FILM & TV SCREENWRITING (SCWR)

SCWR 100 | INTRODUCTION TO SCREENWRITING (FORMERLY DC 201) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course is an introduction to and overview of the elements of theme, plot, character, and dialogue in dramatic writing for cinema. Emphasis is placed on telling a story in terms of action and the reality of characters. The difference between the literary and visual medium is explored through individual writing projects and group analysis. Films and scenes examined in this class will reflect creators and characters from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and intersectional identities. Development of a synopsis and treatment for a short theatrical screen play: theme, plot, character, mise-en-scene and utilization of cinematic elements.

SCWR 101 | SCREENWRITING FOR MAJORS (FORMERLY DC 101) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course introduces digital cinema majors to dramatic writing for motion pictures. The topics covered include theme, plot, story structure, character, and dialogue. Emphasis is placed on telling a story in visual terms. Films and scenes examined in this class will highlight creators and characters from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and intersectional identities.

SCWR 110 | INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION IN FILM & TV | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course will interrogate the representation of people and communities across a range of intersectional identities in film and television through the lens of creators. Through readings, screenings and discussions students will examine how marginalized groups have been represented on screen, identifying harmful and stereotypical depictions and erasures from the past to the present day. Students will learn creative tools and tactics to combat harmful representation and implement these tactics in their own creative work. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of research, lived experience, and authenticity to ensure inclusive and equitable representation across all media platforms.

SCWR 120 | FILM STRUCTURE FOR MAJORS (FORMERLY DC 221) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
A critical analysis of three-act film structure as well as an introduction to alternative narrative structures including, but not limited to, dual protagonist, ensemble, and non-linear structures. Films of multiple genres and eras by creators with a diverse range of intersectional identities will be examined. Students will develop a cinematic language with which to discuss films as well as a toolbox of techniques to use when making films.

SCWR 121 | CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD FILM STRUCTURE (FORMERLY DC 222) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Critical analysis of successful Hollywood films and their narrative structures. Films of multiple genres and eras by creators with a diverse and intersectional range of identities will be examined. Students will learn how to recognize classical three-act structure in finished films and scripts. Students will develop a cinematic language with which to discuss films as well as a toolbox of techniques to use when making films. Key story concepts to be discussed include: protagonist, antagonist, want versus need, elements of the future, poetic justice, planting and payoff, catalyst, climax, and Aristotelian terminology.

SCWR 122 | SCRIPT TO SCREEN (FORMERLY DC 224) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This analytical course examines the screenplay’s evolution to the screen from a writer’s perspective. Students will read feature length scripts of varying genres and then perform a critical analysis and comparison of the text to the final produced versions of the films. Storytelling conventions such as structure, character development, theme, and the creation of tension will be used to uncover alterations and how these adjustments ultimately impacted the film’s reception.

SCWR 123 | ADAPTATION: THE CINEMATIC RECREATING OF MEANING (FORMERLY DC 235) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course explores contemporary cinematic adaptations of literature and how recent re-workings in film open viewers up to critical analysis of the cultural practices surrounding the promotion and reception of these narratives. What issues have an impact upon the borrowing and reinterpreting of narratives of film? How, when, and where can we identify such borrowings and reinterpretations in multiple contemporary iterations of the same narrative?

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 150 | TELEVISION GENRES (FORMERLY DC 229) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Students will analyze and discuss some of the most important and influential shows in television history. Students will learn all about the writer-centric form of scripted television, where it’s been and where it’s heading. Students study serials and procedurals, network and cable shows, principal leads, partnerships and ensembles, comedy and drama, prevalent themes, innovations in content and form, the impact of DVR, and the impact of the internet. Course Description: This analytical course examines the screenplay’s evolution to the screen from a writer’s perspective. Students will read scripts of varying genres and then perform a critical analysis and comparison of the text to the final produced versions of the series. Storytelling conventions such as structure, character development, theme, and tension will be used to uncover alterations and how these adjustments ultimately impacted the show’s reception. In addition to series of various genres, students will examine shows by, for, and about a diverse range of intersectional characters and creators reflective of our communities.

SCWR 151 | TELEVISION GENRES FOR MAJORS (FORMERLY DC 230) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 152 | TELEVISION GENRES FOR MAJORS (FORMERLY DC 231) | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This analytical course examines the screenplay’s evolution to the screen from a writer’s perspective. Students will read scripts of varying genres and then perform a critical analysis and comparison of the text to the final produced versions of the series. Storytelling conventions such as structure, character development, theme, and tension will be used to uncover alterations and how these adjustments ultimately impacted the show’s reception. In addition to series of various genres, students will examine shows by, for, and about a diverse range of intersectional characters and creators reflective of our communities.

SCWR 210 | THE FUNDAMENTALS OF COMEDY | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course explores how Chicago became the cultural hub for comedy in America and the vital role The Second City has played in the modern style of improvisation. Through lectures and screenings, students will explore the history of comedy theory and where the form is headed next.
SCWR 240 | INTRODUCTION TO PITCHING (FORMERLY DC 288) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course focuses on creating an inventory of new material for future writing projects by developing and pitching story ideas for television, film, and independent films, as well as cable, streaming, and network television series. Students will analyze the vital role of pitching in the entertainment industry and build a foundation towards mastering professional pitching techniques.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 250 | INTRODUCTION TO TELEVISION WRITING (FORMERLY DC 272) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course focuses on writing the sitcom and one-hour drama television formats. Students will examine the conventions of serialized and procedural series and will learn how the collaborative dynamic of the writer’s room impacts story. The lectures and workshop provide a foundation of what it takes to be a professional staff writer and culminate in crafting a spec episode of a current television series.

