

TFP 201: Narrative Strategies and Screenwriting

January - June 2023

BSS 8th Batch

Department of Television, Film and Photography

University of Dhaka

Course Number: TFP 201

Course Title: Narrative Strategies and Screenwriting

Credit Hours: 4.0

Total Marks: 100

Number of classes per unit:

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Number of total classes | 15 |
| Number of classes per week/unit | 1 |
| Class hours per week/unit | 3.00 hours |
| Consultation hours per week | At least 1.00 hour |

Instructional Strategies:

- Lectures
- Assignments
- Field works
- Individual/Team Project Presentations
- Exams

Assessment:

| Sl. No. | Assessment Methods | (%) |
|---------|------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Attendance/Class Performance | 5 |
| 2. | Mid-term | 20 |
| 3. | Assignment (s) | 5 |
| 4. | Project + Pitching | 20 |
| 5. | Final Exam | 50 |
| | Total | 100 |

Introduction to the Course:

This course focuses on the various modes used in narrative and non-narrative storytelling in fiction films, drama and television. It will also introduce students to the primary forms of writing for the screen including features, shorts, drama and documentary. It will explore the basic theory and formal aspects of story, structure and character which are essential to all forms of screenwriting. The students will critically review produced scripts and films from a screenwriter's perspective.

Specific Objectives:

- To understand the various types of storytelling in fiction for films, drama and television.
- To become able to learn the primary forms of writing for the screen
- To understand the aspects of story and all forms of screenwriting.

Key Readings:

Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.

Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.

Additional Readings:

Blacker, Irwin R. 1986. *The Elements of Screenwriting: A Guide for Film and Television Writing*. New York: Macmillan.

Cowgill, Linda J. 2005. *Writing short films: Structure and content for screenwriters*. Lone Eagle.

Epstein, Alex. 2002. *Crafty screenwriting: Writing movies that get made*. New York: Holt Paperbacks.

Field, Syd. 1994. *Four Screenplays: Studies in the American Screenplay*. New York: Bantam Dell.

Howard, David, and Edward Mabley. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press.

McKee, Robert. 1997. *Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers.

Russin, Robin, and William Missouri Downs. 2012. *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

Seger, Linda. 2010. *Making a good script great*. Third. Los Angeles: Silman James Press.

Selbo, Jude. 2016. *Screenplay: Building Story Through Character*. New York: Routledge.

Snyder, Blake. 2005. *Save the Cat! The Last Book on Screenwriting You'll Ever Need*. Los Angeles: Michael Wiese Productions.

Tarkovsky, Andrei. (1987). *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. (K. Hunter-Blair, Trans.) Austin: University of Texas Press

Trottier, David. 2014. *The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

মার্কেস, গাব্রিয়েল গার্সিয়া. ২০১৪. *চিহ্ননাট্যের কর্মশালা: কেমন করে গল্প হয়*. অনুবাদক: তরুণ কুমার ঘটক.
কলকাতা: প্রতিভাস.

Suggested Software

Celtx/ Final Draft/ StudioBinder

(Collect the software from the Department Seminar)
For StudioBinder, visit
<https://www.studiobinder.com/scriptwriting-software/>

Screenplay Resources (Online)

- <https://imsdb.com/>
- <http://www.script-o-rama.com/snazzy/table.html>
- <https://thescriptlab.com/browse/>
- <https://www.simplyscripts.com/movie-scripts.html>
- <https://sfy.ru/>
- <http://www.moviescriptsandscreenplays.com/>
- <https://www.scriptfly.com/screenplays/index.php>

Class hours: 01 pm to 04 pm on Wednesdays

Room # KB 1101

Consultation hour: 04 pm to 05 pm on Wednesdays

Room # TFP 718

Instructor

Saiyeed Shahjada Al Kareem

Lecturer

Department of Television, Film and Photography

University of Dhaka

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Course Outline

Session One

About the Course

- ✓ What will we learn?
- ✓ What are the goals of this course?

Basic Concepts

- Narrative vs non-Narrative
- Fiction vs Non-fiction
- Idea, Story, Script, Screenplay
- Narrative Storytelling

Assignment:

- Write short descriptions of 5 scenes that you find interesting to watch through the prescribed frame.
- Take a photo with your mobile phone for reference.
- Submit the .pdf file via Google Classroom (along with the photo inserted into your .pdf file)
- Marks - 3 (Assignment -1 + Discussion/Consultation- 2)
- Due: 2nd session date.

Session Two

Screenplay Structures

- ✓ Narrative Structure
- ✓ Linear-non-linear
- ✓ Acts
- ✓ Plot
- ✓ Sub-plot
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Theme

Readings:

- Pages: 15-42, 142-159; Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.
- Pages: 109-143 Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.

- Pages: 24-27; Howard, David, and Edward Mabley. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press.
- Pages: 208-232; McKee, Robert. 1997. *Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers.

Session Three

- Screenplay Layout
- Originating Ideas and Idea development

Readings:

- Page: 16-30, 31-41; Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.
- Page: 215-237; Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.
- Chapter 1_Gathering Ideas; Seger, Linda. 2010. *Making a good script great*. Third. Los Angeles: Silman James Press
- Chapter 2_Format; Russin, Robin, and William Missouri Downs. 2012. *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.
- Chapter 1: What is It? Snyder, Blake. 2005. *Save the Cat! The Last Book on Screenwriting You'll Ever Need*. Los Angeles: Michael Wiese Productions.

