilliant, but it encompasses most all of the dramatic concepts discussed in class, has few formatting errors, and shows promise. The serious effort you've put into this class demonstrates that with persistence, you have the potential to succeed in this arena. Don't move to Hollywood yet – but take a surfing lesson, for the future.

C: Acceptable work. You showed up to class and completed all the assignments, but your writings didn't show a lot of creativity or enthusiasm. There are a several structural and formatting problems with your pages and your participation was just adequate. Maybe you found screenwriting tougher than you expected. Don't worry. Ohio is a nice place to live too.

D: What happened? You missed several classes, didn't complete all the assignments, and showed little interest in the subject matter. The structure of your writing is poor and there are numerous formatting errors. You may like the movies but I doubt you'll ever write one.

E: No excuse for this grade. The course is over and you know absolutely nothing about screenwriting. Based on my personal experience, you have a promising future as a motion picture studio executive.

RESOURCES

Text: Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting, by Syd Field (2005).

Films: Casablanca (1942)

Plus one of the following films is to be rented or purchased:

North By Northwest (1959)

Rosemary's Baby (1968)

The Verdict (1982)

Fargo (1996)

Numerous handouts will be distributed throughout the quarter.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Sample)

CLASS DATE	ASSIGNMENTS
March 27 T Introduction. Review syllabus. Discuss genres. Explain Loglines.	Write original Logline for April 3.
March 29 R Discuss three-act dramatic structure.	Read Chapters 1, 6, 7 in text.
April 3 T Present & critique Loglines in class. Discuss how to write Treatments.	Write Treatment for April 10.
April 5 R Characterization – discuss arc, character types, character strengths and weaknesses.	Watch Casablanca for April 17. Read Chapters 3, 4 in text.
April 10 T Treatments due. Discuss Step Outlines. Explain pitching stories.	Write Step Outline for April 17.

CLASS DATE (cont.)	ASSIGNMENTS (cont.)
<p>April 12 R Go over proper script formatting.</p>	<p>Start to prepare pitches for May 8.</p>
<p>April 17 T Step Outline of First Act due. Discuss Casablanca – act breaks, plot points, character arcs.</p>	
<p>April 19 R Practice scene writing. Discuss dialogue, subtext.</p>	<p>Read Chapter 14 in text.</p>
<p>April 24 T Discuss subplots, scene structure. Review Glossary of Terms.</p>	<p>Write opening scene of movie for May 1.</p>
<p>April 26 R Review Writing Guidelines handout.</p>	
<p>May 1 T Opening scene of screenplay due. Business class - Hollywood history, current production and distribution methods, how the writer's role has changed over the last 60 years.</p>	<p>Watch film of choice – Write Film Analysis Paper for May 8.</p>
<p>May 3 R Business class - Types of deals and contracts available to a screenwriter.</p>	<p>Continue writing First Act of screenplay – rough draft for student exchange due May 17.</p>
<p>May 8 T Film Analysis Papers due. In class pitches.</p>	
<p>May 10 R In class pitches.</p>	
<p>May 15 T Oral scene readings.</p>	
<p>May 17 R Rough draft of First Act due – exchange with classmate for weekend read. Oral scene readings.</p>	

CLASS DATE (cont.)	ASSIGNMENT (cont.)
<p>May 22 T In class one-on-one critique of rough draft of first act.</p>	<p>Rewrite First Act of screenplay based on classmate's comments – due May 31.</p>
<p>May 24 R Business class – attaining representation, submissions, taking meetings, credit determination, arbitration, WGA rules and minimums, writing for independent films, budgets and production value, software, writers' resources, TV writing.</p>	
<p>May 29 T Business class – Finish discussions from previous class.</p>	
<p>May 31 R Polished first act of screenplay due. Loose ends. Questions, make-up pitches, final discussions.</p>	