

Syllabus

Title of the Course:	Fundamentals of Scriptwriting	Course Breakdown:	28 teaching hours online, 152 hours independent study
Name of the Instructor:	Gülengül Altıntaş	Weekly class time:	Tuesday, 11.30 – 13.30 (CET) / 2 hours (2 hours teaching + 2 hours workshop)
Language:	English		
Hosted by:	Ludwig-Maximilians- Universität München	Certificate issued by:	LMU (6 ECTS)

About the instructor:

Gülengül Altıntaş received her BA degree from the Department of Film and Television at Istanbul University in 2000. After her graduation she went to USA and completed the certificate program “Content Creation for Entertainment Media” at University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2001. Upon her return to Istanbul she worked as an assistant director in various productions including commercial films, TV productions and movies. She attended scriptwriting workshops given by professors from New York Tisch School of the Arts and Hungarian Film Academy. She worked as a TA at the Film and Television Department of Istanbul Bilgi University and received her MA degree in 2006 from the same department with her dissertation on cyberculture and cinema. She shot several short films and received several awards. Currently she is teaching scriptwriting courses, working as a freelance script consultant, and writing her PHD Thesis on Turkish Cinema in the field of oral history research.

Description of the course

The main objective of the course is to introduce a general knowledge on cinematic storytelling. Throughout the course students will develop skills of both reading and writing film. Students will be introduced to the dramatic necessities of the story and its structure; gain advance skills for script analysis and improve their appreciation for cinema as an art form. The films, which will be analyzed in class will vary in period, genre and country of production yet the focus will be kept on what has been called as 'Young Turkish Cinema' and the specific narrative qualities of these films reminiscent of Eastern Dramatic Circle. Workshops will help students to apply their skills of analysis into their own writing practices. Each student will develop their own short film script project and the process of development will be monitored, discussed and reviewed in workshop hours, which will be supported with in-class writing exercises to help students improve their practice of writing with image and sound. The course is designed for students from all disciplines. Being a filmlover and willing to write is the only pre-requisite for the course.

Learning Aims

Upon the successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- improve their film appreciation and film reading skills
- develop an understanding on the dramatic necessities of cinematic storytelling.
- learn about the process and steps of writing a short script, through their own script projects.

Course requirements

- **Writing exercises:** Throughout the semester you will have several writing assignments, which are all explained in the weekly plan. Writing assignments are not mandatory, it is voluntary, and it is only for the ones who like to exercise on their creative muscles.
- **Screenings:** Students will see the required films, which are mentioned in the weekly plan in off-class hours. I expect you to see the films in advance and make yourself prepared for the discussions before you come to that week's class.
- **Short Film Script Project:**

The grading will be assessed over individual student projects. Throughout the semester from idea to finished script, you will develop your own short film script project - which will be submitted and graded in 3 different stages:

- **Assignment 1 (30%)** - writing a logline, synopsis, character biographies
 - **Assignment 2 (30%)** – writing the treatment and outline
 - **Assignment 3 – (40%) – writing the final script**
- All written assignments should be written in Celtx and submitted in PDF format. Celtx is a free scriptwriting software, so start by signing up for a free membership.
- **Assignments which will fail to follow this guideline will not be accepted!**

Organization of the course

- The course is designed in two complementary parts:
- **Lectures** (2 hours class time) will be based on the analysis of the selected films in terms of film language and narrative structure. Every week’s analysis will be complemented with required readings. In class discussions will be an important part of these sessions, so students are required to see the films in advance, follow the readings and participate into discussions.
 - **Workshops** (2 hours class time) - development of individual script projects of the students through in class discussions and writing exercises.
- Video lectures, class discussion on *Off-University’s* platform www.coworkingsquares.de, one to one tutorials.

