SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:

CIM126 Y is an online course that is an introduction to the basic techniques and elements of screenwriting. It is designed to provide the film writing student with skills that cultivate: 1) an ability to create narrative story lines; 2) an understanding of the dramatic structure of screenplays; and 3) an ability to use screenwriting software such as Final Draft and format scripts according to professional formatting rules.

All assignments should be posted on Blackboard. Script pages MUST BE written with screenwriting software such as Final Draft or Amazon Story Writer. Final Draft can be purchased with a student discount at FinalDraft.com or downloaded for free with a DEMO. https://store.finaldraft.com/final-draft-11-edu.html

Amazon Storywriter is free. https://storywriter.amazon.com/dashboard When using Amazon Storywriter please convert your pages to PDF before uploading them to Blackboard.

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is for students to be able to demonstrate the following specific skills and knowledge by the end of the semester:

1. Ability to create well developed stories by writing short film scripts.
2. Ability to develop credible characters for dramatic films.
3. Ability to master dramatic story and script structure.
4. Ability to analyze and discuss student projects as well as films.
5. Ability to format scripts properly, using screenwriting software.

Course Topics:

1. Mastering Screenwriting Software and Script Formatting
2. Understanding the Elements of Story
3. Grasping Three-Act Structure
4. Creating Original Characters and their Arcs
5. Understanding Effective Scene Design
Please note that in screenwriting APPEARANCES ARE IMPORTANT.

1. All outside assignments must be typed.

2. All assignments must be proofread. Beyond TWO ERRORS, misspellings, lack of or incorrect punctuation, obvious bad grammar, or improper usage of format will result in **ONE point per ERROR** deducted from your assignment grade, up to 25 points total for errors.

3. Each assignment must be submitted by the designated deadline. TEN points will be deducted from any assignment that is late.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:** None

**MATERIALS FEES:** None

**ASSIGNMENTS/COURSEWORK:**

There are seven assignments in this course:

- Assignment #1: Power Point Lecture Quizzes
- Assignment #2: Formatting Exercise
- Assignment #3: *Toy Story 3* Quiz
- Assignment #4: Scene Assignment
- Assignment #5: *Rewrite* Quiz
- Assignment #6: Short Script Outline Worksheets
- Assignment #7: Short Script

**TEXTS AND RESOURCES REQUIRED:**


Screenwriting Software: FINAL DRAFT or other screenwriting software such as Amazon Storywriter.
GRADING/EVALUATION:

Assignment 1: Quizzes on Power Point Lectures 5%
Assignment 2: Formatting Assignment 5%
Assignment 3: Quiz on Toy Story 3 Script 5%
Assignment 4: Scene Design 25%
Assignment 5: Quiz on Rewrite 5%
Assignment 6: Script Outline Worksheets 5%
Assignment 7: Short Script 50%

Total 100%

All grades will be determined on a percentage basis: A+= 98-100, A = 94-97%, A- = 90-93, B+ 87-89, B = 84-86%, B- = 80-83, C+ 77-79, C = 74-76, C-= 70-73%, D = 60-69%, F=59 and below. All School of Communication majors must pass this course with at least a C. (C- is not acceptable.)

RUBRIC: Scripts are graded based on this rubric: Structure – 25%; Character – 25%; Scene Design – 25%; Writing (Formatting, Grammar/Spelling, Scene Description) – 25%

INCOMPLETE GRADES: Save serious illness or other excused emergency, there will be no final “I” (incomplete) grades issued. All work will be considered final at the end of the term and all assignments will receive a grade. Work not submitted will receive a failing grade. Academic dishonesty of any kind, for whatever reason, will not be tolerated.

DISABILITY SERVICES: Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, need to be registered with the Office for Disability Services, which is housed in the Academic Development Center (Whitten University Center, Suite N201).

HONOR CODE STATEMENT: Students enrolled in this course are expected to abide by the University of Miami Honor Code. The purpose of the Honor Code is to protect the academic integrity of the University by encouraging consistent ethical behavior in assigned coursework.

