

## Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2016

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Film Studies  
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Film Studies - D0206  
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences  
Level/Career Undergraduate  
Course Number/Catalog 4881  
Course Title Screenwriting and the Business of Television  
Transcript Abbreviation ScreenwritingTV  
Course Description This course examines television writing from both a creative and business perspective. Each student will individually pitch, and then write the show's bible, outline, and pilot. Students learn about teleplay structure, as well as ways to develop intriguing characters, realistic dialogue, and engaging episodes. In small groups students develop, write, and read others' work collectively.  
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week  
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never  
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No  
Grading Basis Letter Grade  
Repeatable No  
Course Components Lecture  
Grade Roster Component Lecture  
Credit Available by Exam No  
Admission Condition Course No  
Off Campus Never  
Campus of Offering Columbus

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites Theatre 5331 or permission of instructor  
Exclusions Not available to students with credit for FS 5194 SP 15

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 50.0601  
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course  
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Masters

## Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## Course Details

### **Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes**

- Students know how to write a professional teleplay in any format
- Students understand that successful TV writing is a collaborative effort and requires lots of rewriting.
- Students develop the oral skills needed to sell a series idea to a producer.
- Students learn to accept criticism of their own work and to critique the work of other.
- Students gain an appreciation of the potential of television.

### **Content Topic List**

- Television Business
- Screenwriting

## Attachments

- FS-4881Sample.pdf  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Davidson, John Ellsworth)*
- Concurrence from Art.pdf  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Friedman, Ryan Jay)*
- Concurrence from English.pdf  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Friedman, Ryan Jay)*
- Concurrence from ACCAD-FS 4881.docx  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Friedman, Ryan Jay)*
- Concurrence from Department of Theatre-FS 4881.docx  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Friedman, Ryan Jay)*

**Comments**

- Concurrence from relevant departments is wise moving forward. English, Theatre, The Wex/

Concurrence from relevant departments is wise moving forward. ACCAD, English, Theatre, The Wex/

Hi John, as we discussed via email this course and the second one I will request to be revised need concurrence from Theatre (department) and ACCAD and Art (esp. Art and Tech) given the overlap / potential overlap with MIP. I also think that English would be a logical concurrence request given the screen writing option in English. This transparency in process will encourage good will and buy -in widely. *(by Heysel,Garett Robert on 02/19/2015 08:52 PM)*

- This course has been discussed and approved by the Interdisciplinary Film Studies Committee (IFSC), which serves as the oversight body for Film Studies and comprises members from all relevant academic units and the Wexner Center. A subcommittee of key members from English, Theatre, the instructor of ACCAD 3350, and the Film Studies Program Coordinator developed this proposal and brought it to the full committee. It has been widely and thoroughly vetted.

This course is to be listed in a Minor in Screenwriting that is currently in development; given the recent pause and possible re-directing of the Moving-Image Production initiative, the IFSC has decided to revisit they structure of that minor, and will submit it later in SP 15. There is no reason why this course proposal should wait for that submission.

There is already clear demand and need for this course. *(by Davidson,John Ellsworth on 02/06/2015 03:55 AM)*

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Davidson,John Ellsworth	01/05/2015 04:03 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Davidson,John Ellsworth	01/05/2015 04:04 PM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Heysel,Garett Robert	01/22/2015 09:11 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Davidson,John Ellsworth	02/06/2015 03:55 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Davidson,John Ellsworth	02/06/2015 03:56 AM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Heysel,Garett Robert	02/19/2015 08:52 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Friedman,Ryan Jay	03/17/2016 03:07 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	03/17/2016 03:35 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	03/18/2016 02:03 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle,Danielle Nicole	03/18/2016 02:03 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Film Studies 4881 [Sample Syllabus taught as FS 5194 in SP 15]  
**SCREENWRITING AND THE BUSINESS OF TELEVISION**  
Spring Semester 2015  
Course Syllabus