(SCWR 100 or SCWR 101) and (SCWR 150 or SCWR 151) are prerequisites for this class.

SCWR 301 | STORY DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 300) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course is designed to help the emerging writer focus their creativity into a viable original project for a feature film. The lectures, workshops, and assignments are designed to enable the student to identify and develop material they have a strong personal connection to. Emphasis is placed on extensive research of the subject matter, creating memorable characters, and crafting a strong dramatic throughline.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 302 | WRITING THE FEATURE SCREENPLAY (FORMERLY DC 301) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course focuses on completing the first draft of a feature-length screenplay. Emphasis will be placed on a foundation of character, structure, plot, and theme to bring the writer’s vetted concept to fruition. The lectures, in-class workshops, and aggressive page deadlines are designed to culminate in a spec screenplay that showcases voice and command of screenwriting conventions.

SCWR 301 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 303 | REWRITING THE FEATURE FILM SCRIPT (FORMERLY DC 303) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This class focuses on practical ways to approach the rewriting process for feature film screenplays. Through group workshops and assignments, students isolate issues with plot, character development, dialogue and pacing in their script and work on addressing them in a full draft rewrite. Student must possess a complete feature-length script in order to enroll in the course.

SCWR 305 | WRITING ON ASSIGNMENT (FORMERLY DC 308) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Modeled after professional writing assignments, this advanced course challenges students to complete a feature length screenplay within specific parameter provided by the instructor in ten weeks. Lectures and strict weekly page submission deadlines provide a practical framework on how to write quickly without sacrificing quality. Constructive analysis will be used in discussing produced scripts, weekly assignments and group workshops to reveal the writer’s unique voice and perspective.

SCWR 302 is a prerequisite for this course.

SCWR 306 | SCENE WRITING (FORMERLY DC 346) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course focuses on analyzing and developing the fundamental building block of film and television writing: the scene. Students will gain a greater understanding of how to craft engaging scenes and refine their unique voice on the page through weekly lectures, writing exercises, and workshops.

SCWR 302 or SCWR 352 or SCWR 353 is a prerequisite for this course.

SCWR 307 | ADAPTATION (FORMERLY DC 347) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will explore creative methodologies geared at getting deeply into the minds and points of view of dramatic characters. Throughout the course, students will concentrate on one set of characters to refine an existing web series, feature film, or television pilot.

SCWR 302 or SCWR 352 or SCWR 353 is a prerequisite for this course.

SCWR 308 | WRITING THE SHORT FILM FOR PRODUCTION (FORMERLY DC 343) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Students will study the essential elements and conventions for writing the short film including but not limited to character, structure, and tension. Students will write a polished short film (no longer than 25 pages) designed to be produced. Students will learn how to put together a professional proposal to apply for internal or external production funds and financing.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 309 | CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will explore creative methodologies geared at getting deeply into the minds and points of view of dramatic characters. Throughout the course, students will concentrate on one set of characters to refine an existing web series, feature film, or television pilot.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 310 | ADVANCED SCREENWRITING LAB (FORMERLY DC 344) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This advanced course is designed to take existing writing projects (including but not limited to features, pilots, television specs, web series, short scripts) at various stages of development and provide the practical means to move forward through constructive workshop sessions. Stories will be broken down to examine concept viability and the overall execution of the narrative. Instructor and peer critiques will challenge the writer to enhance their voice on the page with the goal of creating work that is unique, engaging, and commercial.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.
SCWR 341 | PITCHING SEMINAR (FORMERLY DC 305) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This advanced course focuses on developing vetted story pitches for existing student projects and how to pitch a unique take on intellectual property. The lectures and in-class workshops will focus on preparing for pitch meetings with an emphasis on how to read the dynamics of a room and creating a unique brand that resonates with producers and executives.

SCWR 240 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 342 | FEATURE DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 309) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course offers a practical approach to the screenwriter's role in the development of a feature film. Emphasis will be placed on obtaining a greater understanding of narrative conventions, script analysis and the film market. From agents to studio executives, we will examine the varying points of view that comprise the development process. Constructive analysis will be used to break down feature length produced screenplays and student work. The assignments and class discussions are designed to expose the inner workings of Hollywood and provide a framework for what it takes to succeed in the entertainment industry.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 345 | HOLLYWOOD HISTORY (FORMERLY DC 387) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Students will gain a deeper appreciation of the history of the Hollywood film industry through behind-the-scenes access to working studios and theme parks, historical readings, presentations and discussions.

