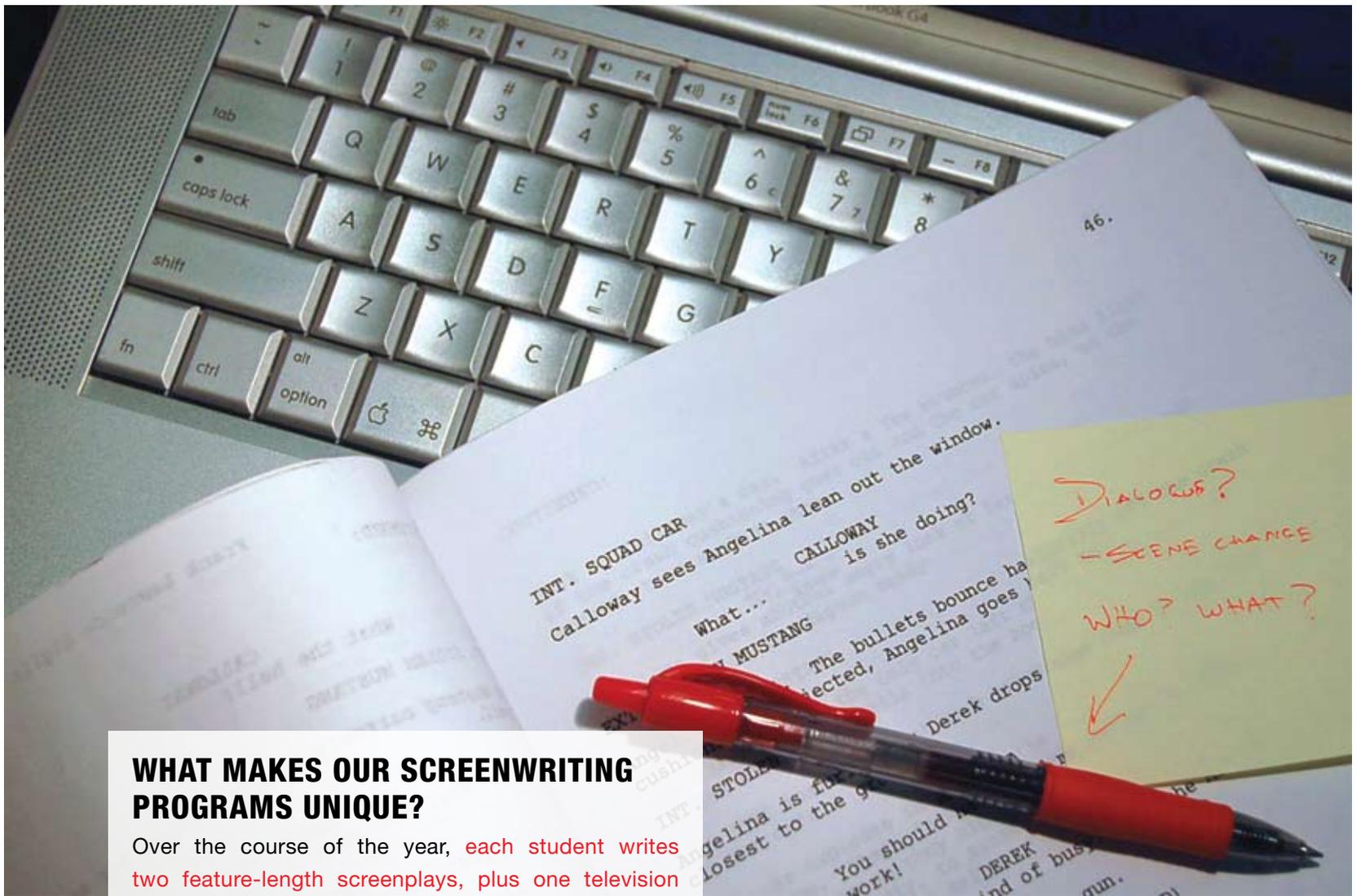


1 YEAR SCREENWRITING

“Scriptwriting is the toughest part of the whole racket...”
— Frank Capra

The New York Film Academy recognizes the critical role writers play in the creation of every film and television show. Yet, writing talent alone is not enough to create successful work in these mediums. Screenwriting is a learned craft, and a writer must write every day to train for the demands of this field, and to truly understand the elements that make a screenplay or teleplay functional, as well as engaging.

