

DRAMATIC WRITING (DWPG-GT)

DWPG-GT 2000 Art & Public Policy All School Seminar: (4 Credits)

Special Topics:

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2015 Goldberg Masterclass in Playwriting (3 Credits)

The focus of this class will be the writing and development of a new full-length play. To this end, students will be expected to bring in new and rewritten pages to be read and discussed in class. The play should not be one workshopped before, and students may not work on it concomitantly in another class. Each week, six students will bring in 10-15 new pages, so be prepared to have new pages read in class every other week. Since this is a writing workshop, students will be actively engaged with one another's work and will be expected to participate in feedback sessions.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2017 Masterclass in Screenwriting (3 Credits)

Majors only. While the screenwriter working in the Western world should be proficient in Aristotelian structure, many of the stories we want to tell don't lend themselves easily to a narrative paradigm in which a hero rises up against the odds in pursuit of a definable concrete goal. Increasingly, many storytellers see life as...messier than that. *Masterclass in Screenwriting: Alternative Narrative Structures* is predicated on the belief that how you tell a story is just as important as the story you tell. In this Screenwriting Masterclass for MFA students, we will explore the expansion of character identification; the balance between plot and character; the manipulation of form, genre, and linearity; and the distinction between the dramatic and narrative voice. We will do this through a combination of text analysis, writing exercises and workshops, as students develop the first draft of a feature-length screenplay (85-100 pages). While challenging accepted narrative models and exploiting the opportunities presented by "alternative" strategies, we will discuss the impact of our artistic choices and how to maintain audience investment in the absence of traditional dramatic guideposts.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2018 Introduction to Dramatic Writi (4 Credits)

This class provides an introduction to the basic elements needed to create a dramatic (of any kind, including comedic) script. Students will examine what it means to have a protagonist, antagonist, and conflict as well as learn to resolve conflict and create a story. Writing exercises will address each of these elements culminating in the writing of a thirty-minute play or screenplay. Examples of how these elements are used in great dramatic works will be drawn from play, film, and television. The intent of this class is to provide students with the tools necessary to do further dramatic writing. Students are required to write and revise a ten-minute play or screenplay, and complete a 20-30 page play or screenplay. In workshop sessions, students read and criticize their work in order to help each writer realize the full potential inherent in the work.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2030 Playwriting I (3 Credits)

Students will concentrate on characterization, dialogue, and structure with an emphasis on identifying the stakes, turning points, climax and resolution of the drama. The course builds to an exploration of theatricality and how the use of physical action, props, movement, sound, and light are primary to the creation of a dramatic work for the stage. This is a writing seminar in which each student will write and workshop a ten-minute play and a one act play. In addition, there will be reading assignments of dramatic texts, primarily from contemporary playwrights, which will be discussed throughout the semester.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2035 Screenwriting I (3 Credits)

This is an introductory course that will focus on the fundamental components of screenplay writing. Produced screenplays will be analyzed for structure and student work will be presented in a workshop process. Students are required to write a short silent film, a ten minute short film and a 20-30 minute short film, as well as a synopsis and outline for a feature length film. The reading and analysis of screenplays will be required in conjunction with the student's original work. Lectures integrate writing work with presentations emphasizing understanding of basic screenplay format, structure, theme, story, plot, character development and film language.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2040 Playwriting II (3 Credits)

This class is designed to expand on and enhance the concepts and techniques learned in Playwriting I and to encourage writers to engage the work and the world more critically. While traditional playwriting models will be embraced, alternative narrative modes and avant-garde structures will also be introduced, with further attention to developing the playwright's unique voice and finding the balance between clarity and subtlety. In addition to completing a full-length play of at least 70 pages, each student is required to read class-wide assignments of dramatic texts, as well as individual assignments suggested by the instructor, tailored to the student's interests and writing style. Students may, with approval of the instructor, choose to complete or rewrite the play they started in Graduate Playwriting I.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2042 Graduate Episodic/TV Writing I: Specs (4 Credits)

Students will write a "spec" episode of an existing series. They will learn how to write a script for both the half-hour and hour-long format, going from premise line to outline to a fully executed draft.. The purpose of this class is to understand how a series functions and how writing the episodic form differs from other dramatic forms.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2045 Screenwriting II (3 Credits)

This intermediate level screenwriting course is designed to expand on the concepts introduced in Screenwriting I by focusing on feature screenplay writing. The goal of the class is the completion of a first draft of an original feature-length screenplay, after developing a pitch, a synopsis and an outline. The reading and analysis of six to eight screenplays is required in conjunction with the student's original work. Lectures integrate writing work with presentations emphasizing understanding of basic screenplay format, structure, theme, story, plot, character development and film language continued from Screenwriting I.

