

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

**CTWR 206B: WRITING THE SCREENPLAY
Spring 2023**

Instructor: Jody Wheeler
Class Schedule: Fridays, 1pm – 3:50pm
Class Location: SCA 362
Office Hours: By appointment
Contact Information: josephw9@usc.edu

Course Objective:

The objective of this class is to learn how to take the outline and first act we developed from 206A and complete the first draft of a feature screenplay. Along the way we will read, critique and revise pages. As we do so, we will also learn tools for rewriting, make a plan, and then turn in a revised feature screenplay.

Course Description:

Students will revise their first act and outline, then will write, read and critique weekly pages as we complete the seven sequences through to the final. There will also be weekly reading from the assigned text with students logging thoughts and take-aways to assist in the writing and rewriting process. We will then make plans for a rewrite, implement, and turn in a final revised feature length screenplay.

Course Reading:

Rewrite 2nd Edition: A Step-by-Step Guide to Strengthen Structure, Characters, and Drama in your Screenplay

<https://www.amazon.com/Rewrite-2nd-Step-Step-Strengthen/dp/1615931570>

Grading Criteria:

Participation:	20%
Draft Full Script	50%
Rewrite Take Aways	10%
Rewrite of Full Script:	20 %

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%
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%
C+ 79% to 77%

D- 62% to 60%
F 59% to 0%

Expectation of Professionalism:

All material is expected to be turned in on time and in the proper format. Assignments will 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.

Recording Devices:

You may not record lectures or workshops without the consent of the instructor.

Laptop and Cell Phone Policy:

Laptops are permissible for taking notes. No cell phones.

Writing Division Attendance Policy:

This class is a workshop and your participation in the discussion is important. Participation includes full involvement in, and contribution to, class discussion, as well as reading (in advance at times; see schedule) the assignments of your colleagues and offering thoughtful, constructive comments.

Class attendance is mandatory and students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Tardiness is unprofessional and disrespectful to the class. Two late arrivals equals one full absence. Two unexcused absences will result in your final grade being lowered by a half grade point (Ex. A to A-) Any further unexcused absences will result in your final grade being lowered another two thirds of a point (ex: B to a C+) for each absence

Excused absences can include, but are not limited to: illness, both physical and mental; death of a loved one; personal emergency; sporting events (for Student-Athletes) or other university-sponsored activities; religious holidays, and so on.

If you find you must miss class due to personal emergency or personal crisis, please contact your professor as soon as possible so they can assist you in finding the appropriate University care and guidance. Your health and well-being are of utmost importance to the Wells Writing Division and to your Faculty.

Class Schedule:

Please note that all dates are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Week 1. January 13:

Topics:

Read First Acts

Questions / Concerns

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Two (a): pg 31-40
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 1

Week 2. January 20

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Two (a): pg 41-50
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 2

Week 3. January 27:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Two(a): pg 51-60
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 3

Week 4. February 3:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Two(b): pg 61-70
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 4

Week 5. February 10:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Two(b): pg 71-80
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 5

Week 6. February 17:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Act Two(b): pg. 81-90
2. Read Rewrite Chapter 6

Week 7. February 24:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Three: pg. 91-100

2. Read Rewrite Chapter 7

Week 8. March 3:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

1. Write Act Three: pg.101-110

2. Read Rewrite Chapter 8

Week 9. March 10:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Class

1. Write Act Three: pg.111-120

2. Read Rewrite Chapter 9 and 10

Week 10 - off for March 17: Spring Break

Week 11. March 24:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

Discuss Your Rewrite / Polish

For Next Week:

Rewrite Act One

Week 12. March 31:

Topics:

Read Pages

For Next Week:

Rewrite Act Two A

Week 13. April 7:

Topics:

Read Pages

Discuss Rewrite chapter

For Next Week:

Rewrite Act Two B

Week 14. April 14:

Topics:

Read pages

For Next Week:

Rewrite Act Three

Week 15. April 21:

Topics:

Read pages

Week 16. April 28:

Topics:

Read pages

Polishing

Producing your script

FINAL: Upload your FINISHED Feature by Friday May 12, @ 9 pm.

Individual Video Meetings?

Study Days: April 29 – May 2

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/ssu

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

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

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>; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <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