

NAME OF SCHOOL: School of Communication, Creative and Cinematic Arts

COURSE: FLA 2020A - Principals Of writing for Dramatic and Factual films

LECTURER : Moses Kevin Wamalwa

CREDIT: 3

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays/Wednesdays 11.00 AM – 12.00 NOON

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1. DESCRIPTION

1.1 Prerequisite:

The course aims to introduce the learner to a practical interaction with the principles of writing for dramatic and factual production in film. It will engage the learners in practical sessions of choices of theme/event, genre, characterization, time, trends in the film industry.

2. LINK TO UNIVERSITY MISSION OUTCOMES & TO PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course the learner should be able:

- a) Demonstrate effective choices in historical events in writing for film.
- b) Examine dramatic and factual scripts and critique their concerns.
- c) Critique the trends in writing for dramatic and factual films.

3. EXPECTED COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course the learner should be able to:

- a) Evaluate the choice of events in dramatic and factual films;
- b) Demonstrate basic skills in writing for dramatic and factual films;
- c) Critique the modern trends in scripting for factual and dramatic films.

4. CONTENT & CLASS SCHEDULE: (Indicate: learning outcome focused on, topic/sub topic, readings, and any assignments due in that week)

4.1 Week One

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to examine the nature of factual films and define the term Dramatic films

Topics of interest include:

Concept to Screen, Standard screenplay format, history and film

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) Define Dramatic films
- b) Examine factual films
- c) Give examples and explain the choices in given factual and dramatic films

- ACTIVITIES:**
1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
 2. Watch examples from Youtube
 3. Assignment for group All: Examine how the scripts of dramatic and factual films across Africa engage historical events. (Group 1: Central Africa, Group 2: South Africa, Group 3: West Africa, Group 4; East Africa)

4.2 **Week Two**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to identify at least 5 distinctive features in dramatic film productions.

Topics of interest include:

Choice of significant historical events for film.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) to identify at least 5 distinctive features of dramatic film productions.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group All: Pick a fresh historical event and design a plot.

4.3 **Week Three**

- a) The objective of this week is to introduce the student to identifying the sticking points in a given script plot and examine choice of relevant titles

Topics of interest include:

Titling and choice of events in screenplays.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) identify the sticking points in a given script plot.
- b) Give a credible title to given events

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group All: Each group to identify the history, politics and global ideas in selected screenplays.

4.4 **Week Four**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on visualisation for their chosen dramatic and factual screenplay concepts and discuss effective dialogue use in screenplays.

Topics of interest include:

From paper to screen and dialogue in screenplays.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) discuss visualisation for a dramatic and factual screenplay
- b) discuss effective dialogue use in screenplays

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group **AII**: Each group to sketch dialogue for their chosen events and plot.

4.5 **Week Five**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on the importance of research in scripting and identifying the main object(s) of the factual events research.

Topics of interest include:

Research in screen writing.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) discuss importance of research in screenwriting;
- b) Examine sticking points in chosen events.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group **AII**: Each group to examine sticking points in chosen events.

4.6 **Week Six**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on the place of cultural context in screenwriting.

Topics of interest include:

Culture and film.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) discuss importance of clear cultural context in screenwriting;

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group **AII**: Each group to discuss cultural contexts in chosen films.

4.7 **Week Seven**

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT TEST

4.8 **Week Eight**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to writing dialogue for a chosen factual event in groups.

Topics of interest include:

The writing process; dialogue.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) Write a short dialogue for a chosen factual event in groups

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.

Discuss in

2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for group **All**: 'Filmmaking is a visual medium, so "show it, don't tell it"' respect to screen writing with a clear example from films you watched.

4.9 **Week Nine**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to writing dramatic scripts.

Topics of interest include:

The writing process; drama and facts.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- b) Write a short dialogue for a chosen dramatic event in groups

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for **All**: Write a two page dramatic factual screenplay event.

4.10 **Week Ten**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on 'universality' and 'particularity' in dramatic and factual production

Topics of interest include:

Particularity and Universality.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) Identify universal elements in a screenplay;
- b) Identify particular elements in a screenplay.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for **All Groups**: Examine history of any factual film you have watched.

4.11 **Week Eleven**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on standpoints in factual films

Topics of interest include:

Standpoints in factual films.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- a) Identify standpoints in factual films;

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for **All Groups**: Examine history of any factual film you have watched.

4.12 **Week Twelve (Course evaluation administered by the Academic Program Administrators)**

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on character choices in factual films.

Topics of interest include:

Character choice in factual films.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- b) Character choice in factual films;

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube
3. Assignment for **All Groups**: Examine choice of characters in any factual film you have

watched.

4.13 Week Thirteen

The objective of this week is to introduce the student to discussions on major points in the course

Topics of interest include:

Revision.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- c) Summarise the coursework;

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in the Discussion Forum on the topics of interest.
2. Watch examples from Youtube

4.14 Week Fourteen – Final Project

5. TEACHING METHODS

Seminar presentations, discussions, writing assignments, and film watching.

6. COURSE TEXT & OTHER READINGS

Pilar Alessandra *The Coffee Break Screenwriter* California: Michael Wiese Productions, 2016

Jill Chamberlain *The Nutshell Technique: Crack the Secret of Successful Screenwriting*
University of Texas Press, 2016

Lee Zahavi Jessup *Getting it Write: An Insider's Guide to a Screenwriting Career* California:
Michael Wiese Productions, 2014

Other Library resources:

You can access Web Based Databases such as EBSCOhost, Ebrary, Keesings, Online, PsycARTICLES, JSTOR, Gale to locating articles in journals, electronic books, magazines and newspapers through the library catalog, which is available on-line from within and outside the

campus via the USIU website (<http://www.usiu.ac.ke>). There are 24 workstations within the library, and Wired access points, available throughout the building, provide high speed network connections. There are also other workstations in the computer labs. Accessibility of e- resources off campus is through Virtual Private Network (VPN).

7. **COURSE EVALUATION** (this is a sample; the nature of the course determines the number and type of assessment tasks. Course work should constitute at least three tasks, and the final examination should carry higher marks than the mid-semester)

<i>Attendance and participation</i>	5%
<i>Assignments & Quizzes</i>	20%
<i>Term paper & presentation</i>	15%
<i>CAT</i>	10%
<i>Mid-Semester Exam</i>	20%
<i>Project (Screenplay)</i>	30%
Total	100%

8. **OTHER REQUIREMENTS (Personalized)**

9. **Key Institutional Academic Policies**

Students should note the following are key policies as outlined in the University Catalogue and Students Handbook

1. *Academic dishonesty*

- a. Any intentional giving or use of external assistance during an examination without the express permission of the faculty member giving the examination.
- b. **Fabrication:** any falsification or invention of data, citation or other authority in an academic exercise;
- c. **Plagiarism:** any passing off of another's ideas, words, or work as one's own;
- d. **Previously Submitted Work:** presenting work prepared for and submitted to another course;

2. *Class Attendance*

Students are expected to attend all classes. Upon being absent from more **seven** classes in a 3 credit unit course or from more than **three** classes for those that meet once a week, the instructor will give a student an **"F"** grade for that course.

10. **USIU GRADING**

- A 90 - 100
- A- 87 - 89
- B+ 84 - 86
- B 80 - 83
- B- 77 - 79
- C+ 74 - 76
- C 70 - 73
- C- 67 - 69

D+ 64 - 66
D 62 - 63
D- 60 - 61
F 0 - 59