FTV 183A: Producing I: Film and Television Development

Course Description

In today’s entertainment industry, aspiring Producers, Executives, and Filmmakers need to have an in-depth understanding of the business issues that influence creative decisions. In particular, it is important to understand why certain movies and television shows ultimately get made and why others do not, because that defines who gets to tell their stories to wide audiences. Each week during the course, we will focus on different areas of the entertainment industry and students will learn about the business issues involved in creative producing.

Throughout the course, we will also examine critical issues that impact both the industry at large as well as the careers of aspiring entertainment professionals. We will discuss how industry-wide changes such as globalization and digital technology are influencing studios, networks, producers, and filmmakers and, in turn, affecting the job market. And we will discuss how important issues like racial diversity and gender inequality impact various areas of the industry. The goal is for students to gain an understanding of the critical issues they need to consider as they start their careers.

1. Course Requirements

Course work consists of attending and participating in weekly class meetings, completing homework assignments, completing a midterm paper, and a final paper.

Assignments and papers are due at the date and time specified below or in class. Late submissions of assignments will impact your grade negatively. Attendance is required of all students in all class sessions. Unexcused absences and more than one excused absence will impact your grade negatively.

2. Homework Assignments and Class Discussions

Homework assignments will include: reading scripts, writing standard studio script coverage, viewing trailers and promos for upcoming films and television series, reading articles and studies about industry wide trends and writing a research paper.

Class Discussions: We will discuss the business decisions involved in Creative Producing. We will evaluate new scripts and discuss whether they have the potential to become successful movies or television shows. We will evaluate creative and business decisions regarding upcoming Hollywood
movies and television shows. And we will discuss issues like diversity and gender inequality in the industry.

Students are expected to participate in class discussions about the homework assignments and important industry topics. The ability to express an opinion intelligently and efficiently is one of the most important skills that young people in this industry must develop, and an important goal is for everyone to come out of the course with an improved ability to express their opinion in a sometimes-adversarial environment.

### 3. Midterm and Final Paper Assignments

For the midterm paper, students will write standard studio Script Notes on a feature film script that will be assigned in class.

For the final paper, students will be assigned to write a paper on Hollywood’s problems with racial and cultural diversity or Hollywood’s problems with gender equality. This topic and the questions that should be answered in the paper will be discussed throughout the course.

### 4. Grading

25% - Participation in Class Discussions about Industry Issues  
25% - Participation in Class Discussions about Screenplays  
25% - Midterm Script Notes  
25% - Final Paper

### Lecture and Discussion Topics

**Week 1, Class 1 – Introduction and Overview**

- Introduction  
- Policies  
- Assignments and Grading  
- The Importance of Opinions  
- Professional Internships  
- Overview of the Course  
- The Importance of Development  
- Script Coverage  
- Basic Elements of Story Structure

Assignment: Write Studio Script Coverage on a script that will be sent out after class.

**Week 1, Class 2 – Studio Development**

- How Studio Development Originates
- The Studio Mandate
- Development Deals
- The Spec Market
- Weekend Read
- Franchise Development
- Open Writing Assignments
- The Studio Development Process
- Studio Rewrites
- Script Notes

Assignment: Read three screenplays in anticipation of a Weekend Read Meeting-style discussion to take place during the following class session. Additional instructions will be given in class.

**Week 2, Class 3 – Weekend Read**

- Weekend Read Meeting

Assignment: Watch trailers for upcoming Studio Films which will be discussed in the following class. Specific trailers will be announced in class.

**Week 3, Class 5 – Weekend Read**

- Weekend Read Meeting

Assignment: Write standard Studio Script Notes on a script that will be discussed in class.
Week 3, Class 6 – The Globalization of Hollywood

- Overview of Globalization
- Top Foreign Markets
- Basic Statistics and Comparisons
- Hollywood and Foreign Audiences
- Hollywood and Foreign Film Industries
- Hollywood and Foreign Governments
- How Globalization Is Changing the Business of Creative Producing
- Hollywood and Global Responsibility
- Midway Point Questions

Assignment: Watch trailers for upcoming Independent Films which will be discussed in the following class. Specific trailers will be announced in class.

Week 4, Class 7 – The Business of Independent Cinema

- Overview of Independent Cinema
- How Independent Films Get Made
- How Independent Films Get Distributed
- Film Markets and Film Festivals
- Digital Distribution

Assignment: Read television pilots in anticipation of a discussion in the following class.

Week 4, Class 8 – The Business of Television

- The Business of Television
- The Different Kinds of Networks
- How Business Goals Impact the TV Development Mandate
- The Golden Era of TV or the Era of “Too Much Television?”

Assignment: Read four television pilot screenplays in anticipation of a Weekend Read Meeting-style discussion to take place during the following class session. Additional instructions will be given in class.

