

Sam Houston State University
Department of Mass Communication
Scriptwriting (Credit 3)
Fall 2017 Syllabus

Course: MCOM 3375 Class Meets: 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM TTH Class Room: CB 319 Section: 01 Class ID#: 82439 Office Hours: Thursday: 2:00 - 3: 00 PM (other times by appointment only)	Lecturer: Richard O. Kosuowe Office: CB #207 Phone: 936-294-1340 Email: rok002@shsu.edu
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Prerequisite: MCOM 1332. Credit 3.

Required Textbook: Television and Screen Writing from Concept to Contract, 4th Edition by Richard A. Blum

Course description:

This course emphasizes the study of style, format, principles and techniques of writing for radio, TV, and feature film. The process of writing fiction and non-fiction will examine the development of the script from research to marketing. Students will learn techniques for writing promotional scripts, public service announcements, documentary scripts, film scripts and television scripts

Additional Suggested Readings:

1. Film Scriptwriting, A Practical Manual by Dwight V. Swain with Joye R. Swain
2. Screenwriting for Film and Television by William Miller
3. Writing for Film: The Basics of Screenwriting by Darsie Bowden

Course Goals: This course is designed to help students to:

1. Be familiar with the various style and formats for the different types of radio and television scripts.
2. Learn to plan, develop and write a variety of radio and television scripts.

Course Objectives: At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Write radio and TV commercial script, PSA, screenplay, sitcom, synopsis, treatment, and TV script
2. Write outlines and documentary
3. Would be able to analyze a script in relation either to the dialogue, scene construction or the dramatic structure.

Test Policy: Tests and quizzes will cover all books, notes, handouts, and discussions. There will be **no final examination**; instead your **PART TWO FIVE-PAGE SCRIPT** will be utilized as your final project.

NOTE: THE (FINAL) PART #2 SCRIPT MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE LECTURER IN THE CLASSROOM OR TO HIS OFFICE IN ROOM 207 ON OR BEFORE THE SCHEDULED DUE DATE. NO EMAIL ATTACHMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED.

Assignment policy: *Late work will not be graded.* Writing assignments will be assigned throughout the course. This is a writing class, please be prepared to have at least one writing assignment due each week. All assignments are to be word-processed in the **COURIER 12 font** unless otherwise specified. Please designate a folder in your computer for MCOM 3375 writing assignments for you to have a backup copy. When you edit, do a “Save as” and number your work, so that you retain a copy of each of your edits. Assignments should follow the format discussed in class. As a writing class, your work will be evaluated on content, format, creativity, punctuation, grammar, and spelling. **No hand-written work will be accepted, and there will be no opportunities to makeup the work if you turn in hand-written assignment.**

NOTE: INCORRECT FORMATS WILL NOT BE GRADED. STUDENTS WILL LOSE POINTS FOR EACH INCORRECT TENSE, FORMAT, PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, AND GRAMMAR.

Class Workload Breakdown

1. Two quizzes	@ 100 each	200	Points
2. One Screenplay logline		10	Points
3. One Character profile assignment		50	Points
4. Five (5-page) minutes screenplays (Part #1)		100	Points
5. Five (5-page) minutes screenplay (Part #2)		100	Points
6. Television interview		25	Points
7. Script format		15	Points
8. Synopsis		25	Points
9. Treatment		50	Points
10. TV Sitcom		25	Points
11. One 60-second Public service announcement		50	Points

Total Points	700	Points
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Note: If you have **FOUR ABSENCES**, he or she **WILL LOSE ONE LETTER GRADE** and Each subsequent absence will result in an additional letter grade loss.

Grading

A= 90 - 100

B= 80 - 89

C= 70 - 79

D= 60 - 69

F= 50-0

NOTE: Your script assignments will be evaluated in the following

- a. Grammar
- b. Script format
- c. Punctuation
- d. Spelling
- e. Tense

DUE ASSIGNMENT RULES

IF AN ASSIGNMENT IS DUE ON TUESDAY OR THURSDAY, OR BOTH, AND IF YOU ARE NOT IN CLASS WITH YOUR ASSIGNMENT TEN MINUTES AFTER THE COMMENCE OF CLASS, TEN (10) POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM YOUR OVERALL SCORE, AND ADDITIONAL FIVE (5) POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM YOUR OVERALL AFTER TWENTY MINUTES. YOU MAY SUBMIT YOUR DUE ASSIGNMENT TO THE LECTURER ON OR BEFORE THE CLASS SCHEDULED TIME AND DAY. BUT IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE IN CLASS ON AN ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE, YOU COULD SUBMIT THE DUE ASSIGNMENT ON OR BEFORE THE DUE DATE, BUT IF SUCH ASSIGNMENT IS SUBMITTED TWENTY (20) MINUTES AFTER THE CLASS SCHEDULED TIME, WHICH IS LAST CLASS PERIOD, SUCH ASSIGNMENT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR EVALUTED. ALSO, KNOWING THAT THIS CLASS IS NOT AN ONLINE CLASS, NO EMAIL OR INTERNET BASED ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION WILL BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED such ASSIGNMENT WILL EARN A ZERO ONLY. HAVING SAID THAT, YOU MAY CONSIDER HANDING OVER YOUR DUE ASSIGNMENT TO A CLASSMATE TO SUBMIT ON YOUR BEHALF, BUT YOU ARE NOT EXCUSED FROM CLASS, UNFORTUNATELY.

