When Given a Chance, Deliver Excellence and Never Quit.  
- Robert Rodríguez

**Course Number**: MEDA-3360_001  
**Course Title**: Screenplay Writing  
**Credit Hours**: 3  
**Semester**: Maymester 2018  
**Time/Location**: MTWR 12:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.  
**Classroom BH 126**

**Instructor**: Edward R. Tyndall  
**Office**: 233 B Bay Hall  
**Office Hours**: Mon, Tues and Wed 11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.  
**Email**: edward.tyndall@tamucc.edu  
**Phone**: 361-825-2296

**TEXT**: *Writing Short Films* by Linda J. Cowgill (edition 2) ISBN 9781580650632

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**:  
Access to a printer/ funds to print 21 copies of each assignment

**CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION**:  
Analysis and writing of the screenplay for narrative fictional films. Writing projects include problem-solving exercises and work on an original screenplay.

**PRE/Corequisites**:  
None

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**:  
-Demonstrate effective collaborative screenplay workshop techniques through successful participation in an intensive screenwriting workshop.  
-Illustrate mastery of dramatic structure through conceptualizing, outlining and writing a short narrative screenplay.

**STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE**:  
The spirit of inclusivity, diversity and tolerance is central to the ethos of the Media Production emphasis. No student will be denied positions of leadership based on race, gender, sexual orientation or intellectual perspective. Students will be chosen for positions of leadership on media projects based on an observed track record of excellence with consideration given to their expressed areas of interest.
As a fine arts emphasis, freedom of expression is a central tenant of our program. Therefore, no idea constructively advanced within the dictated structure of the classroom will be suppressed. All forms of creative expression, formally advanced, will be subject to the rigorous criticism central to the foundations of the fine arts tradition.

As an emphasis grounded in exploring the human condition, difficult, challenging and controversial subject matter will be explored in the classroom. Our work as artists and critical thinkers challenges us to face such difficult material with the greatest respect for divergent perspectives and to judge the merits of such subject matter through rational and civil discourse. The Media Production emphasis is committed to intellectual freedom and an environment of engagement that allows all students to contribute to this discourse in a constructive environment that fosters our evolution as media artists and critical thinkers.

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK IN MEDIA PRODUCTION COURSES:
The Media Production Program uses a formal in-person criticism model for all feedback and evaluation. This process is born out of the fine arts tradition and allows students to learn by viewing other approaches to projects in addition to their own, hear multiple perspectives during criticism, and participate in the critical analysis of peer work. Each student’s work will be screened in a group setting and feedback will be offered by the Professor and by peers. This formal critique represents the feedback students will receive on projects. Students are free to schedule a time during office hours to view projects again with the professor if they feel further discussion is needed. Final grade evaluation will be determined by the Professor on creative projects using the standard Media Production Rubric.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN ON THE ASSIGNED DATE:
No late assignments will be accepted. Assignments turned in after the due date will receive a zero. Incomplete assignments will be graded as is. No exceptions other than for family tragedy or medical emergencies (w/documentation). No incompletes will be given for this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM:
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an F.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Strict attendance is required. There are no “excused” absences other than medical emergencies for which a physician’s care is required and that can be documented in writing or validated by the University Health Center. Such documentation or validation must be at the student’s initiative. All documentation must be submitted within 2 days of your return to class. Given the condensed nature of maymester courses, after one
unexcused absence the student will be given a failing grade in the course. Tardiness or
early departure from the class will be considered an absence unless the instructor has
been informed and has approved, in writing, of mitigating circumstances.

**DROPPING A CLASS:**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can
sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your
academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this
course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the
process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course
drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in
your being dropped from the class. June 15 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic
grade of “W” this term.

