



South Portland, Maine 04106

## Communications and New Media

**Title: Writing for Media** **Catalog Number: CNMS-125 01**  
**Credit Hours: 3** **Total Contact Hours: 45**  
**Lecture (or Lab): Room HILD-102** **Instructor: Huey Coleman**  
**Office Hours – Location: By Appointment, before or after class in room 102**  
**Contact Information: E-mail: [hcoleman@smccme.edu](mailto:hcoleman@smccme.edu)**

**Course Syllabus – Writing for Media, CNMS - 125 01**  
**Class Meeting Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday, 3PM - 4:15PM**  
**January 17, 2017 - May 11, 2017**

### Course Description:

In this course you will learn basic media writing skills for a variety of types of video productions and new media projects for both non-fiction and fiction. Non-fiction scriptwriting includes news reports, commercials, PSAs, documentary formats, and the rapidly changing world of New Media. Interview techniques, the cornerstone to non-fiction formats, will be taught through practice sessions in the class and by going out to the community and interviewing people for your midterm documentary script assignment. In the second half of the semester you will concentrate on fiction scriptwriting. You will analyze examples of narrative cinema, develop scripts from assigned premises, and work on adaptations of short stories. The course final is writing your own original script for a short film. In addition, you will learn how to write treatments and proposals and practice giving “pitches” to your classmates on your projects. In each class you will take part in roundtable discussions and critiques and in class group assignments. The goal of the course is for you to develop scripts and ideas that can be used in future video and new media courses and in your own creative projects. This syllabus is subject to change.

### Text, Tools and / or Supplies:

\*Text: *The Screenwriter's Bible, 6th Edition: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script* (Expanded & Updated), David Trottier, Paperback, Feb 25, 2014

\*Software: Celtx scriptwriting software, <http://celtx.com/> free desktop software. On Celtx home page click “Pricing”, then select “Basic Scriptwriting, \$0 month, Sign Up”

**Evaluation & Grading:**

- a. Mid-term Exam 15%
- b. Attendance, Class Participation, Group Work, Oral Presentations, & Quizzes 30%
- c. Weekly Assignments 30%
- d. Final Exam 25%

**Assignments:**

All assignments are due at start of the following class and will be given each week. Your participation in class is an important component in determining your grade. Each week there will be time devoted to discussion on the subject at hand and each week you will need to be prepared to present all or a portion of your written assignment or oral presentation to the class. For some assignments and presentations you will work in teams partnering with fellow students in the class. Classes will include group critiques of the assignments. **Be aware that you must check your SMCC e-mail account weekly for course updates. Bring a laptop or tablet to class, if available.**

**Format**

Written assignments should be printed on 8.5x11 inch typed page, double spaced in 12 point font, with your name and date due at the top of the page. No discs please. You must keep a copy (digital or paper) of your written assignments and notes for oral presentations for reference use during the semester

**Course Policies Attendance:**

You are required, as stated in the college handbook, to attend all classes. A portion of your grade is determined by your attendance and active participation in class. Points will be deducted for unexcused absences, tardiness, or leaving class early. It is SMCC policy that if you have 3 consecutive unexcused absences then you receive an Administrative Failure which is reported to the dean of the college. I want all of you to do well in this class. If you are having problems keeping up with the class and the assignments, please talk to me so we can develop a plan that works for you.

**End-of-Course Evaluation**

Students complete evaluations for each course attended at SMCC. Evaluations are submitted online and can be accessed through the student portal. Students can access the course evaluations beginning one week before the end of classes. The deadline for submission of evaluations occurs Monday at 5 p.m. following the last day of the class. You will receive an e-mail to your student e-mail account when course evaluations are available.

**ADA Syllabus Statement**

Southern Maine Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and employer. For more information, please call (207) 741-5798. If you have a disabling condition and wish to request accommodations in order to have reasonable access to the programs and services offered by SMCC, you must register with the Disability Services Coordinator, Sandra Lynham, who can be reached at 741-5923. Further

information about services for students with disabilities and the accommodation process is available upon request at this number. Course policies about online testing are modified to suit each individual's accommodations.

