

# HANDBOOK

MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN WRITING AND PRODUCING FOR TELEVISION

## WELCOME INMATES,

What? Did you think that you were going to get some solemn, portentous "look to the person to your left, now look to the person to your right," "this is the first day of the rest of your life"-type introductory letter? If so, you're in the wrong place.

But none of you is in the wrong place. You were handpicked to be here. Why? Here's why; because each and every one of you can flat-out write. If you recall the first time we met, I stressed the point that I could not teach you how to write. No one can. And anyone who holds out that promise is selling you something. We're not selling you anything. We're buyers and you and your talent is what we purchased. As writers, you have shown up, armed and dangerous.

There is another, just as important ingredient that figured in my recruiting decisions. The ingredient is passion. Each of you has that passion and desire to live the life of an honest to God working writer. I have lived that life. I can highly recommend it and I am eager to pass it on to you.

BUT...do it for the right reasons. Do it to experience the joy of creation, the bliss of honing your craft as a writer. Or, if you'd rather do it for the wrong reasons—the money, the fame, the private plane, the sex, the even more money, then make sure that some day you endow a Writers building with your name on it at LIU's Brooklyn Campus.

Here we are, on the launch pad. All you have to do is arrive with your talent and your passion and your willingness to enter a truly collaborative venture. You're not going to be treated as "students," but as members of a writing staff. Welcome to the Real World. Not the MTV version. You'll be in the trenches and you'll be expected to function as professionals, well, semi-professionals. At the end of two years, you will have plenty to show for it. Who knows, maybe even the beginnings of an actual career.

Without more, let me Welcome You, One & All to the Class of 2012 and the Inaugural Year of the TV Writers Studios<sub>sm.</sub> Now, "look to the person to your left..."

With Soaring Hope,

Norman Steinberg

Director - TV Writers Studio

## FIRST COHORT - 2010-2011 TV WRITER' STUDIO BIOGRAPHIES Class of 2012



AMBER YODER is an honors graduate from Denison University (2007) with a B.A. in Media, Technology and the Arts. She has worked most recently as Associate Producer on the BBC funded documentary BLAST! with Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Paul Devlin. Amber has also produced the psychedelic sci-fi webseries The Third Age and the forthcoming documentary Grant Morrison: Talking with Gods with Respect films. As a member of the WGA

East's digital caucus, Amber is passionate about writing and producing new media for the digital age.



JORGE RIVERA is an independent television writer, producer and director, whose best known work -- the indie-pilot, RHYME ANIMAL -- has placed as finalist in several high-profile festivals and competitions including: The Independent Television Festival (2010), the National Association of Television Program Executives' NextTV Competition (2009), the New York Television Festival (2008), the HBO New York International Latino Film Festival Pitcha-thon (Winner, 2009), and NexTV's Web Series and Television Competition (2009).

RHYME ANIMAL is a scripted drama thriller about an ambitious hip-hop DJ who rides the coattails of a maniacal rapper only to discover the rapper to be a cannibalistic serial killer.

Since then, Jorge has been hired as Head Writer on Lenox Avenue (created and Executive Produced by Al Thompson -- the Royal Tenenbaums). Lenox Avenue is a sexy dramatic web series that depicts the lives of three friends as they navigate through life, love and coming of age, set in Harlem's recent renaissance.

Lenox Avenue stars Al Thompson, Michael K. Williams and Jaime Hector (HBO's the Wire), Victor Williams (the King of Queens), Dorian Missik (NBC's the Cape), and Ryan Vigilant (WC's Gossip Girl).

Jorge's latest project (the UNPROTECTED) is a branded content web series that has been awarded as a 2010 Webby Honoree, a NATPE NextTV Branded Content Finalist (2010), and named to the 2010 Marketing Sherpa Hall of Fame.

As the first of three sons growing up in Jersey City, Jorge was inspired by the oral tradition his parents brought with them from the small towns of Cayey and Pasto Viejo in Puerto Rico. It was this rich storytelling tradition that helped him to formulate the unique and sometimes strange vision of the world he portrays in his work.

"I look forward to collaborating with my fellow LIU students in the TV Writer's Program. I expect we're gonna have a lot of fun as we support each other through this amazing program."



JOSEPH PETTINE is a recent graduate of Clarion University with a Bachelor's in English Education and a minor in Theater.

While attending Clarion University, seven of his plays, ranging from comedy, drama, romance and horror, were produced and performed by the Clarion University Theater Department. He was honored to have five of his plays performed in one special event evening advertised as the Joe-case (It rhymes with showcase. Get it!). In January of 2009, Joe was nominated for the John Cauble Short Play Award at the Kennedy Center American College

Theater Festival for his short horror play, "The Lot".

Joe would love to write for television or film. He has always wanted the opportunity to work with the community of writers, actors, directors, and other hard working individuals all driven to put on a good show and entertain their audience. When not writing, he works in Pennsylvania as a substitute teacher, a great way to get material.



KRISTEN LAYDEN graduated from Williams College in 2010. As an undergraduate at Williams, she majored in English, focusing on creative writing. Her capstone research paper was an analysis that applied literary and cultural theory to the central family of HBO's Big Love. She also minored in Neuroscience and enjoys learning about physiology and medicine.