Prerequisite: Screenwriting I

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2047 Masterclass in Episodic/TV Writing (3 Credits)

This elective writing class focuses on a single area of study within episodic/tv series writing. A masterclass requires the writing of a full-length work, and is equivalent in workload to an advanced level writing class.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2048 Graduate Episodic/TV Writing II: Pilots (4 Credits)

Students will write an original pilot. In the lecture component of the class, emphasis will be placed on both pilots and the series that emerge from those pilots. Students will be encouraged to think about the arena of the show, the story engine of the series and character goals both in the pilot itself and across a series.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2050 Advanced Playwriting (3 Credits)

This is an advanced class for students who are serious about developing their playwriting skills. Initial class sessions will be devoted to a series of writing exercises to generate ideas, play with content, experiment with structure, and discover what and how students most want to write this semester. This class is about risk and experimentation. Students may begin something and throw it out; they should strive to build a play that excites them and feels truthful and vital.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2055 Advanced Screenwriting (3 Credits)

In this class, students will build on their experience of writing a full-length original screenplay in Screenwriting II and repeat the process with a higher expectation for a completed screenplay. They will also be expected to write faster and end the semester with a rewritten draft of their original screenplay. The course will review the fundamental components of screenplay writing and structure while exploring specific elements of scene, character, dialogue, theme, etc. that apply to feature screenplay writing. This is a workshop class; work will be presented to the class for analysis and discussion throughout the semester.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2060 MFA Thesis in Playwriting (4 Credits)

This is a semester-long, comprehensive class where students are expected to utilize all the tools they have developed in the previous three semesters of study to complete an original, full-length work. Students are required to come into this class with a draft of the play, preferably one developed in Advanced Playwriting or Goldberg Masterclass in Playwriting, that they will work on and complete over the course of the semester. Students who did not take Advanced Playwriting/Goldberg Masterclass must come into the class with a full-length play that they have written somewhere else. As much as continuing to work on a full-length play, this class is about developing a rewriting practice; a process for students to assess their own work, determine to what degree the draft matches or does not match their ideal vision for the play, and from there, use that assessment to help devise a plan for how to make their play match their ideal vision. In the course of the semester this class will explore a number of tools to aid that process of assessment and rewriting, including the use of actors and directors in context of developmental readings.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2062 Graduate Playwriting I (4 Credits)

This is an introductory class that explores the basic craft and execution of playwriting based in Aristotelean concepts of dramatic structure. The primary goal is to introduce different strategies for creating dramatic conflict and for sustaining the arc of a play through its rising action, climax, and denouement. By experimenting with various tools and ways of thinking about structure, students will develop their own ways of working, their own strategies for creating and revising, and their own personal goals as writers. Many topics will be covered, but the focus will be on the fundamentals.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2063 Graduate Playwriting II (4 Credits)

This class is designed to expand on and enhance the concepts and techniques learned in Graduate Playwriting I and to encourage writers to engage the work and the world more critically. While traditional playwriting models will be embraced, alternative narrative modes and avant-garde structures will also be introduced, with further attention to developing the playwright's unique voice and finding the balance between clarity and subtlety. In addition to completing a full-length play of at least 70 pages, each student is required to read class-wide assignments of dramatic texts, as well as individual assignments suggested by the instructor, tailored to the student's interests and writing style. Students may, with approval of the instructor, choose to complete or rewrite the play they started in Graduate Playwriting I.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2065 Mfa Thesis in Screenwriting (4 Credits)

This is a semester-long, comprehensive class where students are expected to utilize all the tools they have developed in the previous three semesters of study to complete an original, full length work. Special attention will be paid to developing dramatic ideas that are viable, structured, and can sustain themselves as full-length work. Students are required to come into this class with a draft of the screenplay, preferably one developed in Advanced Screenwriting, that they will work on and complete over the course of the semester. Students who are not bringing in a screenplay written in Advanced Screenwriting must come into the class with a feature length screenplay that they have written in any other class, or in their free time.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2066 Graduate Screenwriting I (4 Credits)

This is an introductory class that explores the basic craft and execution of feature length screenwriting. The class will focus on the basics of narrative story telling; structure, theme, plot, character development, film language and format. The class is a mix of lectures, workshopping and assigned readings, with emphasis on applying lessons from the lectures and readings to student work.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2067 Graduate Screenwriting II (4 Credits)

