

THFM-3002-600 (3 credit hours)
Special Studies in Screenwriting

Fall 2022

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVES:

This course is an intensive seminar in screenwriting for students interested in writing feature length films. Students will develop material and shape it into a strong narrative with an emphasis on dramatic structure, visual language, and character development. Through the use of readings, writing exercises, screenings and workshops, students will develop and learn the skills necessary to complete a full-length feature screenplay.

SCOPE

Students will be required to generate a detailed treatment and step outline of their proposed screenplay. Once the instructor has approved their outline, students will proceed to write their scripts in 30-page sections. Comments and suggestions will be incorporated into a re-write.

OUTLINE OF CONTENT

Week 1

Course introduction - What makes a good story? What is a dramatic situation? What is conflict? Review the basic principles of dramatic three-act structure.

Watch "*Dog Day Afternoon*" and read the screenplay. Think about how the story comes from character. In your journal, Discuss the dramatic conflict, protagonist, antagonist, character objectives, actions, obstacles, inciting incident, and plot points.

Assignment:

- Write a paragraph describing the **premise** of your screenplay. Pay special attention to the following: Is it dramatic? Is the character's objective clear? Does it contain conflict? Is there action? What is the main story purpose? What is Action? Something must HAPPEN in every scene.

Week 2:

Character development: Story comes from character and why.

Assignment:

- Write a detailed character biography of your main character. Discuss the interior and exterior of character, the biography/interview, and visually introducing character to show us who your character is. Think about what is at stake, how and why they take action, foreshadowing, goals, fatal flaws, super skills, locations, etc. Does the protagonist change by the end?

Week 3

Readings on Act I - Introduce main characters, establish 'the rules of the world', set up main character's goals. "Inciting Incident" is the event that occurs in the hero's life that doesn't happen every day, The Inciting Incident sparks the desire main character needs in order to pursue their goals.

Readings about Act II - Confrontation, obstacles, plots points, rising conflict, escalation, reversals, and the crisis.

Readings on Act III structure: Showdown/Climax, Protagonist either prevails or fails, or has a realization. Resolution.

Assignment:

- Read the screenplay '*Moonlight*'. In your journal identify the obstacles, the rising conflict, a reversal. What are the stakes? Identify the Act II plot point/crisis

Expand your **premise** into a **three-page treatment**.

Week 4

Assignment:

- Using your treatment, outline your screenplay and break down what happens in each scene.

Week 5

Scene Construction: Dialogue, Sub-text, and Action. Every scene must have purpose, either to move the story forward or reveal character or both.

Assignment: Begin to write your script.

Weeks 6-13

Weekly Journals

Notes from Instructor

Rewrites

Continue to write your screenplay.

Final Draft due December 15th.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on a series of short assignments including treatment and outline, as well as the weekly journal and the three drafts of the screenplay.

MARK DISTRIBUTION

Writing Assignments	25%
First Draft Script	25%
Final Draft Script	25 %
Screenplay Journal	25 %
Total:	100%

ALL assignments must be submitted in PDF form via NEXUS.

Student will meet with instructor once a week, for up to one hour, either on Zoom or in person.

If it is necessary to cancel a class due to exceptional circumstances, every effort will be made to inform students via UWinnipeg email.

A permitted or necessary change in mode of delivery may require adjustments to important aspects of course outlines, like class schedule and the number, nature, and weighting of assignments and/or exams.

Students have the responsibility to regularly check their UWinnipeg e-mail addresses to ensure timely receipt of correspondence from the University and/or their course instructors.

ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) Writing Assignments
- 2) First Draft of Feature Screenplay
- 3) Final Draft of Feature Screenplay
- 4) Screenplay Journal (see below)

Screenplay Journal

Students are required to read one feature film screenplay per week (an online folder with hundreds of screenplays will be made available to students) and write a journal entry describing the screenplay, including who the protagonist is, what is the protagonist's want and need, what are all the major turning points in the plot, including the inciting incident, act breaks, climax, and resolution. What are the primary energies. Also include something specific that resonated for you about the story.

