LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
1. To gain understanding of the fundamentals of screenwriting including elements of premise, plot, character, conflict, dialogue and scene construction.
2. To explore different genres, structure and research in screenwriting.
3. To encourage creative expression and critical analysis of one's own work.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is an exploration into storytelling, the basis of narrative production. We will examine the structural requirements of screenplay writing, as well as the creative experience of conceiving, constructing and writing a screenplay. In addition to the required text, students will examine screenplays, and will delve into research. They will work individually on their own creative and analytical work, will be expected to present a pitch and discuss pages in class, and will finish the semester with the first thirty pages, Act One, of their feature-length script.

This course requires prompt attendance, active class participation, note-taking in class, preparation of chapter readings, exercises, critical papers and presentations. Students are expected to deliver all assignments on time. Participation stands not only for attendance, but constructive involvement in class activities and evidence of active engagement with the course objectives. This includes following the scheduled readings, thinking through the material, paying attention in class and full participation in class exercises. Missed assignments will be averaged into your grade as 0. Makeup assignments will only be given in documented cases of illness or emergency.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Screenplay: Writing the Picture
Robin U. Russin & William Missouri Downs
Silman-James Press
ISBN-10: 1935247069

Recommended Texts:
The Writer's Guide to Writing Your Screenplay – Cynthia Whitcomb
Screenplay: Writing the Picture – Robin Russin, William Missouri Downs
The Writer's Journey - Christopher Vogler
The Art of Dramatic Writing – Lajos Egri
Poetics – Aristotle
The Screenwriter Within – D.B. Gilles
How Not to Write a Screenplay – Denny Martin Flynn
Zen and the Art of Screenwriting – William Froug
Screenwriting 434 - Lew Hunter
Story – Robert McKee
Independent Feature Film Production – Goodell
Film Art – Bordwell, Thompson
A History of Narrative Film – David Cook
Additional readings and other assignments will be given in class, either through handouts, library reserve or on-line. Students are particularly encouraged to read additional works on their own. Suggestions will be given throughout the semester.

While we may or may not directly review the info in class, you are expected to be familiar with the material in the book. If you have questions, please write them down at home, and bring them to discuss in class. Remember, class participation is crucial!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments: The bulk of the work will be conducted through in-class exercises, written reflections on readings and/or other observations of mediated materials, and outside assignments. You will receive the details of these in-class assignments as part of the course schedule, and through announcements and handouts throughout the semester. There will be no make-up for in-class work. The syllabus is in flux, depending on the pace of work we accomplish in class, and is subject to change.

You will be required to hand in pages on the specified dates, as well as revisions of previous pages, as detailed. On the last day of class, you will hand in Act One, approximately 30 pages of your screenplay.

GRADING POLICY:
All assignments will be graded on a scale of A-F. The grade breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-95%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-80%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-74%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73-70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>63-60%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59-0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Grade Calculations will be based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1 - 1.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - .9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
50% of your grade will be based on your creative work (meets learning objectives 1-3)
30% of your grade will be based on the written assignments and critical analysis
(meets learning objectives 1-3)
20% of your grade will be based on oral presentation, class discussion and participation
(meets learning objective 3)

You are expected to provide neat type written papers for all assignments and submit
assignments that are free from grammatical and spelling errors, and adhere to the technical
specifications of the form. The grade of each student will be based on my assessment of your
attendance, class participation, effort put into creative and critical writing and presentations.

ATTENDANCE:
This course requires prompt attendance, active class participation, note-taking in class, and a
responsible attitude towards your production work. Students are required to attend all classes
as their absence will affect their classmates' projects as well as their participation grade. As this
class meets once a week, more than THREE absences from class will lead to AUTOMATIC
FAILURE. Two latenesses equal one absence, so please arrive for class on time and ready to
work.

