School of Cinematic Arts  
The John Wells Division of  
Writing for Screen and Television  

CTWR 206b : WRITING THE SCREENPLAY  
Section 19156D  

Instructor: BOB TZUDIKER  
Class Schedule: THURSDAY/ 10am - 12:50pm  
Class Location: SCA 342  
Office Hours: By appointment at USC or by phone  
Contact Information: Email: tzudiker@usc.edu; Phone: 323-969-1981  

Course Objective:  
Our objective is to write a feature film draft and rewrite that will make you proud.  

Course Description:  
This is a workshop in which we will learn as much from each other as from individual work. Discussion of each other's work is a vital part of class, so part of your homework each week will be reading each other's outlines and treatments. Preparation is essential to productive class time.  

You will turn your outlines from 206a into a film script. We will also pay attention to our internal processes as you write.  

Course Reading:  
"The War of Art" by Steven Pressfield  
Read article from The Guardian 3/4/17 by George Saunders:  
https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/04/what-writers-really-do-when-they-write  

Grading Criteria:  
Students will present their work in class or email written work no later than 6pm on each Tuesday. This allows time for professor and classmates to read the work before the classes on Thursdays. Late work will be penalized in grading.  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Polish</td>
<td>10%</td>
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100%  

As per Writing Division policy the following is a breakdown of numeric grade to letter grade:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100% to 94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93% to 90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76% to 73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72% to 70%</td>
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**Expectation of Professionalism:**
All material is expected to be turned in on time and in the proper format. Outlines and treatments should be submitted in Word or other word processing program. Script pages should be in Final Draft or saved as PDFs. Assignments may be penalized for grammatical mistakes, spelling errors, format mistakes, and typos. Please proof your assignment prior to submission.

**Internet Policy:**
Material discussed in the room is considered private and should not be blogged, tweeted, posted, snapchatted, or be posted anywhere else on the internet. In fact, your classmates’ work should not be discussed with any outsiders (meaning anyone not in our 206b class).

**Recording Devices:**
You may not record lectures or workshops without the consent of the instructor.

**Laptop and Cell Phone Policy:**
Students should bring a laptop (if available) to class for work on in-class exercises. No web surfing, checking email or texts during class unless specifically asked to do so. Legible printing on a lined pad is acceptable for in-class work. Laptops will be opened only for specific in-class purposes. Cell phones should be off or silenced and kept out of sight during class time unless specifically cleared by the professor prior to class.

**Writing Division Attendance Policy:**
Students are expected be on time and prepared for each class.

On the third absence, students will have their final grade lowered by 10% and an additional 10% for each absence thereafter. Two late arrivals equates to one full absence.

Note: This is a change in policy. Instructors will no longer distinguish between an excused or unexcused absence. **An absence will be an absence.**

Please note that if you are a Writing for Screen and Television major/minor you must receive a grade of a C or better in order to receive degree credit. If you have any questions about the minimum grade required for credit please check with your home department.

If you have an emergency and/or know you will miss class please contact your professor prior to class or contact the Writing Division at 213-740-3303.

If a student has an emergency and additional accommodations are needed, those accommodations will need to come through the USC Campus Support and Intervention (CSI) office. The Writing Division recommends the student and/or advocate contact CSI at 213-821-4710 and their home department adviser for additional support.

B+ 89% to 87%  D+ 69% to 67%
B  86% to 83%   D  66% to 63%
B- 82% to 80%   D- 62% to 60%
C+ 79% to 77%   F  59% to 0%
Class Schedule:
Please note that all dates, assignments and subjects are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. We will split the class into two groups in order to have time for full discussion of all stories. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO READ EACH OTHERS’ MATERIAL FOR EVERY CLASS.

Week 1: Refresh Ideas
ASSIGNMENT PRIOR TO THIS CLASS: Read this Syllabus, your classmates’ final work from 206a AND be ready to present your idea to the class to refresh our memories and catch up on any changes. The presentation should be brief and include any pressing questions you may have.

Presentation/questions constitute half of Participation grade (5% of total grade – the other 5% depends on class participation).
ASSIGNMENT: Start writing approx. 10 pages each week

Week 2: Discuss Group A pages.
REREAD "What Writers Really Do..." article from The Guardian 3/4/17 by George Saunders.
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Keep writing approx. 10 pages

Week 3: Discuss Group B pages
Dreaming your story: harnessing your unconscious. Blocks to creativity.
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Read "The War of Art" by Pressfield
Keep writing. approx. 10 pages

Week 4: Discuss Group A pages
"Who?" How character becomes story. Capturing a character with brevity. We will look at song lyrics and other examples to show how concisely this can be done.
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: approx. 10 pages, Read Chapter 1 of DiPego book

Week 5: Discuss Group B pages
The questions we ask ourselves create the world. Control the questions the audience is asking themselves from scene to scene.
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)

Week 6: Discuss Group A pages
The presence of the past: back story for plot and character.
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: approx. 10 pages

Week 7: Discuss Group B pages
Imagery and repetition.
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

Week 8: Discuss Group A pages
Character character character.
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

Week 9: Discuss Group B pages
Creating a world.
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

SPRING BREAK

Week 10: Discuss Group A pages
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

Week 11: Discuss Group B pages
Discuss our experiences in doing this classwork, what flows easily and what has been difficult.
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

Week 12: Discuss Group A pages
A GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages

Week 13: Discuss Group B pages
B GROUP DELIVER: Approx. 20 pages (10% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Complete your first draft.

Week 14: Final script discussions and review.
A & B GROUPS DELIVER: Final pages of first draft
Your first draft should be finished by now, valued at an additional 20% of your grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Begin rewrite.

Week 15: LAST CLASS. Review and discuss the class.
DELIVER: Approx. half the rewrite (5% of grade)
ASSIGNMENT: Continue rewrite

Finals Week - : Deliver final screenplay.
Final script pages constitute 15% of grade
Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

**USC Support and Advocacy** - (213) 821-4710
[studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

**Diversity at USC** - (213) 740-2101
[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

**USC Emergency** - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
[dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu)
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

**USC Department of Public Safety** - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

**Diversity and Inclusion**
Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, [http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm](http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm); e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here [https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/](https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/)

**Disruptive Student Behavior:**
Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

**PLEASE NOTE:**
**FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX**