

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
LOS ANGELES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
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09/02/03

BOSTON UNIVERSITY LOS ANGELES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE #s: **FT 566 A1** Special Topics: The Business of Hollywood (13 weeks)
FT 566 D1 Speakers Series: Careers in Hollywood (13 weeks)
_____ Internship Program (13 weeks)
_____ **Elective #1** (13 weeks)
_____ **Elective #2** (13 weeks)

CREDITS: **FT 566 A1** (4 credits); **FT 566 D1** (4 credits); **FT _____** (4 credits); **Elective #1** (4 credits); **Elective #2** (4 credits)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS OF HOLLYWOOD: A Practical Analysis of the Film & TV Industries: How to evaluate, acquire, develop, promote, sell, produce and market motion picture and television projects.

ACADEMIC DIRECTOR/PROFESSOR:

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MEETING TIME: Special Topics: The Business of Hollywood (Thursday 12-3pm)
Speaker Series: Careers in Hollywood (Wednesday 7pm–10pm)
Internships (Monday – Wednesday; Friday 9am – 6pm)
Elective #1
Elective #2

LOCATION: Park LaBrea: 435 Curson Ave.
Tower 48
Suite 3H

COURSE OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVE – BUSINESS OF HOLLYWOOD: The Business of Hollywood is intended to bridge the gap between graduation and entering the work force in the film and television industries. It is a practical analysis of these industries and will cover a wide spectrum of practical thought – including how to write a resume for the industry, how to get your first internship and paying job, how to deal with the extraordinary personalities that inhabit

the industry, to applying what you've learned in school to the real world. The course will offer the basics in film and television acquisition, development, pre-production, production, post-production, distribution, promotion and sales. It will cover both business and creative aspects of the film and television industries. The course will begin with the birth of an idea and acquisition of an intellectual property. It will take the student through the genesis stages of a film or television program/film through to its completion and sale. The course will have a heavy emphasis on the actual real-life experiences of the instructor and guest speakers from various disciplines within the process. This course is designed for students who truly want to learn what it takes to make a motion picture or television program, and understand the realities of the industry. At the end of the course students should have the confidence to venture out on their own, find a screenplay, novel, short story, etc., evaluate the property, acquire the property, develop the property, devise a financing strategy, accumulate all of the key personnel and components to bring it to life (and work well with each individual involved), and later promote and sell (if needed) the finished work.

READING ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING: There will be two (2) required books to read during the course; however, there will be several additional books recommended,, as well as trade papers and magazines. There will be a large number of hand-outs provided for the students ("The Big Red Binder").

GRADING: The Business Of Hollywood course grade will be determined as follows: 50% class attendance, 25% class participation and 25% for the final Class Project (see Class Project description later in course syllabus). The Internship Program will be graded as Pass/Fail. The Careers in Hollywood course will be graded as follows: 50% class attendance and participation and 50% based on the final exam. Each elective will be graded according to the respective Instructor's scale.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Class attendance and participation is very important. Classes will consist primarily of lectures and question and answer sessions; however, guest lecturers, workshops and screenings will also come into play. Please be aware that particular student interests that are not covered by the course syllabus should be brought to the instructor's attention. All attempts to cover such topics will be made.

COURSE OUTLINE: THE BUSINESS OF HOLLYWOOD

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1.	01/20/04	7pm - 10pm	Introduction; Defining Roles: What's a Producer; The Property.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Course overview and objective B. Larry Weinberg: Background C. Student introductions and specific goals & interests D. Review course outline, schedule, reading list and Class Project (see attached outline) E. Why do you want to be in this business - what motivates you? What turns you on? What role do you want to play in the game? 			

