

DRAMATIC WRITING (DWRI)

DWRI 106 Introduction to Screenwriting (5 Credits)

A great story is the foundation of all successful narrative films. In this course, students analyze scripts to discover how narrative structure, character development, cinematic language, and dialogue are used to convey meaning to an audience. Students give voice to their own stories through developing, pitching, and writing short scripts for the screen, while exploring the collaborative relationship between the writer and the rest of the creative team.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 123.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 237 Improvisation for Writers (5 Credits)

With improvisation central to television and film comedy-making today, it is imperative that writers can think outside the box, generate content quickly and work collaboratively in a writers' room. Through exercises and experimentation, students gain confidence in using improvisational techniques within a collaborative environment to transform inspiration into the creation of original scripts.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 123 or ENGL 193.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 265 Short Film Screenwriting (5 Credits)

Through short-form screenwriting, students master the art and craft of cinematic storytelling and expression by creating compelling narratives and believable characters. Based on analysis of successful screenplay mechanics, students develop high-quality short-form, fictional narratives for film that are suitable for submission to short-form screenwriting competitions and for production in collaborative student projects.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 106 or FILM 106.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 272 Introduction to Playwriting (5 Credits)

Playwrights are masters of dramatic construction. They bring to life believable characters, give them voice through dynamic conflict and memorable dialogue and create worlds that capture imaginations. Through careful analysis and critique of seminal stage works and their own original scripts, students explore a variety of techniques and styles used by professional playwrights across the ages.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 123 or ENGL 193.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 305 Script Analysis for Film and Television (5 Credits)

Solid narrative structure is essential to the creation of compelling script-based storytelling. Beginning with the Aristotelian notion of drama and progressing through modern formats, students analyze plays, movies, and television series to identify the basic components used to build story in a variety of genres and narrative forms.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 106 or FILM 106.

DWRI 310 Survey of American Television (5 Credits)

From its roots in the conventions of 19th-century theater and vaudeville through the emergence of subscription channels, streaming content and multi-screening activity in the 21st century, American television has been a source of entertainment and a reflection of social trends and values. Students investigate this rich history to gain an understanding of the influence television yields on society, forming a foundation for their future written work.

Prerequisite(s): (CTXT 121 or ARTH 100) and (CTXT 122 or ARTH 110).

DWRI 312 Comedy Sketch Writing (5 Credits)

In this course, students explore the structure and development of sketch comedy through a process of pitching, outlining, rapid writing, and revision. In an environment of workshops and critical inquiry, students examine status, character, political satire, physical comedy, and other diverse styles to inform the creation of successful original sketches.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 237.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 315 Feature Film Screenwriting: Outline and Development (5 Credits)

In this course, students transform artistic visions into feature film scripts. From story research to shaping the narrative structure, students outline the script and story beats, all with a focus on incorporating key elements such as theme, premise, character development, and commercial viability.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 355 Spectrum of Storytelling: Interactive and Immersive Narratives (5 Credits)

Storytelling is evolving. To thrive within emerging platforms, students analyze cultural trends and learn to adapt their narrative skills for digital, interactive, and immersive delivery. Within a collaborative setting, students create innovative short-form work to tell stories in immersive formats such as themed entertainment, branching narratives, and 360 worlds.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 106 or FILM 106.

DWRI 356 Writing the Feature Film Adaptation (5 Credits)

Whether it's novels, plays and comic books; or apps, toys and Twitter feeds, the film industry is always looking for the next big idea. In this course, students identify and restructure a wide range of source material for the needs of a three-act feature screenplay. Emphasis is placed on analysis of case studies and in-depth critique in a collaborative environment as students progress from writing an initial concept, to beat outline, to the midpoint of an adapted screenplay.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 265; FILM 265 or DWRI 305.

DWRI 357 Principles of Dramaturgy (5 Credits)

Dramaturgs contextualize the world of a play and lead important conversations about the meaning and significance of texts. In this course, students gain a sophisticated understanding of the collaborative nature of theater through an introduction to the roles of the dramaturg and literary manager. By practicing dramatic adaptation, script coverage, theater season planning and production dramaturgy, students learn to construct casebooks that improve production quality.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 272; PERF 215 or MPRA 215.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 372 Advanced Playwriting for Production (5 Credits)

Playwrights captivate audiences with complex characterization intricately woven with conflict and motivation into a dynamic story arc. With an emphasis on producing professional work, students work collaboratively in an intensive workshop environment to write and revise full-length scripts for performance and production.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 272; PERF 215 or MPRA 215.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 384 Writing the Television Comedy Spec Script (5 Credits)

Informed by a thorough examination of the dynamic and evolving industry of television comedy, students take on the role of comedy writer as they craft an original spec script for an existing comedy series. Through in-class table reads and exploration of current trends in comedy, students focus on the DNA of the series and voice of each character.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 388 Writing the Television Drama Spec Script (5 Credits)