In the summer of 2008, Kristen interned for NBC Sports at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials and then at the Beijing Olympics in China, where she worked at the Bird's Nest on the Opening Ceremonies and the Track and Field events. The following

summer, in 2009, she worked in New York City as an intern on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. She also spent a semester abroad in Prague, where she studied film, travel

writing, and foreign media, and interned at InStyle magazine Czech Republic.

Kristen is originally from Simsbury, CT. Her hobbies include skiing, singing, rowing, surfing, and drinking copious amounts of iced coffee. Her favorite TV show changes by the hour, but her current favorites are Breaking Bad, The Good Wife, and the late Pushing Daisies. Her favorite movie is Chinatown.



MATT ZEHNDER was bitten by the show business bug early in life, when as a shy 5th grader, he found enjoyment performing at the St. Peter's talent show, watching the anciently old Sister Mary Cleophus laugh, while he told the story of a bird pooping on his mother's shoulder at Fenway Park. Matt disappeared for a while, but the passion resurfaced when he split open his chin during a death scene in an improvisation class. Since then he's appeared in

many world premier plays, notably at Actor's Theatre of Louisville, and at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, where his play, Jung Pinball, was also produced. On television, he's appeared in commercials for Pringles, Ridgewood Savings Bank, and the Mini Cooper. And on Crackle.com, his work as a writer, performer, and improviser can be seen in the series, Judgment Day. Matt has been involved in many short films, and recently he wrote, produced, and directed, This is Business, which played at the New York City downtown short film fest, and the Hoboken International film festival. In his spare time, Matt likes swimming, playing with Clair, Edwin, and Vinnie, and finding new things to wish for.



NANNETTE LIPINSKI was born in Michigan to parents whom from a very early age encouraged her passion and love of writing. Nannette used to write stories and poems about her flock of animals; and then she would set up reading nights so that they could hear the stories that she had written about them; they were a very engaged audience, perhaps because they could not escape.

Nannette applied to various programs and decided to attend the prestigious dramatic writing program at The Conservatory of Theater Arts and Film at Suny Purchase in New York, earning a

BFA in Dramatic Writing. While attending Purchase, Nannette won many playwriting and script writing contests. Many of her plays became full productions that were staged for the entire school community and public at large. Last Spring, Nannette was a development intern at TeenNick and Logo.

Nannette soon realized that her true passion lay in television, a medium that Nannette became passionate about because of television's unique ability to have a weekly and ongoing relationship with its audience; a relationship not found in any other

writing medium. Nannette feels that as female comedy writer, women in general are underrepresented and the need for a female's perspective in the mainly male dominated comedy-writing universe is greatly needed. Nannette would be proud to represent a woman's comedic take on the world and she hopes to bring to the table her unique sense of humor and outlook on life.

When not spending an obnoxious amount of time writing and rewriting, Nannette has a passion for animals; capybaras (large rodents) and cats in particular, and spending time with her family, friends and boyfriend.



DAPPO AGANGA is a recent graduate from Monash University, with a B.A. in Communications. After graduation, he worked as a personal assistant to a professor in Botswana. However, prior to graduating, in the fall of 2008, he wrote, co-directed and produced a short play about domestic abuse and its effects, which showed at a drama night within his university.

Dapo wants Eric Kripke or Joss Whedon's Job, but will settle for creating his own work of fiction that can be remembered.

When not working on an Idea for a script, he can often be found watching a movie or TV show on his PC.



RYAN O'CONNELL is an Emerson College graduate with a B.A. in Visual Media. His work as a Promotions Producer at WCVB-TV Channel 5 in Boston earned him an International Promax Gold Award in 2006.

Ryan was also a Writing Intern at the National Lampoon, where he wrote and produced several promotions and comedy videos and worked to drive visitors to the company's web page. After writing dozens of sketches regarding Paris Hilton's legal woes and directing

Kato Kalin on two consecutive full day shoots, Ryan decided to return to the East Coast. Born in Albany, NY, Ryan is already well aware of what being a TRUE New Yorker means and is happy to return to his home state. He is excited and honored to be involved in this program and looks forward to working with Norman and this talented group.



Self-proclaimed Ivy-League homegirl SOFIA QUINTERO is a novelist, filmmaker, public speaker, educator and social entrepreneur. Born and raised in the Bronx in a working-class Puerto Rican-Dominican family, she earned a BA in history-sociology and an MPA from Columbia University. Sofia has published a dozen novels and short stories across genres including "chick lit," erotica and hip-hop noir (under the pen name Black Artemis) including DIVAS DON'T YIELD, EXPLICIT CONTENT, PICTURE ME

ROLLIN' and BURN. Her latest - the critically acclaimed young adult novel EFRAIN'S SECRET (Knopf 2010) - was a winner of the 2010 Parents' Choice Award.

Sophia also co-founded Chica Luna Productions, a nonprofit organization that identifies, develops and supports women of color seeking to make socially conscious entertainment. Through its comprehensive filmmaking institute the F-Word, Chica Luna has produced over fifteen short films and sparked the career of their makers. Sofia also works with New York City youth through the National Book Foundation, Urban Word and Voices UnBroken and facilitates media literacy workshops on campuses across the country. Her artistic and political endeavors have taken her from Cuba and Mexico to Palestine and Israel.

