Writing for Emotional Impact
Writer’s Studio, Spring 2022

COURSE INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>CODE &amp; SECTION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF COURSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing for Emotional Impact</td>
<td>WRIT52611-22S1</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<th>COURSE SCHEDULE</th>
<th>CLASS LOCATION</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAYS: Tuesdays, April 5-May 24</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Susan Hubbard</td>
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<td>TIMES: 1:30-4pm CST</td>
<td>Registration deadline: Thursday, March 24, 5:00pm CST</td>
<td>EMAIL: <a href="mailto:susan.hubbard3@gmail.com">susan.hubbard3@gmail.com</a></td>
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GRAHAM SCHOOL INFORMATION

PHONE: 773.702.1722          WEBSITE: https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Audiences watch movies and read fiction hoping to be blown away; to go on emotional journeys so powerful they linger in the mind as lived experience. Learn to bind audience to story by building strong character identification and skillful story catharsis. A top screenplay and a novel will be used to provide examples and inform our discussion. Participants will complete in-class and at-home exercises, workshop their work in class, and read, support and critique each other’s work. Writers should plan on regularly submitting their work for peer and instructor review.

The intent of this class is to interrogate and challenge the notion that character arc and story meaning are controlled primarily by external character goals and plot events. To that end, we’ll examine and apply techniques writers can use to bind audiences to their stories by letting them in to the emotions that pre-exist, accompany, underlie and fuel character goals, character decisions and character actions. We’ll discover how emotions, longing, unmet desires and the character's idealized self-image combine and combust to demand transformation and change, driving the events of the story forward to a cathartic conclusion.

REQUIRED TEXTS*

1. *The Apartment*, 1960 film starring Jack Lemmon and Shirley MacLaine, written by Billy Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond. Winner 5 Oscars including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Art Direction and Best Film Editing and nominations for Best Actor in a Leading Role for both Lemmon and MacLaine. Running time: 2 hours, 5 minutes.


* Note that study texts are SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Email the instructor after you have registered.
Week 1
April 5

Prior to class watch the study movie and be prepared to discuss it in the first class. Email the instructor after you have registered to receive a link to the screenplay and to confirm that the study texts have not changed.

Prior to class begin reading the study novel. The sooner we can integrate the novel into our class discussion, the sooner we can begin to reap the rewards of its lessons.

**TOPICS:**

- Audience experience of stories
- Emotional vs. external plot
- Study texts and key course concepts

Week 2
April 12

- Humans, factored; establishing underlying character drivers
- Identifying story problems and central conflicts
- Deepening meaning through subordinate characters and side stories

Week 3
April 19

- Centering your audience in the here and now of your character’s experience
- Enabling audience access to your character’s inner life

Week 4
April 26

- The burden of the idealized self image
- The Big Lie and the character arc

Week 5
May 3

- Amplifying subtext
- Deploying three powerhouse tools

Week 6
May 10

- Reframing overarching dramatic questions and immediate scene questions
- Crafting triple-duty scenes
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
As we may be addressing controversial topics in our class discussions, we expect students to be respectful and considerate of others.

DISABILITY INFORMATION
The Graham School of Continuing Liberal & Professional Studies abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act (see http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm), with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (see http://www.dol.gov/oaam/regs/statutes/sec504.htm), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (see http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) and will provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities covered by law. If you have a disability for which you may require accommodations, please contact Charnessa Warren, Director of Student Disability Services, at 773.702.6000 or charnessa@uchicago.edu in advance of the first class meeting.

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<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>May 17</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Harnessing tension</td>
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<td>• Evoking the unnamable</td>
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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>May 24</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deploying danger, risk, and surprise</td>
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<td>• Planting the long fuse</td>
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<td>• Driving home your themes</td>
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