

**COMM202 Story for Film and Television – Section 201
Spring 2020**

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1:00-2:15 P.M.
School of Communication – Room 015
Instructor: J. Paul Preseault
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Office hours: Directly before class, by appointment

REQUIRED TEXT:

Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect 4th Edition. (2014) By Claudia Johnson. Focal Press.

Optional Text:

The Complete Screenwriter's Manual: A Comprehensive Reference of Format and Style. (2006)
By Stephen Bowles, Ronald Mangravite, and Peter Zorn. Pearson.

REQUIRED SOFTWARE:

There are a number of screenplay writing software options, and while Final Draft is considered the industry standard, you need simply to have a fully operational version of a screenwriting program of your choice.

Final Draft does offer to give students a free semester of using their software, please go to:

<http://trial.finaldraft.com/edutrial/>

WriterDuet is another screenwriting software option that is subscription based, go to their link to find out more information about getting a student discount:

<https://writerduet.com/students>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to develop students' creative writing ability and specifically to prepare students to write for the screen. Students will be instructed in the styles, formats and approaches for writing motion picture scripts (i.e. writing for TV, film and video). During the semester, students will be required to complete several writing assignments, in-class exercises and group projects designed to expose them to the craft of writing for film and TV, with the goal of creating several short, polished scripts.

COURSE RATIONALE:

Screenwriting is at the very core of film and television production.

Generally speaking: no scripts, no shows. This course is designed to expose students to the basic tenets of the screenwriting process and practice.

Directly connected to the act of screenwriting is story telling. This course is intended to engage both the process of story development, as well as translating these stories into properly formatted screenplay language.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course you will:

1. Have a deeper understanding of both the film writing process, and the consideration of writing for an audience;
2. Discover approaches to film writing by drawing from students' own life experiences;
3. Explore diverse approaches to finding and refining source material, and to applying writing techniques for narrative screenwriting;
4. Have an understanding of the elements of drama as applied to short screenplay form, including structure, character, plot and dialogue;
5. Will discover work habits that will aid the student with idea conception, developmental writing stages, revisions, and final polishing of proposals, treatments, scenes and short scripts;
6. By having the opportunity to read, and critique the work of their peers, learn from the evaluation process, and apply it to their own writing;
7. Provide consistent criticism of student's writing in an environment that is as academically challenging as it is creative.

COURSE WORK:

During this course you will:

1. Successfully complete all writing assignments including multiple drafts of short scripts.
2. Participate in all classroom discussions and critiques.
3. Complete all in-class exercises and homework assignments satisfactorily.
4. Evaluate, expand, modify and redefine their artistic identities throughout the semester.

GRADING:

Students will be graded based on their completion of:

Assignments	Percentage of final grade
Autobiographic Menu	10%
The Discovery Script – draft and rewrite	15%
The Decision Script – draft and rewrite	15%
Boxing Match Collab Script – draft and rewrite	15%
The Long Short Script – draft and rewrite	20%
Readings/Discussion Board	15%
Attendance/Professionalism	10%

All of the above assignments will be graded on a 100 point scale, except the weekly discussion board, these will be worth 10 points per week.

Sakai Gradebook will be used – you should be able to see your grade standing throughout the term.

Assignment descriptions on Sakai will also list the grading Rubric per each individual assignment.

ASSIGNMENT AND FINAL GRADE SCALE:

Grade Criteria	Letter Grade	Points
Performs at the highest level and demonstrates full and uncompromised commitment and effort. Delivers all assignments with 100% requirements fulfilled	A	100 – 94
	A-	93 – 90
Performs at a high level and demonstrates consistent and effective achievement in meeting course and assignment requirements	B+	89 – 87
	B	86 – 84
	B-	83 – 80
Meets the basic requirements of the course and the assignments	C+	79 – 77
	C	76 – 74
	C-	73 – 70
Performs at a level sub-par to basic requirements, though meeting some minimum standards.	D+	69 – 67
	D	66 – 60
Fails to meet minimum course requirements	F	59 or less

