

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

**CTWR 206b : WRITING THE SCREENPLAY
Section 19352
Spring 2022**

Instructor: BOB TZUDIKER
Class Schedule: FRIDAY/ 1pm - 3:50pm
Class Location: SCA 362
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:

PHILOCTETES by Sophocles. Any translation EXCEPT Seamus Heaney's. ("Greatest play ever written." - Bob Tzudiker)

Reread the George Saunders article: <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 Wednesday. This allows time for professor and classmates to read the work before the classes on Friday. Late work will be penalized in grading.

Participation:	10%
First Draft	75%
Rewrite/Final delivery	15%

	100%

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

A	100% to 94%	C	76% to 73%
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A-	93% to 90%	C-	72% to 70%
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%

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).

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 to be on time and prepared for each class. Two unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by one full point (ex: A to a (A-)). A third unexcused absence will result in your grade being lowered another full point (ex: B to a (B-)). Your grade will be lowered by one point for every absence after. Two late arrivals equates to one full absence.

In order for absence to be excused the student must have approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session.

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 must miss class please contact your professor prior to class or contact the Writing Division at 213-740-3303.

Class Schedule:

Please note that all dates, assignments and subjects are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO READ EACH OTHERS' MATERIAL FOR EVERY CLASS. But because we will be reading half the scripts aloud in class, you will only be re-reading approximately 40 pages per week.

Class discussion will skew toward the pages we read aloud each week, but I hope to address all the work, if briefly, to help inform your writing of your next 10 pages.

We will be broken into A/B groups, so we can read half our scripts aloud going forward.

Group A: Ajay, Lexi, Colton, Ina

Group B: Collin, Virginia, Alisa, Jack

Week 1 - 1/14: This meeting will be via ZOOM.

Discuss the upcoming semester

ASSIGNMENT PRIOR TO THIS CLASS:

Read each other's Act I.

Reread your own outlines and Act I, make notes on the direction you envision for your continuing work on the script. You will share these verbally in class.

Presentation/questions (5% of grade - as part of the first draft grade)

ASSIGNMENT for next week: Everyone starts writing approx. 10 pages each week

Be sure to schedule time to read the pages of Group B (Collin, Virginia, Alisa, Jack)

Week 2 – 1/21: Read Group A pages aloud, discuss all if possible.

REREAD "What Writers Really Do..." article from The Guardian 3/4/17 by George Saunders.

A GROUP will read aloud, so need to read their pages before class.

ASSIGNMENT: Write approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 3 – 1/28: Envisioning your story

Reading B aloud.

The questions we ask ourselves create the world. Control the questions the audience is asking themselves from scene to scene.

ASSIGNMENT: Keep writing. approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 4 – 2/4: Discuss Group A pages

Reading A aloud.

"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.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Philoctetes.

Next class' discussion will count heavily toward your participation grade (overall participation is worth 10% of grade).

Week 5 – 2/11: Discuss "Philoctetes"

The play is short and takes place in real time. Make sure you understand the backstory, which the audience would have largely known, so you can appreciate the complexity and drama of every moment.

We will discuss the play in class. I will ask an opening question. I ask that everyone engage in the discussion.

Reading B aloud as time permits.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 6 – 2/18: Discuss pages

The presence of the past: back story for plot and character.

A GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 7 – 2/25: Discuss pages

Imagery and repetition.

B GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 8 – 3/4: Discuss pages

Character character character.

A GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 9 – 3/11: Discuss pages

Creating a world.

B GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 – 3/25: Discuss pages

A GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 11 – 4/1: Discuss pages

Discuss our experiences in doing this classwork, what flows easily and what has been difficult.

B GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 12 – 4/8: Discuss pages

A GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: Approx. 10 pages (5% of grade)

Week 13 – 4/15: Discuss Group B pages

B GROUP reads.

ASSIGNMENT: As needed, but moving toward completion of first draft.

Approx. 5% of grade

Week 14 – 4/22: Final script discussions and review.

Discuss final pages of first draft

Your first draft should be finished by now, valued at an additional 15% of your grade.

ASSIGNMENT: Begin rewrite. Approx 5% of grade.

Week 15 – 4/29: LAST CLASS. Review and discuss the class.
ASSIGNMENT: Continue rewrite

Finals Week - : Complete screenplay, with as much reqrting as possible.
Final script 10% 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” <https://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, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

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