- Answer these questions:
 1. What's the underlying concept of the film? (What's it about?)
 2. Who is the protagonist?
 3. What does the protagonist want?
 4. Who or what is in opposition to the protagonist?
 5. Does the main conflict escalate?
 6. Identify the beginning/middle/end turning points

Additional readings and viewings may be assigned as necessary

TBA

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	below50%	GPA	0
B	70 – 74.9%	GPA	3.0				

Work not submitted will be graded as 0%.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY & COURSE CONTENT

Theatre & Film are communal art forms in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people cooperate 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, meetings or shoots both within and outside of class times; and, in short, 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

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.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Human Rights and Diversity

All students are encouraged to visit the University's Human Rights and Diversity website (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/index.html>) to familiarize yourself about your rights, the University's policies, and resources in place to support you. This site includes links to the University's Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/sexual-violence-policy-and-procedures.html>), as well as resources for getting and providing support and clear steps for disclosing or reporting sexual violence.

Sexual Violence Resources on Campus

From the UW Human Rights & Diversity website:

The University takes all disclosures and reports of sexual violence seriously; survivors of all backgrounds and experiences will be treated with dignity, respect, and care. If you have experienced sexual violence, there are trained staff to help you in whatever way suits you best."

Disclosing is telling a member of the UW Community that you have experienced sexual violence. This could be someone you trust or feel comfortable with, like a professor, coach, another staff person, or a member of the Sexual Violence Response Team (**SVRT**). A disclosure can be made in order to receive support, accommodation, or to be connected to other resources. The Sexual Violence Response Team (**SVRT**) is a small team of specially trained, well-situated staff that coordinates and organizes services for survivors in a confidential manner. For example, if you personally do not feel comfortable talking to your professors about extensions or deferring work, they would be able to arrange changes for you without telling the professor why you need accommodation.

Contact SVRT by phone at 204-230-6660. [You can find more information on disclosing here.](https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/sexual-violence/get-support.html)
(<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/sexual-violence/get-support.html>)

Reporting is making a statement to the **Human Rights & Diversity Officer (HRDO)** with the intention of seeking remedy, sanction, or consequences through the university. Once a report is made, the **HRDO** will review your report and discuss your options. Your options could include an investigation process, or informal resolution (if you wish to resolve it without an investigation). The **HRDO** can still connect you with support, accommodation, or external organizations while the investigation is taking place.

You can contact the HRDO by phone at 204-988-7508 or by email at hrdo@uwinnipeg.ca
You can report online here » (https://uwinnipeg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4ONi2EP1gcXjyBv)

PUBLIC HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

Should public health and university regulations require it, the schedule and content of the course may be subject to change on short notice. Every effort will be made to inform students of these changes, to deliver the course content in the best way possible under the circumstances, and to evaluate students fairly.

HEALTH AND ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Life happens to everyone. If you are experiencing a crisis in your life, or if you have a physical or mental health issue, communicate with your Professor or Accessibility Services – let us know so we can provide support or direct you to those who can. The earlier we know, the earlier we can discuss what resources might be available. Students with documented disabilities, or temporary or chronic medical conditions requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams/presentations (e.g., private space or more time) or during lectures/labs (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 204-786-9771 or accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential. If you are registered with Accessibility Services, do not assume that Accessibility Services (AS) has informed your instructor that you have registered with them. Please see <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. If you do not register with AS, you cannot be granted special consideration (e.g. extra time to write exams/tests, attendance issues because of physical or mental health conditions, etc.).

The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of your fellow classmates and your instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending on-campus lectures and labs. Exposure to perfumes and other **scented products (such as lotion)** can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities. We are asking for your cooperation to create a scent-free environment **on campus** by students, faculty and staff.

"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES

During the FW terms, the Department of Theatre and Film presents a series of lectures held on Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20). This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. and are open to all students. The speakers will specifically address issues related to “the business of the business.”

Lectures will take place in-person in the Theatre, Wednesday 12:30 – 13:20, on the following dates:

October 5, 2022
November 9, 2022
January 18, 2023
March 1st, 2023

Guests will be confirmed shortly.

MANDATORY ATTENDANCE FOR HONOURS STUDENTS: Attendance at EVERY lecture is mandatory for ALL Honours students in Theatre (that is, anyone taking 4000-level courses in any area), as well as students in THFM-3110 Screen Acting, THFM-3201 Styles in Design, and THFM-3801 Production II.