- F. Typical places to start in the business (e.g.; producer assistant, agent assistant, etc.); networking, networking, networking....
- G. A practical application of what you learn in college. How to get a job...
- H. Resume: know your audience/reader; how to draft; what to include.
- I. Internships and how best to use them.
- J. Navigating the Hollywood seas: love of storytelling, tenacity, art of the schmooze, networking again; how to deal with "personalities" in the biz.
- K. Producing: "The art of Alchemy...creating something from nothing."
- L. Producer, Exec. Producer, Co-Producer, Assoc. Producer, Line Prod.
- M. Selling intellectual property (i.e.; ideas, stories, characters)
- N. Most powerful man on planet? Who can write a check in Hollywood? (about 15-20 people; everyone else looking for the same thing).
- O. What kind of film or television program do you want to make? Feature Film, Documentary, TV Film/Mini-Series, TV Series (Sitcom/Drama), Animation; Indie vs. Commercial; Low, medium or high budget? Studios and Networks.
- P. Producer Agreement and Co-Production Agreement (**Handouts #1 (a) and #1 (b)**).
- Q. It all begins with an idea: finding the Property you want to acquire, develop, promote and produce. "In the dizzying world of moviemaking, we must not be distracted from one fundamental concept: The idea is king." Jeffrey Katzenberg
- R. Reading, thoughts, comments, "**COVERAGE**". (**Handout #2**: examples of coverage); Who is evaluating the property: producer, executive, agent/manager, et al.

** Handout Screenplays for "A Weekend Read" (ala an agency or studio/network): ** 4 screenplays to be read over weekend by all in class.

** Class to choose one (1) script to do coverage on over weekend.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
2.	01/29/04	2pm - 5pm	Evaluating the Screenplay and Working with the Writer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. What to look for in a screenplay/teleplay; How to evaluate the Property; Will it sell? Art vs. Commerce. B. Discuss thoughts of class on scripts read - roundtable discussion. C. Discuss students' coverage. D. Which script would students want to: direct, produce, represent, finance/distribute? E. Acquisition of the screenplay, teleplay, novel, play, short story, etc. F. Legal Clearances: Option & Purchase Agreements and Writer Agreement. (Handouts #3, 4 and 5) G. How to develop the screenplay/teleplay project. H. Script notes (from the producer, agent/manager, studio/network executive, financier, director, department heads, et al.) 			

- I. Story meetings; Working with the writer.
- J. Discuss the process of translating what's on the page to screen.
- K. How many voices participate: positive results vs. negative results.
- L. **View "Peter Guber Bravo Interview": discuss content covered.**
- M. **Read "Pound of Flesh" and "Hello He Lied" for discussion in Class 3.**

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
3.	02/05/04	2pm - 5pm	The Director; Casting; Talent

- A. Discuss "*Hello He Lied*" and "*Pound of Flesh*"
- B. Selecting and working with the Director.
- C. Open directing assignment: class will discuss work-in-progress project which is considered an "open directing" assignment.
- D. **Class to view various director show reels, shorts, etc. to determine which director is to be hired by the class for the open directing assignment.**
- E. The Director Deal (**Handout #6**)
- F. Non-union vs. Union (DGA)
- G. Understanding relationship between: Producer, Director & Writer.
- H. Attaching talent: making offers; getting scripts to cast; dealing with talent agents and managers.
- I. The casting director.
- J. The package; Putting a cast list together and valuing talent attachments.
- K. **Class to view actor showreels and casting/audition tapes (i.e.; screen tests)**
- L. The Actor Deal (**Handouts #7 and 8**)
- M. Non-union vs. Union (SAG)
- N. Working with the actor and understanding the relationship between the Producer, Director and Actor

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
4.	02/12/04	2pm - 5pm	Setting Up Your Project at a Studio, Network or Indie \$ Source

- A. Submitting your project to the studio or network.
- B. Submitting your project to foreign sales companies.
- C. Submitting your project to television syndicators.
- D. Submitting your project to independent equity financiers.
- E. Submitting your project to established producers and showrunners: companies that have overall deals with studios and networks.
- F. Acquisition divisions at the studios.
- G. How to package your project so that it is seen in the best possible light. Knowing your audience.
- H. Creating "*a false sense of urgency*".
- I. Equity financing, foreign pre-sales, bank financing, gap financing, TV deficit financing.

- J. Submission Releases and Non-Disclosure Forms
(**Handouts #9 and 10**)
- K. Studio and Network development.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
5.	02/19/04	2pm - 5pm	Financing Cont; Distribution; Foreign Sales; Network Deal

- A. Understanding the business/financing climate to determine best approach to financing your project.
- B. Discuss with class the major studios and networks and alternate entities which are viable sources of financing.
(**Handouts #11, 12 and 13**)
- C. Equity financing and International "Soft Dollars" (subsidies, tax incentives, etc.); alternatives to the traditional studio/network route
- D. The Distribution Deal (**Handout #14**)
- E. The Foreign Sales Deal (**Handout #15**)
- F. The Network Deal (**Handout #16**)