Class Location and Times: Hagerty Hall 186, W/F 11:10 - 12:30  
Instructor: Andy Rose  
Contact Info: rose.928@osu.edu  
Office Location and Hours: To be arranged.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines television writing from both a creative and business perspective. Each student will individually pitch an idea for an original half-hour TV series to the class, and then write the show's bible, outline, and pilot. During this process, you will learn about teleplay structure, as well as ways to develop intriguing characters, realistic dialogue, and engaging episodes. In addition, you will work in small groups of 4 to 5 students to collectively develop and write the bible and pilot of an hour-long TV series. Finally, the class will perform table readings of scenes from everyone's original pilots so that all can hear how their dialogue sounds when read aloud.

Students will learn the various formats for TV show scripts, and how they differ from the look and structure of a feature film. You will find out how shows are pitched and created at the various networks, the different seasons of development, a writer's role on a TV series, ways to sell an idea to a producer, and the types of deals and contracts available to writers in the TV business.

In addition, students will briefly study the history of American television, from the early days of network dominance, through the more recent era of cable channel proliferation, to the ways the Internet is currently changing the landscape of home entertainment. We will view several popular shows from different eras, analyze their structure, and try to understand why they were successful.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the time this class is over, you will:

- Know how to write a professional teleplay in any format.
- Understand that successful TV writing is a collaborative effort and requires lots of rewriting.
- Have developed oral skills needed to sell a series idea to a producer.
- Learn how to accept criticism of your own work and critique the work of others.
- Be aware of how TV shows are developed and ways to sell yourself as a writer.
- Have a better appreciation of the potential of television.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

This is first and foremost a writing class, so everyone is expected to write. Five written assignments must be completed during the semester. Assignments turned in late will lower your grade. Also required will be an in-class oral pitch of the series you are creating, and a group presentation. The assignments required are as follows:

- 1) **INDIVIDUAL TV SHOW PITCH** – You are to create an idea for a 30-minute television series and pitch the idea to the class as if you were trying to sell the concept to a TV network. Describe the basic premise, the main locations, and the major characters. Tell us what happens in the pilot episode, and give us some sample episodes for the first season. Where do you see this showing going in the years to come?
- 2) **INDIVIDUAL SERIES BIBLE** – This document includes a detailed synopsis of the original show you have created, plus a description of all the main characters and a paragraph describing each episode for the first half-season (13 shows). Sample bibles from produced series will be posted on Carmen. Though some actual bibles are 30 pages or longer, yours only needs to be about 10 pages, as long as you include all of the necessary material.
- 3) **OUTLINE OF INDIVIDUAL TV PILOT** – This is a beat sheet that contains a list of all the scenes in your show.
- 4) **INDIVIDUAL TV PILOT** – A half-hour episode (22 minutes). It must be properly formatted with correct act breaks.
- 5) **GROUP PROJECT BIBLE / 6) GROUP PROJECT TV PILOT** – The ideas for most episodes of scripted TV shows are created around a conference table amongst all the writers. You and your assigned group of 4 or 5 students are to come up with a premise for an hour show (48 minutes), approved by me, and write a bible and pilot episode. The bible should contain a description for the first 13 shows. Each group will present their series to the class. You must decide how to delegate duties within your group. When coming up with the premise, think out-of-the-box, like Breaking Bad, Mad Men, Dexter, The Sopranos, Lost, House of Cards, etc.
- 7) **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION** – Working in television 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 material, but you will miss one of the most important aspects of this course – group work and feedback. Throughout the semester, we will examine your work and the work of fellow students. For this to be successful, everyone must participate. Half of this grade will come from the anonymous assessment given to you by the other members of your group.

