

**Screenwriting 1**

**Instructed By:  
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## Course Syllabus

### **Course Name:** Screenwriting 1

**Course Description:** This is the first level Screenwriting course. You will be introduced to character development, dramatic film structure, formal script writing, and film production.

### **Course Materials/Resources:**

*Celtx:* A subscription from the school will be provided and students will be required to use it for the class. It is browser based and can be accessed through a regular computer, Chromebook, or tablet.

*Textbooks:* *Story* by Robert McKee will be assigned and expected to be read. It can be purchased from [Amazon](#) or read as a [PDF](#). It's also available on Audible.

### **Special Course Features:**

SkillsUSA is a national student organization. SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA helps each student excel. SkillsUSA programs include local, state, and national competitions in which students demonstrate occupational and leadership skills. Students can join SkillsUSA for a **\$30** fee that includes both the state and national membership. It also includes the costs associated with the local and district competition. All students who join SkillsUSA will receive a SkillsUSA shirt. Students who join can expect to participate in community service projects, develop leadership skills, and meet connections in their industry.

**SkillsUSA Week - October 28 - November 1**

**SkillsUSA Local Competition - November 1**

**SkillsUSA Regional Competition - TBA**

**SkillsUSA State Competition - April 17-19**

### *Post-Secondary Articulated Credit:*

Students may be eligible to receive free college credit after successful completion of Digital Media Arts (the prerequisite for Screenwriting). The grade qualifications and number of college credit hours available vary by the college with which it is affiliated. This program has articulated credit agreements with the following colleges/universities:

- Ferris State University

**Course Requirements:** Screenwriting core skill areas, proficiencies, and their content areas prepare students to advance to post-secondary training and/or career paths that lead toward employment in a number of Visual Communications jobs. Most jobs in this career path require post-secondary education. Students are expected to possess basic computer and Internet skills.

**Electronic Equipment:** Phones are not permitted during class time unless specifically instructed by the instructor. If phones are out without permission, they will be confiscated and discipline will follow school policy. Earbuds/Airpods or any other headphones, are not to be worn while in the classroom unless specifically being used on the computer for a project. Games of any kind are not allowed on the classroom computers. Downloads are not allowed on the computers unless approved by the instructor for the benefit of your project.

**Food & Drink:** Food and beverages are NOT allowed in the classrooms. Water is allowed if in a closed container with a screw lid but never next to the computers or near equipment.

**Attendance:** Attendance in class is essential for thorough understanding and time to complete projects and assignments. Due to the nature of the group-driven class, if you are absent frequently, you not only hurt your grade, but you are hurting the group's ability to finish the project. If you have extended unexcused absences and miss more than 50% of the project, you will be expected to complete the assignment on your own.

*Excused Absences* - students will be permitted to make up any work assigned during an excused absence. The student will have the same number of days to make up missed work as the number of days absent. Students may need to come in outside of class time to make up that work due to the nature of the projects that are completed.

*Unexcused Absences* - Students WILL NOT BE PERMITTED to make up ANY work during an unexcused absence. A "0" will be recorded. However, if you are absent during a project, but are in class the day it is due and able to complete it, you will receive the project grade.

**Late Work:** Individual, group assignments, or projects that are forgotten, lost, stolen, or for whatever reason not turned in on time will be reduced by 50%. Any assignments not turned in by the time I pass graded assignments back will receive a "0" grade. Students are responsible for the security of their homework and classroom material.

**Equipment Check-Out:** Equipment may be checked out for Screenwriting projects only. You will not be allowed to check-out equipment for any other class projects. Any damage that occurs, regardless of whose fault it is, will be the responsibility of the person that checked-out the equipment and that person will be held financially responsible for any and all replacement and/or repair costs.

Do not plan on any outside filming until you have approval from me to check-out equipment. I reserve the right, based on your performance in my class, to not allow you to check out any equipment overnight. Failure to return or properly care for equipment will result in you no longer being able to check out equipment for future projects.

**Theft:** Theft of any kind will be subject to the school discipline policy and submitted to the school police liaison officer for criminal prosecution. Just because you "find" something, does not make it yours. Please note that all areas (classroom, audio room, studio, equipment storage, etc) are monitored with video surveillance.

## Screenwriting 1 Course Schedule

MP	Topics	Assessments/Projects
1	Identity Dialogue Character Development Dramatic Film Structure	Writing Schedule Artistic Identity Overheard Dialogue Collaborative Screenplay
2	Character Arc Inner/Outer Need Film Premise	Boxing Match Short Film Stage 1 Short Film Stage 2
3	Inciting Incident Scene Analysis Crisis, Climax, Resolution	Short Film Stage 3 Short Film Stage 4 Short Film Stage 5
4	Final Film	Short Film Stage 6 Pre-Production, Production, Post-Production of Film Final Film (Final Exam Grade)

“Anxious, inexperienced writers obey rules. Rebellious, unschooled writers break rules. Artists master the form.”

- Robert McKee