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
6.	02/26/04	2pm - 5pm	Budget Review; Players & Roles. Pre-Production & Production

- A. Pre-Production & Production: Line producer/UPM (Unit Production Manager) / 1st AD (Assistant Director).
- B. Creating budget & schedule (board) - where to start: crew size, # of days to shoot; budget; location; effects, etc.; cash flow and draw down.
- C. Standard budget (union) vs. Low-Budget or Ultra-Low-Budget (non-union).
- D. Hard costs, soft costs, deferments.
- E. Time = Money
- F. Agendas: Director vs. Producer
- G. Decisionmaking - Benevolent Dictatorship
- H. Bond Companies and Completion Guarantors
- I. Insurance and liability.
- J. **Class to receive sample budgets for discussion**
- K. Above-the-line vs. Below-the-line.
- L. Producers: Executive Producer, Producer, Line Producer, Others - what they do during shoot.
- M. Department Heads (e.g.; Cinematographer, Editor, Production Designer)
- N. How to select your crew - who does what???
- O. Vendors: equipment, facilities, services (sound, lighting, labs, post, film/tape).
- P. Locations vs. Sound Stages.
- Q. Unit Publicity.
- R. Special Effects.
- S. Transportation.
- T. Chemistry of the crew.
- U. **Handouts #17 and 18 and Handout #19**

- V. Sound House.
- W. Prepping the cast and crew; Production meeting; Tech scout.
- X. Storyboarding.
- Y. Film Production vs. Television Production
- Z. LA 411 Book: everything you need in connection with physical production elements.
- AA. Preparing the talent; Preparing the director; Preparing the writer; Preparing the crew.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
7.	03/04/04	2pm - 5pm	Production Cont.; Post-Production.

- A. Review course: questions and answers on course to date.
- B. 1st Day of the shoot: pep talk, gift, roll camera.
- C. 1st AD: most important guy on set.
- D. The call sheet; production and camera reports.
- E. Script changes.
- F. Dailies.
- G. The producer-director agenda dilemma (irreconcilable differences and how to resolve them); improvisation, risk-taking and patience.
- H. The budget is king! Taking care of the budget, crew, cast, director.
- I. Taking care of your cast and crew; Safety & law; Locations; Film Permits.
- J. Special effects: practical vs. CGI.
- K. Working with the financier, studio, network, sales co. during production.
- L. Unit publicist - promoting and selling your picture before it's complete.
- M. **Handout Packet #20** (Production Paperwork); **Handout #21**
- N. Editing - the Editor.
- O. Equipment and facilities - The Editorial House; non-linear vs. linear (AVID)
- P. Post-production supervisor.
- Q. Director in the editing room; Director's Cut vs. Final Cut
- R. Titles and credits; Opticals, digitals, special effects.
- S. Working with financier, studio, network, sales co. during post-production.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
8.	03/18/04	2pm- 5pm	Post-ProductionContinued. Distribution,Broadcast and Sales

- A. Post-production sound house: dialogue editor, ADR & Looping, sound effects, , music editor, scheduling.
- B. Music: songs, temp track, music clearances/licenses/sound track.
- C. Music Licenses: **Handout #25**
- D. The Sound Mix (Final Dub): the mixing facility.
- E. The Wrap Party
- F. Copyright: **Handout #26**
- G. Delivery: Delivering your completed project to the distributor or network: the pitfalls and anguish in trying to close the deal. **Handout #23.**
- H. Overview of the Studios, Major Independent Distributors, Sales Companies, and Networks - who's out there and how do you know what they want???
- I. **Handouts #11, 12 and 22**

- J. When to screen for distributors and broadcasters?
- K. How to choose a distributor or broadcaster: worldwide rights, split rights (foreign & domestic).
- L. The distribution deal; P & A (Prints and Advertising).
- M. Using an agent/lawyer/producer's rep.
- N. Home Video (cassette) and Video On Demand (VOD)
- O. Digital Video Discs (DVDs).
- P. Cable and other TV sales: the license deal.
- Q. Ancillary and Allied Rights (e.g.; airplanes, hotels, etc.)
- R. Merchandising and licensing.
- S. The Internet: No longer viewed as distribution outlet but rather as another line item on the marketing budget; creating the website and viral marketing

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
9.	03/25/04	2pm-5pm	Distribution, Broadcast and Sales Continued; screening

