DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: 3/0/3

CN 4537 SCREENWRITING   **LEVEL 6**   **UK CREDITS: 15**

(Updated: Spring 2016)

PREREQUISITES: WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing
WP 1111 Academic Writing
WP 1212 Academic Writing and Research
CN 2301 Contemporary Mass Communication
CN 2202 Writing for Mass Communication

CATALOG
DESCRIPTION: Methods of film screenwriting. Examination of the principles of cinematic stories, structure, character and dialogue. Film screenings and script analysis.

RATIONALE: The ability to structure and deliver a screenplay is a fundamental communication industry skill, and this module allows the student to master it. Students learn to apply different techniques and methods in creating an original short screenplay.

LEARNING
OUTCOMES: As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and techniques of screenwriting
2. Differentiate between different genres and styles
3. Evaluate the elements, style and structure of already existing screenplays
4. Apply relevant techniques and methods to complete an original short screenplay
5. Communicate using relevant film and screenwriting terminology

METHOD OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING: In congruence with the learning and teaching strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

➢ Classes consist of lectures and class discussions.
➢ Film screenings
➢ Screenwriting exercises
➢ Office Hours: Students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their instructor, where they can ask questions and go over lecture material.
➢ Use of a Blackboard site, where instructors post lecture notes, assignment instructions, announcements, and additional resources.

ASSESMENT:

In-class exercises – **formative**	0	Hand outs of screenwriting exercises
Preparatory portfolio for original short screenplay	40	Indicative components: character presentation and analysis, story structure, techniques used, genre descriptions, influences from other scripts
Original short screenplay	60	15-20 pages

Formative assessment: Practice exercises in class that the student will prepare for the completion of the original script
The preparatory portfolio aims to assess learning outcomes 1, 2, 3
The original short screenplay aims to assess learning outcomes 1, 4 and 5

READING LIST:

1. Required Text:
Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*, published by Bentam Dell (New York), Delta Trade revised edition, 2005 or latest edition.

2. Further Readings:
Cattrysse, Patrick. "The Protagonist's dramatic goals, wants and needs", *Journal of Screenwriting*, vol. 1, n.1, 2010.

Fawell, John. *Hitchcock's Rear Window*, Southern Illinois University Press: USA, 2004.

Field, Syd. *Four Screenplays*, Bantam Dell: New York, 1994.

Field, Syd. *The Screenwriter's Workbook*, Bantam Dell: New York, 2006.

Horton, Andrew. *Writing the Character-Centered Screenplay*, University of California Press: Berkley, 1999.

McKee, Robert. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*, Methuen, 1999.

Scott, Kevin Conroy (ed). *Screenwriters' Masterclass*, Faber and Faber: London, 2004.

Scripts:
Rear Window, John Michael Hayes, 1954.
Chinatown, Robert Towne, 1974.
Thelma and Louise, Callie Khuri, 1991.

RECOMMENDED MATERIAL: Journal of Screenwriting (monthly)

WWW RESOURCES: www.imdb.com

www.filmmaking.com/howtowrite.html
www.screenwritersutopia.com

http://www.mypdfscripts.com

SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS: Word

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS: Verbal presentation skills using proper screenwriting terminology

INDICATIVE CONTENT OUTLINE:

1. What Is a Screenplay?
1.1 Introduction to the art of script writing and the role of the script in filmmaking
1.2 Coming up with ideas, research and development

2. Screenplay Form
2.1 Writing the screenplay
2.2 Structure and format
2.3 Synopses, outlines, treatments
2.4 The final draft

3. Character
3.1 The creation of an original character
3.2 Building a character
3.3 Story and character
3.4 Structure and character
3.5 The role of empathy in character development

4. The Elements of Story
4.1 Structuring the story
4.2 Building the story line
4.3 Plot points
4.4 Opening and closing
4.5 Structure, meaning and substance
4.6 The principle of antagonism

5. The principles of story design
5.1 Act design