

THEA/FILM 405 Scriptwriting

Trimester 2 2009

30 Points



TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2009

Study week: 19 to 23 October 2009

Last piece of assessment due: 23 October 2009

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

John Downie Email: john.downie@vuw.ac.nz Phone: 463 6826

Room: 101, 85 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: posted on office door.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Tuesdays 15.10-18.00 Room 305, 77 Fairlie Terrace

Tutorials

Individual tutorials with John Downie TBA

COURSE DELIVERY

Weekly open seminars, plus two one-on-one tutorials.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information for this course will be posted under the course number on the Course Notice boards in 77 Fairlie Terrace (Theatre) and 85 Fairlie Terrace (Film). If you are uncertain about any elements relating to classes and course assignments, please email John Downie for advice.

COURSE CONTENT

This is a creative course employing a number of touchstone topics with which to work into and through the broader perspectives of script creation for different performance mediums, paying particular attention to dramatic and narrative structure, action, and dialogue.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should:

- be able to understand the ways in which the scriptwriting process contributes towards the final outcomes of a performance text.
- have developed personal scriptwriting skills, both in the area of locating and opening out ideas, and in the crafting and drafting skills involved in realising sequences, scenes and acts.
- be able to understand certain key aspects of a performance script provided by the scriptwriting process, such as the designing of actions to a timeframe, the employment of plot reversals (peripeteia), concealing and revealing, and so on.
- have completed the writing of two scripts for any performance medium, one being of short duration (5-10 minutes) and one of 20-30 minutes; to have written a short scenario for a 20-30 minute script; to have compiled a portfolio of creative writing exercises; and to have compiled some kind of notebook on process.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The University anticipates that you should be able to devote at least 12 hours per week to a full-year (two trimester) paper in a 4-paper Honours or Graduate programme. This year the course is being taught in a

more compressed single trimester format, so that this expectation for writing exercises and projects, reading, and notation will demand somewhere between 15-24 hours per week. At Honours level, it is expected that students will attend every seminar; if you expect to be absent from a class seminar, please contact the course co-ordinator in advance if possible.

GROUP WORK

Though students will be assessed individually for all assignment work, informal collaborations between students will be invited in the context of the weekly class.

READINGS

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of VicBooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from VicBooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. You can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to you or they can be picked up from the shop. You will be contacted when they are available.

Essential texts:

There are no set texts for this course, though there will be short handouts made available in the context of class work. Students will be encouraged to select and read (in literary, performance, and audio-visual form, as appropriate) a particular model or exemplar of 'performance authorship', and to record critical responses to this study in their individual notebooks.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

There are five assessable components to the course.

Assignment 1 A short (5-10 minute) script written for any performance medium. 10%. *Due Tuesday 4 August.*

Assignment 2 A short scenario (20-30 minutes) for any performance medium. 20%. *Due Tuesday 18 August.*

Assignment 3 A workbook/folio of writing exercises. 20%. *Due Tuesday 29 September.*

Assignment 4 A crafted and drafted full-length script (20-30 minutes), for any performance medium. 30%. *Due Tuesday 13 October.*

Assignment 5 A notebook on process. 20%. *Due Friday 23 October.*

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

Unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical reasons with certificate), or a previously agreed extension, work handed in late will normally lose 2% for each weekday late, starting from the hour the work is due. Comments on late work will be minimal. Work submitted late without an extension will not normally be accepted if it is more than two weeks after the due date. **Note:** if you fail to hand in work by this two-week deadline, you will normally be considered as having failed to meet a mandatory requirement and therefore fail the course.

Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to submit your final project for unavoidable reasons. The Aegrotat procedures are listed in *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under “about Victoria” on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Extensions

If you wish to ask for an extension (e.g., because of pressure of work) please do so well before the due date. Extension requests on the day the assignment is due will not normally be accepted.

Requests for extensions must be made in writing, by filling out the extension form (available on your course Blackboard site) and getting your Course Co-ordinator to sign it. Only Course Co-ordinators may grant extension, not tutors. The signed Extension form must be attached to the assignment when it is submitted, plus any relevant documentation. If circumstances prevent you from accessing the extension form, you must attach an email from the Course Co-ordinator, which confirms that an extension has been granted, to your assignment. In real emergencies we can of course be flexible, but the most important thing is for you to somehow let us know as soon as possible.

Extensions will not be granted beyond **Friday 23 October**, except under exceptional circumstances. The University does not permit the School to accept work after the last day of the examination period.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to complete all assignments within the stipulated deadlines and options, and to attend a minimum of 80% of weekly class sessions.

STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course (i. e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer. Work submitted in the final examination will obviously be handwritten. You are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

You should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic/Publications.aspx>

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
THEATRE AND FILM PROGRAMMES COURSE OUTLINE THEA/FILM 405

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 13 14 Jul Self.

Week 14 21 Jul Moment.

Week 15 28 Jul Dance.

Week 16 4 Aug Story. Assignment 1 DUE

Week 17 11 Aug Montage.

Week 18 18 Aug Predicament. Assignment 2 DUE

Mid Trimester Break: 24 August – Friday 4 September 2009

Week 19 8 Sept Seen.

Week 20 15 Sept Heard.

Week 21 22 Sept Myth/History.

Week 22 29 Sept Transformation. Assignment 3 DUE

Week 23 6 Oct Athletes.

Week 24 13 Oct Demonstrations. Assignment 4 DUE

23 Oct Assignment 5 DUE