SCWR 346 | FILMMAKERS SEMINAR (FORMERLY DC 388) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Each week, students will be given the rare opportunity to speak directly with some of the industry's biggest players. Hollywood directors, writers, cinematographers, editors, producers, agents, managers, entertainment lawyers, development executives and others will come to class, discuss their journeys, offer advice, and answer questions. The class will culminate with an industry mixer, where these professionals, along with dozens more, will join the students for a relaxed evening of networking. This is an invaluable opportunity for students to begin to form meaningful relationships that can help them as they transition from student to filmmaker. Note: Students must be participating in the DePaul LA program to be eligible to enroll.

SCWR 349 | STORYTELLING FOR VIDEO GAMES (FORMERLY DC 341) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course examines the writer's role in the game development process and how storytelling conventions like character, conflict, and plot are utilized to enhance gameplay. Emphasis will be placed on building an understanding of game narratives, interactivity, and working with design teams. Students will develop a design document highlighting characters, locations, dialogue scripting, and overall gameplay for an original video game idea.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 352 | WRITING THE SITCOM (FORMERLY DC 306) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course focuses on the fundamentals of writing the half-hour situational comedy. Creating comedic characters, situations, and developing multiple storylines are covered. Students will create an original sitcom pilot.

SCWR 250 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 353 | WRITING THE EPISODIC DRAMA (FORMERLY DC 307) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course examines the storytelling techniques necessary to write an hour long television dramatic series with an emphasis on characterization and structure. Students will create an original hour long pilot.

SCWR 250 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 354 | REWRITING THE ORIGINAL TELEVISION PILOT (FORMERLY DC 330) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This class focuses on practical ways to approaching the process of rewriting a script; specifically this class will focus on students' original television pilots. Through group workshops, lectures, readings, and assignments, students identify and improve problems in various areas of their teleplay including, but not limited to: plot, character development, dialogue and pacing. By the end of the quarter, students will have completed a full rewrite of their complete pilot script; therefore, students must possess a complete television pilot in order to enroll in the course.

This course is repeatable.

SCWR 355 | THE WRITER'S ROOM (FORMERLY TV 302) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course enables students to develop a television series in an advanced workshop setting modeled after a professional writer's room. Emphasis will be placed on pitching ideas, breaking story, and examining the various roles that make the writer's room a creative and dynamic environment.

SCWR 352 or SCWR 353 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 360 | WRITING THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERIES (FORMERLY DC 328) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Students will study the conventions for writing and producing the independent television series, including concept and character development, narrative structure, story-world, budget constraints, and audience. Series of various styles and genres by creators with a diverse range of intersectional identities will be examined. Students will write an original, short-form, five-episode series.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 361 | PRODUCING THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERIES (FORMERLY TV 330) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course is an immersive introduction to video production for the independent television series. Students learn how to produce a short-form, five-episode, independent series. The course covers the basic principles of directing, budgeting, financing, casting, hiring talent, scheduling, securing locations, shooting, creating safe, diverse, and inclusive sets, controlling continuity, and gathering social media artifacts for a series. Students learn the production process from idea execution through production.

SCWR 360 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 362 | MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTING THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERIES (FORMERLY TV 309) | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Students study online marketing and distribution models for independent television in order to develop and prepare to launch their own independent series or pilot. Topics covered include: platform options, social media outreach, participatory culture, the unique qualities of online communities, press kits, the role of film festivals, and shifts in digital exhibition and distribution.

SCWR 361 or FILM 115 or CP 360
SCWR 365 | SHOWRUNNING I (FORMERLY TV 321) | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course provides an overview of the evolution of the Showrunner in network television, cable, and streaming media. Students will analyze how the success of a series is dependent on an astute Showrunner who knows how to handle the creative, financial, and managerial aspects of putting on a show. Emphasis will be placed on the vital role these executive producers play in the three stages of production to ensure the actualization and continuity of their artistic vision.  
SCWR 250 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 366 | SHOWRUNNING II (FORMERLY TV 331) | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This advanced course enables students to take on the role of the Showrunner for the packaging and preproduction of an original television or web series. Through hands-on exercises, students will use their creative sensibilities and business acumen to develop a viable show bible, style guide, budget and schedule for a self-produced production or as part of a network pitch package.  
SCWR 365 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 370 | COMEDIC IMPROVISATION FOR FILMMAKERS | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course lays the foundation for successful improvisation in the current Chicago style, starting with the formation of the ensemble and exploring various elements of the creative process. Students experience what it means to be a part of a larger whole, create freely without self-judgement, and develop tools of play that will make them better communicators and filmmakers.

SCWR 371 | COMEDIC IMPROVISATION FOR FILMMAKERS II | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
The essence of a good improvised scene is provided by strong character work. This course gives students a wealth of tools to create a variety of cinematic characters, each one driven by a unique perspective. They will continue to build on the fundamental skills of collaboration, play, and active listening while bringing more of themselves into their filmmaking.  
SCWR 370 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 372 | COMEDIC IMPROVISATION FOR FILMMAKERS III | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This advanced course focuses on the mechanics of the various forms that an improvised scene can take. Students learn to build off character and premise to develop a fully fleshed out scene with a strong comedic arc. Emphasis will be placed on breaking down the aesthetic devices that comprise a cinematic scene.  
SCWR 371 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 373 | TOPICS IN COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course features an in-depth study of comedy focusing on an aesthetic, history, or filmmaking method. Students will analyze the distinctive traits of the selected topic within the broader context of comedy film and television. Specific topics will be selected by the instructor and will vary with each quarter.

