



## OVERVIEW

- **Degree:** Comunicación Audiovisual + Screen Studies
- **Module/Area:** Module 3 (Screenwriting), Area 1 (Introduction)
- **ECTS:** 6
- **Year/Semester:** 2nd year, 2nd semester (Winter-Spring)
- **Type:** Mandatory
- **Instructor:** Pablo Castrillo (Associate Professor) ([pcastrillo@unav.es](mailto:pcastrillo@unav.es))
- **Language:** English
- **Class Hours:**
  - Lecture: Tuesdays, 3.30-5.15pm (classroom 12)
  - Lecture: Thursdays 3.30-5.15pm (classroom 2)
  - Workshops: Select Fridays (see Course Calendar), 10-11.45am (room 1550)

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

### COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Students will understand the nature and form of dramatic writing.
2. Students will become familiarized with the professional standards of script format.
3. Students will learn how to use the essential tools and structures of audiovisual storytelling.
4. Students will understand the different phases of the screenwriting process, as well as the role that a script plays in the film and television industry.

### DEGREE COMPETENCIES

#### 1. Skills

- RA10 - Students should learn how to apply their acquired knowledge to their job or work vocation in a professional manner, and make use of the skills usually demonstrated by elaborating and defending authorized arguments as well as by solving problems within their area of study.
- RA12 - To correctly express their acquired knowledge and ideas in the field of audiovisual communication, both in oral and written form.
- RA16 - To identify and apply the elements that are specific to the construction of the screenplay.

#### 2. Competencies

- RA19 - Students will acquire the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to make judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific, or ethical issues.

## SYLLABUS

0. Introduction: What is screenwriting?

### I. Visual Writing

1. Screen prose
2. Script format

### II. Dramatic Design



3. Conflict
4. Character
5. Structure
6. Seriality

### **III. Script Architecture**

7. Exposition
8. Dramatic tension
9. Planting and payoff
10. Dramatic irony
11. Dialogue and subtext
12. Special sequences

### **IV. Screenwriting Career & Business**

13. An introduction to adaptation
14. Pitching and the script development process
15. A writer's guide to the entertainment industry

### **V. Applied Screenwriting**

16. The screenwriting process
17. Writing the short film
18. An introduction to documentary writing

## **COURSEWORK**

<b>Lectures:</b> 50 hours	Screenwriting theory, film and TV case-studies, in-class creative exercises
<b>Workshops:</b> 14 hours	Discussion of assignments, exercise reviews
<b>Writing exercises:</b> 45 hours	Writing exercises assigned on the workshops; final assignment
<b>Personal study:</b> 40 hours	Mandatory readings, lecture notes, assigned viewings and screenplays
<b>Tutoring:</b> 1 hours	Office hours



(TOTAL: 150 hours)

## GRADING

### MAY SESSION (ORDINARY)

<p><b>Attendance and participation</b></p> <p>Attendance to all lectures and workshops is mandatory. Active engagement in class discussions will be taken into consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance will be tracked through short in-class exercises assigned at random times</li><li>• Absences must be justified in advance</li></ul>	10%
<p><b>Practice</b></p> <p>Writing assignments (see '<u>Workshops</u>' section of the course website.)</p> <p>* Writing proficiency: each error (grammar, spelling) or typo will be penalized with -0,1 point.</p>	40%
<p><b>Theory</b></p> <p>Final exam based on assigned readings, class notes and materials, and viewings analyses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Please, note:</b> a passing grade must be achieved in the final exam to receive grading in the Final project.</li></ul>	50%

### JUNE SESSION (RETAKE)

Students who fail the course in the ordinary session in May will have to take a final exam for the entirety of their grade in the June session.

#### **A note on academic honesty and School regulations**

Plagiarism (including unsuitable use of A.I. tools) and unauthorized copy constitute academic misconduct, which is punishable according to University regulations. Penalties may include the loss of both examination opportunities and suspension of student status for a period ranging from one week to three months.

#### **A.I. Policy**

Students may be allowed to employ generative A.I. tools in specific exercises when instructed so, always under the following conditions:



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- All creative writing—including concept, dramatic design, and final text—, must be original of each student.
- A.I. tools may be used only for assistance with research, brainstorming, or proofreading.
- If an A.I. tool is actually used, **a live link to the chat** must be appended.
- It is never allowed to feed your draft to any A.I. tool to request feedback.
- The use of AI tools when not permitted, or their improper use, will be considered academic misconduct (plagiarism).

In each exercise, a specific "**usage level**" will be indicated along the following scale:

## **Level 1: Proofreader**

You may use an AI tool only as dictionary, thesaurus, or proofreader.

## **Level 2: Researcher**

You may resort to an AI tool to ask questions about professional, technical, scientific, or other fields in order to strengthen verisimilitude in your writing.

