

THFM 2612-001 (3 credit hours)

SCRIPT AND THE SMALL SCREEN

Term: **Fall 2014**
Time: **T/Th 10:00 – 11:15 p.m.**
Location: **Room 2M77**

Instructor: **Dr. Jonathan Ball**
Office: **2M69**
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E-Mail: **j.ball@uwinnipeg.ca**
Office Hours: **T/Th 1:30-2:30 p.m.**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will investigate the narrative techniques employed by two core television genres, the comedy series and the drama serial, alongside a number of examples from other shows. Our investigation will focus on scene structure, episode structure, act breaks and seasonal arcs as well as the similarities and differences between the two formats. Students will learn to develop story concepts and write script sequences for a “spec” script, analyze existing shows, and work in groups to develop stories and mock proposals (aka, pitch bibles) for a television series. Students working within a group will all receive the same grade.

REQUIRED TEXT

Douglas, Pamela. *Writing the TV Drama Series*. 3rd ed. Studio City: Michael Wiese Prod., 2011. Print.

REQUIRED DVDS

True Detective, Season 1

Examples from this show, and other shows, will be shown in-class. However, due to time constraints, we shall only watch selections from various series and not the entire series.

GRADING

Proposal assignments will be completed by groups. All members of the group will receive the same mark.

Scripted Sequence for a Spec Script (due Oct. 7)	30%
<i>True Detective</i> Scene Analysis assignment (due. Oct. 28)	30%
Group Project: Mock proposal for TV series (due Nov. 27)	40%
TOTAL	100%

Late assignments will not be accepted and will be given a grade of 0%.

Since the effectiveness of this class is dependent on full participation in class discussions and in group work, absences and late arrivals not due to documented medical reasons will lead to deductions in the final mark. Students who do not attend class on a regular basis will be burdens on their groups and so a premium is placed on attendance and punctuality. Additionally, in the arts industries, being late or missing meetings may very well sink your projects and cost you or your employers thousands of dollars.

Unexcused absences from lectures will be penalized at a rate of 1% per instance. Unexcused lateness for lectures will be penalized at a rate of 0.5% per instance.

Excused absences or late arrivals require a medical note or prior arrangement with the instructor. The instructor will use personal discretion to determine whether or not to excuse a non-medical absence. Students with chronic medical conditions that will require extensive absence should meet with the instructor at the beginning of the term to discuss whether the course is appropriate for them.

In addition, all students must attend group meetings outside of class. Students who are reported to have missed group meetings outside class will have (an additional) 2% deducted from their final mark per meeting missed.

CONVERSION SCALE

For the calculation of the final grade the following conversion table will be used:

A+	90 – 100%	GPA	4.5	C+	65 – 69.9%	GPA	2.5
A	85 – 89.9%	GPA	4.25	C	60 – 64.9%	GPA	2.0
A-	80 – 84.9%	GPA	4.0	D	50 – 59.9%	GPA	1.0
B+	75 – 79.9%	GPA	3.5	F	below 50%	GPA	0
B	70 – 74.9%	GPA	3.0				

Work not submitted will be graded as 0%.

DEFINITIONS OF GRADING DESCRIPTIONS

A+ Exceptional. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill AND great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

A Superior. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill OR great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

A- Excellent. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B+ Very Good. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B Good. Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C+ Satisfactory. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

D Barely Satisfactory. Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

F Failing. Unsatisfactory knowledge of concepts and/or techniques, which does not satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course. Late or missed assignments will be given a failing grade.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Sep. 4:	Introduction to Course
Sep. 9 – Oct. 7:	Fundamentals of TV Writing, Examination of Various Shows
Oct. 9 – Oct. 23:	Focus on <i>True Detective</i>
Oct. 28 – Nov. 27:	TV Series Development

Important Dates:

Oct. 7:	Scripted Sequence Due
Oct. 23:	Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline
Oct. 28:	Scene Analysis Due
Nov. 11:	Remembrance Day / No Classes
Nov. 27:	Final Group Project (Series Bible) is due

"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES

The Department of Theatre and Film is presenting a series of six lectures which will be held on Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**: Sept 17, Oct 22, Nov 12, Jan 14, Feb 11, Mar 11. This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/majors and for Film majors is optional but highly recommended.

2014 ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to introduce our new students to faculty and other students; to provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and to provide news about what's coming up. This year our *Orientation Assembly* will be held on **Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 12:30-13:20 in Theatre, 1T15. ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY** for all Majors and Honours students. Those considering Honours are strongly recommended to attend. All others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (which houses the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am-5:30 pm weekdays. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE**: outside of regular building hours, it is **MANDATORY** that everyone in the building **EITHER** carry an access card **OR** have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). **ALL EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes MUST have an access card.** If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, **you may be evicted.**

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA

Students must check our website at <http://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca/tbooking.htm> and read the menu items called *Fire Safety Instructions in the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film*, *Access Card/Building Use Policy* **AND** *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

GENERAL NOTES

This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca

to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential. <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>.

Students who plan to conduct research interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, even a family member, must obtain the approval of the appropriate ethics committee before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/human-ethics.html> for submission requirements and deadlines.

All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect.

UWinnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities.

Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.

Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.

Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.

It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-filesystem-action/pdfs/calendar/RegulationsandPolicies.pdf>) for information on Registration, Grading, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2014 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin in September and end in November, 2014 (Fall 2014 Term).

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Theatre is a communal art form in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals both within and outside of class times; and, in short, to exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

COURSE CONTENT NOTE**All Theatre and Film Classes**

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.