When not working on her second young adult novel SHOW AND PROVE (Knopf 2012), Sofia is developing two Internet series. Through their multimedia production company Sister Outsider Entertainment, Sofia and Elisha Miranda are developing SANGRIA STREET, a Latina counterpart to SEX AND THE CITY and GIRLFRIENDS. Sofia is also in post-production with her independently produced series HOMEGIRL.TV <a href="http://HOMEGIRL.TV">http://HOMEGIRL.TV</a>



SUSAN DIANE JONES was born in the Bronx but grew up in Westchester County. She attended S.U.N.Y. Brockport and majored in English, eventually becoming the first of five siblings to graduate college. Sue embarked on a career as an editor and landed a job at a prestigious financial services firm. She still would have been working there had the company not gone out of business during the current recession. However, there was one bright side to being unemployed: Sue got to spend a lot of quality time with her ailing mother in the last year of her life, something that wouldn't

have been possible had she been working full-time.

Sue had a tough time finding another editing job. Then she heard about Long Island University's graduate program in Writing and Producing for Television. Sue loved

watching television and writing was her first love. The TV Writers Studio<sup>sm</sup> seemed tailor-made for her! When she was accepted into the program, Sue realized that she had taken the first step toward realizing her dream of writing for a living. Sue cannot wait to begin this new phase of her life and career!



SYNDI SHUMER graduated from Hofstra University's School of Communication in 1996. She is a member of the WGA, having broken into writing while working on the production staff of the children's series SESAME STREET. She has since written a broad range of scripted material for Sesame Workshop, including two direct-to-video projects ("The Best of Elmo 2," "Shalom Sesame") and an assortment of Muppet sketches, parodies, song lyrics, animated shorts, award show presentations and more.

Prior to scriptwriting, Syndi freelanced in various production-related positions within the television industry. Previous credits include the daytime dramas GUIDING LIGHT, AS THE WORLD TURNS, and ANOTHER WORLD, and the primetime sitcoms LATELINE (starring AI Franken), TALK TO ME (Kyra Sedgwick) and MADIGAN MEN (Gabriel Byrne). However, the one genre she has yet to work in is the one she wants to write for most - the one-hour drama. And so, the two-year countdown begins... Let's do this!  $\odot$ 



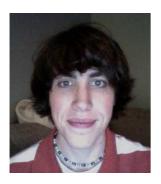
TRAVIS TAYLOR graduated from California State University Fullerton with a BA in Radio-TV-Film in January 2010. He has worked as a producer for radio traffic reports, and as a board operator and call screener for the last year and a half at Total Traffic Network Los Angeles and KLAA respectively.

TRAVIS has worked on a few features and several shorts as a boom operator and/or production sound mixer, largely for no pay or school credit only. He has written a couple feature length scripts

and a few shorts.

Apart from writing, Travis wouldn't mind making attempts at directing, acting, and/or performing stand-up comedy. Though these endeavors go for the most part untried due to a combination of his laziness and cowardice.

Travis spends his free time listening to podcasts and playing guitar... poorly. He enjoys the musical styling of Tool, System of a Down, Black Mountain, and Rasputina to name a few as well as the comedic styling of The Simpsons, The Zucker bros. and Jim Abrahams, Bob Odenkirk and David Cross, and Mitch Hedberg.



ZACHARY HOLDREN is a recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor's Degree in Film Studies and English Fiction Writing, Class of 2010. He recently held a job as a medical records technician as well as stints as movie theater usher and Indian Restaurant waiter. During his undergraduate career, Zach made a couple short films at the Pittsburgh Filmmakers and wrote several short stories in his fiction classes. In 2008, he won the Film Studies Undergraduate Writing Award for an essay on the film Los

Olvidados.

Zach has been a resident of the Pittsburgh area for the past decade. He enjoys movies, and spending time with his girlfriend Emily. He also enjoys long walks on the beach.



BRANDON BECK is a writer/director/musician from Charlotte, NC. He just recently graduated from the Conservatory of Theatre Arts and Film at SUNY Purchase with a BFA in Dramatic Writing. To put it less haughtily: He wrote scripts for four straight years. That worked out pretty well. Along the way he directed several of his own plays, including "How to Write a Play" and "More Plays About Buildings and Food." Most people seemed to like them, which was pretty cool. He was also a founding member of the Purchase Improv Troupe, and is currently studying long-form improv at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre. While at Purchase he was a

recipient of both The Dean's Award for Dramatic Writing and a number of parking tickets. He is currently collaborating with cartoonist Daniel Spenser on an animated pilot entitled "Wintersberg," which has been hailed as "a little too long" and "probably too expensive to shoot, you idiot." He's a self-taught guitar player of close to eight years, and is also handy with a drum kit and a banjo. His favorite chords are D major (Cowboy style, nothing too flashy) and A7+9. Some of his favorite things are Phish concerts, guitars, and the saxophone solo in Born to Run. When he grows up he wants to be some sort of combination of Trey Anastasio, Conan O'Brien and Joss Whedon.



KRISTINE EKMAN is originally from Seattle, but I've made my home in Brooklyn for the past 5 years. I've worked all sorts of odd jobs since moving to New York. Most recently, I was an Associate Producer for a weekly legal program that aired on the PBS affiliate in New Jersey. For some reason, I was nominated for a bunch of regional Emmys (and even more surprising won three-including a 2010 New York award for a show about the

Voting Rights Act Supreme Court case). I've always loved TV, and I'm sure I watch more than is healthy. ;)



ANGEL CASTILLO, originally from Miami, Florida, is a recent graduate of Dartmouth College, with a BA in Chinese and Japanese languages and literatures. Now he is putting his degree to good use by pursuing something that has nothing to do with either of those.