- A. Film festivals and film markets. Key festivals: Sundance, Toronto, Venice, Berlin, Cannes, Telluride; MIFED, AFM.
- B. **View CD on Film Festivals** - Sundance: how to "do" Sundance.
- C. How to market your picture on your own: sales kits, advanced notices, websites, PR, etc.
- D. Working with the studios and networks on marketing your film or television program.
- E. Using the Internet as a marketing tool.
- F. **View promotional trailers and other reels.**
- A. **View "Apple Jack" .**
- B. A Case Study for an independent short film.
- C. Questions and answers session with class: how did project begin, how was it acquired, developed, financed, produced, post-produced, marketed, sold and released.
- D. Career after short film.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
10.	04/1/04	2pm-5pm	Screening

- A. **View "The Last Supper"**
- B. A Case Study for an equity-financed, independent film.
- C. Questions and answers session with class: how did project begin, how was it acquired, developed, financed, produced, post-produced, marketed, sold and released.
- D. Career after independent feature film.
- E. **View "Gracie Graves and the Kids From Room 402".**
- F. A Case Study for a children's television series produced with Fox Family Channel.
- G. Questions and answers session with class: how did television project begin, how was it acquired, developed, financed, produced, post-produced, marketed, sold and released.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
11.	04/8/04	2pm - 5pm	Hollywood: A general overview.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>View "Photographing Fairies"</u> B. A Case Study for an internationally-financed film. C. Questions and answers session with class: how did the film begin, how was it acquired, developed, financed, produced, post-produced, marketed, sold and released. D. Is Hollywood For You? Finding your niche. E. Understanding the right reasons and wrong reasons for going into the "biz". F. Building your network - shmoozing, shmoozing, shmoozing. G. Having the "moxie" to get your foot in the door and move ahead. H. Don't be desperate - things happen in a random manner and often being lucky is as good as being talented and smart. I. Remember: <i>"In Hollywood, anything can happen, Anything."</i> Raymond Chandler J. What have we learned? K. Questions and Answers. L. Future plans. 			

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
12.	04/15/04	2pm - 5pm	Present and Analyze Class Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>CLASS PROJECTS DUE: Turn in at beginning of class.</u> B. <u>Eight students to present to professor and class his/her CLASS PROJECT; i.e.; pitch meeting setting; "Pitch" to last no longer than 15 minutes.</u> C. Question and analysis and critique of pitches. D. Class wrap-up. 			

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
13.	04/22/04	2pm - 5pm	Present and Analyze Class Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>Seven students to present to professor and class his/her CLASS PROJECT; i.e.; pitch meeting setting; "Pitch" to last no longer than 15 minutes.</u> B. Question and analysis and critique of pitches. C. Class wrap-up. 			

<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
14.	04/29/04	2pm - 5pm	Q & A Mixer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>Class wrap-up and Wrap Party.</u> 			

SUGGESTED READING LIST:

1. Dealmaking in the Film & TV Industry by Mark Litwak. Silmar/Jones 1999.
2. From Script to Screen: The Collaborative Art of Filmmaking by Linda Segar and Edward Jay Whitmore. Owl Books 2000.
3. Filmmaker's Dictionary 2nd Edition by Ralph S. Singleton. Lone Eagle 1999.
4. How To Make It In Hollywood by Linda Buzzell. Harper Perennial 1999.
5. **Pound of Flesh by Art Linson [Required Reading]**
6. **Hello He Lied by Linda Obst [Required Reading]**
7. Daily trade papers such as Variety, Hollywood Reporter
8. Hollywood Creative Directory
9. Lone Eagle Book Series: Film Actors, Film Directors, Film Writers, Film Producers (latest editions available)

SUGGESTED WEB SITES:

1. IMDB.com
2. script-o-rama.com
3. whorepresents.com

COURSE HANDOUTS (BINDER):

- 1 (a). Producer Agreement + Producer Deal Checklist
- 1 (b). Co-Production Agreement
 2. Sample Screenplay Coverage
 3. Option & Purchase Agreement (Short-form)
 4. Option & Purchase Agreement (Long-form)
 5. Writers Agreement
 6. Directors Agreement
 7. Actor Agreement
 8. Actor Letter of Intent; Actor Offer Sheet
 9. Submission Release Form; Rights Acquisition Solicitation Memo
 10. Non-Disclosure Form
 11. July 30, 2001 Variety Independent Financing Guide; "The Going Rate"; AFMA 2000 Sales Survey
 12. List of production companies with overall studio deals