Outline of the Course Schedule

Week 1	Should Start Submitting Reading Reflections and Focus on Short Essay Lectur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to class and its requirements • Lecture: Image & Representation & Storytelling. Cinema as an art form. Storytelling as a form of communication. • Writing Exercise: “First memory exercise” Sharpen your pen and start writing. Every dramatic journey is a descend. The road of the hero is the one that goes inward.
Week 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: Basics of Restorative Three Act Narration: Setup, Conflict, Confrontation, Climax, Resolution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film analysis: The Graduate • Assignment: Watch <u>The Graduate</u> before class (writer: Buck Henry, Calder Willingham, dir. Mike Niccols, 1967) • Readings: Syd Field, pp. 1-25
<p>Week 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: The Hero's Journey – A character is what s/he needs! Character & Motivation & Resolution & Premise • Film analysis: Margaret, Blue Velvet, Güneş Yolculuk • Assignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Watch <u>Margaret</u> before the class (dir./writer Kenneth Lonergan, 2011) 2) Watch <u>Blue Velvet</u> before the class (dir./writer David Lynch, 1986) 3) Watch <u>Güneş Yolculuk</u> before the class (dir./writer Yeşim Ustaoglu, 1997) • Readings: Campbell, pp. 1-100
<p>Week 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture : Drama § Emotion Drama is emotion! So let's start working on them. ^[11]_[SEP] Six fundamental human emotions according to Egri and their dramatic uses for the characters. • Writing exercise: Every student will write a personal memory attached to the 'emotion' they choose. We will imagine this memory as a timespace and discuss the ways in which the atmosphere of the scene, cinematography, sound and production design can contribute to convey the character's feeling in depth. • Assignment: Watch <u>You Were Never Really Here</u> (writer/dir. Lynne Ramsey, 2011)

<p>Week 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: Form As Story • Film Analysis: Gegen Die Wand, Handmaiden • Assignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Watch Gegen Die Wand before the class (writer/dir. Fatih Akin, 2004) 2) Watch Handmaiden before class (dir.Chan-wook Park, writer: Sarah Waters, Jung-woo Ha) • <u>We will also be discussing:</u> Who is the anti-hero and why we love her/him so much? How the film uses the genre of melodrama as a modality? Why melodrama makes us cry so much!?! Feeling of catharsis and its (mis)uses.
<p>Week 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: Script Editing • <u>Film Analysis:</u> Tabu, Adı Vasfiye, Elle, • We will be discussing: Handling several characters and multiple point of views through script editing. • Assignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Watch Tabu before the class (writer/dir.Miguel Gomez, 2012) 2) Watch Adı Vasfiye before class (dir: Atif Yılmaz, writer: Barış Pirhasan) 3) Watch Elle (dir: Paul Verhoeven, writer: Dijan&Birke&Manning, 2016)
<p>Week 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: Constructing Narrative Time • <u>Film Analysis:</u> Zama, Cleo de 5 a 7

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Watch <u>Zama</u> before class (writer/ director: Lucrecia Martel, 2017) 2) Watch <u>Cleo de 5 a 7</u> before class (writer/director: Agnes Varda, 1962) • Recommended Reading: Gérard Genette, The Narrative Discourse, (parts t.b.a) • <u>We will also be discussing:</u> Breaking the linearity of the 3 act structure. Post-modern narratives and parody as an art form.
<p>Week 8</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Case Study: <u>Young Turkish Cinema</u> and the specific qualities of these films reminiscent of Eastern Dramatic Circle • <u>Film Analysis:</u> Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da (N.Bilge Ceylan, 2011); Kızkardeşler (Emin Alper, 2019); Mavi Dalga (Zeynep Dadak-Merve Kayan, 2013); Kader (Zeki Demirkubuz, 2006), Bahoz (Kazım Öz, 2007) • Recommended Reading: Young Turkish Cinema Booklet – by Altyazı Film Assosiation (pdf will be available on-line)
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Should Focus on Long Essay</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Film as a narrative art form -1 • In-class presentations: Every student will choose a short film of they like and make a presentation of the film's analyses. • Reading: Writing the Short Film, Pat Cooper & Ken Dancyger (pp. 65-87)

<p>Week 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Film as a narrative art form -2 • In-class presentations: Every student will choose a short film of they like and make a presentation of the film’s analyses.
<p>Week 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Working on your short film idea. How to find an idea? Where to look? How to develop?
<p>Week 12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Designing your characters and finding your premise. How to write a logline and synopsis?
<p>Week 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Working on your treatment. What is a treatment? Why it is important? How you write it?
<p>Week 14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Working on your scenes and dialogues. • Basics of script formatting. How to design a scene? Giving a unique voice to your character through dialogue writing.

Reading List

- Lajos Egri, The Art of Dramatic Screenwriting
- Syd Field, Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting
- Gérard Genette, Narrative Discourse: An essay on method
- Aristotle, Poetics
- Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces
- Christopher Vogler, The Writer’s Journey
- Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Women Who Run With the Wolves