Angel got into writing his junior year of college when he began performing stand-up comedy and writing for his school's humor magazine, the Jack-o-lantern. He has since performed stand-up in such clubs as The Miami Improv, Fort Lauderdale's National Lampoon Underground, and Boston's Comedy Studio. By graduation he had co-written a 10-minute stage play, written a feature-length

screenplay on his own, and had co-written another screenplay.



BRIAN FOUNTAIN MURRAY is a recent graduate from Morgan State University. Brian, began his career as an actor on a PBS television show called Numbers Alive. He has studied theater at the American Academy for Dramatic Arts and film at the New York Film Academy. His film experience includes feature-films like A Guy's Guide for Marrying Money, Side Streets, Chinese Coffee and television shows like CSI, and Pros vs Joes.

For the past five years Brian has been establishing Scoundrel Entertainment as a one-stop-shop for media and production. From editing to shooting, this small media arts company does it all.

Since returning to school he has written three feature length screenplays, directed several short films, and documentaries and held intern positions with both The Walt Disney Company and NewsCorp. When not in school he may be found on a set near you with a camera in hand.



EMILY SKLAR graduated from Yale University in 1995 with a degree in American Studies, and over the past fifteen years has held a series of jobs in and near the entertainment industry. She was Meryl Streep's assistant for five years and a literary agent for another five. She has been an intern at Saturday Night Live, an editorial assistant under Judith Regan at Regan Books (HarperCollins), the stage-manager of an off-off-Broadway play, a frequent contributor of book reviews to Publishers Weekly, an

assistant to a Saudi Prince, an assistant to the director Jonathan Demme, one of a squadron of aides to a secretive scientist/hedge fund billionaire, and - with the grudging help of her cat, Francine Pearl Sklar - a reviewer of pet products for the website ZooToo.com. Currently, she is the executive assistant to the president of The Wall Group, a talent agency.

Emily grew up in East Hampton, New York. A short and not-very-illuminating list of things she loves includes laughing, traveling, reading, the ocean, London, driving, and blueberries. According to the results of several personality tests, if Emily were a dog she'd be a Bearded Collie.



The only thing that's left of ADELAIDE BLANCHE'S Rock and Roll dreams is her name: Alexez. I wanted to be Rock Star, but ended up being a mommy. Dealing with a dose of reality, I went back to Baruch College and received a B.A. in fiction and script writing. After graduation, I got on the "nobody's going to read your work if you don't have an agent" merry-go-round. To pay the bills I started working in real estate. You don't know how many five-story walk-ups there are in New York City until you're climbing the stairs,

again and again and again. I prefer to work for myself, so I design jewelry made with natural stones. I help out on the set of Immigrants Soap Opera, which follows the lives of West Indian immigrants making their way in the city.



JOSH NOVO is a recent graduate of SUNY Purchase College with a BFA in Dramatic Writing. He has studied with horror meister Rob Schmidt and TV writer Eddie Pomerantz. His interest in TV writing came from watching TV on DVD and he decided to put his skills to the test by writing a spec script for Sex and the City.

He recently had a mini-play put up at The 52nd Street Theater

Project and in his spare time he does freelance reading for Dorchester Publishing and has Grey's Anatomy and True Blood marathons with his friends. He is truly excited to be part of this amazing opportunity. He currently lives in Newington, CT.



JULIE CHRISTIE is a graduate from Baruch College, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English/Journalism and Dean's List recognition.

Blink and you will miss her portrayal of a grief-stricken fashion model at a funeral in an episode of "Sex and the City." Julie currently edits Word Search puzzles for Dell Magazines (www.pennydellpuzzles.com <a href="http://www.pennydellpuzzles.com/">http://www.pennydellpuzzles.com/</a>). When not working, she writes screenplays, goes to the movies, and

frequents Blue Smoke for some really great ribs, sweet potato fries, and collard greens. She also shakes her fists at the television when the METS are "playing." Julie lives in Brooklyn with her parents and sister.



JESSE GORDON is a recent graduate from Williams
College, with an Honors BA in Theatre. He specialized in
playwriting. Last year he directed a play, "Thoughts on a
Subject."For his senior thesis, he wrote a play, A Trivial
Pursuit, and it was presented at Williams College. John wants
Adam McKay's job.

When not in school, he lives in Chicago and Martha's Vineyard teaching tennis.

JENNIFER SEFCIK - I live in the suburbs of Philadelphia and I work as an RN. I've been taking writing classes for about two years through UCLA extension. I have completed two TV specs one pilot, and I'm currently working on two screenplays. For fun I like to bike ride and watch baseball and hockey.

## WPT 610 - Writing & Development - The Television Series: (6 Credits)

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

This course introduces students to the basics and complexities of television script writing, and the seamless integration of the written script into the development stage of the television production process.

#### COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Cohort 1 will embark on the first leg of its two-year journey. In this phase the student cohorts will be introduced into the world of creating an actual pilot script for a prospective TV series. The students will be expected to hone their script writing skills while being immersed in and learning the collaborative nature of TV staff writing. It will be a baptism of sorts, sometimes under fire.