Assignment:

- Write down the first 10 pages from the screenplay of *The Godfather*.
- Submit the .pdf file via Google Classroom (along with the photo inserted into your .pdf file)
- Marks - 3
- Due: 4th session date

Session Four

Story

- ✓ Story Elements
- ✓ Story Structure

Readings:

- Pages: 21-23; Howard, David, and Edward Mabley. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press.

- Pages: 31-78; McKee, Robert. 1997. *Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers.
- Pages: 41-45 Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.
- Pages: 106-126; Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.

Assignment

- Write down audiovisual descriptions of 4 scenes utilizing the prescribed tools. Take inspiration from your surroundings. Combine facts and your imagination in writing the visual description.
- Take a photo with your mobile phone for reference.
- Submit the .pdf file via Google Classroom (along with the photo inserted into that file)
- Marks - 3 (Assignment -1 + Discussion/Consultation- 2)
- Due: On the 5th session date.

Session Five

Character & Characterization

Readings:

- Pages: 71-108; Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.
- Pages: 43-88; Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.
- Pages: 81-90, Parker, Philip. 1999. *The art and science of screenwriting*. Exeter: Intellect Books.
- Chapter 13: Character Functions, Seger, Linda. 2010. *Making a good script great*. Third. Los Angeles: Silman James Press.
- Pages: 28-29; Howard, David, and Edward Mabley. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press.
- Pages: 100-109; McKee, Robert. 1997. *Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers.
- Chapter 4: Five Cornerstones of Dramatic Characterization, Corbett, David. 2013. *The art of character: Creating memorable characters for fiction, film, and TV*. London: Penguin.

Session Six

Dialogue: The Search for the Perfect Line

Readings:

- Pages: 173-181 Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.
- Pages: 84-87; Howard, David, and Edward Mabley. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press.
- Pages: 191-219; Cowgill, Linda J. 2005. *Writing short films: Structure and content for screenwriters*. Lone Eagle.
- Pages: 136-169; Epstein, Alex. 2002. *Crafty screenwriting: Writing movies that get made*. New York: Holt Paperbacks.
- Pages: 51-66; Blacker, Irwin R. 1986. *The Elements of Screenwriting: A Guide for Film and Television Writing*. New York: Macmillan
- Pages: 217-234; Selbo, Jule. 2016. *Screenplay: Building Story Through Character*. New York: Routledge.
- Pages: 123-134; Trottier, David. 2014. *The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.
- Chapter 13: Dialogue; Russin, Robin, and William Missouri Downs. 2012. *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

Session Seven

Screenwriting: How Genres Work

Readings:

- Chapter 11: The Structure of Genres; Russin, Robin, and William Missouri Downs. 2012. *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.
- Pages, 327-351, Film Art: An Introduction (12th Edition) by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson

Session Eight

Screenwriting: The Art of Adaptation

Writing Screenplay (1): Idea/Story Selection, Logline, One-liner, Treatment, Acts

Readings:

- Pages: 257-274, Field, Syd. 2005. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Bantam Dell.

- Pages: 255-263, Frensham, Raymond G. 2008. *Teach Yourself Screenwriting*. Illinois: NTC Publishing Group.
- Pages: 1-32, Hutcheon, Linda. 2016. *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York & London: Routledge
- Pages: 109-115, Theories of Adaptation: Novel to Film (https://www.academia.edu/30568663/THEORIES_OF_ADAPTATION_NOVEL_TO_FILM)
- পৃষ্ঠা ৮-৩২ ('পিকুর ডায়রি' গল্প ও 'পিকু' চিত্রনাট্য), রায়, সত্যজিৎ, পিকুর ডায়রি ও অন্যান্য (ই-বুক). ২০২০. কলকাতা: আনন্দ পাবলিশার্স প্রাইভেট লিমিটেড

Session Nine

The Art of Pitching (Guest Lecture)

Session Ten

Writing Screenplay (2): Discussion on the 1st Draft

Session Eleven

Writing Screenplay (3): Discussion on the 2nd Draft

Session Twelve

Writing Screenplay (4): Discussion on the 3rd Draft

Session Thirteen

Discussion on Project Pitching Material

&

Submission of the final draft of the screenplay.

Session Fourteen

Narrative Strategies: Different Aspects

Writing Screenplay: Construction of National Identity

Session Fifteen

Project Pitching (In presence of the Guest Lecturer)

End of the Course (Recap)

Assignments

- ✓ Scene descriptions **A** (3 scenes): Individual (Due: Session 2)
- ✓ Writing Screenplay using software (10 pages): Individual (Due: Session 4)
- ✓ Scene descriptions **B** (3 scenes): Individual (Due: Session 5)
- ✓ Project Submission (Final Draft): Individual (Due: Session 13)
- ✓ Pitching: Group (Due: Session 15)

Project: Screenplay Writing & Pitching

Write a short film screenplay based on the suggested text (story/ poem/ letter) using the standard screenplay format. Provide Logline, One-liner, and Synopsis.

Use Studio Binder for writing the screenplay.

On the 9th, 10th and 11th sessions, you have to submit draft screenplays (1st, 2nd and 3rd drafts) and participate in the discussion with the instructor in order to transform the text into a proper screenplay.

Submit the final draft on the 12th session along with the pitching of the project.

| Project Timeline: 4 weeks | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Schedule | Due | Marks |
| 1 st week (Session 10) | Draft 1 | 2 |
| 2 nd week (Session 11) | Draft 2 | 2 |
| 3 rd week (Session 12) | Draft 3 | 2 |
| 4 th week (Session 13) | Final Draft | 9 |
| Presentation (Pitching) | | 5 |
| Total | | 20 |

N.B. No assignment will be accepted after the deadline.