

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY LOS ANGELES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**  
**'THE WRITER IN HOLLYWOOD' GRADUATE**  
**CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

***The Writer in Hollywood 2: Preparing Your Script for the Entertainment Marketplace***

***Course # (CFADR580E)***

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Instructor: Deborah Baron  
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Office: B.U. in L.A. offices  
Office Hours: Mondays by appointment

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**Course Objectives & Requirements:**

**The Writer in Hollywood 2: Preparing your script for the entertainment marketplace (course # CFADR58E)** is geared toward students who have completed MFA screenwriting programs and have several full scripts and other writing samples to submit with their applications. Applicants should have a clear interest and experience in writing for film and television and be ready to make the transition to the professional world of Hollywood. This course will emphasize rewriting, extensive workshopping of writers' material, and the end-of-semester Pitch Festival.

In this advanced screenwriting workshop, students will refine skills they've already acquired, and develop new ones in the process of completing a rewrite of a feature script or a television pilot by the end of the semester. Also, the possibility of working on more than one project exists, and can be discussed with the instructor.

**Attendance and class participation are required, as are timely completion of assignments.**

**The goal of the course** is to help students write a draft of a dynamic, professional script that can be polished and submitted to agents, managers, producers and executives in the industry. To accomplish this we will determine what "works" in their first drafts, what doesn't, and what they need to accomplish this time around.

**The following aspects of rewriting will be covered in the Monday workshops:**

- Greater depth in character development, leading to natural (vs. imposed) changes in structure
- Intensifying the overall dramatic tension and narrative design in the 3 Act (or 2 or 4 Act) framework
- Development of Subplots and Complications through Secondary Characters
- Refining Scene Structure and scene goals: Rewriting scenes with attention to every choice and detail
- Opportunities in transitions from one scene to another, both visually and thematically
- Juxtaposition of imagery
- Use of contrast -- dialogue vs. behavior; subtext
- Originality in Location and Setting
- Worthy Rivals and Obstacles
- Setting up and paying off
- Making obligatory scenes interesting

**Required Reading:**

"The Screenwriter's Guide to Agents and Managers" by John Lewinski  
 "Writers on Writing" - Collection of essays from *The New York Times*  
 "The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay"  
 by David Howard and Ed Mabley (for the film analyses)

**Topics and Methodology:**

Brief, pertinent lectures, group discussion and critique, and individual conferences addressed to the needs of each student and his or her material.

**Students will need to email or mail the scripts they plan to rewrite to the B.U. in L.A. Office Coordinator, a minimum of 2 weeks before the Fall semester begins.**



**Special Events:**

Studio tours, museum visits, Industry events, screenings, symposiums, etc. may be scheduled throughout the semester. All sessions are mandatory unless otherwise noted.

**Copying Fee:**

PLEASE NOTE: There is a \$25 copying fee that will cover some, if not all, of your copying costs. Please contact Heidi McNeil if you have questions regarding payment.

**Email Access:**

Daily access to email is essential - we do have 4 office computers w/internet available for use, but your own laptop or computer is essential. You'll find free broadband internet access in all Park La Brea apts. and the BU in LA office.

BU in LA office login info:

Login: BUinLA

Password: BULA2006

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE:**

Here is a schedule, including assignments, which is a flexible structure and may change. It is based on a feature page count and 3-Act structure, *which will be altered accordingly to fit the development process, act structure and page count of television scripts.*

**Class one:** Introductions; course Q and A; overview of character and choice of material.

Discuss students' story ideas, what they think they "got right" in the 1<sup>st</sup> drafts, and what they want to accomplish in the new draft.

Assignment: Present main problems of current drafts. Written bios of lead and secondary characters (including active wants) that include changes or adjustments; a statement of principle conflicts in story.

**Class two:** Discuss problems and possible fixes.

Topics: Greater depth in character development, leading to natural (vs. imposed) changes in structure; inciting incidents.

Assignment: Begin a scene list which in effect will become your outline. A brief, specific description of the opening and closing scenes of Acts 1 and 2. List first 10 scenes in Act 1.

**Class three:** Discuss conflicts; openings and closings of Acts.

Topics: Secondary characters -- subplots and complications.

Assignment: Complete list of scenes for Act 1, and begin scene lists for Acts 2 & 3. Brief specific description of Act 3 opening and closing.

**Class four:** Discuss outlines and Act 3 breaks.

Topics: Midpoints and twists.

Assignment: Complete Act 2 outline. Work on Act 3 outline. Bring in opening scene of screenplay to read in class.

**Class five:** Workshop opening scenes.

Topics: Dynamic openings and Act breaks.