#### **RESOURCES**:

The resource texts for this course are: <u>Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting</u> by Syd Field (Delta, Nov. 29, 2005). <u>Writing the TV Drama Series: How to Succeed as a Professional Writer in TV</u> 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Pamela Douglas, (Michael Wiese Productions, Sept. 1, 2007); and <u>The Showrunners: A Season Inside the Billion-Dollar Death-Defying, Madcap World of Television's Real Stars</u> by David Wild (Harper Perennial, Oct. 2000)

#### Additional readings include:

- 1. "Understanding Media: The Extension of Man" by Marshall McLuhan.
- 2. "Created By: Inside the Minds of TV's Top Show Creators" (Vols 1 & 2) by Steven Prigge
- 3. "Writing and Producing for Television and Film (Communication for Behavior Change) (Communication of Behavior Change)" by Esta de Fossard and John Riber

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

At the end of this first semester, the cohorts will have collaboratively written a first draft of the pilot script under the guidance of the Professor/Showrunner and LIU Media Arts Professors. The student cohorts will be expected to develop the ability to write spontaneously and quickly as they would if they were on the writing staff of an ongoing TV series.

#### SCHEDULE:

Classes will meet on Monday & Wednesdays for three-hour blocks of time. During the first six weeks, the student-cohorts will be totally immersed into the workings of the staff of an ongoing television show. The term the table will be used throughout. The table is the actual and metaphorical place around which the cohorts collaborate and become a writing staff. In an introductory orientation period, the fundamentals of story structure, character development and script writing technique will be reviewed.

The remaining nine (9) weeks of the first semester will be spent by the cohorts crafting a first draft of the pilot script. During this segment, Media Arts Professors and veteran working professionals-- TV/Screen writers, producers, directors, cinematographers, etc. will be brought in to share experiences and help guide the cohorts through the difficult process of creation.

#### Week 1: Monday

- Introduction of the cohorts to their new colleagues.
- An orientation to scriptwriting fundamentals and the collaborative process.
- The table Staff writing-TV style explained.
- The nuts and bolts of a one-hour TV series script.
- Creating characters for series TV a primer.

#### Week 1: Wednesday

- Presentation of the pilot premise, pilot story and character treatments.
- Detailed discussion of the pilot story and character treatments.
- Pairing Up writing as a "team." Each cohort will be paired with another writer.
   Pairs will change weekly until permanent choices are made.

#### Week 1: Assignments

- Cohort teams will be required to return the following week each with a revised story treatment and enhancements to character treatments.
- A written pilot story related scene, at least five pages in length involving a minimum of three characters.
- Cohorts are required to keep a weekly blog of their experiences both in and outside the classroom.

#### Week 2: Monday

- Random readings from student blogs.
- Review of scenes and story treatments written by cohort teams.
- Critical analysis of the scenes and treatments by the "table."

#### Week2: Wednesday

- Cohorts deconstruct the pilot story, and then re-build it, adding elements that work, deleting those that no longer work as well.
- A revised story treatment is produced at the table.
- Two unnamed network pilot scripts are distributed to the cohorts. One of these scripts was chosen to be on the fall schedule, the other was rejected...expositional discussion.
- Change partners. New writing teams are created.

#### Week 2: Assignments:

- Each cohort team will write the opening scene of the revised story treatment.
- Read and analyze the two network pilot scripts and be prepared to discuss which succeeded and which failed and why. And...did the network make the right decision?

#### Week 3: Monday

- The weekly blog readings, randomly chosen.
- Discussing the two network pilot scripts distributed last week. Why did one succeed and the other fail...did the network make the right decision?
- A frank discussion and critical analysis by the table of the various opening scenes written by the cohort teams.

#### Week 3: Wednesday

- The difference between constructive vs. destructive criticism.
- Writing for series characters. The "sound" of their voices.
- A further revision of the pilot story and the character breakdowns by the table.
- Pilot story to be "locked in" next session.
- New writing teams are chosen

#### Week 3: Assignments

- Each cohort team lays out pilot story beat by beat.
- A personal and revelatory scene between any two series characters in a non-pilot story situation. No longer than three (3) pages.

#### Week 4: Monday

- Weekly blog readings.
- Analyses of short scenes. Were the characters' voices captured?
- The primacy of character development in a successful series.

#### Week 4: Wednesday

- The importance of the pilot story; the framework for the series. What must it suggest for the future? What element(s) bring viewers back week after week, year after year?
- Locking and loading. Writing the pilot must begin in the next session so <u>no one</u> <u>leaves</u> until a detailed, beat-by-beat pilot story is agreed upon by "the table."
   Bad take-out Chinese food is ordered.
- New writing teams are chosen.

#### Week 4: Assignment

• No homework! Everyone has worked hard enough. Re-read the pilot story.

#### Week 5: Monday

- Random selection of daily blogs from the previous week. These should be interesting.
- Final tweaking of pilot story. Let the writing begin!
- Choosing partners. Final choices are made by cohorts of the partners that will remain for the rest of the course. Or not.

#### Week 5: Wednesday

- Discussion of a new character—Brooklyn! The importance of infusing a pilot with a distinct sense of place.
- More writing.

#### Week 5: Assignment

- Write the next scene; the one that comes right after the last scene written at the table.
- Examine what has been written. Did we succeed? Specific suggestions and fixes for last week's work.

#### Week 6: Monday

- Random blogs are chosen to be read.
- A fresh look at last week's writing. Did we really write this crap?
- Re-writing. Why re-writing is writing.