In addition to learning the conventions of the writing craft, in our One-year Screenwriting Program, students are given the support and structure to write and meet deadlines. Students write intensively throughout the course and complete several projects with the assistance of constructive critique from instructors, as well as peers.



WHAT MAKES OUR SCREENWRITING PROGRAMS UNIQUE?

Over the course of the year, **each student writes two feature-length screenplays, plus one television “spec” script along with a number of treatments.** As part of a fully integrated program, students explore related areas of filmmaking that help to improve their screenplays and put them into a real-world context. Thus, in addition to writing classes, students study film craft, acting, pitching, and cinema studies, as they apply to screenwriting. Students also write, direct and edit a short digital film or scene from a feature script.

Upon completion of the program, students not only understand story structure, character, conflict and dialogue, but also leave the Academy with finished products that they can pitch, produce, and try to sell.

In the One-Year Screenwriting Program, students are taught the art of screenwriting through courses in both film studies and screenplay/script analysis.

Students are assigned several writing projects. These projects are subject to critique from instructors and peers during in-class workshops.

AVAILABLE IN	
LOCATIONS	
NEW YORK CITY	UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, HOLLYWOOD
TUITION	\$12,500 PER SEMESTER

One-Year Screenwriting

SEMESTER ONE OBJECTIVES

During Semester One, One-Year Screenwriting students will be introduced to the skills and tools necessary for writing successful screenplays. Students are encouraged to be creative, but are also taught to think of the screenplay as the definitive industry tool for articulating ideas or concepts to a production team, including producers, financiers, directors, and actors. Clarity can be as important as creativity. Standard formatting and industry expectations will be studied and analyzed during writing workshops and lectures. Students will also study the Business of Screenwriting and how to navigate the entertainment industry.

LEARNING GOALS

1. WGA format and copyright law.
2. In-depth study of classic screenplay structure, character arcs, theme, conflict, flashbacks, voiceover, subtext, style, tone, visualization, discipline, and genre.
3. Critical concepts in film history.
4. Entertainment industry methods, practices, and players.

PRODUCTION GOALS

1. Write a 10-page short film script.
2. Write a treatment for a feature length film.
3. Write an outline for a feature length film.
4. Write a first draft of a speculative (“spec”) feature length screenplay.

SEMESTER TWO OBJECTIVES

The second semester of Year One challenges students to develop their craft artistically and technically, and to progress beyond their earlier experiments with the feature length screenplay. In an advanced workshop, students will write a first draft of a second original spec feature length screenplay and will then choose between revising that screenplay or the screenplay from Semester One. Students are expected to share revised or newly written material in workshops. In addition, students will broaden their understanding of the medium by learning to develop material for television and writing a spec one-hour television sample script.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Fundamentals of film directing.
2. In-depth look at treatment writing.
3. In-depth study of the pitch.
4. Standard conventions of TV writing.
5. Theory and practice of acting.

PRODUCTION GOALS

1. Write first draft of a second spec feature screenplay.
2. Revise a draft of one of the two spec scripts written earlier.
3. Direct a short film or scene.
4. Write a one-hour or half-hour television spec script.

SEMESTER ONE COURSES

ELEMENTS OF SCREENWRITING

This course introduces students to the craft of screenwriting, establishing a foundation for all future writing. Through lectures and in-class film screenings, the instructor will highlight a specific topic that students will then analyze in classroom discussion and practice through skill-building exercises. Topics include Classic Screenplay Structure, the Elements of the Scene, Developing the Character, Character Arcs, Antagonists, Dialogue, Writing the Visual Image, Introduction to Final Draft, Theme, Conflict, Flashbacks, Fantasy Sequences and Dream Sequences, Voice-Over, Text and Subtext, Developing Your Writing Style, Tone and Genre, Visualization, Revealing Exposition, Creating a Compelling Second Act, Climaxes and Resolutions, and the Beats of the Scene. Screenplay formatting will be a major focus, and students will learn how to write scene description, to describe characters and locations, and to develop action sequences. The course will also include script-to-screen analysis, comparing well-known films to their original screenplays.

SCREENPLAY ANALYSIS

This course is designed to further students’ knowledge of the intricacies of feature-length screenwriting. Each week, students will be required to view a film (or read the script) prior to an in-class screening of that same film. The instructor will then critique the film as it is screened, offering minute-by-minute observations focusing on such topics as subplot development, visual storytelling, turning points, planting and pay-off, and character development.