**CLASSROOM/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each
individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under
Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either
(a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit
from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to
disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students
engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This
prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic
classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING:**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as
soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA
Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any
amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All
courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed
before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in
Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS:**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that
provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other
things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning
environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you
believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability
Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access
issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for
assistance at (361) 825-5816.
GRADE APPEAL PROCESS:
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

GRADING:
30% Step Outline  
45% Script Draft  
25% Workshop Participation and Readings  

GRADING SCALE:
100 – 90 = A  
89.99 – 80 = B  
79.99 – 70 = C  
69.99 – 60 = D  
59.99 – 0 = F  

TOPICAL OUTLINE:
May 14th --- Review Course Material, Table Reading “Shock Act”, Screening “Shock Act”. Screening various other short films  
Due --- None  
Assignment --- Read “Writing Short Films”, Read All Handouts, Write Step Outlines

May 15th --- Workshop Step Outlines  
Due --- Step Outlines! Bring Enough Copies for Everyone

May 16th --- Workshop Step Outlines  

May 17th --- Workshop Step Outlines  
Book Reading Due --- Reading of “Writing Short Films” completed
Assignment --- Write Script Drafts!

May 21st --- Workshop Script Drafts
Due --- Turn in Script Draft! Bring Enough Copies for Everyone

May 22nd --- Workshop Script Drafts

May 23rd --- Workshop Script Drafts

May 24th --- Workshop Script Drafts

May 25th --- Workshop Script Drafts

Resources for Screenwriters

Screenwriting Format:
Software available for formatting includes Movie Magic Screenwriter and Final Draft. These programs will greatly increase your writing efficiency given the technical formatting issues required in writing scripts. You should be able to get a copy of these programs at an academic discount from several vendors.

If you decide to “do it yourself” you can find information regarding proper formatting techniques at http://www.simplyscripts.com/WR_format.html

You can also use Celtx, which is free and downloadable at http://celtx.com/

Screenwriting Magazines:
The following magazines are great resources for information regarding screenwriting. They have associated websites with all sorts of valuable information.

Creative Screenwriting
http://www.csweb.ws/csw/index.cfm
Creative Screenwriting Magazine also has a great Podcast available for free through the iTunes Store that features weekly interviews with working screenwriters.

Script notes Podcast

Script Magazine
http://www.scriptmag.com/

Filmmaker Magazine
Filmmaker Magazine is a great resource for independent filmmakers
http://filmmakermagazine.com

IndieWire
Indiewire is filled with great blogs and news related to indie film production http://www.indiewire.com

Withoutabox:
You can submit screenplays (and films) to film festivals by going to Withoutabox http://www.withoutabox.com/, create an account, and choose from the “Call for Scripts” section to pick festivals. If you decide to submit to one, you should be able to receive a discounted rate for most festivals using your student status.

Things To Get Involved In!

Like the Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/tamucc.mediaproduction/

South Texas Cinémathèque Screening Series
South Texas Cinémathèque, a collaborative screening series run by The Department of Communication and Media and the Art Museum of South Texas, is designed to broaden Media students’ exposure to independent film by bringing internationally recognized filmmakers to Corpus Christi, Texas for discussions, screenings and lectures. South Texas Cinémathèque’s past guests are recipients of some of the most prestigious awards given in independent film. The series gives students rare opportunities to interact with internationally recognized film artists while broadening their understanding of the filmmaking process.

Student Showcase
Each year the Production Track Student Showcase offers students an opportunity to screen their coursework to live audiences in a theatrical environment. Selective inclusion in the showcase provides students with networking opportunities and serves as a portfolio-building event.

Media Professional Program
The Media Professional Program gives Production Track Students diverse learning opportunities while working with active industry professionals on faculty led film projects. Students train with production experts in intensive shooting environments while serving in key crew positions such as Assistant Camera Operator, Production Sound Mixer, Script Supervisor, Assistant Director, Production Assistant and more.

Annual Portfolio Reviews
Intensive annual portfolio reviews are held each spring as part of a formal mentorship initiative overseen by Media Production Faculty. Spanning several days, these reviews allow students to meet one on one with faculty to discuss creative work, career objectives, matriculation, and involvement in other Media Production program initiatives.
MEDIA PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FILE POLICIES

EQUIPMENT RETURN:
Equipment must be turned in organized to the same standards as when you received it. For Every incident of disorganized gear you will loose 5 pointes (on a 100 point scale) off the assignment for which the gear was drawn.

EXPORT STANDARDS:
All projects turned in must be shot at a 24P frame rate and exported as an H.264 HD 1080P File.

UPLOAD STANDARDS AND FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS
Files should be names as follows:
Use YOUR last name and the project name. Smith_Stills Project or Cantu_Sound Project