#### Week 6: Wednesday

- The website for the prospective series is launched. Cohorts are encouraged to contribute much in the way videos are posted on YouTube.
- Analysis of the cohorts' scenes. Is there anything we can use? Or, do we just forge ahead and write it at the table?
- More writing by "the table."

#### Week 6: Assignment

- Write the scene following the last one worked on by the class for next week's class.
- Each cohort team will be assigned characters about whom they should write fully fleshed out bios and back-stories.

#### Week 7: Monday

• Road Trip! A day spent in an actual writers' room at a current TV series. How different is this from our table? How is the Internet used? Could you contribute to this table?

#### Week 7: Wednesday

- Observations and/or lessons, if any that were taken away from the visit to the writers' room the day before.
- Character descriptions are added to the website in a Wikipedia manner.
- Examination of the scenes that were written after last week's session. What is usable? What is disposable?
- Writing the pilot script at the table.

#### Week 7: Assignment

- Write the scene following the last one finished at the table.
- Write blogs to reflect individual appraisal of the writing process. Is it getting easier? Harder? The table experience....pluses and minuses. Working with a partner? Good? Bad?

#### Week 8: Monday

• Visiting dignitary. Writer Andrew Bergman (Blazing Saddles, The In-Laws; The Freshman, et.al.) lends his views to the cohorts for a day. A new perspective. Another voice is heard. Notes are given.

#### Week 8: Wednesday

- Read blogs aloud to compare experience.
- Writing under the supervision of Bergman & Showrunner.
- A frank and constructive discussion. The cohorts discuss the writing process; their colleagues' quality of work; ways to improve output.
- A cohort team is chosen to "run" the table; conduct the writing session.
- Fact of life in the TV business. Notes come from everywhere. Lesson: Get used to it.

#### Week 8: Assignment

Work on Pilot

#### Week 9: Monday

 Producer/Executive David Picker visits. (Former President of United Artists and Paramount Pictures; producer of "The Jerk," "Lenny," "Leap of Faith," et. al.) Mr. Picker shares his thoughts and criticisms of the script with the cohorts giving them a combined studio and producer slant on their work.

#### Week 9: Wednesday

- Writing with a production budget in mind. What makes sense; what doesn't? Learning to write within your means.
- Reading of Blogs.
- The Table. Script writing proceeds. A new team is chosen to run the writing table.

#### Week 9: Assignment

- An episode of "Law & Order-SVU" is screened after class.
- Speed Writing In anticipation of next week's guest lecturer, each student will
  write and submit a short scene, no longer than three pages in length for the show
  "Law & Order-SVU." <u>Deadline</u> for submission by email will be 11 PM of the same
  day. The scene will involve SVU characters to be designated.

#### Week 10: Monday

- "Law & Order" scenes are read aloud. Five (5) scenes are chosen to be submitted to Producer/Director Ted Kotcheff who will visit the following day. The scenes are emailed to Mr. Kotcheff.
- Writing of the pilot at the table continues. A new team is chosen to "run" the table.

### Week 10: Wednesday

- Ted Kotcheff Exec Producer/Director of "Law & Order; SVU" (Duddy Kravitz; Rambo) visits. Mr. Kotcheff will discuss the five (5) "Law & Order" scenes that were emailed to him.
- A Director's take on the pilot script. Mr. Kotcheff gives notes on the pilot script from a director's POV. How does a director analyze a script? What are the director's main criteria?

#### Week 10: Assignment

- The next two scenes will be written by the cohort teams. Half the teams will write one scene, the other half will write the other.
- Screen at least two episodes of "Monk." View the Monk website.

#### Week 11: Monday

- David Breckman, Exec. Producer/writer/director of "Monk," visits for both days and discusses the crafting of quirky characters.
- A new team is chosen to run the table.
- Blogs are chosen to be read aloud.
- Writing of the pilot script continues

#### Week 11: Wednesday

- Breckman analyzes the pilot script and gives notes.
- A typical production schedule for a one-hour "Monk" episode is reviewed.
- Production breakdowns and forms are explained. A discussion of the Internet component for Monk is analyzed.

#### Week 11: Assignment

- The next scene is written by each team of cohorts.
- Develop ideas, "areas" for a pilot of their own.

• Prepare sample elements for an Internet component. Imagine ways to utilize the Internet to promote the pilot.

#### Week 12: Monday

- A new team is chosen to run the table.
- All writing at the table all the time.

#### Week 12: Wednesday

- Table writing
- Analysis of the website. Has the website reached the University community?
   Cohorts suggest changes.

#### Week 12: Assignment

- Each team of cohorts will prepare a verbal pitch of a pilot idea to be made to the network. No longer than five minutes.
- Each team of cohorts writes the next scene.

#### Week 13: Monday

- Mitch Semel, former CBS-TV and Comedy Channel executive visits and details
  what the networks look for and how they make their decisions about which pilots
  to make and then which to order to series.
- Cohorts do their series pitches to Semel who will decide within the next week which to order and which to reject.

#### Week 13: Wednesday

- New team is chosen to run the table.
- Table writing

#### Week 13: Assignment

- Re-read the body of the script and make notes for fixes and changes.
- Envision how the pilot story should end.

#### Week 14: Monday

• Cohorts commune and vote on which team should run the table for the last two weeks and bring the first draft to a close.

