Instructor: David Turkel  
email: david.turkel@oregonstate.edu  
office hours: T 1:30-3:30  
Office: 306 Moreland  
term: Spring 2019  
course credits: 3

Course Description: This creative writing course focuses on three main topics: story structure, story outlining and the development of a properly formatted screenplay. This class will examine a range of professional materials including the outlines, screenplays, series documents and “story bibles” from a range of existing films and television shows. Students will then apply this understanding toward pitching, outlining, composing, workshopping, and revising the pilot episode of a series of their own creation.

OSU Baccalaureate Core Outcomes for all Writing II Courses:

- Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.
- Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.
- Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision.

This course fulfills the Baccalaureate Core requirement for the WR II category. It does this by following the “Outcomes Relative to Course Content” and “Assessment Methods” listed in the matrix below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSU Bacc Core Outcomes for WR II Course</th>
<th>Outcomes Relative to Course Content</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication</td>
<td>Students practice recognizing the essential elements of five-act story structure in written, spoken, and visual forms. They then apply this structure to organize the material presented over the course of a season, a single episode and the primary unit of scene. In workshops, students will use this template to help evaluate the work of their peers.</td>
<td>Multiple quizzes over the course of the term. “Coverage” worksheets based on the work of professionals in the field. Story outline assignments covering episode- and series-length arcs of story and character development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions</td>
<td>Screenwriting is a highly standardized form. Students will practice using Final Draft software (the industry standard) to compose professionally formatted documents. They will practice evaluating peer work based on the same strict rubric and for revising their own work over the course of the term to reflect industry specifications.</td>
<td>Exercises on proper outlining practices using correctly formatted headings and concentrating solely on Major Actions. Continued development of a twenty-thirty page pilot episode conforming to professional standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision</td>
<td>Students are asked to evaluate story in a number of forms (spoken, written, filmed) and to apply story theory to organize the composite elements. This practice extends from small, introductory assignments through to the class’ major project—the writing and revising of a well-structured, twenty-minute episode of television with a mini “story bible” for a series-length vision evidencing a clear grasp of story structure.</td>
<td>Multiple Discussion Board assignments assessing a range of materials from obituaries to casual storytelling to the story “pitches” of fellow students. The creation and continued revision of “story bibles” and outlines as well as the revised draft of their pilot all put this theory into practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specific WR/FILM 225 Outcomes:

• Develop a vocabulary for understanding story structure (inciting incident, act break, midpoint, crisis, climax, resolution) and learn how to apply these concepts to analyze the narrative and thematic intent of a variety of dramatic vehicles.
• Conceptualize a thematically rich and diverse vehicle for multiple storylines and earn practice “pitching” to an audience of peers.
• Recognize the “fractal” nature of the dramatic arc as it applies to scenes, episodes, seasons, and the overall series trajectory, and develop rudimentary series “bibles” mapping interlocking story arcs of varying lengths.
• Examine what is meant by a Major Action (“story beat”) and practice creating the outline (or “beat-sheet”) of the pilot episode of an original television series.
• Learn proper screenplay formatting and construct the pilot episode (20-30 pages) of a series of their own creation.

Required Texts:

• Into the Woods: a five-act journey into story by John Yorke

Assignments and Grades:

Graded Work:
1) Discussion Board assignments: 10pts x 4 = 40pts (20%)
2) Quizzes: 5pts x 4 = 20pts (10%)
3) Outlines: 10pts x 3 = 30pts (15%)
4) Script: 15pts x 3 = 45pts (22.5%)
5) Feedback: 10pts x 4 = 40pts (20%)
6) Script revision: 15 pts (7.5%)
7) Series Outline revision: 10 pts (5%)

Percentages as Letter Grades: A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-70; D= 69-60; F=59-0

Course Policies:

Email and Tech: Check Canvas daily. Students may contact me either through email or via Canvas messaging.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory. This class depends on a lot of group work and peer support. Students will be deducted a full letter grade for any two absences which have not received my prior approval.

Link to OSU Student Conduct Expectations: http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/code

OSU Official Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities: Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.
Course Content:

WEEK ONE
T: Introductions (Discussion Board); Yorke, chap 1; quiz
Th: Fairfax obituary (Discussion Board assignment)

WEEK TWO
T: Yorke, chap 2-4; quiz; Act structure lecture/discussion; viewings
Th: Will Smith video; first Outlining assignment

WEEK THREE
T: Yorke, chap 5&6; quiz; viewing; script reading (worksheet)
Th: Industry docs (outlines, series doc, bible); series bible, take one (Discussion Board)

WEEK FOUR
T: Pitch lecture; Interviews; framing discussion
Th: Group pitches; Pitch Revision (Discussion Board)

WEEK FIVE
T: Using Final Draft; Formatting; major actions discussion
Th: In-class b-plot exercise; pilot outline assignment; feedback partners assignment

WEEK SIX
T: group discussion; Yorke, chap 7-10; quiz
Th: screenwriting tutorial; viewings; assignment: first five pages (screenplay)

WEEK SEVEN
T: technical revision seminar; peer groups; turn exercise
Th: guest lecture (TBD); assignment: next 10-15 pages

WEEK EIGHT
T: Group workshops; in-class writing exercise
Th: Assignment: last 10-15

WEEK NINE
T: Group workshop; revision discussion; episode 2 outline assignment
Th: Notes on revision; Series bible revision assignment

WEEK TEN
T: Final workshops
Th: Debrief; final revision assignments