13. "Film Financing: an introduction" - Article from Fall 2000
"Produced by"
14. Motion picture distribution Agreement
15. Foreign Sales Agreement
16. Television network Agreement
17. Sample Budget #1
18. Sample Budget #2
19. Feature Film Budgeting Guide
20. Various Production Documents (e.g.; call sheet, schedule, day-out-of-days, etc.)
21. Crew Deal Memorandum
22. Networks Handout
23. Sample Delivery Schedule
24. Other course-related material which may be selected during the term.
25. Music License Agreement
26. Copyright article.

SUGGESTED ENTERTAINMENT RELATED SOCIETIES TO JOIN:

1. Independent Feature Project West or East
2. American Cinemateque
3. Women In Film

SCRIPTS and TV BIBLES TO BE READ FOR CLASS

1. "Pearl"
2. "The Fat Man"
3. "The Sailmaker"
4. "The Green Man"
5. "Jackboys" TV Bible and Pilot

CLASS PROJECT - Content Outline

Winter 2004

There will be no written test given in this class. The Class Project will be turned in on **April 15, 2004** and will synthesize the entire course material into a single project typically referred to as a "Project Bible". Each student will give a 5 minute "pitch" presentation of their project to the class and professor. I will discuss the Class Project further during the course of the class and answer all pertinent questions when necessary. I will also bring into class examples of past Class Projects. The concept behind the Class Project is to provide the student with a working model of a motion picture or television project bible, professionally prepared, which he/she can, if willing, introduce to the marketplace.

A typical Project Bible will include most, if not all, of the following:

1. **THE PROPERTY** - Feature Screenplay (or outline/synopsis), Short Screenplay (or outline/synopsis), Novel (or outline/synopsis), Play (or outline/synopsis), Biography, Newspaper/Magazine Article, Re-Make of Existing Film or Television Program, etc.
2. **OPTION AGREEMENT** - Underlying property rights agreement (short form). Using the handout as an example, draft a short-form option and purchase agreement for The Property.
3. **SYNOPSIS** - Log-line for The Property and long-form synopsis of The Property (no more than two pages) [Note: If The Property is an outline or synopsis ignore #3]
4. **BUSINESS PLAN** - Create a short business plan (i.e.; nom more than three pages) for developing, promoting, financing and selling you Property. The Plan should include the following: (a.) the project concept and why it will work; (b) short analysis and state of the marketplace (i.e.; film, television) as it relates to your Property; (c) statement of rights situation; (d) principals involved in the production (i.e.; bios on producer, et al.); (e) analysis of what makes this production and production team unique or likely to achieve it's goal and have the opportunity for success; (f) how do you intend to execute the production; (g) how do you intend to market and promote the production; (h) what is the projected budget.
5. **SUGGESTED DIRECTOR LIST** - Create a list of about 5 - 10 directors who might be right for your project (any director is allowed). Basically create a wish list.
6. **SUGGESTED ACTOR LIST** - Create a list of about 5 - 10 actors who might be right for each of your main characters in your project (any actor is allowed). Basically create a wish list.
7. **CHARACTER BREAKDOWN** - Create a character breakdown for each of your main characters in your project wherein you describe the type of character, personality, character traits, physical traits, weaknesses and strengths, back-story, likes and dislikes, and goals. Try to be as detailed as possible and put yourself in the position of an actor reading up on his/her character.
8. **BUDGET & SCHEDULE** - Create a short form top-sheet budget for your production and create a short-form schedule of production. Estimates are acceptable. Decide when you want to go into production, how long pre-production will last, how long will the production phase last, and how long will the post-production phase last. Create a calendar of events if you desire. This is not a full-blown budget and only a hypothetical based on solid reasoning.
9. **PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL** - Create or add any graphics, photos, drawings, articles, press, etc. which will help promote and sell your project. Be as creative as you want and include anything you feel will help sell and promote your production.
10. **SUBMISSION LIST** - Create a wish list of film studios, networks, motion picture and television production companies, etc., which might be right for your production. Research the companies and proper person to submit your material to. [The Hollywood Creative Directory is a good resource as is the independent financier list in the Course Handout Binder]