THE BUSINESS OF SCREENWRITING I

There are many “angles” to understand when approaching “the deal,” and they differ from one medium to the next. It is crucially important for a writer to protect his or her work both through Copyright Registration and registration through the Writer’s Guild of America. Next, the writer must strategize about how to get his or her script into the right hands, in the correct manner, and for the appropriate market. An overview of topics include: Agents, What Is Copyright?, How Do I Enforce My Copyright?, How to Register with the Writer’s Guild of America?, Getting Your Script in the Right Hands, What To Do If You Don’t Have an Agent, If the Deal Goes Through What You Need to Know, Options, Pay for Rewrites, Writing on Spec or for Hire, How a Television Deal Differs from a Film Deal. Classes will be supplemented with special lectures by industry professionals.

SEMESTER TWO COURSES

SCREENWRITING WORKSHOP 1

Workshop sessions are student-driven classes in which student work is evaluated and critiqued. Deadlines will be established that guide students in the development of a feature-length screenplay from logline to treatment, then from outline to screenplay. Each student will be allocated one hour of workshop time a week in which his/her work will be critiqued in a constructive, creative and supportive atmosphere.

CINEMA STUDIES

The Cinema Studies course introduces students to critical concepts in film history and culture, and allows students the opportunity to engage deeply with individual films. Consisting of lectures, screenings, and group discussions, each session will give students the chance to consider classic and provocative films within the context of a broader film culture. The course includes topics such as: film genre; film history; film style; film criticism and cinema-going practice; entertainment industry organization, and other topics in the culture of film.

ADVANCED STORY GENERATION

This course introduces students to the workhorse of the screenwriting business treatments. Students will spend one quarter perfecting a treatment for a feature film script which will be used as the foundation for the second feature-length screenplay they will write in their first year.

SCREENWRITING WORKSHOP II

The workshops continue, providing students an arena in which to complete the first draft of their first screenplay. This will be the perfect place for students to practice the art of discipline, as they will be expected to continue to hone their working styles and find their voices.

SPECIAL SEMINAR IN DIGITAL FILMMAKING

This intensive workshop trains students in the fundamentals of film directing, which in turn facilitates an understanding of the filmmaking process as it relates to screenwriting. It is our belief that a student who actually picks up a camera, blocks a scene and directs actors from a script is far better prepared to then write a screenplay. If a writer has actually translated a shot on the page into a shot in the camera, then the writer has a much sharper perspective on the writing process. Hands-on classes in directing, editing, cinematography, and production cover the creative and technical demands of telling a story with moving images. Then, working in crews of four, students will make a short film or shoot a scene from one of their screenplays using digital video cameras. Afterwards, they will edit their footage with digitized sound on Final Cut Pro. At the end of the seminar, the final films are celebrated in a screening open to cast, crew, friends and family.

ACTING FOR WRITERS

Acting for Writers introduces students to the theory and practice of the acting craft, using Stanislavski Method, improvisation, and scene and monologue work as starting points. By exploring how actors build characters and performances based upon the information provided in a film script, writers will learn how to write more powerful dialogue, develop more memorable characters, and create more effective dramatic actions. Upon completion of this course, writers will have a new understanding of how their words are translated into performance, and this knowledge will help students refine their craft.

THE BUSINESS OF SCREENWRITING 2

This course introduces students to the moviemaking machine known as the Studio System: the players, the relationships, and the deals. A survey of the studio system history and the major players of today will be discussed. Topics include writing on spec versus a contract job, re-writes, WGA law governing authorship, the open writing log used by agents and managers to identify screenwriting jobs for clients, distribution, and production. Similar topics with regard to television will also be examined.

REVISION CLASS

Having created two spec scripts during the course of the year, students are now ready to delve into the revision process. In this class, each student's feature will be read, strengths and weaknesses will be identified and a strategy for revising the feature will be developed. Students will then rewrite the script. Workshop classes will provide students the opportunity to hear their work read aloud and to receive constructive criticism from fellow students and the instructor.

TV WRITING

This class is an introduction to the television industry and television writing. Topics include standard conventions, proper formatting, expected running times, styles of dialogue, and seasonal character and plot development. As part of this training, students will then conceive, write and polish their own one-hour drama or half-hour comedy television spec script based on a show that is currently running on television, which can later be used as a writing sample.