SCWR 374 | WHAT MAKES US LAUGH | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course examines the role that comedy and satire have played in the cinematic arts since the turn of the last century. Students will examine the comedic language in films and television shows, while understanding the context for the times in which they were made.  
SCWR 210 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 375 | COMEDIC STORYTELLING | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course focuses on the most influential comedy writers from antiquity to today. Emphasis will be placed on the context for when these works were created, how they were received at the time, and how these pieces remain relevant. Students will immerse themselves in comedic structure and storytelling to build a frame of reference and to craft a distinct voice as a filmmaker.  
SCWR 374 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 376 | COMEDIC VOICE | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
In this course, students will study and analyze stand-up comedy as a route to success in Film and Television. Students will learn about the history of stand up comedy and the comedians who parlayed success on the stage into success in television and films. Students will study the process of how comedians first created their material and honed/perfected it on stages around the world. Finally, students will mine their own lives for funny stories, creating original stand-up comedy routines (5 minutes), work-shopping them in class and eventually performing these routines on the Main Stage at Zanies Comedy Club.

SCWR 377 | STAND-UP COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
In this course, students will study and analyze stand-up comedy as a route to success in Film and Television. Students will learn about the history of stand up comedy and the comedians who parlayed success on the stage into success in television and films. Students will study the process of how comedians first created their material and honed/perfected it on stages around the world. Finally, students will mine their own lives for funny stories, creating original stand-up comedy routines (5 minutes), work-shopping them in class and eventually performing these routines on the Main Stage at Zanies Comedy Club.

SCWR 378 | Advanced Stand Up Comedy | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
Students will focus on developing an original comedy set connected conceptually and/or tonally, then taking it from stage-to-screen. Students will develop their material in class, perform in front of peers, perform out at comedy clubs all in the service of crafting an original pitch for a longer project for the screen (web series, a TV show or movie).

SCWR 379 | COMEDY, JOKE, AND SKETCH WRITING (FORMERLY DC 383) | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
Students will learn techniques and formulas for joke writing, writing sketch comedy packages, and writing for news driven comedy shows. Students will apply these skills to their existing scripts as well as to developing new material.  
SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.
SCWR 380 | COMEDY PRODUCTION | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course introduces students to the collaborative nature of comedy film production. Emphasis is placed on discovering stories and characters with the creation of a short comedic non-fiction film. Building on that, students ideate, pitch, and produce short narrative film concepts to become proficient with current comedic filmmaking techniques.  
SCWR 370 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 381 | COMEDY PRODUCTION II | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course focuses on developing comedy filmmaking skills by refining the creative voice and technical proficiency. Students ideate, craft, and revise a short comedic script for production. This project then moves to the pre-production phase where emphasis is placed on casting, scouting, budgeting, and crew collaboration to ensure continuity of the comedic vision. Principal photography, editing, and final delivery of this project will be completed in SCWR 382 Comedy Production III.  
SCWR 380 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 382 | COMEDY PRODUCTION III | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This advanced comedy filmmaking course focuses on the principal photography, editing, and final delivery of the project that originated in SCWR 381 Comedy Production II. Students will continue to hone their skills as directors, value the holistic fashion in which films are made by serving in different crew positions, and ensure the continuity of their comedic vision through the post-production workflow process.  
SCWR 381 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 385 | DIRECTING COMEDY FOR FILM | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course focuses on effective techniques for directing actors in comedy. Students will delve into text analysis, explore possibilities that reside within written works and craft comedic performances in scenes for film and television projects. Emphasis is put on effective casting, the importance of collaboration, and honing a unique point of view.

DC 210 and SCWR 376 are prerequisites for this class.

SCWR 386 | DIRECTING COMEDY FOR FILM II | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course is an on-camera workshop with a focus on crew collaboration and directing screen performances with actors. Students will prep, cast, rehearse and direct select scene exercises, which will be edited to understand the holistic approach to comedy filmmaking.  
SCWR 385 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 390 | TOPICS IN SCREENWRITING (FORMERLY DC 304) | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
Advanced study in screenwriting focusing on a specific genre each quarter such as: Science Fiction, Film Noir, Comedy, Action-Adventure, Nonfiction, etc. May be repeated for credit.

SCWR 100 or SCWR 101 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 392 | TOPICS IN LA | 2-6 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
This course features an in-depth study of an aesthetic, history, business or filmmaking method. Students will analyze the distinctive traits and application of the selected topic within the broader context of the film and television industry in Los Angeles. Specific topics will be selected by the instructor and will vary with each quarter.

SCWR 399 | INDEPENDENT STUDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)  
Variable credit. PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of dean.

SCWR 400 | FOUNDATIONS OF SCREENWRITING (FORMERLY DC 501) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
Students begin their screenwriting journey with a strong foundation in the basic building blocks of solid, engaging storytelling. Students will mine their own lives in order to create memorable stories, characters, and settings. Films and other creative works analyzed in this class will reflect creators and stories from underrepresented groups, highlighting a wide range of diverse backgrounds and intersectional identities. Additionally, students will learn basic screenwriting skills such as character development, constructing atmosphere, and the fundamental components of a scene.