In this class, students will build on what they've learned in Graduate Screenwriting I and apply it to completing an original, full-length screenplay. The course will review the fundamental components of screenplay writing and structure while exploring specific elements of scene, character, dialogue, theme, etc. that apply to feature screenplay writing. Emphasis will be placed on character as the engine of story. This is a workshop class; work will be presented to the class for analysis and discussion throughout the semester.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2070 MFA Thesis in Episodic/TV Writing (4 Credits)

Students will take what they have learned in the previous classes, placing special emphasis on how a pilot generates long-form story and long-term character development, and write a pilot that incorporates all of these elements. They may have the option, at the instructor's discretion, of writing a later episode of the same series.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2074 Collaboration: Reloaded (3 Credits)

This production class is designed to examine the nature of collaboration between actors, playwrights, designers and directors, using the medium of the Reading, that form in which so much of the work of theater artists transpires. For each meeting the class will operate in five teams, consisting of a director, a playwright, one or two designers and several actors. (Since there are 6 playwrights enrolled in the class, 1 playwright will observe each section). The basic form of the class is simple: each week, teams will rehearse and/or present an excerpt of the playwright's play as a reading. After each presentation, we will discuss, not the product, but the process of creating the reading: problems, successes, conflicts, choices.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2080 Masterclass Across Mediums: (3 Credits)

This elective writing class focuses on a single area of study across mediums. A masterclass requires the writing of a full-length work, and is equivalent in workload to an advanced level writing class.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2082 Writing Workshop (3 Credits)

This elective writing class focuses on an area of study within the mediums of playwriting, screenwriting, and/or episodic series writing. In addition to writing assignments, students will also focus on text analysis, production and/or performance. A writing workshop does not require completion of a full-length work.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2105 Film Story Analysis: (4 Credits)

This text analysis course is designed to provide a platform for an in-depth study of how the story of a film is presented, what choices are made by the author, how information is offered or withheld and what effect this has on the drama. This class will be an "anthology" of different works, each selected for a different aspect of storytelling, exploring how the stylistic choices, themes, and dramatic devices reveal themselves within the body of work. The course is designed to better help students organize their own narratives by analyzing the techniques employed by various screenwriters in constructing their screenplays. A selection of films will be screened and discussed in terms of continuity of theme; delineation of plot, development of structure, protagonist's story purpose, dialogue as action and character. After each screening, the instructor will lead a group discussion and analysis of the film, focusing further on the techniques, conventions and devices employed by the screenwriter to both tell a good story and satisfy the demands of the audience.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2110 TV Story Analysis: (4 Credits)

This text analysis course is designed to provide a platform for an in-depth study of how the story of a show is presented, what choices are made by the author, how information is offered or withheld and what effect this has on the drama. This class will be an "anthology" of different works, each selected for a different aspect of storytelling, exploring how the stylistic choices, themes, and dramatic devices reveal themselves within the body of work. This class examines the history and evolution of television/episodic, from the early days up to the present, with an eye toward how storytelling has changed and evolved. Various genres and shows will be viewed and discussed as we not only analyze the unique episodic universe but also connect what was going on in television to the larger currents of American culture and history, and see what lessons there might be for people who plan to work in episodic now.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2116 Play Story Analysis (4 Credits)

This text analysis course is designed to provide a platform for an in-depth study of how the story of a play is presented. This class will be an "anthology" of different works, each selected for a different aspect of storytelling, or it will center around a single playwright's (or group of playwrights') work, exploring how the stylistic choices, themes, and dramatic devices reveal themselves within the body of work. The course is designed to better help students organize their own narratives by analyzing the techniques employed by various playwrights in constructing their plays.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2150 Advanced Episodic/TV Writing: Series (3 Credits)

Students will come to class with a pilot they've written and hope to expand into a full series. They will then write a detailed description of the remainder of the first season, with attention to character arcs, plot mechanics and story goals. The purpose of this class is to teach long-term story and character development while learning how a pilot should establish the components for a successful series.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2300 Graduate Internship (1-6 Credits)

Students experience the profession of the dramatist from "the other side of the desk" by working in a professional organization that develops and or produces the work of dramatists. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to complete an internship and can do so for credit at any point after the first semester by registering for DWPG-GT 2300. Minor assignments required. Seek assistance for an internship with TOCD or Kanbar Internship Coordinator.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2350 Business of the Business (1 Credit)