Mastering drama series structure is a vital skill that provides writers with a wide variety of exciting opportunities in television production. Through careful analysis of current market trends, students delve into the character, tone, and form of successful episodic dramas to conceive, pitch, and develop a spec script for an existing television drama.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 412 From Melos to Hip Hop: The Evolution of the Musical Narrative (5 Credits)

With roots dating back to the melodic precepts of Aristotle, the musical narrative has been inextricably linked to American performance, culture, and zeitgeist since the early 19th century. Through an exploration of historical and contemporary musical theater and cinema, students analyze the structural and narrative devices that guide narrative musicalization, crafting original musical structures that sing.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

DWRI 415 Feature Film Screenwriting: Completion and Revision (5 Credits)

Professional screenplay writers know that the first draft is just the beginning of a feature film script. Revision is vital to shape the narrative elements of theme, tone, structure, and dialogue into a dynamic, compelling story. Students complete their feature scripts from part one of this two-part sequence by workshopping their scripts in a collaborative environment. The final work is refined for submission to professional production entities and entry into advanced screenplay competitions.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 315 or FILM 315.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 425 Limited Series, Unlimited Possibilities (5 Credits)

The limited series occupies an important place in the television landscape. In this course, students explore the unique challenge of creating a three-act structure with its attendant character development over four-to-six episodes. By examining watershed limited series, and their place in television history, students conceive and propose a series based on an original idea, an existing intellectual property, or an historic event, resulting in the creation of a professional pitch deck and an industry-ready proposal.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 434 Writing the Television Comedy Pilot Script (5 Credits)

An original comedy pilot is one of the most effective tools a writer can have to break into the industry and attract the attention of agents, producers, and studio executives. Through an examination of television comedy trends and analysis of successful pilots, students conceive, pitch, and develop a pilot script and show bible for an original comedy series.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 438 Writing the Television Drama Pilot Script (5 Credits)

Based on examination of current and past television drama trends and successful pilots, students conceive, pitch, and develop a pilot script for an original drama series. Students create a series bible, comprising all elements of the ongoing story arcs and character development. Through collaborative analysis and revision, students generate professional material suitable for submission to networks, production entities, and industry professionals.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 460 The Writer Collaboration Laboratory (5 Credits)

From character-driven genres to interactive spectacles, dramatic writers collaborate to bring stories to life. Students explore all stages of the creative process, from concept to final production, as they partner with artists and designers in other fields to create, perform and/or produce original material. Repeatable. Student may take course up to three times for credit.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 475 Creating the Factual Narrative (5 Credits)

History, current events, and cultural changes impact us daily. Students explore the human condition by examining events that shape us through feature documentaries, non-dramatic television, and fact-based podcasts. Students learn tools to create factual narratives in the growing field of non-fiction entertainment.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 305.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 479 Undergraduate Internship (5 Credits)

Internships offer students valuable opportunities to work in a professional environment and gain firsthand experience to help them prepare for careers. In an approved internship setting, a student typically spends one quarter working with an on-site professional supervisor and a faculty internship supervisor to achieve specific goals and objectives related to the program of study.

DWRI 495 Dramatic Writing Senior Project and Professional Development (5 Credits)

From live performances to film, television and online channels, the global entertainment business is full of opportunities for dramatic writers. To claim their place, dramatic writing students hone their pitches, acquire networking skills and create career action plans that support their professional aspirations as screenwriters, TV writers, playwrights or creators of original online content. Students revise and polish existing written material that showcases their specific creative skills to potential employers.

Prerequisite(s): (DWRI 272 or PERF 215) and (DWRI 415 or FILM 415) and (DWRI 434; FILM 434; DWRI 438; FILM 438 or FILM 326).

Attributes: Business-focused elective; Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 710 Beyond the Page: Improvisation for Writers (5 Credits)

Improvisation takes writers from behind the pen and teaches them to use ensemble-building techniques and improvisational exercises to generate original content and develop agility in their creative process. Warm-up techniques, collaborative exercises and scene work energize students to transform ideas into innovative narrative works that expand their writing process.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 715 From Greeks to Geeks: Script Analysis from Aristotle to the Digital Age (5 Credits)

Writers explore and adapt the principles of storytelling as narrative models emerge. Incorporating analysis of the earliest works of dramatic theory to leading-edge digital formats, students examine the evolution of dramatic structures. They compare components of multiple narrative platforms to determine what makes a work successful and apply these elements to their own writing.

DWRI 720 Stories as Experiences: Writing Immersive Narratives (5 Credits)

User-generated content, immersive technologies, and interactive narratives have revolutionized the art and technique of storytelling for writers. In this course, students create original content for immersive user experiences and virtual reality in 360-degree environments. By employing established story principles to new narrative models, students create stories that become experiences.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 725 Short Form Narrative Lab (5 Credits)

Equipped with an understanding of script structure, character development and dialog, students learn to craft compelling short-form narratives, including webisodes, animation, video games, narrative advertising, short plays and sketches. As they engage with a range of forms, students support collaborative opportunities across disciplines as they prepare for a variety of professional applications.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 730 Small Screen, Big Impact: Analysis of Television (5 Credits)

From the 19th century to the present, the medium of television has evolved and impacted the human experience. In this course, students examine the history of the form from vaudeville through on-demand, streaming channels. They analyze business models, distribution platforms and ratings systems that drive contemporary entertainment markets and shape viewing habits.