Week 5, Class 9 – Weekend Read

- Weekend Read Meeting

Assignment: Watch trailers for upcoming Fall Television Series in anticipation of a discussion of the TV Pilot Development Process during the following class.
Week 5, Class 10 – Producing Television

- Homework Discussion
- Overview of Television Development & Production
- Broadcast Network Television
- Basic Cable
- Premium Cable
- Broadband Networks
- Guest Speakers

Assignment: Read articles and reports about Hollywood’s issues with racial diversity and gender inequality which will be discussed in the next class.

Week 6, Class 11 – Racial Diversity and Gender Inequality

- Homework Discussion
- Hollywood and Issues of Racial Diversity and Gender Inequality
- Audiences and Multiculturalism
- Representation of People of Color on Screen and Industry Hiring Practices
- Representation of Women on Screen and Industry Hiring Practices
- Discussion of Final Paper

Assignment: Write a paper on Hollywood’s issues with Racial Diversity and Gender Inequality. The focus of the paper will be discussed in class.

Week 6, Class 12 – Your Hollywood Career

- Internship summary
- Career Questions
- Non-Career Questions
- Summation of the Course
UCLA DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION, AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Example Syllabus. The syllabi posted are general syllabi for students who wish to find out the topics generally covered in these courses

FTV 182: Power, Identity, and Justice in the Film Industry

Course Description and Goals:
With movements like #MeToo, #OscarsSoWhite, and Black Lives Matter, in recent years we’ve seen American media industries increasingly pressured to respond to longstanding calls for more diverse representations and employment for groups long underserved by mainstream film and television. Paying attention to questions of race, gender, sexuality, and ability, in this course we’ll look at how politics, economics, labor, and identity intersect to determine who is able to participate, what representations are produced, and how industry cultures are, or aren’t, changing.

Required Texts/Readings:
All readings will be made available on the course website.

Grading Breakdown:
Participation - 25%
Weekly responses - 20%
Research report - 20%
Research paper - 35%

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation
Full class participation means coming to class on time, with the readings done, and taking part in the conversations we have in class. Class is a place to try out ideas, so please feel welcomed to contribute as we talk and learn as a group. As long as the classroom remains a place of respect and generosity for each other and each other’s ideas, we all benefit from a wide range of viewpoints on and approaches to the course material.

Weekly responses
Weeks 2-5, you will write a weekly response to one or both of the required readings (your choice), due via our course website by 9am (PST) on Wednesdays.

Response requirements:

- 300-600 words long
- identify the main argument / thesis / purpose of the reading
- include at least one passage from the readings (please cite) that helps you make your analysis
- if there was a part that was particularly challenging to understand, mention this and what made it difficult
- end with a question the reading left you with - maybe something that went unexplored or unanswered, or something the readings made you wonder about in relation to the course's broad topics - that you might also ask in class.

As long as you meet these requirements, you have flexibility in how you engage with the readings. This shouldn’t be a synopsis/summary; rather, engage with / deconstruct / respond to the reading.

Maybe you’d like to analyze how the writer makes their point - what kinds of assumptions they work with, or what kinds of evidence they use. Maybe you see particular applications of this reading to what we
have already discussed in class. Maybe the reading helps you understand better how the contemporary film industry works. These will also help me direct our conversations during our Thursday evening classes.

**Course papers**
This is a two-part assignment where you will research a film of your choosing that engages in some way with a social issue or identity. In Week 3, you’ll submit a research report, and then after our last day of class you’ll submit the final paper. A separate document on the course website will have more details on expectations for this project.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**
Subject to change, but I’ll give you a heads-up if anything does change.

Class 1- Origins of the contemporary film industry
Screening:
- *Beverly Hills Cop* (Martin Brest, 1984, 105 minutes)
Reading:

Class 2 - Studying the media industries
Screening:
- *Bamboozled* (Spike Lee, 2000, 136 minutes)
Readings:

Class 3 - Gender, intersectionality, and the box office
Screenings:
- *Bridesmaids* (Paul Feig, 2011, 132 minutes)
- *Girls Trip* (Malcolm D. Lee, 2017, 122 minutes)
Reading:

Class 4- Global film markets and representation
Screening:
- *The Meg* (Jon Turteltaub, 2018, 113 minutes)
Readings:
Optional readings:
- Rebecca Rubin - “Global Box Office Hits New Record in 2019 with $42.5 Billion.” *Variety*, January 10, 2020.