WRITING ABILITY: The focus of this class is furthering your knowledge of communication.
While some writing – particularly format – instruction will occur, the course will focus on
communication topics rather than instruction on spelling, grammar, punctuation, and style. All
students in this course are expected to be able to write in standard American English at a level
of complexity appropriate to the class. All written assignments will be graded accordingly. If you
are having difficulty with basic spelling, grammar, and style issues you are encouraged to seek
out a writing assistance at the Writing Center.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIAL NOT TAUGHT IN THIS COURSE: It is the student's
responsibility to be thoroughly familiar with all materials taught in prerequisites to this course
that apply to the current course activities. It is also the student's responsibility to familiarize
him/herself with any technology or materials not taught in the course, but that s/he chooses to
use as a part of the course. Failure to do so will not be accepted as an excuse for not
completing work by deadline.

TEXTBOOK AND OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS: It is the student's responsibility to obtain the
edition of the course textbook(s) specified in the syllabus and also to obtain all other materials
required for the course that are identified in the syllabus as well as any assignment instructions.
It is also the student's responsibility to bring the textbook(s) and all other necessary materials
to any in-class or lab meetings and to labs. Failure to do so may result in a penalty to the
student's grade.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Plagiarism--when an individual attempts to pass
another person's work as his/her own -- is viewed as a serious and punishable offense. The
minimum penalty is an "F" on the task in which plagiarism is involved. More common in CMCN
is an "F" in the course. In the communication professions, another form of plagiarism is the
theft of copyrighted materials, often punishable by termination-of-employment, fines, lawsuits
and/or jail. Similarly, falsification of interviews (including in survey questionnaires) and/or
falsification of data or quotations is treated as being equally serious. Any student's duplication of copyrighted software from the computers in any computer lab will be viewed as another form of academic dishonesty.

DOUBLE DIPPING POLICY: “Double dipping” is a form of academic dishonesty that occurs when a student seeks course credit for doing essentially the same work for multiple classes without advising the professor(s) in advance. This is also considered "self-plagiarism," and is a serious offense. It occurs when a student submits all or a substantial part of any report, term paper, recording, production to fulfill a course requirement, even though that work also has been submitted to satisfy the requirements for another course. It can only be viewed as acceptable in special circumstances (resume portfolios, for example) if the instructors in both courses are informed by the student in advance of the double submission, and have both agreed to this arrangement. The penalty for academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, making up information, furnishing false information and so forth) is a minimum of “F” for the relevant assignment, but may also require a higher penalty including an “F” in the course or suspension from the university.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: A University, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas or works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regards to honesty, effort and performance. As a Jesuit, Catholic University, Fordham is committed to ensuring that all members of the academic community strive not only for excellence in scholarship but also for integrity of character. In the pursuit of knowledge and personal development, it is imperative that students present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique and eventual reformulation. As part of this process, each student must acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others… Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials. For further details, consult the Standards of Academic Integrity on the University website http://www.fordham.edu/academics/handbooks__publicati/undergraduate_academ/index.asp

HUMAN DIVERSITY: Fordham University respects human diversity in its many and varied forms. This course will include a component or components dealing with the role and impact of human diversity in the communication processes - both interpersonal and mass. The diversity component(s) will include such groups as women, minorities, members of alternative lifestyles, the disabled, and other cultural and special-need groups, nationally and internationally.

SPECIAL NEEDS: It is the instructor's policy to make accommodations for students with documented special needs - including but not limited to physical challenges and/or learning disabilities. If you would like consideration, please meet with the instructor and provide documentation at your earliest convenience so that appropriate accommodations can be made regarding your future work in the class.

Please Note: Accommodations will not be made retroactively. In order to obtain special consideration on assignment and/or exam formats, students must provide in ADVANCE of the assignment or test. Official documentation of the disability as well as an individual specific request for accommodation must be made for all assignments and tests for which you would like consideration.
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS: The Office of Disability Services at Fordham University helps to ensure equal educational access and opportunity for all members of our community. In the Jesuit tradition of cura personalis, members of the ODS staff work individually with each student to understand his or her strengths and limitations in order to develop their most effective and comprehensive accommodation plan. Fordham will offer reasonable and appropriate auxiliary aids and services to assist otherwise qualified persons in achieving access to its programs, services, and facilities once students meet with ODS for an initial intake meeting to develop an accommodation plan directly with the student in accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students seeking accommodation(s) should contact Erin Koch, Assistant Director of Disability Services, (212) 636-6282 or disabilityservices@fordham.edu.