SCWR 401 | WRITING THE FEATURE I (FORMERLY DC 402) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
This course focuses on creating a vetted concept and step outline for a feature length screenplay. Emphasis is put on idea origination and world building, forming engaging characters, and structuring an affecting plot with cause and effect storytelling. Through script readings, weekly assignments, and in-class workshops, students will hone their unique voice to craft the dramatic template for a cinematically viable story.

SCWR 402 | WRITING THE FEATURE II (FORMERLY DC 403) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
This course focuses on completing the first draft of a feature length screenplay. Students will bring their vetted concepts to life on the page by focusing on a foundation of character, theme, structure, and plot. The lectures, in-class workshops, and weekly page deadlines are designed to culminate in a spec script that showcases the writer’s voice and command of screenwriting conventions.

SCWR 401 or SCWR 490 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 403 | REWRITING THE FEATURE (FORMERLY DC 404) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
This class focuses on rewriting the feature film screenplay. Through workshops and course discussions, students will learn how to identify missteps in their writing and develop a practical means to efficiently address these issues moving forward. Students must possess a complete feature length script to rewrite in order to enroll in the course. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 405 | ADVANCED WRITING ON ASSIGNMENT (FORMERLY DC 408) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
This course provides a framework for students to complete a feature length screenplay within specific parameters provided by the instructor in ten weeks plus an additional treatment that would compliment their existing portfolio. Modeled after the techniques and deadlines of professional writing assignments, students learn how to meet the expectations of studio executives and producers without sacrificing their unique voice. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 406 | THE ART OF SCENE WRITING (FORMERLY DC 445) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)  
This advanced course asks students to move beyond convention in an effort to deconstruct the core elements of a scene: location, subject, conflict, and exposition. Through weekly lectures, writing exercises, and workshops we will examine a number of innovative screenwriting techniques to refine the writer’s unique voice and enhance the commercial viability of their work.
SCWR 407 | SCREEN ADAPTATION (FORMERLY DC 446) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This advanced course focuses on identifying and developing source material for the screen. Emphasis is placed on learning to negotiate the public domain when searching for material to adapt, as well as practical ways to acquire copyrighted material. Students will choose material from the public domain to adapt, and then formulate a logline, short pitch, treatment, and first act of a feature screenplay (or two acts of a teleplay).

SCWR 408 | WRITING THE SHORT MOTION PICTURE (FORMERLY DC 401) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
In this screenwriting course students will study the essential elements and conventions of writing the short film, including character, structure, and conflict. They will examine the fundamental differences between feature and short films. Story development emphasis will be placed on compelling character-driven stories that can be produced on a modest budget. Students will be required to complete two short screenplays. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 409 | CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This advanced course will explore creative methodologies geared at getting deeply into the minds and points of view of dramatic characters. Throughout the course, students will concentrate on one set of characters to refine an existing web series, feature film, or television pilot.

SCWR 410 | SCREENWRITING LAB (FORMERLY DC 444) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This course focuses on instructor led workshop sessions to help writers take existing projects (including but not limited to features, pilots, television specs, web series, short scripts) at various stages of development and provide a means to move forward. Story will be deconstructed, from concept to individual scene work, in an effort to craft a viable narrative for the screen. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 420 | STORY STRUCTURES (FORMERLY DC 502) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
Advanced critical analysis of multiple film structures beginning with a solid understanding of classically structured linear narratives told in three acts and ultimately exploring non-traditional feature film structures including but not limited to: ensemble, multiple protagonist, non-linear and episodic. Films will range from classic Hollywood films to contemporary independent films. Students will learn various theorists’ approaches to terminology (which may include Snyder, Field, Campbell, and Howard) in order to develop a language with which to discuss scripts and finished films, both other people’s work as well as in developing their own. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 425 | GENRE STORYTELLING | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This advanced course examines the dramatic conventions of genre storytelling in film and television. Through extensive script readings and discussions, students will deconstruct the common features of genre in an effort to discern audience expectations and develop a methodology for narrative innovation in their own work. In addition to evaluating films and series of varying genres, students will examine work by, for, and about a diverse range of intersectional characters and creators reflective of our communities.

SCWR 440 | DEVELOPING THE PITCH (FORMERLY DC 434) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
In this course, students will create an inventory of new material for future writing projects by developing and pitching stories for independent and studio films, as well as cable, streaming, and network television series. Through lectures, guest speakers, and workshop exercises, we will analyze the vital role of pitching in the entertainment industry, and build a foundation to help students master professional pitching techniques. Students will seek to mine their own lives, using their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities to highlight their unique perspectives in the projects they pitch.

SCWR 441 | INDUSTRY AND PITCHING SEMINAR (FORMERLY DC 505) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
Students will learn the art and craft of pitching including the differences between pitching new or existing ideas, shaping pitches based on your audience, and pitching a take on existing source material. Students will also learn not only how to pitch projects, but to pitch themselves, focusing on what makes them unique as a writer/director/producer, the themes that connect their work, and how to present themselves as a brand. Industry professionals will visit class (live or via Skype) when appropriate. Students will also learn how to create pitches for existing material that is either in the common domain or material that the students have acquired the rights to work on.

