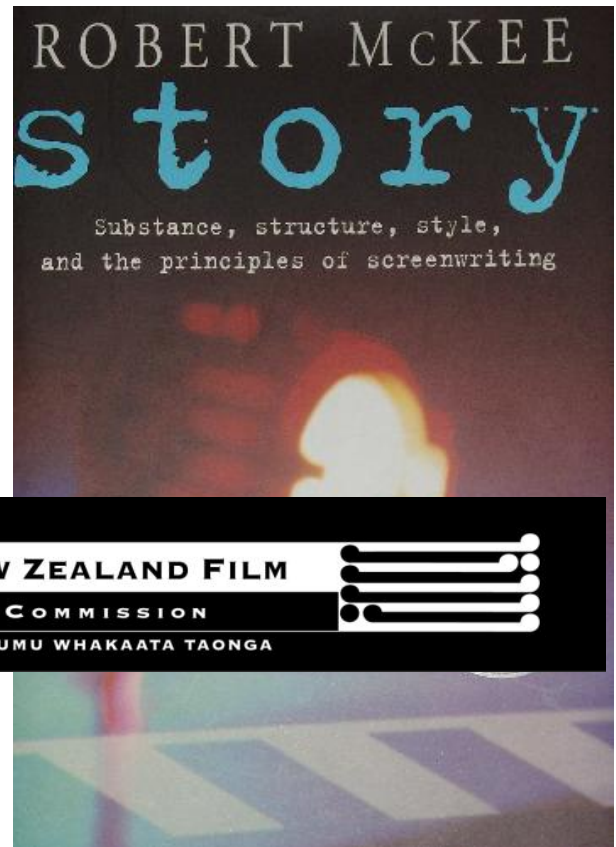


FILM 320 CRN 8640

Special Topic: SCRIPTWRITING

“Badges? We don’t need no stinkin’ badges.”
“Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a damn.”

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.



QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

“Gort, Klaatu barada nicto.”

“You talkin’ to me?”

Staff

Co-ordinator: Harriet Margolis (305/83 Fairlie Terrace, 463 6827, Harriet.Margolis@vuw.ac.nz).
Office hours: 2-3pm Mondays, 4-5pm Tuesdays, and by appointment at our mutual convenience.
Administrator: Kushla Beacon (307/77FT, 463 5359). Student Representative: TBA.

Class times and venue

Second trimester. Mon 11am-1.50pm, Wed 11am-1.50pm. Venue: Rm 306, 77 Fairlie Terrace.

Course aims

In 2007 FILM 320 takes the craft of scriptwriting as its topic. The course is set up to give students space to develop writing skills as well as practice developing professional relations with writing partners. Working with writing partners will include critiquing each other’s work as well as brainstorming together. This year there will be expanded opportunities for analyzing films in terms of their script’s structure because FILM 320 Scriptwriting aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop practical skills in both writing and analysis of script structure.

Course objectives

By semester’s end students should be familiar with the usual concepts for writing a Hollywood-style feature film as taught in professional scriptwriting workshops, and to the extent possible, students will work to industry/professional standards. Because this is an undergraduate course lasting only one trimester, though, the course objectives favor practicing components of scriptwriting rather than completing a full script or scripts. Students will practice analysis of texts leading to enhanced skills for writing and evaluating scripts, as well as have opportunities to learn practical scriptwriting skills and to receive feedback in terms of the writing’s professional viability.

Texts

No set text, but readings may be suggested. A reserve reading list is at the University Library.

Workload

The university recommends that you devote 18 hours per week to a 24-point course at 300-level, including class time.

Group work

There are no group work assignments for this course.

Assessment

--All assessment will be internal. Details of each assignment will be given in class, on Blackboard, and on the notice board. Please plan ahead for the deadlines.

--Hold onto all work prepared in response to class assignments, along with any critiques of that work that you receive, until the semester's end.

	Due Date	Weighting
Scriptwriting exercises Approx. 2-8 pp. each, 10% each	18 July, 8 Aug, 12 Sept, 26 Sept	40%
Critical analysis & rewrite Approx. 2-4 pp. + rewrite	15 Aug	15%
Script Approx. 4-10 pp. (+ backstory &/or treatment as necessary)	10 Oct	20%
Pitch 3 minutes	10 Oct	15%
Participation Factors: attendance, contribution to class generally, work with partners in class (Adjustments to these dates or lengths may be necessary as the course progresses.)	ongoing	10%

--WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS should be handed in personally to your instructor in class when they are due; otherwise, turn work into the box on the 3rd floor of 77 FT (in the lobby area by the building's outside door).

We will try to date work received in the after-hours box according to when it arrived, but you shouldn't push your luck.

When you turn in work, there should be a cover sheet identifying

- the work as yours
- the course it is for
- the date it is due and the date you are turning it in (if the latter differs from the former)
- the title of your work

Work should be stapled together and the pages numbered, but your name should appear only on the cover sheet.

A Word file version of the cover sheet is available on Blackboard.

TAKE THESE DIRECTIONS SERIOUSLY. WORK LIKE A PROFESSIONAL.

