

THTR 4329

Spring 2025

The Cinema: Films and Performers

University of Texas at Tyler

Instructor Michael K. Ward, Master of Fine Arts

Email: mward@uttttyler.edu or contact directly through Canvas

Office: Skype, Zoom, Text, Call or Facetime by appointment

Office Phone: cell phone (text preferred) 903-504-3881 You may text me if there is a problem between the hours of 8am and 9pm. Please do not abuse this. I had a couple of students text after 11 pm this past semester. If you text after or before these hours I reserve the right to block future texts from the student that does this.

Catalogue Information

Students will learn the process of writing for the stage and screen by working on and creating a short play and a short film.

Required Books

Elements of Playwriting by Louis Catron

Finish the Script by Scott King

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

The student...

- can develop a short dramatic/comedic text that is stageable for theatre in proper format.
- has knowledge and understanding of theater as an art form
- has knowledge of and understanding of drama for the stage
- can develop a short dramatic/comedic text that that can be filmed in proper format
- can develop characters
- develop world building
- tell a complete story and understand the art of storytelling

Skills

The student...

- can develop and rewrite stage text for performance
- can develop and rewrite a short film to be filmed
- write in proper format for the stage
- write in proper format for the screen
- understand and use outlining principals

General competence

The student...

- can define the fundamental differences - and similarities - between storytelling for stage and screen and execute both effectively

Products:

Students will write and workshop a 10 minute play.

Students will write and workshop a short film.

Grading

Final Draft Short Play	25%
Final Draft Short Film	25%
Attendance and Participation	25%
Assignments and Discussion Boards	25%

* All assignments due by Mondays 10pm

Absence Policy

This class only meets 8 times. Each class is essential. Student need to be on time and ready to participate. If a student misses a class for any reason other than sickness or legitimate emergency, their grade will be reduced by one letter grade. Absences for sickness must have a doctors note. It is the students responsibility to contact the professor and still complete the work.

Schedule

Week 1 – Class Meets Jan. 13 6 pm

- Introduction to the class
- The Germinal Idea
- Assigned Reading Elements of Playwriting Chapter 1 & 4

Week 2 Jan. 20 On your own

- Watch Lecture
- Post your thoughts on Chapter 1 & 4- Ask Questions
- Post 3 Germinal Ideas on discussion board
- Respond to classmates' Germinal Idea
- Assigned Reading Elements of Playwriting Chapter 2 & 5 (To be discussed in class)

Week 3 Jan 27 Class Meets

- Class Discussion Chapter 2 & 5
- Discuss Germinal Ideas and pick Idea that will lead to your play
- Understanding Outlining
- Telling your story

Week 4 Feb 3 – On your Own

- Write you play out in prose form – Like a short story
- Create an Outline for your short play
- Assigned Reading Elements Of Playwriting Chapters 3 & 6
- Post thoughts on Readings and respond to classmates

Week 5 Feb 10 Class Meets

- Present your prose form story and outline to class
- Discuss stories
- Assigned Reading Elements of Playwriting Chapter 4
- Start writing you play

Week 6 Feb. 17 – On your own

- Write Rough Draft of your play and turn in by Sunday

Week 7 Feb 24 Class Meets

- Discuss plays
- Assigned Reading Elements of Playwriting Chapter 10
- Work on revisions and editing

Week 8 March 3

Mid Term Due by March 8th 10pm

*****SPRING BREAK*****

Week 9 March 17 On your own

- Watch Lecture
- Introduction to Screenwriting
- Assigned Reading Finish the Script Chapter 1 & 2
- Post your Idea and prep your Elevator Pitch

Week 10 March 24 Class Meets

- Present your Elevator Pitch to the class
- Discuss Elevator Pitches
- Assigned Reading Finish the Script Chapter 3-4

Week 11 March 31 On your own

- Watch Lecture
- Create your treatment and turn it in
- Assigned Reading Finish the Script Chapter 5

Week 12 April 6 Class Meets

- Class Check in
- Present your treatment to the class and discuss
- Write the script and turn it in
- Assigned Reading Finish the Script Chapter 8

Week 13 April 13 On your own

- Work the script
- Assigned Reading Chapter 17
- Get actors for the Workshops on April 23

Week 14 Class Meets April 20

- 6-7pm Work with Actors reading script
- 7pm Workshop readings of scripts

Week 15 April 29 On your Own

- Final draft due May 2 10pm

UNIVERSITY POLICIES UT Tyler Honor Code

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: [Students Rights](#)

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at [Campus Carry](#).

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 12.) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date (Sept. 12th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

Submitting grade replacement contracts, Transient Forms, request to withhold directory information approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.

Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census date)

Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)

Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment

Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu or visit [Disability Services Office](#)

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students

have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

"Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

copying from another student's test paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test; possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test; using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority; discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination; divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student; substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment; paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an administered test, test key, home solution or computer program; falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit; taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or

resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

“Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

“Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by SafeAssign™, available on Blackboard.

UT Tyler Resources for Students:

Writing Center: The Writing Center provides all undergraduate and graduate students a place to work on their writing projects and skills. There are tutoring options as well as workshops available to support you in your academic writing.

Math Learning Center: The Math Learning Center provides drop-in tutoring for lower-level math courses throughout the week. The MLC also has computer workstations for your use.

PASS Tutoring Center: The PASS Tutoring Center supports a variety of courses. Due to COVID-19, we are asking that you schedule an appointment for your face-to-face tutoring support. Tutoring is also available through Zoom tutoring sessions. Check the website to see the courses supported for the Fall 2020 term.

Supplemental Instruction (SI): SI is a series of weekly peer-assisted study sessions in courses identified by previous students as difficult. Due to COVID-19, SI sessions will be conducted face-to-face and via Zoom this fall. Check the website to see the support courses for the Fall 2020 term.

Upswing (24/7 Online Tutoring): Upswing is a free, confidential, and convenient way to receive help in nearly all of UT Tyler’s undergraduate courses.

Robert R. Muntz Library Staff: UT Tyler has an incredible staff of librarians ready to assist you. [Discipline/major library liaisons](#) are available to support you and you can also schedule appointments for research consultations. In addition, the Robert R. Muntz library's Head of University Archives and Special Collections can assist you with scholarly communications, primary sources, and archive materials.

Canvas 101: This Canvas course provides you with a wealth of information – including how to navigate in Canvas, use ProctorU (and even take a practice test), tips for being a successful online and hybrid learner, how to use Zoom, and more!

Digital Support Toolkits: Digital Support Toolkits are supplemental materials generated by faculty to help you be successful in targeted courses typically taken by our freshman and sophomore population. Students registered in Digital Support Toolkits supported courses will find these in their Canvas dashboard. You don't have to register – just take advantage of this great resource.

UT Tyler Testing Center: The Testing Center provides securing testing opportunities to meet the needs of students and the community in an environment conducive to student and academic success.

Student Accessibility and Resource (SAR) Office: The SAR Office works to provide students equal access to all educational, social, and co-curriculum programs through the coordination of services and reasonable accommodations, consultation, and advocacy.

Student Counseling Center: The Student Counseling Center supports students in developing balance, resiliency, and overall well-being both academically and personally. They have in person and virtual counseling options. In addition, the Student Counseling Center offers [TAO](#), a self-help, completely private online library of behavioral health resources. Sign in to the TAO website using your UT Tyler credentials.