MAS 314

Screenwriting: Images, Ideas, Stories

S2 Day 2018

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Karen Pearlman
karen.pearlman@mq.edu.au
Contact via karen.pearlman@mq.edu.au
Y3A 189H
Tuesdays 1:15 by appointment

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
(39cp at 100 level or above) including MAS202

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
The unit investigates a diversity of processes and techniques from around the globe for writing and editing drama, documentary and hybrid screenplays. Assessment tasks combine creative writing projects with critical analysis. It is relevant to those writing for performance, screens and digital media.

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:

Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.

Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.

Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Screenplay Outline	25%	No	week 4, Sunday, 26 August
Screenplay development	25%	No	Wk7 in class & online
Screenplay Draft	40%	No	Friday, 09 November
Workshop Participation	10%	No	Throughout Semester

Screenplay Outline

Due: **week 4, Sunday, 26 August**

Weighting: **25%**

Screenplay Outline

Research and write an Outline for a 8 to 12 minute film.

The Outline should include your initial screen idea, with reference to your idea's

- cinematic qualities,
- storyworld,
- characters,
- events or plot, narrative or change over time,
- genre or tone,
- and theme.

Include an image of a key location, prop or costume that you envisage and notes on the ways you will research and develop the idea's strengths and address any gaps in logic, coherence or drama.

Your film idea can be presented as :

a. collage or assembly of images and text addressing the points listed above (may be delivered as powerpoint presentation, video, or pdf)

OR

b. a written text addressing the points listed above plus at least one image

It should be a maximum of 750 words or an equivalent in words and images.

This assignment will be discussed further in MAS 314 workshops.

Submission: via ilearn link

Submission **filename requirements**: TuteDay&Time-Surname-TaskName (eg. Tues2pm-

MacKay-Outline)

Assessment Criteria:

- Identification and some refinement of a screen idea

- Strength and clarity of the screen idea and its presentation

- Synthesis of discipline-specific knowledge as demonstrated by application of course content to conception and articulation of screen ideas

Feedback: comments & rubric - Marks are made available through the Gradebook function in iLearn.

For a full assessment rubric, please refer to iLearn.

Examples of relevant or related assessment tasks will be discussed in practicals.

Late Submissions:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date, and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

Screenplay development

Due: **Wk7 in class & online**
Weighting: **25%**

Screenplay development (25%)

This task is designed to develop a specific aspect of the screenplay on which you are working for your final submission. Start with reflection on feedback you have received on your outline and any in class dramaturgical work you have done. Consider where focused independent research and development would be most beneficial to the creative work. Then:

1. Choose the a term from the following list. **Research** the term you have chosen. **Summarise** a working definition of the term (derived from more than one source) in 250 words or less.

- Character backstory,

- Subtext

- Metaphor

- Specific Genre in which you are working (eg. drama, black comedy, horror, satire…)

- Storyworld

- Creative research

- Dramaturgy

2. **Do the creative writing task associated with the term you have researched (see list below)**. These tasks will be read aloud in tutorials for discussion in week 7

- *Character backstory:* write the backstory of one or two key characters (up to 750 words)

- *Subtext:* write a scene with subtext

- *Metaphor:* write a scene or short sequence with a visual or aural metaphor embedded

- *Specific Genre in which you are working:* write a scene or short sequence where conventions of your selected genre are creatively employed

- *Storyworld:* describe the circumstances, pressures, and rules or relationships or your storyworld (up to 750 words)

- *Creative research:* write up the findings from research that you will apply to your script (up to 750 words)

- *Dramaturgy:* Trade screenplay outlines or drafts of scenes with someone else in the class and provide a dramaturgical response to your partner's ideas that includes: short summary of what you read, written observations or questions about the storyworld, characters, theme and perspective and relevant reference images, other films, books, information, artworks, sites, locations or casting possibilities that you think might be useful or inspiring to the idea you are reading about. (up to 750 words)

Submission: via brief in class presentation and ilearn link in week 7

Submission **filename requirements**: TuteDay&Time-Surname-TaskName

filename example: Tues2pm-MacKay-ScreenplayDevelopment

Your submission must include:

- Summary of working definition of your chosen term

- Bibliography of sources used in defining term (may be academic or credible industry/ journalism sources from online or print)

- Written creative task associated with the term as per list above

Assessment Criteria:

- Clarity and accuracy of summary definition of selected term

- Insightful application of knowledge of the term to creative writing task

- Creativity and sophistication of creative writing

Feedback: Interaction with peers and tutors in-class. Students also receive general comments & rubric. Marks are made available through the Gradebook function in iLearn.

For a full assessment rubric, please refer to iLearn.

Examples of relevant or related assessment tasks will be discussed in practicals.

Late Submissions:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date, and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Screenplay Draft

Due: **Friday, 09 November**
Weighting: **40%**

Consolidate your work and learning from tasks 1 and 2 into an 8 to 12 minute script

The script should be accompanied by an approximately 50 word Synopsis of your idea and a150 word account of how you have responded to feedback on your Outline.

