

SCREENWRITING (MFA)

The MFA in Screenwriting is the terminal degree in writing for film and television. The program culminates in the successful completion of the MFA thesis screenplay or teleplay.

The MFA Screenwriting Degree has now been split into two (2) concentrations. Students are required to choose one (1) of the following:

- Standard
- Comedy

| Program Requirements | Quarter Hours |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Degree Requirements | 68 |
| Total hours required | 68 |

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Describe standard structural paradigms and narrative techniques utilized in the writing of feature films and television shows.
- Assess the narrative strengths and weaknesses of a given piece of scripted content.
- Apply a professional creative process to the development of film and television story concepts.
- Prepare a story pitch for a screenplay or pilot that meets professional standards.
- Write screenplays and teleplays using standard entertainment industry format.
- Complete the first draft of a feature screenplay or television pilot on deadline.
- Rewrite an original screenplay or teleplay based on critical feedback.

Degree Requirements

Course Requirements

- Course requirements are determined by the concentration selected.
- No Introductory Course may be substituted for any other course at any level.

LA Quarter

MFA in Screenwriting students may apply to participate in the LA Quarter.

This ten-week immersion program is structured around living in Los Angeles, taking classes on a historic studio lot, and interning at high profile companies that align with students' professional aspirations.

If selected to participate, students are required to enroll in SCWR 441 (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) Industry and Pitching Seminar and FILM 499 Internships in Media and Design in Los Angeles.

Thesis Project

MFA in Screenwriting students must complete a thesis project which consists of a feature length screenplay or an original television pilot, pitch deck, and series bible. Thesis projects must be at a level of quality that warrant representation by literary agents and managers. Satisfactory completion of the thesis project is determined by the Thesis Committee.

Thesis Committee

Students will be assigned a Thesis Committee that consists of two faculty members and their thesis course instructor who will serve as Thesis Chair. This committee serves as mentors and ultimately judges the thesis project as "pass" or "rewrite".

Thesis Project Year One

Students will enroll in SCWR 500 (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) Writing for Film Thesis Development or SCWR 550 (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) Writing for TV Thesis Development where they will develop and pitch their project to their Thesis Committee for feedback.

Thesis Project Year Two

Students will enroll in SCWR (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) 501 Writing for Film Thesis I or SCWR 551 Writing for TV Thesis I where they will write the first draft of their thesis project. This draft must be submitted to the Thesis Committee on or before the last day of final exams for the quarter in which they are enrolled in SCWR 501 or SCWR 551. Students will receive feedback from the Thesis Committee before the start of the next quarter. Students will then enroll in SCWR (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) 502 Writing for Film Thesis II or SCWR 552 Writing for TV Thesis II where they will rewrite their project. The new draft must be submitted to the Thesis Committee on or before the last day of final exams for the quarter in which they are enrolled in SCWR 502 or SCWR 552.

Thesis Project Defense

The Thesis Committee will evaluate the revised project as part of the thesis defense and the Thesis Chair will notify the student as to whether they received "pass" or a "rewrite" decision. If a student receives a "pass", they must complete their remaining degree requirements to graduate. If a student receives a "rewrite", they must submit their revised project by an assigned date to the Thesis Committee for a new thesis defense. The thesis defense process will be repeated until the student receives a "pass".

Students who have completed their degree requirements but have not completed the thesis project must enroll in SCWR 701 (<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/academics/Pages/Current/Requirements-MFA-in-Screenwriting-Standard.aspx>) Thesis Continuation to maintain their active student status.

Students in this degree program must meet the following requirements:

- Complete a minimum of 68 graduate credit hours in the designated degree program.
- Complete all graduate courses and requirements listed in the designated degree program.
- Earn a grade of C- or better in all graduate courses of the designated degree program.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Satisfactorily complete the thesis project as determined by the student's Thesis Committee
- Students cannot count credit earned towards a previously awarded master's or MFA degree toward the completion of this MFA program.

For DePaul's policy on repeat graduate courses and a complete list of academic policies see the DePaul Graduate Handbook.

Students are required to choose one of the following concentrations:

- Comedy Concentration, Screenwriting (MFA) (<https://catalog.depaul.edu/programs/screenwriting-mfa/comedy-concentration-screenwriting-mfa/>)
- Standard Concentration, Screenwriting (MFA) (<https://catalog.depaul.edu/programs/screenwriting-mfa/standard-concentration-screenwriting-mfa/>)