The Rules

- You must attend class. You will get (3) three absences without penalty. Consider these absences to be your excused absences. No notes or e-mails.
- Once class has started, you are expected to remain present until class is over.
- Attendance will be taken at the start of every class period.

- **NO TEXTING ON YOUR PHONES DURING CLASS, BUT IF YOU ARE CAUGHT TEXTING DURING CLASS, YOU MAYBE ASKED TO LEAVE THE CLASS.**
- Do not cheat, ever. The school has guidelines for dealing with this, and I will follow these guidelines - it would be unfair to the other students not to enforce it.
- Do not eat or drink in class or around any equipment in the field.
- Participation is mandatory.
- Absolutely no sidebar conversations during class, but if you are caught partaking in such action you will be asked to leave.
- Make no mistake -- your participation grade and the attendance policy is not the same thing.
- **No late PROJECT will be accepted.** However, if certain unavoidable circumstance prevails, **the lecturer MUST be notified immediately in private** for such situation. Upon careful consideration of such situation, the **lecturer** will utilize his discretion to **levy 50 points penalty or NOT to accept such late project.** The bottom line, **DO NOT TURN IN LATE WORK.**
- If you miss an administered **QUIZ, YOU MUST PRESENT A DOCUMENT FROM A DOCTOR, IF THE DOCUMENT IS AUTHENTIC (doctor's office letterhead, doctor's printed name, business name, address, phone number, email address and fax/or email, and doctor's signature) AND HONORED BY THE LECTURER, THE MISSED QUIZ MUST BE TAKEN BEFORE THE SCHEDULED REVIEW OF SUCH QUIZ.**
- If you are tardy, find a seat as quickly and quietly as possible. Do not interrupt the class to find out your status on that day's roll sheet, if you curious about it, please address it with me after class.

Department of Mass Communication Attendance Policy

If you have **FOUR ABSENCES**, he or she **WILL LOSE ONE LETTER GRADE** and Each subsequent absence will result in an additional letter grade loss.

Attendance policy

Student attendance is mandatory for all class sessions. Role will be taken every lesson. MWF students are allowed 3 unexcused absences in this class for the entire semester. Documented medical related absences or students observing a religious holy day as explained in Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code, are exempt from this policy. These students will be expected to complete any make-up work.

Use of telephones and pagers policy

- 1.0 The use by students of telephone and pagers or any device that performs these functions during class-time is prohibited unless specifically permitted by the instructor. All such devices should be turned off or put in a silent or vibrate mode and should not be visible during class. At no time should students answer a call or page during class or leave the classroom to answer a call or page. Failure to comply with this policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with three or more offenses, failure of the course.
- 2.0 Any use of a telephone or pager or any device that performs these functions during a test period is prohibited. These devices should not be present during a test or should be stored securely in such a way that they cannot be seen or used by the student. Even the visible presence of such a device during the test period will result in a **ZERO** for that test. Use of these devices during a test is considered de facto evidence of cheating and could result in a charge of academic dishonesty (see student code of conduct <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/StudentGuidelines2010-2012.pdf#page=29>).
- 4.0 If there is an emergency situation for a student, that student should inform the instructor and place himself/herself in a seat near the door where an exit for a phone call would be only minimally dis-

ruptive. Other arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Q-Drops

A Q-drop is a drop made after the last date for tuition refunds (12th class day for fall/spring; 4th class day for summer) but before the date for which a drop would result in the grade of "F" as published in the Academic Calendar. Students will be allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count toward the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop a class, a student will be required to remain in the class.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

The Faculty Handbook states that the University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Furthermore, the University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of cheating on an exam or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. If you are found cheating on a test or plagiarizing, students will receive an automatic "F" for the course. If identical work is received from two or more students (that is not part of a group project), or another's work is submitted as your own, the students involved will each receive an "F" for the course. Any student who continues in this class past the 15th calendar day of the semester agrees implicitly that any and all written work is subject to review by turnitin.com and any other appropriate screening services. There will be no incompletes given without the express permission of the Chair of the Mass Communications and the Dean.

Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities covered by the Americans with disabilities Act should go to the Counseling Center and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in a timely manner to obtain the documentation required. Students are responsible for initiating the process of documenting the need for an accommodation under the ADA act.

Religious Observance

University policy allows for student to observe religious holy days without penalty. If you intend to miss class as a result of the observance of a religious holy day or as a result of the necessary traveling time required for religious observance, such an absence will not be penalized so long as you have notified the instructor in writing of the dates and times of class sessions that are missed. The deadline for notification is the 12-class day. Students absent from class as a result of religious observance are required to submit any due assignments immediately on their return to the classroom. Makeup tests and quizzes will also be provided on return to the class.

The above course syllabus is subject to change, but whenever such situation occurs you will be notified of the change or changes immediately.