



THFM-2611-001 (3 credit hours)

INTRODUCTION TO SCREENWRITING

Fall 2015
Tuesday / Thursday 1:00- 2:15 p.m.
Room: 4M39

Instructor: Dr. Alden R. Turner
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Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4 p.m.
Other Times by Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to the basics of screenwriting through scene writing exercises, the adaptation of a classic short story, and the development of an original short film script (15-20 minutes long). It includes a study of the language of film, narrative principles, formatting, script analysis, and adaptation. The course also deals with the role of the screenwriter in the filmmaking industry.

Students are **required** to have written work ready for **each class** and to participate constructively in critiquing the work of classmates.

REQUIRED TEXT

"The Chorus Girl" by Anton Chekhov (available at <http://chekhov2.tripod.com/069.htm>).

Note: Students are advised that every piece of writing presented for discussion must be distributed to all members of the class; i.e. your original plus 14 copies in total (13 for students and an additional copy for the professor). These copies must be made at the student's expense and should be viewed as necessary costs associated with taking this course.

ASSIGNMENTS

Constructive participation in critiquing	20%
Adaptation of "The Chorus Girl" (due October 20, 2015)	40%
Short original screenplay (due December 1, 2015)	40%
TOTAL	100%

Late Assignments will **not** be accepted without a medical certificate.

GRADING SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA 4.50	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.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

September 10 Introduction to Screenwriting Workshops

UNIT 1: SCREEN ADAPTATIONS

September 15 / 17 "Chorus Girl" Summary

Adaptation Outline

September 22 / 24 Opening Scenes

September 29 / October 1 Characters and Conflicts

October 6 / 8 Scene Design

Basic Script Formatting

October 13 / 15 Crisis and Climax

UNIT 2: ORIGINAL SCREENPLAYS

October 20 "Chorus Girl" Adaptation Script due

October 20 / 22 Invention and Story Design

October 27 / 29 Story Synopsis and Step-Outline

Screenwriting Practices and Prospects

October 29 VW Date

November 3 / 5 Inciting Events and Progressive Complications

November 10 / 12 Character and Plot Development

November 17 / 19 Conflict, Crisis and Change

November 24 / 26 Script Analysis and Revision

December 1 Original Short Screenplay 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 (except where noted) during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW: FRIDAY** Sept 18, Oct 21, **FRIDAY** Nov 13, Jan 13, Feb 10, Mar 9. 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.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (home to the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am and 5:30 pm weekdays only. 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.

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 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 204-786-9771 or <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility> to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/new-faculty-handbook/appeals-and-academic-misconduct.html>) for information on Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

Students facing a charge of academic or non-academic misconduct may choose to contact the University of Winnipeg Student's Association (UWSA) where a student advocate will be available to answer any questions about the process, help with building a case, and ensure students have access to support. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit our website at <http://www.theuwsa.ca/academic-advocacy> or call 204-786-9780.

We ask that you please be respectful of the needs of classmates and instructors/professors by avoiding the use of unnecessary scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to scented products can

trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities. Please consider using unscented necessary products and avoiding unnecessary products that are scented (e.g. perfume).

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.

Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2015 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin on September 9 and end on December 1, 2015 (Fall 2015 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.

Performance-Related Classes

Much of an actor's work is based upon actual experiences of life which become translated into fictional circumstances. Because of this, the teaching of acting may involve encouraging the student to examine personal and even intimate areas of life to help him or her access life experiences appropriate to the demands of the work.

Dramatic literature depicts a wide range of human actions, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. Acting students must learn to simulate life truthfully in interaction with other students in the safety of the acting class and the rehearsal hall through exercises, discussions, and directions which address rather than avoid truthful, particularized, personalized action.

Performance classes often require strenuous physical activity. Classes may also involve physical interaction between students as part of class exercises or character development and occasional physical contact by instructors for purposes such as the demonstration of a technique or to make a posture correction. Students are responsible for wearing clothing appropriate to these activities.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of actions and subject matter involved in drama are urged to discuss these concerns with their course instructor.