FMA 22 Course Outline as of Summer 2025

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: FMA 22 Title: SCREENWRITING
Full Title: Screenwriting
Last Reviewed: 2/24/2025

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00 Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category:	AA Degree Applicable
Grading:	Grade or P/NP
Repeatability:	00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP
Also Listed As:	
Formerly:	MEDIA 22

Catalog Description:
An introduction to the fundamentals of screenwriting, including story structure, character development, dialogue, plotting, and formatting as they are used in creating scripts for film and television.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:
Course Completion of ENGL 100 or EMLS 100 (formerly ESL 100) or higher (V8)

Recommended Preparation:
Course Completion of FMA 10 (or MEDIA 10)

Limits on Enrollment:

Schedule of Classes Information:
Description: An introduction to the fundamentals of screenwriting, including story structure, character development, dialogue, plotting, and formatting as they are used in creating scripts for film and television. (Grade or P/NP)
Prerequisites/Corequisites: Course Completion of ENGL 100 or EMLS 100 (formerly ESL 100) or higher (V8)
Recommended: Course Completion of FMA 10 (or MEDIA 10)

Limits on Enrollment:
Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.
Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree:	**Area**	Effective:	Inactive:
CSU GE:	**Transfer Area**	Effective:	Inactive:
IGETC:	**Transfer Area**	Effective:	Inactive:

CSU Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2012	Inactive:
UC Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2012	Inactive:

CID:

Certificate/Major Applicable:
Both Certificate and Major Applicable

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Compose a well developed and properly formatted screenplay.
2. Evaluate a theatrically produced film script.

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of screenplay format.
2. Describe screenwriting business practices in the film industry.
3. Analyze a screenplay from an industry reader's perspective.
4. Analyze and demonstrate the use of the "three act" structure.
5. Analyze and demonstrate the use of various character elements including:
   a. character arc
   b. use of foils, protagonists, & antagonists
   c. revelation of character qualities through dramatic action.
6. Create dialogue and subtext that demonstrates verisimilitude.
7. Compose at least one act (or at least 30 pages) of polished screenwriting.

Topics and Scope:

I. Structuring and Plotting
   A. Three-Act structure
   B. Character arcs
   C. The Hero's Journey and other popular structural models
   D. Treatments
II. Formatting
   A. Master scenes
   B. Software and page set-up features

C. Transitions, camera angles, sound effects, and special effects
D. Produced scripts vs. speculative scripts

III. Writing
A. Treatments
B. Character histories
C. Sequences, scenes, and beats
D. Action
E. Dialogue and subtext
F. Studio coverage on a produced script

IV. Revising
A. Workshops
B. Peer critiques

V. Film Analysis
A. Film grammar
B. Film genres

VI. Marketing
A. Pitching
B. Marketing the speculative “spec” script

Assignment:

1. Readings: (40 to 50 pages per week)
   a. Reading and analysis of representative screenplays
   b. Style handbook for proper writing formats
   c. Periodical literature pertinent to screenwriting topics and to the film and television industry which applies to the writer and the writing process
2. Screenings and discussions of representative feature films
3. Writing: (60 to 90 pages)
   a. Weekly creative assignments dealing with various topics such as format, dialogue, characterization
   b. A major screenplay project
4. Participation in group activities, workshops, and peer critiques
5. Quizzes and exams

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written homework, script development, screenplay	Writing 75 - 75%

Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None	Problem solving 0 - 0%

Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%

Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Quizzes, Exams	Exams 10 - 10%

Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Class Participation and Group Work	Other Category 15 - 15%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:
Invisible Ink: A Practical Guide to Building Stories that Resonate. McDonald, Brian.Talking Drum, LLC. 2017
The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script. 6th ed. Trottier, David. Silman-James Press. 2014
Making a Good Script Great. 3rd ed. Seger, Linda. Silman-James Press. 2010 (classic)
Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting. Field, Syd. Delta Press. 2005 (classic)
Writing the Screenplay. 2nd ed. Armer, Alan. Waveland. 2002 (classic)