### **SMCC Pay-for-Print Policy**

Each semester students receive a \$20 printing credit. The balance resets at the end of the semester and any remaining credits are removed. The College's pay-for-print system monitors printing on all printers (including those in general access labs, library printers, Tutoring Services, Campus Center Lounge and technology labs). Be sure to log OUT of the system when you've finished your printing, to prevent unauthorized access to your account. Students can check the number of pages they have printed by using the Printing Balance tool available on SMCC computers (located in the lower right corner of the screen, near the clock). Departments with work study students who need to print documents for the department should contact the Help Desk at 741-5696 to have a special account set up. To find ways to reduce your printing charges, please go to the IT Help tab on My SMCC. If you have questions about the pay-for-printing policy or your printing charges, please contact the Help Desk at 741-5696 or send an e-mail to [helpdesk@smccme.edu](mailto:helpdesk@smccme.edu).

### **Refunds**

Print jobs are eligible for a refund in the event of mechanical or electronic error on the part of the printer, print server, or software used to submit the job. Jobs are not eligible for a refund in cases where the job was not set up correctly, was submitted multiple times, or the student is not satisfied with the result. To request a refund, please bring the offending print to the IT Department in the basement of the Ross Technology Center. Refunds will be granted in the form of a credit to the student's account.

### **Add-Drop Policy**

Students who drop a course during the one-week "add/drop" period in the fall and spring semesters and the first three days of summer sessions receive a 100% refund of the tuition and associated fees for that course. Please note any course that meets for less than the traditional semester length, i.e., 15 weeks, has a pro-rated add/drop period. There is no refund for non-attendance.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

A student may withdraw from a course only during the semester in which s/he is registered for that course. The withdrawal period is the second through twelfth week of the Fall and Spring semesters and the second through ninth week of twelve-week Summer courses. This period is pro-rated for shorter-length courses (usually 75 percent of course meeting times; please check with the Registration Office. To withdraw from a course, a student must complete and submit the appropriate course withdrawal form, available at the Registration Office. This process must be completed either in person or by using SMCC e-mail accounts.

**Plagiarism Statement**

If an instructor suspects that a student has knowingly committed a violation defined in the Maine Community College System Policy on Student Grade Appeals and Academic Misconduct, the instructor has the authority to review the alleged misconduct and determine the grade that the student should receive for the assignment and the course. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the assignment or course and may require the student to complete additional work for the course. The instructor may consult with the department chair and/or the College's chief academic officer prior to making such decisions. If a student seeks to challenge an instructor's determination, the student should submit a grade appeal. Grade appeal forms are available in the Advising Office on the South Portland Campus or in the administrative offices in the Learning Commons on the Midcoast Campus. An instructor may also refer the matter to the College's disciplinary officer for review under the procedures of the MCCS Student Code of Conduct.

**Writing for Media, CNM-125 01**  
**Spring Semester, 2017**  
**Class and Assignment Schedule**  
**Tuesday & Thursday, 3PM - 4:15PM**

**Be aware that you must check your SMCC e-mail account weekly for course updates. Bring a laptop or tablet to class, if available.**

**NOTE:** Each class will include: group work, roundtable discussions, writing critiques, oral presentations, pitches, and/or quizzes. This syllabus is subject to change.

**The syllabus is meant as guideline for the semester's goals and objectives.**  
**Please refer to assignment sheets posted each week for assignments.**

**January 17**

**Week 1a. Introduction & You Are What You See**

\*Class Activity: Get to know each other. Course introduction. Pre-Test.

\*Media: Scenes from a variety of media and scripts relevant to the class topic.

\*Written Assignment due next class on Thursday: Notes on reading assignment.

Reading notes consist of a paragraph on 6 things that were new to you or intrigued you and why in the assigned reading.

\*Reading Assignment due next class on Thursday: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 3-10, pg 267-278

**January 19**

**Week 1b. Introduction & You Are What You See**

\*Class Activity: Download Celtx. Go over reading assignment notes. In class visual essay assignment.

\*Media: Scenes from a variety of media and scripts relevant to the class topic.

\*Written Assignment: Write a purely visual description of a scene that reveals an individual character with no spoken dialogue nor inner dialogue.

\*Reading Assignment: TBA

**January 24**

**Week 2a. Video Vocabulary**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on visual scene. Video Vocabulary in class assignment.

\*Media: Scenes from a variety of media and scripts relevant to the class topic.

\*Written Assignment: Notes on the reading assignment. Reading notes consist of a paragraph on 6 things that were new to you or intrigued you and why in the assigned reading.