## **Level 3: Sounding Board**

You may use an AI tool as "brainstorming buddy" for developing, testing, and refining your original ideas. This usage level must maintain a **conversational style**, that is, you may not present queries covering the entire scope of your exercise or requesting revisions/feedback of your drafts.

## **Level 4: Character Interview**

Once you have created your character and its general description, you may feed it to an AI tool to then ask questions which it must respond **in character**.

## **Level 5: Prompt Generator**

You may feed elements of dramatic design, such as characters, settings, or themes, to an AI tool and ask it for prompts, which you may then use to create your own scene. (Thereafter, you must write the scene on your own, only with Level 1 assistance if needed.)

## **OFFICE HOURS**

By appointment, via e-mail: [pcastrillo@unav.es](mailto:pcastrillo@unav.es)

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Mandatory Readings**

1. Texts assigned each week constitute the mandatory readings of the course. These will be posted on the course website (please refer to the "**Readings**" section.)
2. Screenplay excerpts read in class or assigned for reading are also mandatory study material.
3. Assigned films for script analysis sessions, as well as their corresponding screenplays, are also required.

### **Recommended Bibliography**

Balló, J., Pérez, X. (1997). *La semilla inmortal : los argumentos universales del cine*. Barcelona: Anagrama.



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Eszterhas, J. (2006). *The Devil's Guide to Hollywood: the screenwriter as God!* New York: St. Martin's Press.

De Rosendo, T. & Gatell, J. (2015). *Objetivo Writers' Room: las aventuras de dos guionistas españoles en Hollywood.* Barcelona: Alba.

Field, S. (1979). *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting.* New York: Delta Book.

Forsyth, M. (2013). *The Elements of Eloquence. How to Turn the Perfect English Phrase.* London: Icon.

Goldman, W. (1985). *Adventures in The Screen Trade: a personal view of Hollywood and screenwriting.* New York: Warner Books.

Gulino, P. (2004). *Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach.* New York: Continuum.

Iglesias, K. (2005). *Writing for Emotional Impact: advanced dramatic techniques to attract, engage, and fascinate the reader from beginning to end.* Livermore, CA: WingSpan Press.

Kleon, A. (2012). *Steal like an Artist : 10 Things Nobody Told You about Being Creative.* New York: Workman Pub. Co.

Mackendrick, A. (2005). *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director.* Edited and with an introduction by Paul Cronin. Faber & Faber.

McKee, R. (1999). *Story : Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting.* New York: Regan Books.

Norman, M. (2007). *What Happens Next: A history of American Screenwriting.* New York: Harmony Books.

Palmer, S. (2008). *Good in a Room: How to Sell Yourself (and Your Ideas) and Win Over Any Audience.* New York: Crown Business.

Pressfield, S. (2012). *The War of Art: break through the blocks and win your inner creative battles .* New York: Black Irish Entertainment.

Riley, C. (2009). *The Hollywood Standard: the complete and authoritative guide to script format and style.* Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.

Russin, R. & Downs, W.M. (2000). *Screenplay: Writing the picture.* Fort Worth: Harcourt College Publishers.

Sánchez-Escalonilla, A. (2014). *Estrategias de guión cinematográfico: el proceso de creación de una historia.* Barcelona: Ariel.

Snyder, B. (2005). *Save The Cat!: the last book on screenwriting you'll ever need.* Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.

Storr, W. (2020). *The Science of Storytelling.* London: William Collins

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. (1979). *The Elements of Style.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

Yorke, John (2014). *Into the Woods: How Stories Work and Why We Tell Them.* London: Penguin.

## Screenwriting Software



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Proper formatting is a minimum requirement of this course. The choice of one software or another falls under your responsibility (feel free to use open-code suites, Microsoft Word... anything as long as you deliver a professionally formatted script).

However, it is generally advisable to use a specialized screenwriting software. There are [a number of free \(or freemium\) options available](#), each with their own pros and cons. The free license of [Fade In](#) has delivered functional results in this course. Another option with full features at no cost —albeit less user-friendly— is [Trelby](#).

## Screenwriting Websites

Go Into The Story <http://gointothestory.blcklst.com/>

John August <http://johnaugust.com/>

Screenwriting.io <https://screenwriting.io/>

Writers Guild of America West (WGAW) <http://www.wga.org/>

Script Magazine <https://scriptmag.com/>

## Screenwriting Services & Competitions

Academy Nicholl Fellowships <http://www.oscars.org/nicholl>

American Zoetrope Screenplay Contest <https://www.zoetrope.com/contests/>

Austin Film Festival Screenplay Competition <https://austinfilmfestival.com/submit/screenplay-and-teleplay-submissions/>

The Black List <https://blcklst.com/>

## Screenplay Databases

Script Slug <https://www.scriptslug.com/>

Go Into the Story – Screenplays <https://gointothestory.blcklst.com/tagged/screenplays>

The Internet Movie Script Database (IMSDBb) <http://www.imsdb.com/>

Screenplays for You <https://sfy.ru/>