

Writing for the Stage and Screen

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 3236

Section: B

CRN (you may add up to five):
35465

Instructor First Name: Bentley

Instructor Last Name: Heyman

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

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 show analysis, workshops, and collaborative discussions, students gain practical experience crafting stories designed for serialized content.

Course learning outcomes:

1. Develop a clear and original television series concept with a sustainable narrative engine.
2. Write a complete, workshop-ready pilot script that demonstrates strong character, structure, and conflict.
3. Create a professional series bible outlining tone, world, characters, and long-term story arcs.
4. Analyze existing television scripts and series with attention to structure, pacing, and episodic storytelling.
5. Participate effectively in workshop and writers' room-style discussions, offering and receiving constructive feedback.
6. Revise written work based on feedback to improve clarity, storytelling, and execution.

Required course materials:

1. Screenwriting Software

Students must have access to professional screenwriting software:

Some choices include:

- Final Draft
- Celtx
- WriterDuet
- Fade In

Grading policy:

Final grades are based on total percentage earned across all assignments.

- **A:** 90–100%
- **B:** 80–89%
- **C:** 70–79%
- **D:** 60–69%
- **F:** Below 60%

Students are graded against a clearly defined set of standards, not relative to the performance of classmates. Assignment rubrics and grading criteria will be provided in advance whenever possible so students can easily translate individual scores into their overall course grade.

Most assignments will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Originality & Conceptual Strength** – Clarity, creativity, and sustainability of the idea
- **Character & Conflict** – Depth, motivation, relationships, and dramatic tension
- **Structure & Storytelling** – Clear narrative progression, pacing, and episodic logic
- **Craft & Format** – Proper television script formatting and professional presentation
- **Revision & Growth** – Evidence of thoughtful revision and responsiveness to feedback
- **Participation** – Active, respectful engagement in workshops and class discussions

Students will receive written and/or verbal feedback throughout the semester designed to be meaningful, predictive, and directly connected to final grading standards.

Attendance policy:

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Because this course is workshop- and discussion-based, regular attendance is essential.

- Students are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty.

- Each additional unexcused absence may result in a reduction of the final course grade.
- Absences on workshop days may negatively affect the participation portion of the grade.
- Excused absences (illness, family emergencies, university-approved activities) should be communicated as soon as possible.

Repeated absences may significantly impact a student's ability to complete the course successfully.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.