The University of Texas at El Paso
University Studies 1301: The Writing Behind the Movies: Screenwriting for Freshman
Fall 2018: CRN 11055 TR 9:00 to 10:20 Old Main 201 LC with RWS 1301 CRN 15839

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Course Description:
In this course, students will read, analyze and investigate a feature length screenplay from a well-known writer, as well as screenplays written by their own peers. Through the study of this type of literature and the literary techniques that support screenwriting, students will begin to experiment in creating their own screenplays. Through sharing their ideas of literature and work-shopping their own writings, students will understand that critical thinking, writing and literature will become an essential part of their education. Along with critical thinking, students will learn other strategies for success in college, including time management, note taking and reading skills. Students will also be expected to participate in the UTEP community and undertake activities around campus to enrich their experience at the university.

This course is in a learning community with RWS 1301 (CRN 15839). You must remain registered in all sections through census day. This class is part of a Learning Community (LC) along with RWS 1301 and several of the readings and assignments in this class will be integrated with the work you do for the other course.

Course Goals for UTEP University 1301:
Goal 1. Students will develop and apply elements of leadership through effective individual participation and meaningful team collaboration to empower them to be agents of change.
   1.1 Students will assess and reflect on their strengths and leadership skill development.
   1.2 Students will engage in active learning through individual, team, and class activities that develop their leadership skills.
1.3 Students will learn more about collaboration, roles, and facilitation skills through faculty instruction and student practice.
1.4 Students will develop effective interpersonal communication skills to include listening, sharing diverse perspectives, and soliciting others’ viewpoints.
1.5 Students will improve their interpersonal conflict management strategies.

Goal 2. Students will examine the roles and responsibilities crucial for their success in college and beyond.

2.1 Students will examine personal and social transition issues affecting college success.
2.2 Students will become familiar with the importance of participating in high-impact practices identified in the UTEP Edge.
2.3 Students will engage in at least one academic and one professional goal-setting activity or exercise.
2.4 Students will develop a plan of study by participating in appropriate academic advising.
2.5 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the rules of academic integrity and will practice acceptable academic behavior.
2.6 Students will become familiar with major UTEP academic policies and requirements in order to remain in good academic standing and graduate in a timely manner.
2.7 Students will demonstrate regular use of university communication systems, such as email, bulletin broadcasts, websites, and Mobile Campus.

Goal 3. Students will identify, assess, and build on their strengths and experiences to develop academic and transitional strategies necessary for success in their academic, career, and life goals.

3.1 Students will reflect on their responsibility for and contribution to their own learning.
3.2 Students will work to improve their oral, written, and electronic communication skills.
3.3 Students will work to improve their academic success strategies such as note-taking, annotation, active reading, test taking, time management, and stress management.
3.4 Students will become familiar with learning management systems such as Blackboard.
3.5 Students will examine their academic, career, and life goals by participating in at least one self-assessment activity about their interests, abilities, and values.
3.6 Students will participate in at least one activity, exercise, or information session to become familiar with the steps, including post-graduate education, required to prepare for a career.

Goal 4. Students will engage in research and critical thinking activities that demonstrate their ability to effectively integrate their learning within, across, and beyond academic settings.

4.1 Students will engage in critical thinking and problem-solving through individual, team, and class activities.
4.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to develop an effective research strategy based on the specifications of the research assignment.
4.3 Students will engage in library and database research.
4.4 Students will locate and critically evaluate the reliability, validity, and accuracy of sources.
4.5 Students will develop a project that involves critical evaluation and effective integration of sources.
4.6 Students will demonstrate the ethical use of sources such as accurate paraphrasing, quotations, and citations.
4.7 Students will reflect on how the research process applies to their learning within, across, and beyond academic settings.

Goal 5. Students will engage in campus and community activities to increase their sense of academic and social belonging.

5.1 Students will begin to build networks of faculty, staff, and peers to create a supportive and positive learning environment.
5.2 Students will attend/participate in a minimum of two social, cultural, and intellectual events at UTEP.
5.3 Students will become aware of and use selected academic and student support resources.
5.4 Students will meet one-on-one in person or virtually at least twice with the instructional team to discuss and receive feedback about their academic progress and transition to UTEP.
5.5 Students will meet in person or virtually with at least two other faculty or staff members important to their academic progress such as their academic advisor, their other professors, teaching assistants and/or tutors.
5.6 Students will become familiar with the university’s student organizations.