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEB RESOURCES
Please “like” and ‘follow’ our departmental Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FordhamCMS, and/or follow us on Twitter at www.Twitter.com/FordhamCMS to receive departmental news, notices of jobs, internship opportunities, etc. You can also view website at www.fordham.edu/cms for information on our new Undergraduate and Graduate programs. The CMS Department's blog is also a great resource for announcements.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>CLASS WORK</th>
<th>HOMEWORK</th>
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| Aug. 29    | Introduction to Screenwriting,                   | Syllabus, in-class exercise and discussion      | Buy Books
|            |       Objective vs. Subjective Criticism, Genre,  |                                                 | Consider premise/plot of your screenplay.
| Monday     |       “Writing the Picture”, Pitching           |                                                 | Pitch will be due in two weeks                             |
| classes    |                                                 |                                                 |                                                            |
| held on a  |                                                 |                                                 |                                                            |
| Wednesday. |                                                 |                                                 |                                                            |
| Sept. 3    | NO CLASSES - LABOR DAY                          |                                                 |                                                            |
| Sept. 10   | Discussion of Screenplay, initial thoughts on    | In-class exercise and discussion, Intro to      | Read Ch. 1 & 2
|            | your premise/plot and structure                 | treatment                                      | Read screenplay of your choice and analyze for next week. |
|            |                                                 |                                                 |                                                            |
| Sept. 17   | Structure, Research, The World of the Story,    | In-class exercise and discussion. Pitches       | Screenplay Analysis DUE
|            | Presentation of Pitches, Treatment               |                                                 | Read Ch. 3 & 4
|            |                                                 |                                                 | Write three different themes/premises from your own
|            |                                                 |                                                 | experience that would make good scripts                 |
| Sept. 24   | Substance of Story, Inciting Incident            |                                                 | Treatment Due Next Week
|            |                                                 |                                                 | Read Ch. 5                                               |
| Oct. 2 | Where to Begin: Character – Protagonist/Antagonist, Secondary Characters, Levels | Discussion, character work; Screening: The Fisher King | **Treatment DUE**  
Read Ch. 6 & 7  
Critical Analysis Due in Two Weeks |
| Oct. 8 – NO CLASSES – COLUMBUS DAY |
| Oct. 15 | Historical Structure Power & Conflict Antagonism & Exposition | In-class exercise and discussion – dialogue assignment, 21 Questions | **Critical Analysis DUE**  
Dialogue Assignment Due Next Week  
21 Questions Due Next Week  
Read Ch. 8-10 |
| Oct. 22 | Beats, Scenes, Sequences, Scene Cards, Story | In-class exercise and discussion  
Review Dialogue and 21 Questions | **21 Questions DUE**  
Dialogue Assignment DUE  
Read Ch. 12 & 13 |
| Oct. 29 | Narrative Dialogue Prep for Pages | In-class exercise and discussion of treatments | **First Ten Pages DUE**  
Read Ch. 11 |
| Nov. 5 | Read and Discuss Student Work Problems & Solutions Genre analysis | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | Revisions  
Read Ch. 14 |
| Nov. 12 | Surprises, Character, More with Format, Review, Act Two, Revisions | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | Revisions  
Read Ch. 15 |
| Nov. 19 | The Text Keeping on Track, Review Pitch, Character/Story Development | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | **Second Ten Pages DUE** |
| Nov. 26 | Polishing your script, Second Ten Pages A Writer's Method | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | Read Ch. 16  
Revisions |
| Dec. 3 | Putting the Meat on the Bones – Subplots/Secondary Characters | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | **Third Ten Pages DUE** |
| Dec. 10 | Onwards and Upwards | Reading your work – BRING COPIES!!! | Revisions |
| Dec. 17 | All Final Work Due | | **Full Thirty Revised DUE** |