DWRI 735 Dramaturgy: Contextualizing the World of the Play (5 Credits)

Dramaturgs elucidate the techniques of dramatic compositions and investigate their historical and sociological contexts to enrich the world of classical and contemporary theater. In this course, students take on the role of the dramaturg and engage in designed research for the study or production of a script or theatrical season.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715; ACT 741 or PERF 741.

DWRI 746 Feature Film Screenplay: Conjuring the Story (5 Credits)

Students develop and enhance their personal voice as screenwriters through the development of an original screenplay in a collaborative environment. Based on a refined understanding of the principles of screenwriting and visual storytelling, students transform imaginative visions into compelling characters and captivating stories, from initial concept to the midpoint of a script.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 750 Writing for Live Performance (5 Credits)

The ancient Greeks created the rules of drama, while contemporary playwrights continue to push those boundaries to excite and inspire audiences in new ways. Through analysis of theater's most important plays, students move beyond conventional elements of dramatic structure to advance the art of live performance.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715; DWRI 728 or MPRA 728.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 756 The Screenplay Adaptation (5 Credits)

The adaptation of source material for the narrative feature is a staple of both mainstream Hollywood and independent films. In this course, students identify, analyze and restructure sources, such as novels, poems, plays, short stories, news content, video games and songs, to inspire a three-act feature screenplay adaptation.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 725 or FILM 706.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 760 Storytelling for Nonfiction (5 Credits)

From "The Civil War" to "Making a Murderer," interest in non-fiction storytelling is growing exponentially. Feature documentaries and non-fiction television involve real-life storytelling that delves into the circumstances which form our daily life. In this course, students explore the expanding field of non-fiction writing, learning the fundamental tools involved in creating factual narrative.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 762 The Writers' Room: Creating a Television Spec Comedy (5 Credits)

Dying is easy. Comedy is hard. In a writers' room environment, students experience the truth of this adage through in-depth exploration of current television comedies, both on and off network. Students create a spec script for an existing show, with careful attention paid to structure, tone, and style.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 763 The Writers' Room: Creating a Television Spec Drama (5 Credits)

Television dramas captivate our imaginations and evoke our deepest emotions in narrative worlds of heightened reality. In a writers' room environment, students use an analysis of current trends to inspire the creation of a quality episode for an existing television drama. Through exploration of character, tone, and form, students conceive, pitch, and develop a spec script suitable for professional presentation.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 772 The Writers' Room: Creating an Original Comedy Series (5 Credits)

As one of the essential tools for breaking into industry, the fully-developed comedy pilot script is a central piece of the dramatic writer's portfolio. Working in a writers' room environment, students create and refine an original comedy series script based on extensive research into industry opportunities and distribution channels. Professional opportunities related to comedy writing are explored, including strategies for submission to agents, producers and studio executives.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 773 The Writers' Room: Creating an Original Drama Series (5 Credits)

By analyzing successful television dramas, students learn the trade secrets of conceiving, pitching, and developing a professional quality pilot script and series bible for an original drama. In this course, students create a comprehensive world through series story arcs and character development. Analysis and revision occur within a writers' room environment to produce material for submission to networks, production entities, and industry decision makers.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 715.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 776 Feature Film Screenplay: The Alchemy of Resolution (5 Credits)

A fully developed, feature-length script transcends the old bromide "screenplays are never finished, only produced or abandoned." With an eye towards professional opportunities, students in this course complete a feature-length script and prepare it for entry into the marketplace.

Prerequisite(s): DWRI 746 or FILM 707.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 777 The Writers' Room: Collaborative Experience (5 Credits)

The dramatic writer relies on creative collaboration and adaptive thinking to actualize a narrative work. In this course, students contribute to cross-department creative initiatives by creating partnerships with artists and designers to conceive, create and produce original material. Repeatable. Student may take course up to three times for credit.

Attributes: Studio Elective Requirement

DWRI 779F Graduate Field Internship (5 Credits)

Students in this course undertake a field assignment under the supervision of a faculty member.

DWRI 779T Graduate Teaching Internship (5 Credits)

Students in this course undertake a teaching assignment under the supervision of a faculty member.

DWRI 790 Dramatic Writing M.F.A. Thesis (5 Credits)

Students showcase the expertise and mastery developed during the course of the dramatic writing graduate experience in the development of a thesis. The thesis consists of a single narrative work representative of the specialization fostered during participation in the program. A second written component demonstrates the research informing the development and philosophy of the work itself, the knowledge of forms and the history of the student's discipline.

Prerequisite(s): minimum score of 6 in 'Graduate Prerequisite Test'.