No honest student wants to be guilty of the intellectual crime of plagiarism, even unintentionally. Therefore, we provide you with these guidelines so that you don't accidentally fall into the plagiarism trap.

Plagiarism is the taking of someone else's words, work, or ideas, and passing them off as a product of your own efforts. Plagiarism may occur when a person fails to place quotation marks around someone else's exact words, directly rephrasing or paraphrasing someone else's words while still following the general form of the original, and/or failing to issue the proper citation to one's source material.
In student papers, plagiarism is often due to...

- turning in someone else's paper as one's own
- using another person's data or ideas without acknowledgment
- failing to cite a written source (printed or internet) of information that you used to collect data or ideas
- copying an author's exact words and putting them in the paper without quotation marks
- rephrasing an author's words and failing to cite the source
- copying, rephrasing, or quoting an author's exact words and citing a source other than where the material was obtained. (For example, using a secondary source which cites the original material, but citing only the primary material. This misrepresents the nature of the scholarship involved in creating the paper.
- using wording that is very similar to that of the original source, but passing it off as one's own.

The last item is probably the most common problem in student writing. It is still plagiarism if the student uses an author's key phrases or sentences in a way that implies they are his/her own, even if s/he cites the source.

**RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY POLICY:** It is the student’s obligation to provide faculty members with notice of the dates they will be absent for religious holy days, preferably before the beginning of classes but no later than the end of the first three (3) class days. Absences due to observance of religious holy days not pre-arranged within the first three class days may be considered unexcused and there is no obligation to allow any make up work, including examinations. Missing a class due to travel plans associated with a particular religious holy day does not constitute an excused absence. The University’s complete Religious Holy Day Policy can be found in the 2018-2019 Bulletin.

**COURSE TOPICS OUTLINE**

**Week 1:**
July 1-5

**Lecture:** VIEW POWER POINT LECTURES

Introduction to Screenwriting:
Thinking Like a Screenwriter
Formatting Your Script Like A Pro

The Elements of Story: Protagonists,
Antagonists, Goals, Problems & Conflict

Three Act Structure: Set Up, Rising Conflict,
Climax and Resolution, Visual Storytelling

Scenes: The Building Blocks of Film
and the Elements of Effective Scene Design
Creating Great Characters

Dialogue: Less is More

Watch: Final Draft Tutorial
http://www.finaldraft.com/learn/final-draft-10-quick-start/

Read: Toy Story 3 Script

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE on Friday, July 5 by 12 p.m.

DUE: Assignment #1: Quizzes on Power Point Lectures

DUE: Assignment #2: Formatting Assignment

DUE: Assignment #3: Quiz on Toy Story 3

Week 2: Lecture: WRITE YOUR SCENE
July 8-12

DUE: Assignment #4: SCENE DESIGN ASSIGNMENT

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE on Friday, July 8 by 12 p.m.

Week 3: Lecture: CREATE YOUR SCRIPT OUTLINE
July 15-19

READ: Rewrite by Paul Chitlik

DUE: Assignment #5: Quiz on Rewrite

DUE: Assignment #6: SHORT SCRIPT OUTLINE

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE on Friday, July 19 by 12 p.m.

Week 4: Lecture: WRITE YOUR SHORT SCRIPT
Week 5: Lecture: WRITE YOUR SCRIPT
July 22-26

DUE: Assignment #7: SHORT SCRIPT (First Draft)

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE by Friday, July 26

Week 6: Lecture: REVISE YOUR SCRIPT
July 29-Aug 2

DUE: Assignment #7: SHORT SCRIPT (Revised)

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE by Friday, August 9
STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I HAVE RECEIVED AND READ THE SYLLABUS FOR CIM 126 Y. I HAVE COMPLETED THE PREREQUISITE COURSES LISTED IN THE SYLLABUS OR HAVE HAD THE PROFESSOR SIGN BELOW TO CERTIFY A WAIVER OF THE PREREQUISITES.

SIGNED: ____________________________________________

PRINT NAME: __________________________________________

DATE: ___________________________