

# **BCOM 350 Scriptwriting for Film & TV**

Western Kentucky University - Spring 2011  
Web Course



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Office Hours: T/R 8:00am - 9:35am & 12:30pm - 1:30pm  
Or by appointment

## **Catalog Description: 3 CREDIT HOURS**

Story structure, dialogue, characterization and other elements important in scriptwriting for television and motion pictures.

## **Prerequisites:**

FILM 201 – Introduction to the Cinema, OR  
BCOM 325 – Survey of Writing for Television, Radio

## **Course Objectives:**

BCOM 350 is designed to teach students the fundamentals of screenwriting for motion pictures, including television and film. The course will address both the technical formatting of scripts and the structural and literary techniques associated with effective writing. Equally important, the class will offer students the opportunity to write, and will prepare them to give and receive effective feedback on their work. By the end of the term, students will master screenplay format, will understand the fundamentals of effective screenwriting, and will have written several short scripts.

## **Texts:**

*The Screenwriter's Bible*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Trottier. Silman James.  
*The Tools of Screenwriting*, Howard/Mabley. St. Martin's Griffin.

## **Course Guidelines:**

During the semester, reading assignments will be given for each class and quizzes will be utilized to test comprehension. In addition, each student will be required to complete a variety of written assignments, including original works and responses to existing scripts. Assignments are expected on the assigned due dates, and will not be accepted late. All written assignments and assignment components must be submitted electronically.

## **PROJECTS:**

Mastery of the course material will be demonstrated both in your own work and in your responses to classmates' work. Projects should strictly adhere to the requirements set forth in class. Failure to read project requirements will have an adverse effect on your grade.

### **Final Project: Short Screenplay**

#### **Minimum Length: 15 pages (+ title page)**

The final screenplay, though it should be attended to throughout the semester, constitutes the class's final project. The script should include a title page, and must encompass no less than fifteen additional pages. Proper screenplay format and style should both be employed.

Deductions will result if they are not. The topic and subject matter of the script are left to the discretion of the student, but this *must* be an original work. No adaptations.

## **Attendance:**

Due to the online nature of this course, traditional attendance will not be taken. However, participation in discussions and script feedback are two major requirements of the class. Regular monitoring of the class Blackboard page is a necessity.

## **Students with Disabilities:**

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 200A, DUC Annex. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

## **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty among students will not be tolerated. Examples include plagiarism, use of another student's work, cheat sheets, copying exam answers, and falsifying assignments or information. Any incident of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the semester.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Quizzes	20%
Scene Exercise	10%
Script #1	10%
Final Screenplay	25%
Script Feedback	25%
Participation	10%

### **ACEJMC Core Values and Competencies:**

Assessment is geared to fulfilling requirements of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. All graduates of accredited journalism/mass communication programs, irrespective of their particular specialization, should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- Understand and apply principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications;
- **Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;**
- **Think critically, creatively and independently;**
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communication professions in which they work;
- **Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communication professions, audiences and purposes they serve;**
- **Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;**
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- **Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions in which they work.**