**Required Readings for University Studies 1301: The Writing Behind the Movies: Screenwriting for Freshman:**


**Borders: Crossing Into your Future, 7th Edition only (Available at the UTEP Bookstore)**

**Recommended Readings for University Studies 1301: The Writing Behind the Movies: Screenwriting for Freshman:**


**Grading Scale:**

900-1000 = A  
800-899 = B  
700-799 = C  
600-699 = D  
<599 = F

You must earn at least a C to receive credit for this course. Please keep all graded work and verify your grade throughout the semester.
**Grading Points:**

**Participation**
- Meetings with Instructor: 20
- Meetings Peer Leader: 20
- Attendance: 60
- Workshop #1: 10
- Workshop #2: 10
- End-of-Semester Online Student Survey: 20

**Writing Assignments**
- Blackboard Writing Assignment: 30
- Group Contract: 30
- Email/Thesis Sentence Assignment: 30
- Critical Analysis: 100

**Presentations**
- Critical Analysis Presentation: 100

**Other Assignments**
- Social Events (Two total): 20 each
- Choices 360: 40
- Resume: 40
- Library Scavenger Hunt: 50
- Library Modules: 30
- Formatting Quiz: 20

**Final Project**
- Screenplay Pitch (25)
- Treatment (25)
- Screenplay Rough Draft (25)
- Screenplay 2nd Draft (25)
- Screenplay Final Draft (50)
- Film (200)

**Final Total:** 350

**Description of UNIV 1301 Assignments:**

**Participation**

Students will be expected to meet once with each the instructor and Peer Leader. Meetings with the Peer Leader will be held during the first few weeks of the semester and meetings with Instructor will be held after Freshman mid-term grades have been released to students. Students **must** meet with the Instructor and the Peer Leader during the semester for a grade. However, you are required to visit office hours any other time that the instructor or Peer Leader find it necessary. We want to hear from you about how you are doing in this class as well as your other classes. Please come see us if you do not understand something or need help or have any questions. THERE ARE NO STUPID QUESTIONS!!!

Part of the participation grade will be attendance. In order to display proper participation, students will be expected to attend class regularly. Attendance will be taken daily for a grade, and tardies will be noted.

Additionally, students will peer evaluate their group members’ screenplay for a participation grade at least twice during the semester. Student will be graded on their discussion with their group. Participation is important.

The final part of the participation grade is the End-of-Semester Online Student Survey. An email will be sent inviting the student to participate. An announcement will be made close to the time the email will go out.
Writing Assignments
At the beginning of the semester, students will do a Blackboard writing assignment. This will take the form of a discussion board post in the course’s Blackboard, under the weekly module. Another writing assignment will be the Group Contract which will be done as a group. One designated member of the group will upload the contract to Blackboard. As a group assignment, this will be a group grade. Other writing assignments include 4pg, typed, critical analysis of one feature length screenplay and how the script tackles a social issue. In preparation for that assignment, students will be writing an Email/Thesis Statement assignment that will highlight proper email etiquette, as well as give the professor a chance to review the thesis statement for the main research project of the course.

Presentations
Over the course of the semester, students will prepare to give an in-class presentation. The presentation should be approximately 5-minutes and no more than 7-minutes, which gives each student an opportunity to display their research on how a screenplay reflects a social issue.

Other Assignments
Throughout the semester students will be required to attend two social, cultural or intellectual UTEP events not associated with their other classes or school activities (for example, if you are in orchestra a concert you play in does not count) Acceptable events include theatrical productions, concerts, movies at the Cinema Novo, a seminar or talk sponsored by any department, job fairs, a game, or any social event, but it must be sponsored by UTEP. For proof of attendance of the first social event, students must create and upload an infographic that will serve as an advertisement to have the other students in the course attend that or a similar event. For the second social event, students will create a .gif of a significant image from the event to the designated Blackboard discussion board. As part of the career exploration component of UNIV 1301, students will take and complete the Choices 360 Inventory and homework assignment. Students will also develop a Freshman Resume. In terms of information literacy, students will be expected to complete the Library Modules videos and quizzes prior to the first class visit to the library. There will also be a Library Scavenger hunt prior to the class’s second visit to the library. There will also be a quiz regarding the proper formatting of a screenplay which will be taken on Blackboard after formatting has been covered.

Final Project
The final project for the course will detail the student’s growth as a screenwriter. Student will move through the screenwriting process with assignments that include a pitch, a treatment and several drafts of their original short screenplay. Screenplay Rough draft must be a minimum of 3-typed pages. The second draft must contain a minimum of 4 pages, and the final draft must be a minimum of 5 pages with a maximum of 10 pages.

Group Work
The final piece of the final project will be a film. Students will work with their group to select and create a film based on the screenplay created by one of the group members. The film must be no less than four minutes and no more than five minutes without credits.

Entering Student Research and Creative Projects Showcase
On Saturday, December 8, 2018 1-4 p.m., the Entering Student Program will host an event to display the best projects from all UNIV 1301 sections. Students will present their work to peers, invited guests, and faculty. It is quite an honor to be nominated and then chosen for this event as it is a very competitive process. I hope that all of you will plan on participating. Location: Tomas Rivera Conference Center, Union East, 3rd Floor.

Final Exam
Exemption from final examinations cannot be given. Final examinations are scheduled to be two hours, forty-five (45) minutes in length and take place during the final examination period. It is the policy of the University not to administer a second final examination in a course. It is also University policy that
students shall not have more than two final examinations in a single day. In the unlikely event that the examination schedule results in a student having three final examinations on a single day, the faculty member upon the request of the student shall reschedule the second of that student’s three examinations. 

In lieu of a final exam, students will be expected to submit their Critical Analysis during the designated exam time.