#### Week 14: Tuesday

- The end is near.
- The table finishes a rough draft

#### Week 14: Assignment

• Review the entire draft. Make notes. Check for story and character continuity.

#### Week 15: Monday

- Top to bottom polish of the rough draft.
- The cohorts are prompted to be sure to record their impressions of this and the next phase of the writing process in their blog/diaries.

#### Week 15: Wednesday

- FIRST DRAFT IS FINISHED!
- Put the script away. Do not look at it till Boxing Day (the day after Christmas).

#### Week 15: Assignment

• Day after Christmas. Read the pilot script. My God, this is awful. Get ready for the re-write.

## WPT 611 - HISTORY OF TELEVISION 3 Credits

#### Course Description and Objectives

The course will investigate television in the context of its historical path from its earliest emergence to the digital era. With an emphasis on the medium's contribution to the culture of the nation through entertainment, news and politics we will begin with the earliest forays into the medium and follow it, genre by genre, to the present day. There will be occasions when chronological order will be ignored in order to compare styles and goals of television programming.

We will screen the shows that demonstrate the move to modernity from The Goldbergs to the Huxtables and watch the history making events that informed and illuminated the American scene.

The course is designed to add a familiarity with the wide historical context of the medium that will provided a greater comfort level in creating, writing and producing successful television programming.

#### Goals

Writers and producers of television content have a responsibility to create, not only entertainment, but to provide an atmosphere of cultural honesty. In studying the shows that are the cornerstones of the history of the medium, that responsibility will become clearer. Whether the genre is sitcom or documentary, the lens on family, race, gender or politics, this course, by showing the good and the bad of the past eighty years, will allow new creators to add to the tradition of innovative and important television

#### Course Requirements.

Attendance and Participation (15%) Short Written Assignments (20%)\* Presentations (25%)\*\* Midterm Test (15%) Research Paper (25%)\*\*\*

\*Four two page papers outlining the work of a television notable. Each paper should deal with a different genre.

\*\* Dividing into groups of three, each group will present one television interview segment by a host and two guests of opposing opinions. These five to ten minute pre-written segments would cover topics that have been affected by television content: election coverage, the invention of the new medium, the impact of sitcoms, children's television, media censorship, sports coverage, etc

These presentations, written by the team of three, can reflect topics that have been covered in the course, but are not limited to those areas. As long as the interviews reflect a significant piece of television history they will be acceptable.

Like all good programming the scripts for these interviews should be entertaining as well as informative, and the topics are to be cleared and the scripts submitted to the instructor before the presentation.

\*\*\*The final research paper (7-10 pages) should deal with "programming that made a difference". It does not necessarily have to reflect areas covered in the class.

#### **Texts**

Gary R. Edgerton, The Columbia History of American Television (Columbia University Press, 2007)

Thomas Doherty, Cold War, Cool Medium (Columbia University Press, 2003)

Lynn Spigel, Make Room For Daddy: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar

America (University of Chicago Press, 1992)

(There will be a list of additional texts on reserve, as well as reading assignments from journals and magazine/newspaper articles distributed each session)

#### Week 1.

Reading: Television in the World of Tomorrow

The earliest invention (Baird)

Screenings: The first images. The first drama.

An overview of the course with emphasis on the beginnings; the inventors, the first programs, David Sarnoff and the RCA contribution, and the 1939 World's Fair exhibit.

#### Week 2.

Reading: So, Who Really Invented Television? Zworykin and Farnsworth Sarnoff vs. Paley

The move to commercialism

The vaudevillians: Milton Berle, Jack Benny and George Burns.

Screening: Texaco Star Theater

#### Week 3.

The Goldbergs and Lucy. The sitcoms arrive.

Reading: Edgerton pp 129-136

Screening: I Love Lucy. Three cameras and an audience

First short paper due

#### Week 4.

From Lucy, That Girl & Mary Tyler Moore, to the Good Wife and Weeds; the woman's role in TV.

Late Night from Steve Allen to Conan

Read Edgerton, 169-177

Guest: Bill Persky First Presentation

#### Week 5.

Reading: The U.S. Congressional Inquiry (Thomas Doherty)

The Cold War, the Blacklist and McCarthyism

Screening. McCarthy vs. Welch

Reading: Cold War, Cool Medium Thomas Doherty.

Edward R. Murrow and the newsmen

#### Week 6

Your Show of Shows, The new look at comedy

The writer's room

Oct. 11,1975: 16 writers and the start of something big.

Screening: Your Show of Shows

Second Presentation

#### Week 7

Reading: The Quiz Show Scandal

Censorship and the Smothers Brothers (Reading)

Phillip Loeb and Lucy Second short paper due

#### Week 8

Reading: The Golden Age of Television Drama

Screening: Requiem for a Heavyweight

The Mini Series: Roots, Winds of War, Rich Man, Poor Man and the rest Sports: from boxing to the Olympics; baseball, hockey and the rest.

Wide World of Sports to ESPN

Third Presentation

#### Week 9

The Presidents; Eisenhower, Nixon and Kennedy. How television took over

politics.

Screening: The Debates

Ted Turner and CNN Edgerton: pp 332-345

Reporting the Wars: WW2, Vietnam and the Middle East,

Third short paper due.