Class 5 - Digital media and independent filmmaking
Screening:
- *Spa Night* (Andrew Ahn, 2016, 93 minutes)

Readings:

Optional reading:

Class 6 - Independent film and the future
Screening:
- *The Farewell* (Lulu Wang, 2019, 100 minutes)

Readings:

**Research paper due Monday, 5pm PST**
FTV 104: FILM AND TELEVISION SYMPOSIUM

Example Syllabus. The syllabi posted are general syllabi for students who wish to find out the topics generally covered in these courses

Course Description

This course is a speaker series featuring guests from various aspects of the film, television and digital media business. In today’s entertainment industry, aspiring Writers, Producers, Animators, and Filmmakers need to have an in depth understanding of the business issues that influence creative decisions. Additionally, aspiring executives, agents and attorneys need to understand how the creative process works to guide their business decisions and their success.

Each week, a new panel of industry experts will participate in a comprehensive Q & A with the instructor focused on a particular topic of interest followed by a Q&A by the students. Students will have an opportunity to ask the experts questions that will help enhance their entertainment business education and inform more on their future career paths. The goal is for students to gain understanding of the relationships, experience and knowledge that must be achieved to build a career in this business.

At the completion of each class, students will write a paragraph evaluating the panel, what they learned, and how it affects their area of interest.

The six paragraphs (one for each class) will be combined into a final paper (no longer than 2 pages, double spaced) that will summarize their experience in the course and how their view of the TV and Film industry has changed.

1. Course Requirements

   Course work consists of attending weekly class meetings, participating in a meaningful manner in Class Discussions and in Q&A sessions with Guest Speakers, and writing a brief Summary Paper at the end of each class evaluating the panels. These summaries will be combined into a Final Paper to be turned in at the completion of the course.

2. Weekly Class Topics

   Class One: TV series from pitch to screen
   Class Two: Adapting existing IP into a feature or series
   Class Three: What does “diversity” mean in the TV and Film Business?
   Class Four: Working with Talent
   Class Five: Entertainment Law 101
   Class Six: Women in front of and behind the camera

   (For additional detail and guest speakers please see the attached weekly course schedule. Weekly topics subject to change based on guest speaker availability.)

3. Final Paper
At the end of the course students are required to write a paper summarizing their thoughts on the Guest Speaker panels and how the panels have influenced their view of the industry and their own career aspirations.

4. Grading
50%: Participation in Class Discussions Guest Panels
25%: Attendance
25%: Final Paper

The use of laptops is strictly prohibited during sessions with guest speakers and will adversely affect your grade. Our guests are volunteering their time, it’s important that we make the most of their visit.

Lecture and Discussion Topics

NOTE: The order of panels is subject to change based on Guest Speaker availability. Guest speakers will be announced closer to the beginning of the course.

**Week One: TV Series from Pitch to Screen**
The Week One panel will host TV Executives, Producers, and Showrunners and Literary Manager to discuss the process from a writer’s pitch, through development, production, and distribution of a TV series.
- Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
- Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
Pitching, distribution platforms, and series development in the OTT streaming world.

**Week Two: Adapting existing IP into a feature or series**
Students will learn from executives, agents, TV writers and documentary filmmakers the challenges and rewards of adapting existing IP to a series or Film.
- Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
- Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers
- Summary Questions regarding priority Discussion Topics

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
How can an unrepped writer or young producer get the rights to a book, article, graphic novel, etc to adapt?
What are the benefits of adapting versus writing your own story?

**Week 3: What does “diversity” in the TV and Film Business mean?**
Students and panelists will participate in an in-depth discussion about the state of diversity in the entertainment business.
• Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
• Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers
• Summary Questions regarding priority Discussion Topics

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
What are the struggles that people of diverse backgrounds face today in entering the entertainment industry.
How are people of color, indigenous, neurotypical, disabled, LGBTQ+ misrepresented in TV and film and how can change take place in the future?

Week Four: Working with Talent
In this class session, students will learn about the business of working with talent; whether it be as representation or working at the celebrity's production company to find and develop projects specific to that performer.
• Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
• Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers
• Summary Questions regarding priority Discussion Topics

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
Why do so many entertainers start their own production companies?
How does a manager or agent find talent, or decide to represent new talent?

Week Five: Entertainment Law 101
In this class session, students will learn the basics of contracts and negotiations that take place in the entertainment industry and how these legal issues can help or hurt them.
• Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
• Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers
• Summary Questions regarding priority Discussion Topics

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
How does a writer protect their work before they submit it publicly?
What are the dangers of working with a friend?

Week Six: Women in front of and behind the camera
In the final class, we will be discussing with our panelist how women’s roles in the entertainment industry have changed from pay disparity to holding positions of power.
• Introductory Questions regarding the Guest Speakers’ Career Paths
• Open Q&A Session between Students and Guest Speakers
• Summary Questions regarding priority Discussion Topics

Specific Discussion Topics will include:
FTV 195 Corporate Internships in Film, Television, and Digital Media

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:
Email:
Phone:
Office:
Office Hours:

1. Description
This course provides credit for weekly fieldwork performed at an external internship site. Students engaged in internships have to enroll in both FTV 194 and 195. Weekly attendance in FTV 194 “Producing” is mandatory. There are no weekly meetings for 195, but students are required to meet at least once per quarter with the 195 instructor to discuss their progress in the internship.

