CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course Name: Script Analysis
Course Number: SCWR 3001 PRFS
Programs offering course: FS
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 4
Contact Hours: 60 (units: Script Analysis 1, Acting, Camera and Film Languages, Editing)
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description
This class is a core course for the Film Studies Screenwriting track and offers the screenwriting students an opportunity to experience how screenplays become transformed by factors outside of the sphere of writing. The screenwriting students join students from the CIEE film studies production track in three eight-week sections of the following topics in production: acting, film language and editing. In these classes the students analyze and exercise how plays become transformed by the work of the actor, cinematographer and editor: exploring how story is divided into acting beats and tactics and the tools actors use beyond dialogue, how story is told with additional film language tools such as color, line, point of view, angle and movement, and how story is cut and rhythmically arranged in editing. All of these factors dynamically interact with the screenplay to put the story into filmic space.

Units Description:
Script Analysis 1: The purpose of this course is to study film language and form by close analysis of scenes and shots; looking at narrative construction and the significance of every detail in the film’s language. It has a strong practical dimension. Meets over 13 of 14 weeks, two academic hours weekly.

Acting: The course introduces the students to basic principles of acting, namely Goal/Obstacle, Other, Tactics and Expectations. Each principle is exercised separately and students engage in short scenes and improvisations to combine the principles and work additional techniques related to character portrayal and building a scene. In some exercises students gain practice directing each other, and specific problems, such as casting or work with non-actors are addressed to prepare them for their upcoming shoot. Meets over 10 weeks, two academic hours weekly.
Note: Meets weeks 1-7, then in weeks 11-14, Acting class time used as preparation for final presentation, plus acting exercises on handling dialogue.
**Camera and Film Language:** This unit complements the practical dimension of the cinematography lectures by focusing on those cinematic tools that serve a dramatic purpose in storytelling with film. Several styles of cinematography will be evaluated in terms of storytelling effectiveness. Technical elements such as shot sizes, axis rules, angles of view, color, composition, and especially, camera movement, are analyzed with a view to their cultivation of film language. Meets over 7 weeks, two academic hours weekly.

**Editing:** In editing class we focus on examples of editing in short films, as well as stylistic analysis of famous films. Main objectives: structure, creating empathy with a character, editing style as a tool of storytelling, work with time and space, influence of location and camera style on the editing, work with sound effects, music and voice over. Meets over 7 weeks, two academic hours weekly.

**Learning Objectives**

To gain an awareness of how screenplays eventually interact with other modes of language specific to filmmaking.

To become familiar with specific vocabulary in film language used by the actor, cinematographer and editor.

To become familiar with specific tools for story-telling used by the actor, cinematographer and editor.

To increase awareness of tools available in spheres beyond the written word that will eventually shape the work of the writer.

To increase awareness of how story is shaped by many collaborative systems within filmmaking.

To gain practical experience in the collaborative work of the screenwriter with other film artists.

In Script Analysis 1 class, through the intensive analysis of films, the following principles are examined and explained: three act story structure, plot points, turning points, the function of exposition, the catalyst, rising action, crisis, climax, culmination, resolution, main tension, theme, as well as scenes and sequences, sub-plots, double-plots, multi-plots, and internal scene structure. Analysis will also cover the role of the protagonist, the creation of empathy, the journey of protagonist, active and passive characters, supporting characters, character arcs and character motivation, the concept of want and need, the role of the antagonist, as well as the use of conflict and obstacles, and a comparison of objective vs. subjective conflict, and action vs. activity.

The narrative tools of mystery, suspense, surprise, dramatic irony, twists, revelations and reversals will be explored and analyzed as will be the dramatic strategies of planting and pay-off, gags, marbling, foxing the audience, and devices such as the obligatory scene, scenes of revelation, scenes of preparation and aftermath, and the advertising of future events.

The course will also explore interpretations of film as a temporal-spatial art by examining pacing, rhythm, accelerating action, and the handling of time and space, montage, transitions, sound, and music.
The craft of creating dialogue, the dramatic use of props and costumes, staging and the creation of atmosphere as employed in the screenplay will also be covered.

**Course Prerequisites**
The course is part of the core curriculum of the Film Studies program, Screenwriting track.

**Methods of Instruction**
The course is team taught and each professors' methods vary. Classes in film language include lecture supported by powerpoint plus segments of films screened. Classes on editing involve lecture and screening of short films which are then discussed and analyzed in class, Classes in acting are largely devoted to in-class exercises revolving around a principle of acting, plus scene work in pairs.

**Assessment**
**Acting, Camera and Film Languages, Editing units:**
- Active participation in classes: 40%
- Final Exam on course material: 20%
- Participation and reflection on pitch: 10%
- Participation as crew member on shoot: 20%
- Participation in Final Presentation: 10%

**Script Analysis 1 unit:**
Students will be expected to recognize the dramatic and narrative elements explained in class, and to present a cogent analysis of a film selected for a mid-term exam and for a final paper.
- Active participation in classes: 20%
- Mid-term examination: 20%
- Take-home final: 60%

Attendance and participation are mandatory, and lack thereof can negatively affect final grade.