This course is designed to familiarize students with the basics of the business of writing for theater, film, and episodic television. The course will include an overview of those industries: from off-Broadway to Broadway theater, independent to studio film, streaming/web series' to network and cable TV. Case studies and examples from across the three mediums will be used to illustrate financing, development, contracts, rights, unions, production, and distribution.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2355 Professional Training (1 Credit)

Students will focus on professional training specific to one of the three mediums of theater, film and episodic TV writing or an otherwise relevant area of career development. Taken in conjunction with the more broad Business of the Business, this class will provide a more in-depth study in a specialized area to better prepare students for professional work in the arts.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2400 Graduate Independent Study (1-6 Credits)

Independent Studies may not replace required course work. To request an Independent Study, students must complete an Application for Independent Study and write a Plan for Independent Study that must be approved by the supervising faculty member and the chair. Supervising faculty must be a full-time faculty member (please see the Application for a complete list.) Applications are available from the Academic Administrator. Approvals are based upon the student's ability to work independently and on the student's academic record.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: Yes

DWPG-GT 2405 Loving Living Playwright (3 Credits)

This is a production workshop for playwrights, led by The Public Theater's Master Writer and Visiting Arts Professor Suzan-Lori Parks. Each week playwrights present bare-bones staged readings, excerpts of their previously written work. Writers are paired off, with one writer serving as "playwright" and the other as "director." Working with professional actors, students will strengthen their writing chops by getting work on its feet for class discussion and feedback. "Playwright" and "Director" pairings change weekly, giving each writer multiple opportunities to explore the possibilities of their own written work. Students must have previously written dramatic material that's ready for production-workshop. Each playwright will commit to working on ONE of their plays for the entire semester.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2409 Graduate Drama Lab I (2 Credits)

This MFA first year production class will explore what happens to a script after the words are on the page and "send" has been hit. Specifically, what are the elements that a writer can take into consideration so that a script is not simply a string of dialogue, but rather a roadmap for visual, cinematic, theatrical storytelling. Over the course of the semester we will look at the key artistic collaborations involved in translating the written material onto the stage and screen: the work of the director; the influence of the actors; the creations of set designers (theater) and production designers (film & TV); the work of lighting designers (theater) and cinematographers (film & TV); the use of sound and music dramatically; the relevance of locations; and finally, the practical concerns of a producer. The question we're examining in all of these is: How are these collaborations informed by the script? And conversely, how might one's writing take advantage of what these collaborators bring to the production of the script?

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2610 Episodic/TV Writing I: The Half-Hour (3 Credits)

Students will write a "spec" episode of an existing series. In the lecture component of the class, emphasis will be placed on the long-term structure of one of the series the students are writing. The purpose of this class is to understand how a series functions and how writing the episodic form differs from other dramatic forms.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2612 Episodic/TV Writing II: The One-Hour (3 Credits)

Students will write a "spec" episode of an existing one-hour television series, and will outline an original hour-long pilot. In the lecture component of the class, emphasis will be placed on story structure and creating serialized drama. The purpose of this class is to gain an understanding of how to create a sustainable series franchise with long-term story engines.

Grading: Grad Tisch Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2630 Comedic Strategies (3 Credits)

This first year MFA text analysis course examines the essential elements of storytelling through the analysis of comedy in theater, film, television and beyond. It will focus on comedic works in all mediums of comedy starting with Aristophanes then moving away from him as quickly as possible. The class will demonstrate how comedy is a living, evolving thing that reflects where we are as people and tells the truth. Popular culture is always telling us something; even when it doesn't know it's telling us something. From satire to sketch and stand-up, the course will explore how jokes can chip away at entrenched ideas and create community. Examples of readings and viewings will be analyzed for character, story, plot, structure, theme and technique.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No

DWPG-GT 2631 Dramatic Strategies (3 Credits)

This first year MFA text analysis course examines the essential elements of storytelling through the analysis of dramas in theater, film and episodic series. Texts from antiquity to the present from each of the three mediums will be read and analyzed for character, story, plot, structure, theme and technique. This is a text analysis class which is meant to complement the writing workshops that students are taking at the same time. The course will use dramatic examples to illustrate elements of storytelling that students can apply to their own original work. By studying source material in its historical context, students will better understand their own work and how it fits into, and is influenced by, the evolution of the form.

Grading: Grad Tisch Pass/Fail

Repeatable for additional credit: No