

ENG 79A: DIRECTED WRITING: BEGINNING SCREENPLAY
Summer 2008
M, T, Th 1:45 – 4:15 PM
Instructor: Marc Weinberg
Office: Rabb 226
marceweinberg@hotmail.com

Screenplay sites: Drew's Script-O-Rama
script-o-rama.com/snazzy/dircut.html

REQUIRED TEXT: Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting by Syd Field

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide you with the tools necessary to tell a story, and get you started on your screenplay.

COURSE DESIGN

This class is both workshop and lecture. You will read scripts, discuss films, and write frequently. These assignments will be reviewed in class, meaning you will receive criticism of your work, and critique classmates' work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- All work must be typed and include a cover page with your name, date and assignment.
- All work must be proofread for grammar, spelling errors and typos.
- You must keep up with all readings, as well as watch assigned movies.

GRADING

Participation in class will account for 20% of your grade. The rest of your grade will be determined by the following assignments:

1. Two homework assignments (20% of your grade).
2. Quiz (10% of your grade).
3. A beat outline, containing your script's most important scenes (10% of your grade).
4. The first act of your feature script (40% of your grade).

DAY 1 (MONDAY, 6/2/08)

- Introduction
- In-class assignment

TUESDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Introduction

DAY 2 (TUESDAY, 6/3/08)

- Discussion of Screenplay Form
- In-class assignment
- Discussion of the important rules of scriptwriting, including format

*THURSDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 1 & 2
See "The School Of Rock"
Pitch two ideas for a screenplay.*

DAY 3 (THURSDAY, 6/5/08)

- Discuss "School Of Rock"
- Discussion of subject and structure
- Pitch your ideas to the class. Class picks one idea.
- In-class assignment

*MONDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 3 & 4
Read and see "Capote"
Graded Assignment #1*

DAY 4 (MONDAY, 6/9/08)

- Turn in first graded assignment
- Discuss film and script of "Capote"
- Discussion of character

*TUESDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 5 & 6
Identify and discuss your script's act breaks, midpoint, and climax.*

DAY 5 (TUESDAY, 6/10/08)

- Discussion of Story & Character, and Beginnings and Endings & Setups
- Students will discuss their act breaks with the class

*THURSDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: See "Groundhog Day"
Email the first scene of your script (2 to 3 pages) to yourself.*

DAY 6 (THURSDAY, 6/12/08)

- Discuss film and script of "Groundhog Day"
- Discuss first scenes

*MONDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapter 7
See "Searching For Bobby Fischer"
Turn 12-beat outline to yourself.*

DAY 7 (MONDAY, 6/16/08)

- Discuss "Searching For Bobby Fischer"
- Discuss Setting Up The Story
- Discuss extended outlines.

TUESDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Graded Assignment #2 - Email the first 10 pages of your script to the entire class

DAY 8 (TUESDAY, 6/17/08)

- Discuss remaining outlines.
- In-class assignment.

ASSIGNMENT DUE TONIGHT: Graded Assignment #2 - Email the first 10 pages of your script to the entire class

THURSDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 8 & 9

DAY 9 (THURSDAY, 6/19/08)

- Discuss Two Incidents and Plot Points
- In-class assignment.

*MONDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: See "V For Vendetta"
Read Field, Chapters 10 & 11*

DAY 10 (MONDAY, 6/23/08)

- Discuss "V For Vendetta"
- Discuss Scene and Sequence

TUESDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read classmates' pages and write notes.

DAY 11 (TUESDAY, 6/24/08)

- Discuss Building The Storyline
- Discuss classmates' pages.

ASSIGNMENT DUE TONIGHT: Email up to 10 more pages of your script to the entire class, for discussion on Monday.

THURSDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 12 & 13

DAY 12 (THURSDAY, 6/26/08)

- Discuss remaining classmates' pages.

*MONDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 14 & 15
See "Thank You For Smoking"
Read classmates' pages and write notes.*

ASSIGNMENT DUE IN 2 WEEKS: Completed first act and outlines, containing 45 to 60 scenes.

DAY 13 (MONDAY, 6/30/08)

- Discuss Writing the Screenplay & Adaptation
- Discuss "Thank You For Smoking"
- Discuss second set of pages.

TUESDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Read Field, Chapters 16 & 17

DAY 14 (TUESDAY, 7/1/08)

- Discuss Collaboration and After It's Written
- In-class assignment
- Discuss second set of pages.

THURSDAY'S ASSIGNMENT: Prepare for quiz.

DAY 15 (THURSDAY, 7/3/08)

- Quiz
- Summary

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE NEXT THURSDAY, 7/10/08, noon: Completed first act and outlines, containing 45 to 60 scenes, to the Brandeis English Department (Rabb 144).