

WRITING FOR THE SCREEN, M.F.A.

M.F.A. Writing for the Screen

The goal of the MFA program in Writing for the Screen is to train students for a career in screenwriting—to develop mastery in writing for screens of all sizes. Using long-form storytelling as a basis for teaching screenwriting, students will progress from the elements class to the creation of a portfolio of work, which will include three feature length screenplays, one episodic teleplay, and at least one original pilot for television. Students can also take writing electives such as transmedia, video-game writing, or playwriting. Proper sequencing of major requirements is indicated by prerequisites of individual courses and as noted in the outline below. Please consult an academic advisor.

Students must maintain a “B” (3.0) average to remain in good academic standing. Students who fall below a “B” average will be placed on academic probation and will have one semester to bring their grade average up to a “B.”

At the end of the first and third semesters, students are required to attend an MFA Performance Review with the department faculty to discuss his/her overall cumulative progress in the program. Letters will be sent to each student following this meeting to say he/she is either performing in an exceptional way, a satisfactory way, or an unsatisfactory way. In the last case, the student will be placed on academic probation. Academic probation will require another meeting at the end of the following semester. If the student does not meet the required standards, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate, an understanding of the dynamics of storytelling required for film, television, and a new and emerging media by developing a portfolio of screenplays and teleplays in which structure, character development, dialogue, tone, and theme are clearly demonstrated.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of industry standard communication through the practice and execution of pitching and oral/written presentation.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of why diverse stories matter, the value of ethical and humanistic themes, and the importance of constructive collaboration in the writer's room.

M.F.A. in Writing for the Screen Requirements

Code	Title	Semester Hours
	Major Requirement	45
	Thesis Requirements	6
Total Semester Hours		51

Course	Title	Semester Hours
First Year		
Fall		
SCWR 510	Production Fundamentals for Writing and Producing for TV (must earn B or higher)	3

SCWR 540	Elements of Feature Screenwriting (must earn B or higher)	3
SCWR 635	Advanced Motion Picture Script Analysis (must earn B or higher)	3
Semester Hours		9
Spring		
SCWR 541	Writing the Feature Screenplay	3
SCWR 660 or SCWR 670	Writing the Drama TV Series Spec or Writing the Comedy TV Series Spec	3
FTVS Elective Film, Television, and Media Studies (Must select any one course from FTVS 500 or 600 level)		3
Semester Hours		9
Second Year		
Fall		
SCWR 640	Rewriting the Feature Screenplay	3
SCWR 650	Advanced Feature Screenwriting	3
SCWR 685	The Business of Entertainment	3
Semester Hours		9
Spring		
SCWR 641	Feature Film and Television Adaptation	3
SCWR 651	Rewriting the Advanced Screenplay	3
Select one of the following:		3
SCWR 661	Writing an Original Drama Pilot	
SCWR 671	Writing an Original Comedy Pilot	
SCWR Elective (must select any one course from SCWR 500 or 600 level)		
Semester Hours		9
Third Year		
Fall		
SCWR 690	Thesis Screenplay Project	3
Select one of the following:		3
SCWR 661	Writing an Original Drama Pilot	
SCWR 671	Writing an Original Comedy Pilot	
SCWR Elective (Must select any one course from SCWR 500 or 600 level)		
SCWR Elective (Must select any one course from SCWR 500 or 600 level)		3
Semester Hours		9
Spring		
SCWR 691	Rewriting Thesis Screenplay Project	3
SCWR 692	Feature Film and Television Portfolio Workshop	3
Semester Hours		6
Minimum Semester Hours		51