**Final Grade**
- Acting, Camera and Film Languages, Editing units: 50%
- Script Analysis 1 unit: 50%

**Course Requirements**
The student needs to regularly attend classes and prove their understanding of the material covered on a final exam. The attendance at the pitch with a written reflection on one of the stories pitched is another assignment considered important because it furthers the student's awareness that the writer writes for an audience beyond herself. Participating as a crew member in production is important for the student to realize that the screenplay is a blueprint for a collaborative event. The final presentation of work on her own feature screenplay, which is work for another core class – Feature screenwriting - is also counted in the assessment of this class.
because the student will use her screenplay in further collaboration to make a presentation with and for others of its contents.

(In the event that in the feature screenwriting class the student realizes a work that does not lend itself to a staged reading, perhaps because of a lack of dialogue or perhaps because of a personal or delicate nature to the material, this final presentation could be waived for the student. The student is encouraged however to find an alternative form of presentation, perhaps through images evoking locations or themes from the work. It is not advisable that the student will be writing in the feature screenwriting class with a view toward the product presented during the last week. A few weeks before the end of the semester, choices concerning the presentation will be discussed among the students and professor.)

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students’ participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor’s or other students’ line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students’ active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences are treated equally regardless of reason for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.
Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

**Missing classes** will lead to the following penalties:

### 90-minute semester classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of 90-minute classes</th>
<th>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one to two 90-minute classes</td>
<td>up to 10%</td>
<td>no penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three 90-minute classes</td>
<td>10.1–15%</td>
<td>reduction of the final grade by 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four 90-minute classes</td>
<td>15.1–17%</td>
<td>reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five 90-minute classes</td>
<td>17.1–20%</td>
<td>reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six and more 90-minute classes</td>
<td>more than 20%</td>
<td>automatic course failure and possible expulsion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 180-minute semester classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of 180-minute classes</th>
<th>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one 180-minute class</td>
<td>up to 10%</td>
<td>no penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two 180-minute classes</td>
<td>10.1–20%</td>
<td>reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three and more 180-minute classes</td>
<td>more than 20%</td>
<td>automatic course failure and possible expulsion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student’s home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

**Missing more than 20% of the total class hours** will lead to a course failure, and potential program dismissal. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

**Late arrival to class** will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.
Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student’s presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor’s note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor’s notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.

Should a truly extraordinary situation arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), always contact the Academic Assistant to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records. In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant within one week of the discrepancy date to have it corrected. Later claims will not be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are
related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one’s own.

**The first principle** is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an “open book” basis).

**The second principle** applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

**The third principle** is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another’s work or including information told to you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

**Weekly Schedule**

| Week 1          | Acting, Editing and Film Language Classes meet.  
|                 | Acting – focus on basic acting principles; short scene to be memorized assigned as homework  
|                 | Editing – focus on basic editing principles  
|                 | Film language – focus on expressive tool of movement  

| Week 2          | Acting, Editing, Film Language Classes meet;  
|                 | Acting – focus on good acting choices; short text on choices distributed in class to be read as homework  
|                 | Editing – focus on basic editing principles  
|                 | Film language – focus on expressive tool of frame.  
|                 | Attendance at Production track pitch.  
|                 | Script Analysis meets – focus on three act structure and sequence structure  
|                 | Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Aristotle Poetics in course reader, pp. 4-21  

| Week 3          | Acting, Film Language and Editing Classes meet;  

| Week 4 | Acting, Film Language and Editing Classes meet;  
Acting – Focus on improvisation technique  
Editing – Focus on editing principles  
Film Language – Focus on Expressive Tool of Composition  
Script Analysis 1 – lecture topics: character and conflict  
Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Course reader selection from *Story* by Robert McGEE, pp. 43-49 |
|---|---|
| Week 5 | Acting, Film Language and Editing Classes meet;  
Acting – Focus on improvisation technique  
Editing – Focus on editing principles  
Film Language – Focus on Expressive Tool of Shot Sizes  
Script Analysis 1 – Screening of *Harold and Maude*  
Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Course reader selection from *Story* pp. 32-33, 63-65 |
| Week 6 | Acting, Film Language and Editing Classes meet;  
Acting – Focus on inner monologue  
Editing – Focus on editing principles  
Film Language – Focus on expressive tool of angles and axis  
Script Analysis 1 - lecture on scene by scene construction within the dramatic curve.  
Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Course reader selection, pp. 60-62, 66-70 |
| Week 7 | Acting, Film Language and Editing Classes meet;  
Acting – Focus on Characterization  
Editing – Focus on Editing principles  
Film Language – Focus on Color as Expressive Tool  
Script Analysis 1 - Screening of *The Commitments*  
Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Course reader selection, pp. 81-90 |
| Week 8 | Final Exam from Topics classes. |
| Week 9 | Script Analysis 1 class – Screening of *Toy Story*  
Reading due for Script Analysis 1: Course reader selection, pp.95-97 |
|---|---|
| Week 10 | Script Analysis 1 class meets - lecture topics: genre  
Assignment – preparation of film analysis paper due in week 14 |
| Week 11 | Acting class resumes – focus on dialogue  
Script Analysis 1 class meets – Screening of *Titanic*  
Assignment: – preparation of film analysis paper due in week 14 |
| Week 12 | Acting class meets – focus on preparing scene for final presentation,  
Script Analysis 1 class meets – lecture topic: screenplay format, trimming; dialogue;  
Instructions for Final Paper |
| Week 13 | Acting class meets, work on preparation for final presentation;  
Last Script Analysis 1 class – Review of topics and films  
Assignment due for Script Analysis 1: *Final Film Analysis paper* |
| Week 14 | Acting class meets, work on preparation for final presentation;  
Presentation from feature screenplay |

**Course Materials**