

LMC 3236 – ES Syllabus
Writing for the Stage and Screen
Summer Early Short Session 2026
3 credit hours

Instructor Information

Instructor: Prof. Bentley Heyman
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Office Location: Skiles 361

General Course Information

Course Schedule: Tuesday/Thursday/Friday: 3:30–6:15 — in person

Course Description

Writing for the Stage and Screen — Creating the Series: Television & Episodic Writing — is a hands-on introduction to writing for television and episodic storytelling. Students develop an original television series concept from initial idea to a workshop-ready pilot script and series bible.

The course explores how episodic stories function, how writers' rooms operate, and what makes compelling characters, conflict, and sustainable long-form narrative engines. Through writing exercises, television analysis, workshops, and collaborative discussions, students gain practical experience crafting stories designed for serialized content.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Develop a clear and original television series concept with a sustainable narrative engine
- Write a complete, workshop-ready pilot script demonstrating strong character, structure, and conflict
- Create a professional series bible and pitch deck outlining tone, world, characters, and long-term story arcs
- Analyze television scripts and series with attention to structure, pacing, and episodic storytelling
- Participate effectively in workshop and writers' room-style discussions
- Revise written work based on feedback to improve clarity and execution

Instructional Methods

This course will be taught through a combination of lecture, workshops, reading, discussions, demonstrations, and in-class exercises.

Required Course Materials

- Screenwriting software (provided)
- Notebook and writing tools

Optional reference texts:

- *Story* — Robert McKee
- *The Anatomy of Story* — John Truby
- *The Art of Dramatic Writing* — Lajos Egri

Grading Policy

Series Pitch / Series Bible Presentation — 300 points (30%)

Opening Scene — 75 points (7.5%)

Second Scene — 75 points (7.5%)

Additional Scene 1 — 75 points (7.5%)

Additional Scene 2 — 75 points (7.5%)

Master Scene — 75 points (7.5%)

Pilot Episode — 325 points (32.5%)

Total: 1000 points (100%)

Final grades are awarded on an A–F scale (no +/- grades).

Description of Graded Components

Opening Scene (75 points)

A focused scene introducing tone, character, and central conflict.

Second Scene (75 points)

A continuation of your story that deepens character and advances the plot.

Master Scene (75 points)

A longer, structured scene demonstrating escalation, pacing, and narrative control.

Additional Scene 1 (75 points)

A scene that expands the world, relationships, or subplots.

Additional Scene 2 (75 points)

A scene that strengthens stakes, theme, or narrative complexity.

Series Pitch / Series Bible (300 points)

A professional presentation outlining concept, tone, characters, and long-term story arcs.

Pilot Episode (325 points)

A complete, workshop-ready pilot script that brings together all elements of your series.

USG Required Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are essential.

More than four unexcused absences will result in a one-letter grade reduction.

Absences may be excused with documentation.
Students should notify the instructor as early as possible.

Late Work Policy

Assignments submitted after the due date will incur a penalty of one letter grade per week.
Assignments more than three weeks late will receive a grade of zero.
Exceptions may be made for documented emergencies.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Core IMPACTS

Core IMPACTS is the University System of Georgia's General Education curriculum. If you are teaching a course that counts towards Core IMPACTS, you should include a syllabus statement about the Core area and associated career competencies. This resource developed by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Online Education at Georgia State University includes template syllabus statements for each of the Core IMPACTS areas that you may adapt for your course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Instructor Note

The instructor reserves the right to modify course materials or schedule as needed to support student learning.