## GRADING CRITERIA

Your final grade will be based primarily on how well you have learned the craft of TV writing. This will be evident in the various writing assignments you turn in during the semester. Also important is the hard-work and dedication you put into this class. This will be reflected by your participation in discussions and presentations, 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 television business works (unless your uncle runs the network). Final grades will be determined in the following manner:

### Individual Series Project:

Outline of Pilot – 15% of grade

Bible – 15% of grade

Pilot – 20% of grade

### Group Series Project: (everyone in your group receives the same grade)

Bible – 15% of grade

Pilot – 20% of grade

Attendance and Participation – 15% of grade (half from group assessment)

## RESOURCES

Writing the TV Drama Series, by Pamela Douglas, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2011)

Numerous handouts will be distributed throughout the quarter via Carmen.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS DATE	ASSIGNMENTS
January 14 W Introduction. Review syllabus. Discuss genres. Explain Loglines.	Write Logline of Individual series for January 21 and present to class.
January 16 F Discuss TV show structure.	
January 21 W Present individual series premises to class.	
January 23 F Finish presenting individual series premises to class.	Start writing Individual show bible for February 27.

CLASS DATE (cont.)	ASSIGNMENTS (cont.)
<p>January 28 W Discuss Bibles. Break into groups.</p>	
<p>January 30 F Group meetings.</p>	<p>Write Individual show outline for February 13.</p>
<p>February 4 W Discuss TV show outlines.</p>	
<p>February 6 F Group meetings.</p>	<p>Start writing Group bible and then Group pilot script.</p>
<p>February 11 W Go over TV show formatting.</p>	
<p>February 13 F Group meetings. (Individual show outlines due)</p>	<p>Continue writing Individual bible, then start writing Individual pilot script.</p>
<p>February 18 W Group meetings.</p>	
<p>February 20 F Present group series to class.</p>	
<p>February 25 W Discuss characters and dialogue.</p>	
<p>February 27 F Discuss television history (Individual Bibles due)</p>	
<p>March 4 W Group meetings.</p>	
<p>March 6 F TV business class. How shows are developed.</p>	
<p>March 11 W TV business class. Writers' roles on series.</p>	
<p>March 13 F</p>	

<p>Group meetings. (Group Bibles due)</p> <p>CLASS DATE (cont.)</p> <p>SPRING BREAK (March 16-20)</p> <p>March 25 W Watch TV episode.</p> <p>March 27 F Group meetings. Individual pilot script exchange.</p> <p>April 1 W Critique of individual pilots.</p> <p>April 3 F TBA</p> <p>April 8 W TBA</p> <p>April 10 F TBA (Individual pilot due)</p> <p>April 15 W TV Glossary of Terms.</p> <p>April 17 F Table readings.</p> <p>April 22 W Table readings.</p> <p>April 24 F Final discussions. (Group Pilot due)</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT (cont.)</p>               <p>Rewrite Individual pilot based on classmate’s comments – due April 10.</p>
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**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT**

Academic Integrity means earning credit honestly through your own efforts. Academic Integrity should be the number one priority for students, as the punishments for violating it are severe and embarrassing.

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic



misconduct. The term ‘academic misconduct’ includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee” (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

*The most common forms of academic dishonesty are the following:*

1. **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is the act of taking ideas, writings, or visual art of another person, including a tutor, and presenting them as your own. In writing, this could take the form of word-for-word copying, paraphrasing, or even taking the structure of someone else’s work and presenting it as your own. This includes material available on the internet. In visual arts, this could take the form of copying ideas, actual structures, or entire works and presenting them as your own. If unsure, take the work to your instructor or a tutor and ask for help.
2. **Cheating on Exams.** This could take the form of having someone else take the exam for you, looking on someone else’s paper or letting someone look on yours, using electronic devices, and taking crib notes into the exam.
3. **Cheating on Assignments.** This could be copying another person’s work, working too closely with a tutor or another student, giving your work to another student, splitting tasks on an assignment that is not CLEARLY designed as a collaborative one, turning in the same work for two different classes, and buying or borrowing papers.

These and other forms of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

## **DISABILITY STATEMENT**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

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