



El Camino College
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD – Official

Course Acronym:	ENGL
Course Number:	78
Descriptive Title:	Creative Writing: Screenwriting
Division:	Humanities
Department:	English
Course Disciplines:	English, Film/Video
Catalog Description:	In this course students learn the skills necessary to create original feature film screenplays. Themes, character, plot, and dialogue are discussed and developed by means of writing exercises. Script format and story structure are analyzed by reading feature film scripts and discussing produced film stories.
Prerequisite:	Eligibility for English 1A
Co-requisite:	
Recommended Preparation:	
Enrollment Limitation:	
Hours Lecture (per week):	3
Hours Laboratory (per week):	0
Outside Study Hours:	6
Total Course Hours:	54
Course Units:	3
Grading Method:	Letter Grade and Pass/No Pass
Credit Status:	Credit, degree applicable
Transfer CSU:	Yes
Effective Date:	Prior to July 1992
Transfer UC:	Yes
Effective Date:	Fall 2017
General Education: ECC	
Term:	
Other:	
CSU GE:	
Term:	
Other:	
IGETC:	

Term:	
Other:	
Student Learning Outcomes:	<p>SLO #1</p> <p>Develop a film story with a first, second, and third act, and the scenes written for that story will adhere to proper screenplay format and standards by including headings, scene descriptions, and dialogue.</p> <p>SLO #2</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to create a 3-act story that must include scenes from their story's first, second, and third acts.</p> <p>SLO #3 Revision of Scenes</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to develop at least 20 pages of scenes written for his/her film story that have undergone revision based on feedback from the instructor.</p>
Course Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and analyze a three-act feature film story structure, including story introduction, first act development, turning point, second act, final crisis and story resolution. 2. Identify and analyze major themes in screenplays. 3. Identify, analyze and develop a character's biography, including setting, problem and potential, as well as a character's growth arc. 4. Identify, analyze and develop one-line descriptions of screenplays. 5. Create and develop a film script plot outline. 6. Create and develop original script dialogue. 7. Compose and revise an original feature film screenplay using current industry format and standards. 8. Cast and direct a scene from an original feature film screenplay.
Major Topics:	<p>I. Common Themes and Genres in Feature Film Stories (3 hours, lecture)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Universal themes, including romance, retribution, restitution, social justice, the nature of war or violence, relationships, humans vs. natural world, uses and fears of technological advances, family crises, and grief/loss B. Genres, including science fiction, history, light and dark comedy, documentary, docudrama, thriller and action C. Peer discussion of personal themes <p>II. Script Reading (3 hours, lecture)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Formatting techniques B. Script as story <p>III. Discussion and Practice of Creative Writing Techniques (4 hours, lecture)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Importance of correct Standard American English usage

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. Differences between dialogue and scene direction within scriptwriting C. Building a believable "world" within the script D. Importance of revising, rewriting and polishing the script <p>IV. Comparison of Script to Produced Feature Film (3 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Reading and discussion of selected screenplays B. Viewing and discussion of produced feature films that use selected screenplays <p>V. Three-Act Story Structure (10 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Story introduction B. Development of first act C. Introducing characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Character development 2. Character arc D. Turning point E. Development of second act F. Final crisis G. Story resolution <p>VI. Plot (9 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Story outline B. Developing a plotline within the story C. One-line "high-concept" descriptions <p>VII. Dialogue (3 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Balancing action with dialogue B. Tone and word choice within dialogue C. Choosing appropriate moments and characters to reveal plot information <p>VIII. Original Scene Creation (15 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Presentation of students' original scenes B. Casting and practice of students' scenes C. Peer discussion and instructor feedback <p>IX. The Business of Screenwriting (4 hours, lecture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Creating a one-line story description B. Developing a story treatment
Total Lecture Hours:	54
Total Laboratory Hours:	0
Total Hours:	54

Primary Method of Evaluation:	1) Substantial writing assignments
Typical Assignment Using Primary Method of Evaluation:	Develop and write an original two- to five-page scene for presentation to the class. Your scene must be properly formatted and include description, characters, and dialogue. The scene must show development of character or characters (such as defining the character's or characters' "world," problem or potential). The scene must be cast with students and rehearsed and directed for presentation to the class for peer review of story elements. The scene must be submitted to the instructor for written review.
Critical Thinking Assignment 1:	Choose a feature film for an in-class ten-minute oral presentation that analyzes the film's theme, basic plot, character, and character growth. Discuss in your presentation what elements make this story "universal."
Critical Thinking Assignment 2:	Choose two or more feature films for an in-class ten-minute oral presentation, comparing and contrasting the films' themes, while also determining important similarities that make stories "universal." Discuss the main characters and important supporting characters and determine their growth.
Other Evaluation Methods:	Class Performance, Completion, Matching Items, Multiple Choice, Term or Other Papers, True/False, Written Homework
Instructional Methods:	Discussion, Group Activities, Lecture, Multimedia presentations, Role play/simulation
If other:	Writing Assignments
Work Outside of Class:	Observation of or participation in an activity related to course content (such as theatre event, museum, concert, debate, meeting), Written work (such as essay/composition/report/analysis/research)
If Other:	
Up-To-Date Representative Textbooks:	<p>Alessandra, Pilar. <i>The Coffee Break Screenwriter</i>. 2nd ed. Michael Wiese Productions, 2016. Discipline standard.</p> <p>Seger, Linda. <i>Making a Good Script Great</i>. 3rd ed. Silman James, 2010. Discipline Standard.</p> <p>Selected Oscar-winning screenplays such as <i>Moonlight</i> and <i>Good Will Hunting</i> or others free from www.thescriptlab.com.</p> <p>Industry magazines and newspapers such as www.hollywoodreporter.com or www.screenwritingmagazine.com.</p> <p>Campbell, Joseph. <i>Hero with a Thousand Faces</i>. 3rd ed. New World Library, 2008. Discipline standard.</p> <p>Cameron, Julia. <i>The Artist's Way</i>. Putnam, 2002. Discipline standard.</p>
Alternative Textbooks:	
Required Supplementary Readings:	
Other Required Materials:	
Requisite:	

Category:	
Requisite course(s): List both prerequisites and corequisites in this box.	
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	Eligibility for English 1A
Requisite Skill and Matching Skill(s): Bold the requisite skill(s). If applicable	<p>Students must be able to read and apply critical thinking skills to complex literary texts, and apply appropriate strategies to the writing process.</p> <p>Read and apply critical thinking skills to college-level expository prose for the purposes of writing and discussion.</p> <p>Apply appropriate strategies in the writing process including prewriting, composing, revising, and editing techniques.</p> <p>Interpret a book-length work through discussion, journal writing, or composition writing.</p>
Requisite course:	
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
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Enrollment Limitations and Category:	
Enrollment Limitations Impact:	
Course Created by:	Ted Davidson and Tom Lew
Date:	11/03/1982
Original Board Approval Date:	
Last Reviewed and/or Revised by:	Chelsea Henson
Date:	08/30/2016

Last Board Approval Date:	11/21/2022
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