All students are encouraged to attend these fun and informative lectures. Please see our department website in the Fall for information.

ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 at 12:30 pm we will hold an *Orientation Assembly* in the Theatre to welcome students to the new term; introduce our new students to faculty and other students; provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and deliver news about what's coming up.

ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED AND WELCOME TO ATTEND!

TAFSA

All students enrolled in at least one theatre or film class are automatically members of TAFSA, the Theatre and Film Students' Association, which plans a number of exciting activities each academic year. Activities organized by TAFSA include regular **Performance Jams, Department parties** and **Socials**; other events have included **DioFest** (a new play festival featuring student written and produced plays), and **24/7** (an event in which students move into our building and several plays are written, rehearsed, produced, and presented – all in a period of 24 hours!).

Please find out more at TAFSA's meetings, held every second Monday from 12:30-13:20 pm. It's a great opportunity for students to connect with other like-minded people and a way to get involved in the department events. Visit the TFSA Instagram account at **@tafsauw** or email them at tafsa.uw@hotmail.com.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (home to the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am to 6 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 (students, faculty and community renters) **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 a UW ID 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.

All studios and labs are locked outside of building hours. Evening and weekend access can be added to your student card by visiting Melinda in the Department office, 3T03.

SECURITY PHONE (General, non-emergency, Safe Walk and Safe Ride): 204-786-9272
SECURITY EMERGENCY NUMBER: 204-786-6666

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film is equipped with an emergency-only phone to contact Security immediately in the main lobby by the House Management Office. This can be used in an emergency situation to directly connect with the UW Security Services.

Students are encouraged to visit the UW Security Services webpage for complete information about campus security and emergency procedures: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/security/index.html>

ONLINE CLASSES:

Instructors whose mode of delivery includes Zoom or a similar platform will clarify expectations for appropriate remote classroom behaviour or decorum (e.g., being on time, muting/unmuting, raising hand, reacting, etc.), and make appropriate allowances in order to respect the privacy of students (e.g., clarifying need to have video on/off).

Performance classes online: No eating, chewing gum, or wearing a mask during on-line work.

RECORDING ON-LINE CLASSES

Should a class be held online, the instructor may choose to record a zoom or video class if there are online connectivity issues, absences, or to post to Nexus for later review.

If a lecture is recorded, students will be given notice (via the course outline or on a case-by-case basis) that their personal information may be captured; informed of how long the recording will be retained; and whether the recording will be used for evaluation of any kind. Students will also be given the option to turn off their cameras/microphones and use pseudonyms to remain anonymous (except where class participation is required).

Students with concerns or who wish to seek alternate arrangements may discuss the matter with the instructor.

Access to recordings will be limited to the academic staff, students, and others with a legitimate need. Recordings containing student personal information will not be posted publicly, but only on UW-approved servers.

No student is allowed to disseminate recordings outside of the class or post recordings publicly. Access to the recordings will be limited to the instructor and the students.

ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA

Department Website: <https://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca> or <https://film.uwinnipeg.ca>

Please refer to the website for department information, but particularly regarding:

Fire and Safety Information for ACTF: Students must check our website and review the [Fire Safety Instructions in the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film](https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film/docs/fire-evacuation-procedures_2020.pdf) (https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film/docs/fire-evacuation-procedures_2020.pdf) and [Access Card/Building Use Policy](https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film/rentals/access-card-and-building-use-policy.html) (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film/rentals/access-card-and-building-use-policy.html>).

Room Bookings for Class Assignment Work: Students may book rehearsal room space class-related work or outside projects. Priority will be given to class assignment work. Please see our website links to *Room Booking Instructions* and electronic *Online Room Booking Form* found on our department website at <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film/rentals/access-card-and-building-use-policy.html>. Please read and note all instructions carefully. Room booking availability is subject to change according to public health and university policies.

