

Screenwriting

This is a sample syllabus. Actual course topics and assignments may vary by instructor and class.

Students will be asked to propose an idea and develop an outline before beginning work on the script. Once they start the screenplay, students will turn in a designated amount of pages each week. When you have pages of script, bring several copies as they will be read and discussed in each class.

Students are encouraged to see movies between each class. At the start of each class, the movies that everyone has seen are discussed, specifically the structure of the films. This discussion leads to a brief lecture about breaking down the 3 acts of a film.

The goal of this class is to complete a first draft of a full-length screenplay in 12 weeks. To accomplish this, students are encouraged to bring at least 10 pages of script each week.

Week 1

The fundamentals of writing a screenplay -- from idea to outline to building the structure of a screenplay and developing clear motivation and wants for the protagonist. At the end of the first class students will pitch the story they intend to write.

Assignment: Write a short outline for your screenplay.

Week 2

Students will turn in their outline. Each student reads his/her work aloud for feedback from the instructor, as well as others in the class. The instructor encourages interplay which makes for lively discussion.

Assignment: Redraft your outline from the feedback received in class. Write at least 10 pages of your screenplay.

Weeks 3-9

Students will bring in between 7-10 pages each week, which will be read aloud and discussed in a workshop format. The feedback received each week will prove crucial to finishing the screenplay draft by the end of 12 weeks.

Assignment: Continue working on your screenplay, writing at least 10 new pages each week.

Weeks 10-12

Pages will continue to be read and workshopped in class. At this point, some students may have completed their first draft. For these students, please bring in a completed draft which the instructor will read from beginning to end and provide notes and suggestions.

Assignment: Continue working on your screenplay, writing at least 10 new pages each week.