\*Reading Assignment: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 11-26

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**January 26**

**Week 2b. Non-Fiction - Public Service Announcement**

\*Class Activity: Introduction to dual column script format.

\*Media: Scenes from a variety of media and scripts relevant to the class topic.

\*Written Assignment: Watch and describe a 30 sec. PSA shot by shot

\*Reading Assignment: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/promoting-interest/public-service-announcements/main>

## **January 31**

### **Week 3a. Non-Fiction - Public Service Announcement**

\*Class Activity: Go over PSA shot by shot assignment. How to make a storyboard

\*Media: PSAs

\*Written Assignment: Write a PSA aimed at youth in non-fiction dual column format and storyboard.

\*Reading Assignment: Watch PSAs listed on assignment sheet

## **February 2**

### **Week 3b. Non-Fiction - Public Service Announcement**

\*Class Activity: Review PSA scripts & storyboards. How to pitch your script.

\*Media: Commercials

\*Written Assignment due next class: Watch and describe a 30 second ad shot by shot.

\*Reading Assignment due next class: Watch commercials

## **February 7**

### **Week 4a. Non-Fiction - Buy, Buy, Buy**

\*Class Activity: Review analysis of ads.

\*Media: Commercials

\*Written Assignment: Write a dual column script and create a storyboard for a commercial for a product made in Maine.

\*Reading Assignment: <http://www.davidreiss.com/CokeCommercialScript.pdf>

## **February 9**

### **Week 4b. Non-Fiction - Buy, Buy, Buy**

\*Class Activity: Pitch your Made in Maine commercials. How a news report is made.

\*Media: News reports & Media Journalism.

\*Written Assignment: Analyze a national and local news report. Notes on internet reading assignment: what are 6 things between the two internet reports you learned and why they are important.

\*Reading Assignment due next class: Watch News reports. Read 2 internet reports: <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/makes-good-story/>  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school\\_report/resources\\_for\\_teachers/8472052.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/resources_for_teachers/8472052.stm)

## **February 14**

### **Week 5a. Non-Fiction - News Report**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on news report analysis. In class practice interviewing.

\*Media: News reports & Media Journalism.

\*Written Assignment: Dual column script & storyboard for news report from your life.

\*Reading Assignment due next class: Research for your news report.

## **February 16**

### **Week 5b. Non-Fiction - News Report**

\*Class Activity and Discussion: Presentations of your news reports. What is a documentary.

\*Media: Documentaries.

\*Written Assignment: Write down 1-3 ideas for a short documentary script on SMCC and all ideas that connect to SMCC. What are 6 things you learned and why they are important in the internet reading assignment.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your documentary treatment script. Plus <http://www.documentary.org/feature/write-wing-defining-role-writer-nonfiction>

## **February 21**

### **Week 6a. Non-Fiction - The Documentary**

#### **Midterm assignment DUE March 9**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on documentary ideas. A short documentary script on a local subject. Requirements:

1 page summary treatment

2-3 page detailed treatment

1 page summary of at least 2 interviews

Oral pitch.

\*Media: Documentaries.

\*Written Assignment: Develop a draft for a 1 page treatment. Develop 12 questions for your interviews.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your documentary script.

## **February 23**

### **Week 6b. Non-Fiction - The Documentary**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on documentary draft treatments.

\*Media: Documentaries.

\*Written Assignment: Interview at least 1 of the 2 people for your script. Write a 1 page summary of the interview.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your documentary script.

## **February 28**

### **Week 7a. Non-Fiction - The Documentary**

\*Class Activity: Review interviews. How to write a detailed treatment.

\*Media: Documentaries

\*Written Assignment: Write a draft of a detailed treatment. Interview another person.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your documentary script.

## **March 2**

### **Week 7b. Non-Fiction - The Documentary**

\*Class Activity: Review of draft detailed scripts. In class work on your documentary script.

\*Media: Documentaries

\*Written Assignment: Continue work on documentary script.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for documentary script.

## **March 7**

### **Week 8a. Non-Fiction - Documentary**

- \*Class Activity: In class work on your documentary script.
- \*Media: Documentaries
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on documentary script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for documentary script.