GENERAL NOTES

- Students can find answers to frequently asked questions related to the University's Covid-19 policies for the 2022-23 year here: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/covid-19/index.html>
- Students should check their UWinnipeg e-mail addresses daily as this is the most direct way instructors and the University will contact students regarding such things as important information about health and safety, policies and registration, and Faculty will contact you about changes to class schedules, cancelled classes, etc.
- 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 video/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, they should withdraw from this course immediately.
- Unless necessary for accessing class, cellular phones should 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.
- When it is necessary to cancel a class due to exceptional circumstances, instructors will make every effort to inform students via UWinnipeg webmail (and/or using the preferred form of communication, as designated by the instructor), as well as the Departmental Assistant and Chair/Dean. ***Students are reminded that they have a responsibility to regularly check their UWinnipeg e-mail addresses to ensure timely receipt of correspondence from the university and/or their course instructors.***
- 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 or examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found in the 2022-23 Undergraduate Academic Calendar, <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>

Regulations, Policies, and Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Regulations and Policies found in the University Academic Calendar at

<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/regulationsandpolicies.pdf>. Particular attention should be given to subsections 8 (Student Discipline), 9 (Senate Appeals), and 10 (Grade Appeals). Please emphasize the importance of maintaining academic integrity and the potential consequences of engaging in plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct. Even unintentional plagiarism, as

described in the UW Library video tutorial “Avoiding Plagiarism” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvFdxRU9a8g>), is a form of academic misconduct. Similarly, uploading essays and other assignments to essay vendor or trader sites (filesharing sites that are known providers of essays for use by others who submit them to instructors as their own work) is a form of misconduct, as it involves aiding and abetting plagiarism.

Important information is outlined in the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures:

<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/policies/academic-misconduct-policy.pdf> and <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/policies/academic-misconduct-procedures.pdf>.

Respectful Learning Environment

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner on campus and in the learning environment irrespective of platform being used. Behaviour, communication, or acts that are inconsistent with a number of UW policies could be considered non-academic misconduct. See the Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/respect-policy.html>) and Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/policies/acceptable-use-of-information-technology-policy.pdf>). More detailed information is outlined in the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/student-non-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf> and <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/student-non-academic-misconduct-procedures.pdf>).

Copyright and Intellectual Property

Course materials are the property of the instructor who developed them. Examples of such materials are course outlines, assignment descriptions, lecture notes, test questions, and presentation slides—irrespective of format. Students who upload these materials to filesharing sites, or in any other way share these materials with others outside the class without prior permission of the instructor/presenter, are in violation of copyright law and University policy. Students must also seek prior permission of the instructor/presenter before, for example, photographing, recording, or taking screenshots of slides, presentations, lectures, and notes on the board. Students found to be in violation of an instructor’s intellectual property rights could face serious consequences pursuant to the Academic Misconduct or Non-Academic Misconduct Policy; such consequences could possibly involve legal sanction under the Copyright Policy (https://copyright.uwinnipeg.ca/docs/copyright_policy_2017.pdf).

Research Ethics

Students conducting research interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, including a family member, must obtain research ethics approval before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities done in class as a learning exercise. For submission requirements and deadlines, see <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/ethics/index.html>

Privacy

Students should be reminded of their rights in relation to the collecting of personal data by the University (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/privacy/admissions-privacy-notice.html>), especially if Zoom is being used for remote teaching (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/privacy/zoom-privacy-notice.html>) and testing/proctoring (<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/privacy/zoom-test-and-exam-proctoring.html>).

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL DATES

The voluntary withdrawal dates, without academic penalty:

NOVEMBER 16, 2022 FOR FALL TERM COURSES which begin in September 2022 and end in December 2022

FEBRUARY 14, 2023 FOR FALL/WINTER TERM COURSES which begin in September 2022 and end in April 2023

MARCH 14, 2023 FOR WINTER COURSES which begin in January 2023 and end in April 2023

Students are encouraged to speak to the Instructor before withdrawing to explore other options.

Please note that withdrawing before the VW date does not necessarily result in a fee refund.

CAMPUS CLOSURE DATES

The dates the University is closed for holidays, irrespective of campus closure related to COVID-19 or other public directives:

September 5 (Labour Day)

September 30 (Truth and Reconciliation Day)

October 10 (Thanksgiving Day)

November 11 (Remembrance Day)

December 23, 2022 through January 2, 2023

February 20 (Louis Riel Day)

April 07 (Good Friday)