SCWR 442 | STUDIO DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 503) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This advanced course examines the development process that enables the screenplay’s journey from draft to screen. By crafting professional coverage and development notes, the class will deconstruct feature length scripts and student work in an effort to forge them into cinematically viable properties. The assignments and class discussions are designed to expose the inner workings of Hollywood and provide a framework for what it takes to succeed in the entertainment industry. Enrollment is only open to MFA students. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 443 | SCREEN ADAPTATION (FORMERLY DC 446) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
In this course, students will create an inventory of new material for future writing projects by developing and pitching stories for independent and studio films, as well as cable, streaming, and network television series. Through lectures, guest speakers, and workshop exercises, we will analyze the vital role of pitching in the entertainment industry, and build a foundation to help students master professional pitching techniques. Students will seek to mine their own lives, using their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities to highlight their unique perspectives in the projects they pitch.

SCWR 441 | INDUSTRY AND PITCHING SEMINAR (FORMERLY DC 505) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
Students will learn the art and craft of pitching including the differences between pitching new or existing ideas, shaping pitches based on your audience, and pitching a take on existing source material. Students will also learn not only how to pitch projects, but to pitch themselves, focusing on what makes them unique as a writer/director/producer, the themes that connect their work, and how to present themselves as a brand. Industry professionals will visit class (live or via Skype) when appropriate. Students will also learn how to create pitches for existing material that is either in the common domain or material that the students have acquired the rights to work on.

SCWR 442 | STUDIO DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 503) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
This advanced course examines the development process that enables the screenplay’s journey from draft to screen. By crafting professional coverage and development notes, the class will deconstruct feature length scripts and student work in an effort to forge them into cinematically viable properties. The assignments and class discussions are designed to expose the inner workings of Hollywood and provide a framework for what it takes to succeed in the entertainment industry. Enrollment is only open to MFA students. PREREQUISITE(S): None.

SCWR 443 | SCREEN ADAPTATION (FORMERLY DC 446) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
In this course, students will create an inventory of new material for future writing projects by developing and pitching stories for independent and studio films, as well as cable, streaming, and network television series. Through lectures, guest speakers, and workshop exercises, we will analyze the vital role of pitching in the entertainment industry, and build a foundation to help students master professional pitching techniques. Students will seek to mine their own lives, using their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities to highlight their unique perspectives in the projects they pitch.

SCWR 441 | INDUSTRY AND PITCHING SEMINAR (FORMERLY DC 505) | 4 quarter hours (Graduate)
Students will learn the art and craft of pitching including the differences between pitching new or existing ideas, shaping pitches based on your audience, and pitching a take on existing source material. Students will also learn not only how to pitch projects, but to pitch themselves, focusing on what makes them unique as a writer/director/producer, the themes that connect their work, and how to present themselves as a brand. Industry professionals will visit class (live or via Skype) when appropriate. Students will also learn how to create pitches for existing material that is either in the common domain or material that the students have acquired the rights to work on.
**SCWR 449 | STORYTELLING FOR VIDEO GAMES (FORMERLY DC 441) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This course examines the writer's role in the game development process and how storytelling conventions like character, conflict, and plot are utilized to enhance gameplay. Emphasis will be placed on building an understanding of game narratives, interactivity, and working with design teams. Students will develop a design document highlighting characters, locations, dialogue scripting, and overall gameplay for an original video game idea.

**SCWR 450 | TELEVISION GENRES AND ANALYSIS (FORMERLY DC 429) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
The purpose of this class is to enable you to study scripted television from the professional's point of view. The course involves critical analysis of successful scripted television shows, their narrative structures and themes. Programs of various genres and eras will be examined. Students will learn how to recognize basic structural elements in finished episodes. Students will develop a language with which to discuss television as well as a toolbox of techniques to use when creating television. Key concepts to be discussed include: basic structure, types of shows, character tropes, means of creating and sustaining tension, themes and advancements in form.

**SCWR 451 | WRITING THE TELEVISION SPEC SCRIPT (FORMERLY DC 400) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
In this class, students will learn the basic teleplay structures for both half-hour and hour-long television shows. Students will choose an existing show and write a spec episode, practicing the skills of matching character voice, structure, and tone.

**SCWR 452 | WRITING THE SITCOM (FORMERLY DC 406) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
In this course, students analyze half hour situational comedy teleplays. The course will feature a specific focus on story-telling styles and techniques of successful sitcom predecessors, various formats of sitcom teleplays, and methods for pushing original projects out into the world. Students will create an original sitcom pilot.

**SCWR 453 | WRITING THE EPISODIC DRAMA (FORMERLY DC 407) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
In this course, students analyze hour-long dramatic teleplays. This course features a specific focus on story-telling styles and techniques of successful dramatic predecessors, various formats of hour-long drama teleplays, and the definition and significance of "show bibles". Students will create an original hour long pilot.

**SCWR 454 | REWRITING THE ORIGINAL TELEVISION PILOT (FORMERLY DC 432) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This class focuses on practical ways to approaching the rewriting of a script; specifically this class will focus on students' original television pilots. Through group workshops, lectures, and readings, students will identify and improve problems in various areas of their teleplay including, but not limited to: plot, character development, dialogue, and pacing. By the end of the quarter, students will have completed a full rewrite of their complete pilot script; therefore, students must posses a complete television pilot in order to enroll in the course. This course is repeatable.

