

Common Course Outline

MCOM 231/ENG 231

Film & Television Writing

3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

Prerequisite(s): MCOM 111, ENG 101 or permission of the instructor.

Film and television writing is designed to present students with a practical approach to scriptwriting techniques and formats. Screenings of important films and television programs illustrating the script writer's craft will be presented. Students will work in small groups to discuss script assignments and proposals. Final proposals for all script assignments will be presented and discussed in a script conference "setting."

Overall Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Differentiate and demonstrate an understanding of the script writer's role in television and in film production.
2. Recognize, define, and describe the terminology and vocabulary used in the various formats associated with script writing for television and film.
3. Compare, contrast, and distinguish the role of a script writer adapting and or creating an original work for television and film.
4. Determine and demonstrate improved skill level in the use of scripting techniques.
5. Analyze and determine the use of point of view, characterization, subtext, and plot synopsis in the preparation of formal script proposal writing.
6. View commercial productions for television, film, and video release with a discerning understanding of the script writer's contribution. Render a critical analysis and evaluation.
7. Recognize, analyze, and discuss the merits of script proposals prepared for formal script conference presentations.
8. Assess the different approaches used by production personnel (the storyboard, the shooting script, the short story synopsis, ect.) to present a script concept visually during the pre-production stage of development.
9. Produce an original script project in literate format containing a proposal, character description, and plot synopsis.
10. Develop as awareness for the importance of the literary agent and the Screen Writers' Guild in successful contact negotiations for screenplay writers.

Major Topics in Film and Television Writing

- I. The Script Writer's Tools-Basic terminology and vocabulary.
- II. Film and television script writing formats.
- III. Character Analysis-Description and use of subtext.
- IV. Plot Analysis-Packaging the script concept for the literary agent, the editorial department, and the producer.
- V. Thinking Visually-How to present the story concept for a visual point of view?
- VI. The Original Script Concept-Use of feedback and working within a production deadline.
- VII. The Script Conference- How to present the script concept effectively.
- VIII. Innovative Script Concepts- Introduction of storyboarding techniques and the graphic novel script format.
- IX. The Selling of the Television or Film Script-Contractual language, what every first time script writer needs to know.
- X. The Impact of Technology on the Role of the Script Writer.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and active participation in class.
2. Written examinations.
3. Three formal script writing assignments (a television script, a film script, and a formal proposal and script for an original script concept).
4. Group panel symposium on careers in media writing.
5. Formal written research paper based on the filmed works of a noted screenplay writer.

Other Course Information

Students are expected to be prepared for all scheduled script conference sessions. All formal assignments must be completed in the correct script format. Formats for all script assignments will be provided by the instructor. Students are encouraged to contact the Writers' Guild of America for updated information on literary agents and film and television editorial departments willing to accept scripts from first time script writers.

The Community College of Baltimore County is committed to providing a high-quality learning experience that results in a growth of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to function successfully as a transfer student, a career students and as a citizen. To accomplish this goal, we maintain high academic standards and expect students to accept responsibility for their individual growth by attending class, completing all homework and other assignments, participating in class activities and preparing for tests.