American College Dublin

CW222 WRITING FOR SCREEN 3

Credits:	3 US credits / 6 ECTS credits
Credit level:	Stage two
Prerequisites:	None
Mandatory:	Yes
Contact hours:	40
Academic Year:	2016/17
Semester:	2
Lecturer:	Ferdia MacAnna

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this module learners should be able to:

1. recognize the general historical development of the practice of screenwriting as a creative art form;
2. understand the main requirements for presenting and formatting a screenplay properly;
3. know how to structure a screenplay so that its plotting and narrative development are presented and paced effectively;
4. produce dialogue that is interesting and entertaining, and that progresses the development of character and plot;
5. provide appropriate and useful indications regarding a scene's location, appearance, lighting and camera position;
6. draw on one's imaginative capacity and aspects of lived and observed experience to produce original and entertaining screenplays.

Learning outcomes 1-5 will be assessed by a research paper, 2-5 by class presentations, and 2-6 by the final assessment.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

This course is a continuation of CW221 Writing for screen 2 (though it follows on from CW221, it is a self-contained course and it is not necessary to have done CW220 first). The aim of the course is to introduce learners to the practices and techniques of writing for the screen. Learners examine the canonical and contemporary practices and context for screenwriting; how to employ and adapt standard screenwriting practice and technique for their own creative purposes; examine structure,

plotting and narrative pacing in screenplays; how to develop believable, interesting characters; the process of producing credible and entertaining dialogue for film; explore the means by which they can generate content from their own experiences and perceptions and the things of the world.

MODULE CURRICULUM

Learners will realise the module objectives by completing a number of curriculum tasks and activities. These are planned to include the following:

- Introduction to writing for the screen. The specifics of the visual world.
- What is contemporary screenwriting, and how should we approach beginning to write for the visual world. The importance of formatting.
- Creating a character.
- Themes and textbooks.
- Constructing the story. The Three Act Structure.
- The importance of Act One.
- The basics of effective screenplay dialogue.
- Case Studies. Scene studies. Casablanca/Out of Sight? As Good As It Gets/ No Country for Old Men.
- Script editing and script passes.
- Writing scenes. The Scene as a microcosm of the film.
- Tone and genre.
- Visual writing exercises.
- The film in the contemporary world. Short films. TV dramas. Feature films. Web series.
- Breaking into screenwriting. Breaking Bad and other examples.
- Finding an audience and the importance of good endings.
- Public performance of group work.

REQUIRED TEXT
Syd Field, *Screenwriting*

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST
William Goldman, *Adventures in the Screen Trade*
Robert McKee, *Story*
Christopher Vogler, *The Writer's Journey*
John Yorke, *Into the Woods: Why Stories Work and Why We Tell Them*
Aristotle's Poetics for Screenwriters

INTERNET WEBSITES
Drew's Script O Rama   http://www.script-o-rama.com/
Simply Scripts   http://www.simplyscripts.com/
IFTN   http://www.iftn.ie/
Irish Film Board   http://www.irishfilmboard.ie/

MODULE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
The physical structures of the module learning environment include lecturing classrooms supplied with integrated chairs and desks and a whiteboard, a Powerpoint system, overhead projector, television and DVD/video player. The learners also have access to an up-to-date computer laboratory (all computers are connected to the College's network; they are equipped with up-to-date software and are networked for printing and internet access).

The module learning environment also includes the College's library (the Rooney Library). In co-operation with the teaching staff and in association with Lynn University, Boca Raton, Florida, the Library is able to supply reading and research materials on all aspects of the proposed Liberal Arts degree (as well as a range of materials on history, sociology, literature, languages, art, international relations and environmental studies). There are networked computers and printers, with Internet access and power points for portable computers. The library management system, Voyager, provides an online catalogue. Learners are able to search the catalogue, extend their loans, and place holds on titles from home. An inter-library loan service is available for staff and learners.

MODULE TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY
The module intended learning outcomes are achieved through a range of teaching and learning strategies. These include three hours per week of class time which combines elements of a seminar and tutorial. Learners are expected to take detailed notes in class and to do practical exercises and other classroom activities prescribed by the lecturer. Learners are also expected to dedicate at least two hours per week to self-directed study which includes reading, elementary research, home assignments, group assignment preparation, individual projects, and revision of material for tests and final examinations. Self-study can be conducted in the College Library or at home. Learners can also contact their lecturer during office hours for further academic support. All these types of teaching provide a versatile opportunity to support and develop learner engagement with the programme.

MODULE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY
The extent to which learners have achieved the module intended learning outcomes is established by different kinds of assessment strategies. These include various forms of continuous assessment and the final exam. The forms of assessment used in the module, together with their weighting, include the following:
- Research paper (c. 2000 words), in which learners will present results of their original research on a selected topic relating to screen writing (30%);

- Class presentations of original screenplay material (20%);
- Final assessment, in which learners will submit a portfolio of scripts and participate in a final showcase of short readings of works developed in the course of the semester (50%).

As class attendance is necessary for the achievement of intended learning outcomes, only learners who have attended at least 75% of the classes can sit the final examination.

The grading scale used by the American College Dublin is the following: A (80-100%), B+ (70-79%), B (60-69%), B- (55-59%), C+ (50-54%), C (40-49%), D (35-39%), F (below 35%). Class presentations are assessed using a class presentation rubric (see Section 5.4.6) to ensure transparency, fairness, and consistency of assessment process.

Learners will be instructed in academic techniques of source referencing to avoid plagiarism, that is, unacknowledged appropriation of someone else's ideas, words, and research results. Plagiarism is regarded by the College as a serious offence punishable by downgrading, failure in the course work, and possible dismissal from the College. The College's detailed Plagiarism Statement is included in the Quality Assurance Manual, sections 3.8.1-3.