**SCWR 455 | ADVANCED WRITERS' ROOM (FORMERLY DC 443) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This advanced course provides students the opportunity to develop a television series in a workshop setting modeled after a professional writers’ room. From Writer’s Assistant to Showrunner, we will examine the various roles that make the writers’ room a creative and dynamic environment. Students will pitch ideas, break story, and ultimately uncover strategies to running the room for a full season.

SCWR 452 or SCWR 453 is a prerequisite for this class.

**SCWR 460 | WRITING THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERIES (FORMERLY DC 428) | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
Students will study the conventions for writing and producing the independent television series, including concept and character development, narrative structure, story-world, budget constraints, and audience. Series of various styles and genres by creators with a diverse range of intersectional identities will be examined. Students will write an original, short-form, five-episode series.

SCWR 400 is a prerequisite for this class.

**SCWR 461 | WEB SERIES PRODUCTION | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This course is an immersive introduction to video production for the web. Students learn how to produce a five-episode web series. The course covers the basic principles of directing, budgeting, financing, casting, hiring talent, scheduling, securing locations, shooting, controlling continuity, and gathering social media artifacts for a series. Students learn the production process from idea execution through production and will work in teams producing two web series.

SCWR 460 is a prerequisite for this class.

**SCWR 462 | MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTING THE WEB SERIES | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
Students study online marketing and distribution models for web television in order to develop and implement the launch of their own series. Topics covered include: platform options, social media outreach, participatory culture, press kits, and the role of film festivals.

SCWR 461 is a prerequisite for this class.

**SCWR 465 | SHOWRUNNING I | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This course provides an overview of the evolution of the Showrunner in network television, cable, and streaming media. Students will analyze how the success of a series is dependent on an astute Showrunner who knows how to handle the creative, financial, and managerial aspects of putting on a show. Emphasis will be placed on the vital role these executive producers play in the three stages of production to ensure the actualization and continuity of their artistic vision.

SCWR 451 is a prerequisite for this class.

**SCWR 466 | SHOWRUNNING II | 4 quarter hours**
(Graduate)
This advanced course enables students to take on the role of the Showrunner for the packaging and pre-production of an original television or web series. Through hands-on exercises, students will use their creative sensibilities and business acumen to develop a viable show bible, style guide, budget and schedule for a self-produced production or as part of a network pitch package.

SCWR 465 is a prerequisite for this class.
SCWR 470 | IMPROVISATION FOR COMEDIC STORYTELLERS | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
This course focuses on building a foundation for comedy improvisation as it pertains to creating cinematic stories. Students will develop the skills to work in a collaborative environment steeped in the tradition of Chicago-style techniques and philosophies. Fundamental improvisational concepts such as give-and-take, surrender, support, mirror, explore-and-heighten, environment, object work, scenic structure, character and choices, will be explored in-depth and applied in scenes.

SCWR 471 | IMPROVISATION FOR COMEDIC STORYTELLERS | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
Students delve into intermediate improvisation work with a focus on collaboration to identify premise, intention, point of view, and a character's usable subtext in a scene. Emphasis is placed on adapting improvised creations into a foundation for film and television material. SCWR 470 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 472 | IMPROVISATION FOR COMEDIC STORYTELLERS III | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
This advanced course explores the intersection between improvisation and the screenwriting process. Emphasis will be placed on the structures that comedic moments can take, from joke construction through longer narrative forms. Students will develop basic concepts into polished written scenes and will revise using targeted improvisations. SCWR 471 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 474 | EVOLUTION OF COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
This course examines the language, physicality, and structure of some of the most revered comedic films and television shows of all time. Students will analyze and discuss the conventions utilized in these works, how they influenced the era in which they were made, and what relevance they have to comedy filmmaking today.

SCWR 475 | ADVANCED COMEDIC STORYTELLING | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
This course immerses students in the great tradition of comedic literature and gives them a strong foundation in all its forms. Students will read works from the classic comedic authors canon: Shakespeare, Plutarch, Parker, Gay, Toole among others. Students will learn how these seminal works were created, how they were received by the public, and how they have influenced contemporary cinematic storytelling.

DC 501 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 476 | THE BUSINESS OF COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
In this course, students explore the process of preparing to enter the professional marketplace as comedy writers. Emphasis will be placed on strategically evaluating the unique voice of existing projects for commercial viability, and curating a portfolio suitable for market demands and distribution trends. SCWR 474 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 477 | STAND-UP COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
In this course, students will study and analyze stand-up comedy as a route to success in Film and Television. Students will learn about the history of stand up comedy and the comedians who parlayed success on the stage into success in television and films. Students will study the process of how comedians first created their material and honed/perfected it on stages around the world. Finally, students will mine their own lives for funny stories, creating original stand-up comedy routines (5-10 minutes), work-shopping them in class and eventually performing these routines on the Main Stage at Zanies Comedy Club.

SCWR 478 | ADVANCED STAND-UP COMEDY | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
Students will focus on developing an original comedy set and then taking it from stage-to-screen. Students will create and develop their material in class, perform in front of peers, and perform at comedy clubs all in the service of crafting an original pitch for a longer project for the screen (web series, a TV show or movie).

