

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*3070	Course Title: Intermediate Screenwriting	Date of Offering: W'19
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Course Instructor: Elaine Chang	Course Format: Seminar (1-3hr session per week)
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Brief Course Synopsis: **subject to change**

With an emphasis on craft, this introductory seminar addresses some fundamentals of screenwriting through writing, reading, and viewing assignments and exercises; and the ongoing workshopping of students' creative work from initial idea conception to execution on the page. Topics will include: story structure, theme, character development, story lines, scene construction, synopsis writing and pitching, script and film analysis, and options for further training and development. Students will be working consistently, individually and in small groups, on screenplay/film breakdowns; the writing of short film scripts and scenes; a production exercise; the evaluation of each other's writing; and the process-oriented (over product-oriented) practice of rewriting and revision. Final assignments will include a complete draft—further to the vetting of previous drafts and stages—of an original feature-length screenplay (approx. 75-120 pages). **Full participation in all collaborative course activities, reflective of an inescapably collective and labour intensive discipline, is needed to pass this course.**

Methods of Evaluation and Weight: **subject to change**

Learning Activities (in and out of class): 10% (Pass/Fail)

Peer/Small Group Work (in and out of class): 15% (Pass/Fail)

2 x 5-page screenplays: 20%

Pitch document and feature outline: 15%

Complete draft feature-length film screenplay (in re earlier, incremental draft stages): 35%

Project slate: 5%

Note: Over the necessarily extensive—hypothetically endless—process of workshopping and revision, screenplay drafts tend to get stronger, tighter, and **shorter**. Length is not a virtue or a standard in itself; and **page counts here are approximate**. (Producers see dollar signs they don't necessarily want to spend superimposed on each page!) Screenwriters cannot be so vain, private, and/or precious as not to be able to share their work or see it as subject to cutting and reshaping, at least in principle. As an art form, screenwriting is *for* another medium or media, not a medium in and by itself. The ability—or the willingness to learn—to think visually, in terms of moving images, and/or to “project movies in one's head” is thus essential.

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Lab fee: Screenwriting Software subscription: Writer Duet--\$28

Other information that you wish to share about the course (optional):

Counts toward the Creative Writing minor.