Assignment: Complete outline of Act 3. Bring in next scene of screenplay.

**Class six:** Workshop 2<sup>nd</sup> scene; Discuss main tension in Act 3. Changes in outlines.

Topic: Biggest obstacles for leads; antagonists.

Assignment: 3<sup>rd</sup> scene of screenplay. Revised outline.

**Class seven:** Discuss changes in stories; workshop scenes.

Topics: Dialogue and subtext; Dialogue vs. behavior -- using what characters say as opposed to what they do.

Assignment: 10 pages. Bring in midpoint scenes.

**Class eight:** Workshop midpoint scenes.

Topic: Scene transitions through imagery and dialogue.

Assignment: 10 pages. Complete or come close to completing Act 1.

**Class nine:** Workshop new sequences.

Topic: What attracts an actor to a role?

Assignment: First 12 pages in Act 2.

**Class ten:** Workshop Act 2 openings.

Topic: Developing and structuring a pitch. Writing a one page synopsis.

Assignment: 12 pages. One page synopsis.

**Class eleven:** Review one page synopses. Workshop scenes.

Topic: Set-ups and pay-offs.

Assignment: 12 pages. Revise one page synopsis.

**Class twelve:** Workshop Act 2 midpoints/closings.

Topic: Pitch practice using one page synopses.

Assignment: Finish Act 2; write opening sequence of Act 3.

**Class thirteen:** Workshop Act 3 openings.

Topics: Main conflicts in Acts 2 & 3.

Assignment: Continue Act 3 scenes.

**Class fourteen:** Workshop new sequences.

Topic: An approach to polishing your new draft.

Assignment: Completion of Act 3.

**Class fifteen:** Workshop endings.  
Topic: Pitch practice -- honing your presentation.

**PITCHING TO INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AT END-OF-SEMESTER “PITCH FESTIVAL”:**

Each semester, students from BULA have an opportunity to meet with and pitch to professional Producers, Agents, Executives and Managers.

Some of the guests students have pitched to in the past are: Jon Landau – Producer of TITANIC; Christopher Wilkinson – Writer ALI, NIXON and academy award nominee; Brian Besser – Agent Endeavor Talent; Phil Krupp – Producer Zev Braun Productions; Jeffrey Thal – Manager/Producer – Ensemble Entertainment and many, many others.

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**GRADES:**

NOTE: THIS COURSE IS PASS/FAIL.

GRADE SCALE:	points & percentages
CLASS ATTENDANCE	10
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS	65
BULA EVENTS	10
FINAL PITCHES	15
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS & PERCENTAGES.....	100

70 and below is failing  
71 and above is passing

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**PLAGIARISM STATEMENT:**

Plagiarism is the act of representing someone else's creative and/or academic work as your own, in full or in part. It can be an act of commission, in which one intentionally appropriates the words, pictures, or ideas of another, or it can be an act of omission, in which one fails to acknowledge/document/give credit to the source, creator, and/or the copyright owner of those words, pictures, or ideas. Any fabrication of materials, quotes, or sources, other than those created in a work of fiction, is also plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense that you can commit and can result in probation, suspension, or expulsion.

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Email addresses for B.U. in L.A. faculty and staff:

Program Director/Certificate Director – Bill Linsman – [bill@linsman.com](mailto:bill@linsman.com)

Program Manager - Michael Ouellette – [mikeo@bu.edu](mailto:mikeo@bu.edu)

Office Coordinator – Heidi MacNeil - [hamcneil@bu.edu](mailto:hamcneil@bu.edu)

"The Writer in Hollywood" Lead Faculty -- Brian Herskowitz - [lrn2write@aol.com](mailto:lrn2write@aol.com)

“The Writer in Hollywood” Faculty – Deborah Baron - [drb1128@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drb1128@sbcglobal.net)

**Film/Television, Advertising/Public Relations - track Teachers:**

Ben Laski - Instructor, Ad/PR, COM CM 561E HW: Careers in Hollywood for Ad/PR - [ben@laskilaw.com](mailto:ben@laskilaw.com)

Marcia Lewis-Smith - Instructor, TV, COM FT 552E A1: The Creative Life in Television - [mls@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mls@sbcglobal.net)

Bill Linsman - Program Director, Instructor, COM FT 552E B1: Professional Production Methods -- [bill@linsman.com](mailto:bill@linsman.com)

Larry Weinberg - Lead Faculty and Instructor, Film/TV, COM FT 566E A1: Business of Hollywood; COM FT566E B1: Careers in Hollywood -- [lweinberg@e3ent.net](mailto:lweinberg@e3ent.net)