2. Units
Students earn between 2 and 6 units for FTV 195 “Corporate Internship.” Students should elect 2 units for 140-169 hours of internship work performed per quarter; 4 units for 170-199 hours per quarter; and 6 units for 20+ hours per week (200+ per quarter).

3. Course Requirements
Students are expected to submit the completed and fully executed internship registration forms and the 195 contract; complete the minimum number of internship hours for their respective unit level; and submit a completed time sheet, approved and signed by the internship supervisor. The time sheet is due to the faculty supervisor no later than Friday of Finals Week.

Students earning 6 units for 195 should also complete three interviews with employees at the internship company (5-15 minutes) and submit a summary of those interviews. In their interviews interns may discuss the employees’ career path, role at the company and any other relevant information. Summary may be 1 to 2 pages per interview. Interview summaries should be submitted along with the time sheet by the due date.

If the student is continuing in an internship with the same company for a second quarter, the student should consult the instructor to discuss a separate assignment.

Late submissions result in an automatic Fail.
4. Required Outside Reading

5. Recommended Reading
Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry:
Paul McDonald and Janet Wasko (eds.), The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry (Blackwell Publishing, 2008)
Steve Neale and Murray Smith (eds.) Contemporary Hollywood Cinema (Routledge, 1998)

History of Studio System:

Contemporary Television:

Agency:

6. Useful Research Tools
Lexis-Nexis:
In order to conduct outside research for your midterm and final papers you should access recent and old trade and newspaper articles on Lexis-Nexis. To access Lexis-Nexis, go to http://www.library.ucla.edu/search/1528.cfm and scroll down to Lexis-Nexis. If you’re accessing Lexis-Nexis from off-campus, you might need to set up your browser as a proxy server: http://www.bol.ucla.edu/services/proxy/

Other online resources:
Box-Office Mojo: www.boxofficemojo.com
Hollywood Reporter: www.hollywoodreporter.com
Variety: www.variety.com
IMDB: www.imdb.com
TV Tracker: www.tvtracker.com
Baseline Studio System: www.studiosystem.com (subscription-based)
The Numbers.com: http://www.the-numbers.com/
TheWrap.com: http://www.thewrap.com/
Tracking Board: www.tracking-board.com

7. **Grading**
To receive a “Pass” grade students have to submit the completed and fully executed 195 contract and internship registration forms before commencement of the internship and perform the minimum required hours of fieldwork for their respective unit level as documented in their time sheet. If they are pursuing 6 units they will also have to submit three interview summaries (see above).

Students have to submit the completed and approved time sheet no later than Friday of Finals Week to the Internship Office, 225B East Melnitz, or email it to internships@tft.ucla.edu.
FOR ALL COURSES – IMPORTANT UCLA POLICIES AND INFORMATION

UCLA Statement of Academic Integrity and Information on Student Conduct:

With its status as a world-class research institution, it is critical that the University uphold the highest standards of integrity both inside and outside the classroom. As a student and member of the UCLA community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors.

Accordingly, when accusations of academic dishonesty occur, the Office of the Dean of Students is charged with investigating and adjudicating suspected violations. Academic dishonesty, includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions or facilitating academic misconduct. Plagiarism is a serious offense. It is the presentation of another author’s words or ideas as if they were your own.

If you have any questions about documentation, quotations, and related matters, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor before submitting your work. Please also refer to the UCLA Rules of Student Conduct at the below website:

http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Student-Conduct

UCLA Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:

The diversity of the people of California has been the source of innovative ideas and creative accomplishments throughout the state’s history into the present. Diversity – a defining feature of California’s past, present, and future – refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more.

Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups. The knowledge that the University of California is open to qualified students from all groups, and thus serves all parts of the community equitably, helps sustain the social fabric of the State.

Diversity should also be integral to the University’s achievement of excellence. Diversity can enhance the ability of the University to accomplish its academic mission. Diversity aims to broaden and deepen
both the educational experience and the scholarly environment, as students and faculty learn to interact effectively with each other, preparing them to participate in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society. Ideas and practices based on those ideas, can be made richer by the process of being born and nurtured in a diverse community. The pluralistic university can model a process of proposing and testing ideas through respectful, civil communication. Educational excellence that truly incorporates diversity thus can promote mutual respect and make possible the full, effective use of the talents and abilities of all to foster innovation and train future leadership.
Therefore, the University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.

**UCLA Disability Discrimination Mandate:**

Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310) 825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit www.cae.ucla.edu.