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance and class participation are critical. It is not enough to simply show up. You will be expected to be a regular participant in all we do. Repeated unexcused absences will greatly affect your final grade. If you are unable to make class, it is important to call or e-mail the instructor beforehand. **If you have more than three absences during the semester, your grade will be reduced by a full letter grade**, unless medical documentation proves the necessity of the absence. This does not apply to student athletes or others who must miss class because of university business, absences under these conditions will be excused with proper documentation provided.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate the truth, as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student’s work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process

Students who commit an act of plagiarism, whether deliberately or accidentally, will still be held responsible. Ignorance of academic rules, or failure to fact check work, sources and citations, is not an acceptable defense against the charge of plagiarism. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as print, Internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty; any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at: <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the chairperson of the department involved, and to the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a

member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them.

The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations. *The School of Communication policy is based entirely on and is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.

STUDENTS IN NEED OF ACCOMMODATIONS:

Any student that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from the Student Accessibility Center confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support:

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – please email me or talk to me after class.

To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites at LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa. Or you may contact them directly at 773-508-8840 and at deanofstudents@luc.edu

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- Students are expected to be actively engaged in class discussions.
- No late assignments will be accepted.
- All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced and proofread.
- Turn off cellphones and other electronic devices. Laptops are welcome if you are using them to take notes.

A Note About Finals

As we will work together and commit to the class, delivery of your final scripts will be during the last two weeks of the semester, freeing you to concentrate on your other finals. There will be no final written examination test. Your final exam time is scheduled for Friday May 1 at 1 to 3pm.

At that time Final Discussion Board submissions will be due to be delivered to Sakai.

Course Calendar

Week One:

Jan. 14 Introduction to course, syllabus, assignments, readings. Screen appropriate subject matter.	Jan. 16 More in depth discussion into Screenwriting. Screening.
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Week Two:

Jan. 21 Due: Reading Discussion board Intro, Chap 1 & 2 and Autobiographic Menu.	Jan. 23 Menu Presentations cont. Story and Screenplay - format
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Week Three:

Jan. 28 Due: Reading Discussion – Chap 5 Screening	Jan. 30 Character
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Week Four:

Feb. 4 Due: Reading Discussion – Chap 6	Feb. 6 Dialogue and Subtext
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Week Five:

Feb. 11 Due: Reading Discussion Chap 8 & 9 and Discovery Script	Feb. 13 Discovery Scripts Table Read
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Week Six:

Feb. 18 Due: Reading Discussion Chap 10 Loglines	Feb. 20 Decision Script Pitches
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Week Seven:

Feb. 25 Due: Reading Discussion and Decision Script Table Read	Feb. 27 Decision Script Table Read Cont
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Spring Break March 2-7, no classes.

Week Eight:

Mar. 10 Due: Reading Discussion – screenplay & Chap 4	Mar. 12 Collaboration
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Week Nine:

Mar. 17 Due: Reading Discussion - screenplay Collaboration cont	Mar. 19 Boxing Match Pitch
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Week Ten:

Mar. 24 Due: Reading Discussion Boxing Match Collaboration Script	Mar. 26 Table Read cont
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Week Eleven:

Mar. 31 Due: Reading Discussion – Chap 13 Individual meeting with Instructor final script	Apr. 2 Individual meeting with Instructor final script
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Week Twelve:

Apr. 7 Due: Reading Discussion – screenplay & Chap 7 - Structure	Apr. 9 Treatments Loglines, Long Short Pitches
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Week Thirteen:

Apr. 14 Due: Reading Discussion - screenplay	Apr. 16 Final script check-in
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Week Fourteen:

Apr. 21 Due: Reading Discussion & Long Short Script	Apr. 23 Table Read and Course wrap up
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Week Fifteen:

Finals Week, April 27 to May 2 - no classes scheduled.

Friday May 1 – Online Submission of Final Discussion Board Due 1 - 3pm

COURSE CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH NOTIFICATION