## **March 9 Midterm Due**

### **Week 8b. Non-Fiction - Documentary**

- \*Class Activity: Mid-Term Requirements Due:
  - 1 page summary treatment
  - 3 page detailed treatment
  - 1 page summary of at least 2 interviews
  - Oral pitch presentations.
- \*Media: TBD
- \*Written Assignment: TBD
- \*Reading Assignment due next class: TBD

## **March 14 & March 16 No Class Spring Break**

## **March 21**

### **Week 9a. New Media - What Is It?**

- \*Class Activity: How to develop a budget for your documentary script. Discussion on defining what is new media.
- \*Media: Scenes from a variety of media and analyze scripts relevant to the class topic
- \*Written Assignment: Create a New Media project, web site, app, technology, art, etc.
- \*Reading Assignment due next class: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 29-57

## **March 23**

### **Week 9b. Narrative Cinema - Scriptwriting**

- \*Class Activity: Roundtable on New Media assignment. Introduce writing the narrative script. Narrative script format. The 3 act structure. The Hero's Journey.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema.
- \*Written Assignment due next class: Why Late For Class 3 page script. Notes on reading assignment. Reading notes consist of a paragraph on 6 things that were new to you or intrigued you and why in the assigned reading.
- \*Reading Assignment due next class: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 57-78

## **March 28**

### **Week 10a. Narrative Cinema - The Hero's Journey**

- \*Class Activity: Review Why Late scripts. More on the Hero's Journey.
- \*Media: Narrative films.
- \*Written Assignment: In preparation for a script adaptation, decide which book from the assigned literature list you will adapt. Notes on text reading assignment
- \*Reading Assignment: Text of the fictional work selected for adaptation. Plus *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 79-109

**March 30**

**Week 10b. Narrative Cinema - Adaptation**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on books selected for adaptation scripts.

\*Media: Movies adapted from literature

\*Written Assignment: Write a 4 page script adaptation from your selected book. Notes on text reading.

\*Reading Assignment: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 113-143

**April 4**

**Week 11a. Narrative Cinema - Adaptation**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on adaptation scripts. Intro to final script assignment.

\*Media: Narrative cinema

\*Written Assignment: Write down 1-3 ideas for a short original narrative script for the final. Plus notes on the assigned reading.

\*Reading Assignment: *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 147-184

**April 6**

**Week 11b. Narrative Cinema - Short Film Final - Preparation**

**Final 10-12 page original script due May 9**

\*Class Activity: Roundtable on your ideas for narrative script. Character development.

\*Media: Narrative cinema

\*Written Assignment: 1 page treatment/outline for your narrative script. Reading notes.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your script. *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 185-216

**April 11**

**Week 12a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film Final - Preparation**

\*Class Activity: In class work on scene/beat cards for your narrative script.

\*Media: Narrative cinema

\*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script. Bring in scene cards for all scenes in your script

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your script. *The Screenwriter's Bible*, pg 241-282

**April 13**

**Week 12b. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

\*Class Activity and Discussion: Go over scene cards. In class work on Act 1 of your narrative script.

\*Media: Narrative cinema

\*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.

\*Reading Assignment: Research for your script - read a selected script.

**April 18**

**Week 13a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

\*Class Activity: Draft of Act 1 is due. Group work on readings from your scripts.

\*Media: Narrative cinema

- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script.

## **April 20**

### **Week 13a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: Draft of Act 2 is due. Group work on readings from your scripts.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script.

## **April 25**

### **Week 14a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: Draft of Act 3 is due. Group work on readings from your scripts.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script

## **April 27**

### **Week 14b. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: Group work on readings from your scripts.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script

## **May 2**

### **Week 15a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: In class work and revision of your script.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script

## **May 4**

### **Week 15b. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: In class work and revision of your script.
- \*Media: Narrative cinema
- \*Written Assignment: Continue work on your narrative script.
- \*Reading Assignment: Research for your script

## **May 9 Mandatory Attendance**

### **Week 15b. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

- \*Class Activity: **All Scripts due. Start oral pitches, chosen by lottery.**
- \*Media: None
- \*Written Assignment: None
- \*Reading Assignment: None

**May 11 Mandatory Attendance**

**Week 16a. Narrative Cinema - Short Film - Writing**

\*Class Activity: **Finish Up Final Oral Pitches**

\*Media: Narrative cinema

\*Written Assignment: None

\*Reading Assignment: None