--PARTICIPATION: "Participation" marks are vulnerable to subjectivity, but I have tried to identify the component parts of this mark (attendance, class contribution, work with partners). When calculating this mark, I'll also consider 1) any "additional comments" I may have provided on your assignments, 2) the

“Honesty Sheets” that will be distributed and collected throughout the trimester, and 3) my recollection of standout moments in class. Failure to turn in the critique on time will automatically drop this 15% of your total mark by 5%.

You are expected to attend all class sessions in their entirety.

Absence from class, especially when it inconveniences writing partners, will definitely affect this part of your mark.

You should make a hard copy of any work before turning it in for evaluation; this responsibility rests with you.

Penalties

DUE DATES: Assignments are due on the dates indicated above.

--All written work is due at the beginning of class on the day it is due. Unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical reasons or other verifiable trauma), any work handed in after its due date can be expected to lose 10 marks (e.g., drop from B+ to B-). From a week after the original due date, work may lose further marks or it may not be accepted at all, depending upon the circumstances and at the discretion of the course convener.

--Pitch: There will be a late penalty of 15% if your absence on the day is not excused (exceptional circumstances, e.g., medical reasons or other verifiable trauma).

This course will comply with the university policy on reasonable accommodation with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities. Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to submit your *final* assignment, in which case you should contact the Faculty Office, and also inform the course convener.

Mandatory Course Requirements

Everything except one of the short scriptwriting exercises and the final script exercise is mandatory. This includes the pitch. If you are unable to make your pitch in class on the scheduled date, other arrangements will be at the convenience of the course convener.

Communication

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class, loaded on Blackboard, and posted on the course notice board at 77FT.

BLACKBOARD: This is a web-based system of communication and exchange of documents. Make sure that you have access to your student account and the University's webpages.

Award

The Prize for Film Studies, arising from a fund established by the Wai-te-Ata Press, will be awarded to the best student of film history, criticism, or production in all FILM classes for a given year.



General University policies and statutes

Students 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 available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.

Student and staff conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct

The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct

Academic grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning,
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course,
- suspension from the course or the University.

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

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Students with Impairments (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate,

learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

telephone: 463-6070

email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contacts are **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407** and **Dr Stuart Brock, Murphy Building, room 312**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

This programme offers:

- Academic mentoring for all Maori & Pacific students at all levels of undergraduate study for the faculties of Commerce & Administration and Humanities & Social Sciences. Contact Manaaki-Pihipihinga-Programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 6015 to register for Humanities & Social Science mentoring and 463 8977 to register for mentoring for Commerce and Administration courses
- Postgraduate support network for the above faculties, which links students into all of the post grad activities and workshops on campus and networking opportunities
- Pacific Support Coordinator who can assist Pacific students with transitional issues, disseminate useful information and provide any assistance needed to help students achieve. Contact; Pacific-Support-Coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 5842.

Manaaki Pihipihinga is located at: 14 Kelburn Parade, back court yard, Room 109 D (for Humanities mentoring & some first year Commerce mentoring) or Room 210 level 2 west wing railway station Pipitea (commerce mentoring space). Maori Studies mentoring is done at the marae.

Student Services

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

FILM 320 ST: Scriptwriting – TIMETABLE 2007

Words in italics are indicative only. This calendar is subject to change, for example, should our pace and progress call for it. Guest speakers have yet to be confirmed.

TURN OFF CELLPHONES DURING CLASS.

Mon 11.00am-1.50pm

Weds 11.00am-1.50pm

Assignments due on Wednesdays

JULY 9	11	Material for 1st exercise distributed. <i>Craft, Structure, Scripts, Software, Format, "Critique"/"Criticism"</i>
16	18	1st exercise due (10%) <i>Story, Character and Plot; Plot and Character, Dialogue, Tone</i>
23	25	In-class exercise: tag lines; précis <i>Genre, Budgets, Characters</i>
JULY 30	AUG 1	In-class exercise: backstory <i>Backstory, Subject/Audience/Purpose</i>
AUG 6	8	2nd exercise due (10%) 2 copies required USE COVER SHEET ONLY ON 1 COPY <i>Drama/Comedy, Fiction/Nonfiction, Revision</i>
13	15	[receive feedback on 2nd exercise] (so do show up for class!) <i>Recognizing themes; Pace</i>
TRIMESTER BREAK		
SEPT 3	5	Critical analysis & rewrite due (15%) 2 copies required USE COVER SHEET ONLY ON 1 COPY In-class exercise: Scene placement, dialogue, nuances <i>Structure, Contexts/Value systems; Pacing</i>
10	12	"The Tin Star" 3rd exercise due (10%) from High Noon (Zinnemann, 1952, 86 min.) Vis 2864 <i>Soundtrack, Props, Depth</i>
17	19	<i>Voice, Nuances, POV</i>
24	26	4th exercise due (10%) <i>Adaptation, Legalities (This topic may shift, depending upon availability of guest speaker.)</i>
OCT 1	3	<i>Structure, Revision</i>
8	10	PITCH EXERCISE (in class) Script due (20%) <i>Writing as a profession</i>

Films that may be screened for in-class analysis of script structure include the following:

Tender Mercies (Bruce Beresford, 1982, 92 min.) DVD 816

In My Father's Den (Brad McGann, 2003, 122 min.) DVD 1610

You may find the following useful:

Words into Pictures (Writers Guild Foundation, 2002, 93 min.) Vis 3984