**Class Policies:**

**Attendance**
Participation is key in this course. Therefore, attendance and arriving on time are required. Two tardies equal one absence. Students may be absent two (2) times without penalty. Once you reach three (3) absences you must meet with the instructor. *At four (4) absences you will be dropped. A fourth absence after the course drop deadline of November 2nd will result in a grade of F.*

Unavoidable absences due to illness or emergency that are properly documented *may* be excused at the discretion of the instructor, not the Peer Leader. Do not schedule job interviews, medical, dental, or other appointments during class time; those are entirely avoidable. If you are absent you are still responsible for everything that is covered in class. Being absent or late is no excuse for missing a due date or misunderstanding an assignment, so contact a classmate in order to find out what you missed. If you are absent on the day an assignment is due, and the absence is excused, the assignment must be turned in on time for it to be considered for grading. *There are no make-ups for in-class assignments or quizzes.*

**Dropping the Class**

Students may drop the class and receive a “W” any time prior to November 2, 2018. Keep in mind that you are only allowed 6 drops over the course of your entire college career. If you accumulate four absences prior to the drop deadline, the instructor will drop you. However, due to the individual nature of Financial Aid, Visa status, etc. dropping and/or being dropped may not be in your best interest. Please consult the instructor and/or your academic advisor before dropping the course.

**Deadlines**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, unless stated otherwise on the assignment sheet. *Late work will not be accepted.* Unless you have a documented emergency or other extenuating circumstance, your late work will not be graded. It is best to visit the instructor during office hours to discuss the possibility of a late assignment being accepted. Any assignment may be handed in early. Deadlines for the campus social events are twice per semester (one before midterm, the other after). This means this is the last day to turn in a social event. If you are a student athlete or student that is required to travel as part of extracurricular activities or a student organization, your assignment is due prior to your departure.

**Extra Credit**

Student can earn 20 extra credit points for attending or participating in the Entering Student Research and Creative Projects Showcase. Other extra credit opportunities may be announced in class, on Blackboard, and by email. However, the student must discuss, either by email or during office hours, their intent to do extra credit and why they feel they need the extra points.
Students can receive extra credit for providing the instructor with a screenshot of their my.utep.edu “classes” page showing completion of the Course Evaluation for their UNIV 1301 course. Screenshot can be emailed to the instructor for 10 extra credit points. For credit, please see the example to the left to see the information required: First name, course list, and status reading: Evaluation Complete.

Format of Written Work
Screenplays must be submitted in proper format which will be covered in readings, video tutorials and in class lecture.
All other written assignments done outside of class must be in MLA format, typed using black ink, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1” margins, double-spaced, on white paper, and stapled. Work that does not meet these stipulations will not be accepted. For more information students can go to the Purdue Owl website: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/ and see the example to the right. 
Handwritten notes and in-class work must be legible.

University Policies:
Copyright Statement
Some of the materials in this course are copyrighted. Violation of US copyright law can result in civil damages up to $100,000 for each work copied. Copying of textbooks is not “fair use” under the Copyright Act. The “fair use doctrine” only permits non-commercial copying of part (in general, not more than 10%) of a copyrighted work. Do not bring a copied textbook to this class. Your cooperation is expected.

Academic Dishonesty
It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students’ Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for investigation and appropriate disposition.
It is contrary to University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty in lieu of normally charging the student through the Dean of Students. Similarly, students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with a faculty member to receive a grade of "F" or any reduced grade in lieu of being charged with scholastic dishonesty.
Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

**Plagiarism**

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors. Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and will be reported to the Dean as mentioned above.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have or suspect a disability and need an accommodation you should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu or go to Room 106 Union East Building. Please visit CASS and see me personally in the first two weeks to discuss any special needs you might have.

**Student Conduct**

[From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Section 2, Chapter 1]: All students are expected and required to obey federal, state, and local laws, to comply with the Regents' Rules and Regulations, with The University of Texas System and University rules and regulations, with directives issued by an administrative official of the U.T. System or The University of Texas at El Paso in the course of his or her authorized duties, and to observe standards of conduct appropriate for an academic institution.

**Special Notes from Prof Martinez:**

**Warning**

***We will have frequent discussions on topics that are sometimes controversial. Students are expected to tolerate and respect the opinions of others and to behave as responsible adults.***

I have never had any issue with my students. However, if you are being unprofessional or rude during a class discussion on a sensitive topic, I will ask you to leave. This will result in loss of points for attendance/participation.

Furthermore, we will be watching scenes from *The Godfather* and other motion pictures. *The Godfather* carries a Motion Picture Association of America rating of R, and while it is rated this way for some of the violence and adult situations, students will be expected to view the scenes and have discussion about the scenes based on its academic value.

**Technology**

*Please TURN OFF cell phones before class.* At the very least, silence it. Cellphones should remain out of the instructor or Peer Leader’s sight.

Students may use laptops or tablets for note-taking or research. However, use of Facebook, games, or any other improper use of the laptop or tablet will result in loss of privilege. If technology is used irresponsibly it will no longer be allowed.