



MMCC1025

Screenwriting

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2023

Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

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Convenor

Kush Badhwar

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online

by request

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces writing for screen media. Students encounter strategies for generating, researching, and developing their own creative ideas. They work on particular aspects of screen storytelling such as character, world, and cinematic metaphor. Students may choose to develop scripts for fiction, non-fiction, animation, interactive narrative, or hybrid forms. This unit combines creative writing projects with critical analysis of selected screenworks and screenplays. Students do not need prior knowledge to do this unit, and is relevant to those interested in screen and sound media, writing, and the creative process.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.

ULO2: generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.

ULO3: apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.

ULO4: evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.

ULO5: demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

General Assessment Information

- The Faculty policy in relation to late assessment submissions is as follows: *Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.*
- Any instance where a student uses the University's electronic learning management system (iLearn) to submit for assessment a written response that comprises more than 250 words in total will be subject to plagiarism detection software.

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|--|-----------|--------|-------------------------|
| <u>Weekly Online Quizzes</u> | 15% | No | weekly, weeks 1 thru 11 |
| <u>Script Outline</u> | 35% | No | 02/04/2023 11:55pm |
| <u>Script, Synopsis & Reflection</u> | 50% | No | 23/05/2023 11:55pm |

Weekly Online Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 11 hours

Due: **weekly, weeks 1 thru 11**

Weighting: **15%**

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of material covered in the unit through online quizzes. Further information can be found on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

Script Outline

Assessment Type ¹: Plan

Indicative Time on Task ²: 37 hours

Due: **02/04/2023 11:55pm**

Weighting: **35%**

Drawing on material generated through weekly tutorial and iLearn exercises, select two ideas, one fiction, one documentary. Write short outlines for each of them. Details on assessment scope and examples will be discussed in tutorials. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.
- apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.
- evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

Script, Synopsis & Reflection

Assessment Type ¹: Creative work

Indicative Time on Task ²: 50 hours

Due: **23/05/2023 11:55pm**

Weighting: **50%**

Consolidate your work and learning this semester into a script for a short fictional or documentary screen production. Details on assessment scope and examples will be discussed in tutorials. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.

- apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.
 - evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
 - demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.
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¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures, tutorials, readings, and screenings are all core modes of delivery of the content of this unit. Active engagement with these is facilitated through weekly quizzes that support consolidation of learning. The assessment tasks are scaffolded to support application of knowledge and insight you develop through this active engagement with all four core modes - lectures, tutorials, readings and screenings. Lack of engagement with any of these is likely to have a detrimental effect on your learning and achievement in the unit.

Lectures

Lectures will be via Zoom. Recordings of the Zoom lectures will be made available via ilearn after they are delivered live, however, live attendance is strongly encouraged! Being present in the 'room' energises the dialogue with your lecturer, tutors and peers, gives you a chance to do quick exercises, comment and respond to questions via chat or verbally, and ask questions. This participation makes the learning more immediate and rewarding. Attendance at lectures is not assessed and there is no need to request special consideration if you miss one.

Tutorials

Tutorials are designed to give you live, in the moment, opportunities to develop knowledge via exercises, and dialogue with tutors and peers. Attending gives you opportunities to try things out, get informal feedback, learn by sharing your responses to other's work, and develop your assessment tasks. Every tutorial is directly aimed at improving your screenwriting ability and is directly relevant to an aspect of your assessment tasks. Attendance is not assessed and there is no need to request special consideration if you miss one, however repeated or consistent lack of attendance will mean missing core learning and is likely to impact on achievement in the unit. Tutorials are NOT recorded.

Readings

Readings for this unit will be available through ilearn. Comprehension will be tested via weekly quizzes.

Videos:

Key videos relevant to assignments will be available through the MMCC 1025 iLearn page. They form part of the unit content and your observation skills will be developed through weekly quizzes asking questions about them.

Technologies/resources required:

Students will be required to use their own computers for research, development and writing of assignments in this unit. It is recommended that MMCC1025 students become familiar with Celtx (free script software) or other industry standard script formatting tools, which will be discussed in class or in information on ilearn. Microsoft Word can be used for scriptwriting, however it is not as effective a tool.

Students are **encouraged to consider downloading and exploring one or more of the widely available free screenplay formatting tools before the start of semester**, so that you are familiar with the principles. Because these are automated processes when using the free, widely available software we do not spend a lot of time in class on them. Rather, our focus is on ideas and content. Tutors often note that because using formatting software improves legibility and gives students a better understanding of the ways that scripts work dramatically and logistically, students not using correct formatting often do not achieve at higher levels.

Unit Schedule

The outline below may be subject to some variations.

Week 1: generating ideas

week 2: character

week 3: storyworlds

week 4: structure/plot

week 5: theme & research

week 6: containment

NB: Comprehension and application of principles from ALL of the first six weeks of the unit is expected to be demonstrated in the Outline assessment task due at the end of week 6. This includes the principles of 'containment' which will be discussed in the lecture in week 6.

week 7: genres

week 8: writing and formatting documentaries

week 9: writing and formatting fiction

week 10: dialogue

week 11: summation and application

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to

Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.