SCWR 479 | COMEDY, JOKE, AND SKETCH WRITING (FORMERLY DC 483) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
Students will learn techniques and formulas for joke writing, writing sketch comedy packets, and writing for news driven comedy shows. Students will apply these skills to their existing scripts as well as to developing new material.

SCWR 480 | COMEDY FILMMAKING | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
This introduction to film production focuses on collaboration, comedy and visual storytelling. Drawing on individual interests and observations, students produce a non-fiction short and then transition to developing a series of comedic narrative filmmaking exercises.

SCWR 476 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 481 | COMEDY FILMMAKING II | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
In this course, students refine their filmmaking skills by meticulously climbing through the stages of pre-production for their original short comedy film. Students ideate, craft, and revise their screenplay, then prepare for production by casting, scouting, budgeting, and rehearsing. Principal photography, editing, and final delivery of this project should be completed in SCWR 482 Comedy Filmmaking III.

SCWR 480 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 482 | COMEDY FILMMAKING III | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
In this advanced comedy filmmaking course, students will focus on the principal photography, editing, and final delivery of their original projects developed in SCWR 481 Comedy Filmmaking II. Reinforcing the importance of collaboration, students will work in different capacities on the projects of their classmates. Emphasis is placed on refining filmmaking skills and ensuring the continuity of the director's comedic vision through the post-production workflow process.

SCWR 481 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 490 | TOPICS IN SCREENWRITING (FORMERLY DC 405) | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)
Advanced study in screenwriting focusing on a specific genre each quarter such as: Science Fiction, Film Noir, Comedy, Action-Adventure, Nonfiction, etc. May be repeated for credit.
SCWR 492 | TOPICS IN LA | 2-6 quarter hours
(Graduate)
This course features an in-depth study of an aesthetic, history, business or filmmaking method. Students will analyze the distinctive traits and application of the selected topic within the broader context of the film and television industry in Los Angeles. Specific topics will be selected by the instructor and will vary with each quarter.

SCWR 499 | INTERNSHIPS IN MEDIA AND DESIGN | 1-4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
This is an internship/independent study course for graduate students, which offers the opportunity to reflect on an internship while gaining professional experience, industry contact and referrals while still in school. Opportunities in post-production, motion picture production, advertising, television, animation, game design, graphic design, motion graphics and interactive media can all qualify for the course. Students will work independently on class assignments. Assignments will be determined by the instructor and based on the number of credits in which the student is enrolled. Admission to the program requires consent of the internship course instructor after verification of the student’s internship. PREREQUISITE(S): Internship. (variable credit)

SCWR 500 | WRITING FOR FILM THESIS DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 498) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will develop a feature-length thesis project in preparation for writing the first draft of their thesis screenplay. The development process will include assignments designed to aid students in choosing their thesis project, fostering a strong personal connection to that project, creating compelling three-dimensional characters, and designing a clear, effective narrative structure for the screenplay. This course will culminate with a completed outline or treatment, and a pitch session with each student’s thesis committee. SCWR 400 and (SCWR 451 or SCWR 401) are prerequisites for this class.

SCWR 501 | WRITING FOR FILM THESIS I (FORMERLY DC 506) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will complete an outline and first draft of their feature length screenplay. In a workshop environment, students will get extensive feedback from their instructor and peers. SCWR 500 or SCWR 550 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 502 | WRITING FOR FILM THESIS II (FORMERLY DC 507) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will revise their thesis feature script. In a workshop environment, students will receive notes to help revise their project. Students will also be expected to meet with their thesis committee to receive additional notes to be applied to the rewrite. SCWR 501 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 550 | WRITING FOR TV THESIS DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY DC 497) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will select and then develop a television thesis project in preparation for writing the first draft of their thesis pilot. The development process will include assignments designed to aid students in choosing their thesis project, fostering a strong personal connection to that project, and creating compelling three-dimensional characters in a world or situation that will provide sustainable long-term conflict. The course will culminate with a completed show bible, an outline for the pilot, and a pitch session with each student’s thesis committee. SCWR 400 and (SCWR 401 or SCWR 402) are prerequisites for this class.

SCWR 551 | WRITING FOR TV THESIS I (FORMERLY DC 508) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will complete a show bible, pilot, and future episode of an original television concept. In a workshop environment, students will get extensive feedback from their instructor and peers. SCWR 500 or SCWR 550 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 552 | WRITING FOR TV THESIS II (FORMERLY DC 509) | 4 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Students will revise their television thesis scripts. In a workshop environment, students will receive notes to help revise their project. Students will also be expected to meet with their thesis committee to receive additional notes to be applied to the rewrite. SCWR 551 is a prerequisite for this class.

SCWR 559 | INDEPENDENT STUDY | 1-8 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Independent study form required. PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of instructor. (variable credit)

SCWR 701 | THESIS CONTINUATION | 0 quarter hours
(Graduate)
Non-credit. Students admitted to MFA program who have completed all the required coursework and who are regularly using the facilities of the University for thesis production and/or post-production are required to be registered each quarter of the academic year until the thesis and defense have been completed. (0 credit hours) FILM 510 or ANI 640 is a prerequisite for this class.