Screenplays will usually be expected to be formatted according to the Australian film industry conventions (for an example see: http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=217&Itemid=73). However, this assignment is not primarily a technical writing exercise and thought-through departures from standard formatting are acceptable. Options include a Scriptment or Image/Text Assemblage. Technical terms should be avoided as much as possible.

This assignment will be discussed further in MAS 314 Workshops.

Submission: via ilearn link

Submission **filename requirements**: TuteDay&Time-Surname-TaskName

filename example: Tues2pm-MacKay-ScreenplayDraft

Assessment Criteria:

- Development and refinement of screen ideas through successive stages of screenplay writing and responsiveness to critical feedback.
- Application of discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to creative writing for the screen
- Creativity and sophistication of the screen play

Feedback: comments & rubric - Marks are made available through the Gradebook function in iLearn.

For a full assessment rubric, please refer to iLearn.

Examples of relevant or related assessment tasks will be discussed in practicals.

Late Submissions:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date, and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

Workshop Participation

Due: **Throughout Semester**
Weighting: **10%**

Students are expected to attend workshops regularly and make considered and informed contributions in response to weekly discussion questions, screenwriting exercises and other students' work.

Submission: through consistent punctual attendance and relevant, informed contributions in discussions of scripts, screenings and readings.

Assessment Criteria:

- Appropriately articulated and considered responses and contributions to critical feedback in screenplay readings processes.

- Relevant and observant contributions to discussion of readings and screenings.

Active participation is assessed by a student's engagement in activities such as: discussions facilitated by the lecturer/tutor, contributions to online discussion forums, or general questions asked during lectures or tutorials and involvement in set activities. Participation is expected to be well considered and relevant to the unit of study.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Delivery and Resources

This unit is delivered through workshops (aka tutorials) and ilearn activities and resources.

Workshops and ilearn activities begin in week 1.

There are no lectures for this unit.

Extensions for Assignments: These are only granted on grounds of disruption of studies, and appropriate supporting documentation. Late delivery of assignments without agreement of the lecturer will incur a penalty. See late submission policy below.

Late Submissions

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date, and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline.

Special Consideration Policy: https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

Required and recommended texts and/or materials: The MAS 314 readings are available through the MQ library e-reserve system. Links to these will be found on ilearn each week.

Technologies used: Supplementary information and task submission links can be accessed at: http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/.   Internet access is required, as are basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing.

Examinations: There is no exam for MAS 314.

Changes made to previous offerings of this unit: The topics in this unit have been updated to reflect shifts in global screenwriting practices.   Assessment Tasks have been modified to integrate theory and practice more effectively. Tasks have been redesigned to facilitate

scaffolding of learning.

Unit Schedule

Week 1

Workshops:

- Discussion: Generating Ideas 1
- Writing Exercise
- Intro to Unit

Week 2

Workshops:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Generating Ideas 2
- Writing Exercise

Week 3

Workshops:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Storytelling, Character and Emotion
- Writing Exercise

Week 4

Workshops:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Storytelling and Place
- Writing Exercise

Assessment Task #1 due at end of week 4

Week 5

Workshops:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Nonficiton & Hybrids
- Writing Exercise or Script Readings

Week 6

Workshops:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Playing with Time
- Writing Exercise or Dramaturgical work with peers

Week 7

Workshops:

- In class presentations of Screenplay Development work

Screenplay DevelopmentAssessment Task #2 due in class in weeks 6 & 7

MID SEMESTER BREAK   - WORK ON SCREENPLAY IS EXPECTED

Week 8

Workshop:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Suspense & Revelation
- Writing Exercise or Dramaturgical work with peers - developing screenplay drafts

Week 9

Workshop:

- Discussion of Readings and/or Screenings
- Discussion: Writing for a Low Budget/Storyworlds for Crossing Platforms
- Writing Exercise or Dramaturgical work with peers - developing screenplay drafts

Week 10

Workshop:

- Discussion: Onscreen Drafting & Editing Thinking
- Writing Exercise or Dramaturgical work with peers - developing screenplay drafts

Week 11

Creative exercises and dramaturgical work - developing screenplay drafts

Week 12

Individual consultations with convenor or tutor, by arrangement

Week 13

Individual consultations with convenor or tutor, by arrangement

Screenplay (Assessment Task #3) due

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). 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
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy *(**Note:** The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.)*

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the Student Policy Gateway (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, 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.

MMCCS website

https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Information is correct at the time of publication

Student Support

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

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

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.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.

- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.

- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline

- Screenplay development

- Screenplay Draft

- Workshop Participation

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.

- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.

- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work

- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline

- Screenplay development

- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of

screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.

- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and develop original screen ideas by drafting and revising a screenplay through successive stages and responding to critical feedback.
- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should

have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply discipline-specific knowledge of topics covered in the unit to development of screen ideas and creative writing for the screen.
- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse and apply dramaturgical insights to screen ideas and screen writing through in-class development of own and peer's work
- Critically analyse and communicate ideas about readings, resources, screenplays and productions.

Assessment tasks

- Screenplay Outline
- Screenplay development
- Screenplay Draft
- Workshop Participation