#### Week 10

The African-American in television, From Amos and Andy to Cosby. From Beulah to Julia. The NAACP and Black Caucus influence on black programming

The Programmers; Guest; Fred Silverman

Fourth Presentation

#### Week 11

Marcus Welby MD to House. How the good guys have changed Ted Mack to Simon Cowell. The Amateurs take over.

Norman Lear and the social sitcoms

Guest: Norman Lear Fourth short paper due

#### Week 12

The Postwar baby boom and Children's programming. Howdy Doody, Kukla Fran and Ollie, Shari Lewis and Mr. Rogers The new animation The Simpsons, South Park and the rest Guest Saul Turteltaub (Shari Lewis' writer)

#### Week 13

Cable Programming: HBO, SHOWTIME and all the rest

Edgerton; pp 301-

Final Paper

## WPT 612 - The Writers' Table: Revising & Delivering the Pilot: (3 Credits)

#### DESCRIPTION:

Students enter the inner sanctum of the creative television-scripting world, the writers' table. This will be their first taste of victory. They have crafted a complete draft of the Central Project pilot script.

#### COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

The Central Project pilot script will be revised, rethought and rewritten collaboratively by the cohort to the point where, in the estimation of the Showrunner/Professor, it is shootable and can be presented to a director. This is a necessary step before the preproduction phase of the course can begin

#### **RESOURCES**:

The Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by Christopher Vogler and Michele Montez (Wiese Productions)

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

At the end of this phase, the Cohort will have rewritten and refined The Central Project pilot script and learned what goes into the process of readying a script for production.

#### SCHEDULE:

WPT-612 will take place over a week-long intensive conducted during the Year 1 winter break, The Writers' Table will be comprised of all-day rewrite sessions for five (5) consecutive days.

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

In keeping with the mission of Long Island University, the underlying philosophy of the TV WRITERS STUDIO is that, given a well-designed curriculum, the right team of mentors, appropriate technical resources and sufficient time, a group of talented graduate student writers, working collaboratively, can develop a TV series that is broadcast worthy. It is through this process that the students will develop the full range of skills, knowledge and experience necessary to enter the profession of television writing and production.

The TV WRITERS STUDIO will assemble a diverse group of graduate students of demonstrable writing talent in a Cohort and immerse them in an intense collaborative venture. What is being proposed is a unique, non-traditional writing-based program designed for participating students to function in a group effort - the Cohort - over two-years. Together, from start to finish, this Cohort will take part in various aspects of one continuous undertaking-- the Central Project. This Central Project shall include the creation of a primetime ready, one-hour dramatic series, from initial concept development all the way through to the marketing and proposed sale of that series. At the end of four semesters of working together, the Cohort will emerge with a unique product, a salable one-hour pilot script - and shootable series episodes. Each student cohort member will author his/her own episode script. Simultaneously, through guided independent study, Cohort members will be able to establish their individual identities as writers by preparing and authoring an original series prospectus and half-hour pilot script in a genre of their choice under the mentorship of a Division IV faculty member and/or industry professional.

After completing the two-year, 48-credit curriculum, the students will earn an MFA in Writing and Producing for Television. The program will be based in Conolly College's Division IV, the Division of Communications, Visual and Performing Arts. The unique pedigree of the degree complements the Division's progressive academic outlook. The MFA in Writing and Producing for Television will use a unique teaching and learning approach that mimics the real world of contemporary television. Students enrolled in the program will be grounded in the structure and theory of dramatic writing. The Cohort will be exposed to the craft of television writing and guided in developing an insider's knowledge of the industry while examining the historical, theoretical, legal and entrepreneurial issues connected to the field. The curriculum will include graduate level writing, history and theory courses, the opportunity for independent study, and seminars and tutorials conducted by industry professionals.

By the end of two years, candidates for the degree will be required to demonstrate

proficiency in the field of television script writing and the craft of producing. They will be expected to communicate their ideas effectively, both orally in class sessions as well as in their writing. Television demands that its writers learn to work as a unit, which is at the heart of its process. State of the art presentation technologies and practices such as web streaming, video blogging and pod-casting will be used to package, promote and showcase student work. In addition an informative multimedia website will be created highlighting the work of the Cohort.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The TV WRITERS STUDIO is a two-year, forty-eight (48) credit interdisciplinary degree designed to produce highly-skilled, experienced "professionals" with strong portfolios who will be prepared to pursue challenging and fruitful careers in the television industry as writers and producers. The term "producer" is used here in the pure television sense. TV writers, in order to control and protect the integrity of their work, take on some executive duties and become writer-producers. An essential part of the skill set that the MFA in Writing and Producing for Television will develop will be a thorough understanding of the tasks that TV producers perform on a regular basis. These tasks include casting, supervising production design, editing, and mastering budgetary matters. However, the essential thrust of the MFA program is writing intensive.

As noted, this proposal calls for establishing a cadre of MFA candidates that will be asked to commit as full-time team members in a group dynamic. The cohorts will function as if they were actual staff writers on a television show. This unit will travel together for two years, wholly immersed in a single continuous project - the Central Project - the creation of a one-hour television series. In this quasi-TV lab/think tank, the student Cohort will initially be presented with a detailed outline, the skeleton of a TV series. The Cohort's job over the next two years, guided by their pedagogic leaders, will be to breathe life into the Central Project and reshape it with their writing and critical analysis. This two-year immersive journey will be capped by the invaluable experience of participating in the live presentation of a full-blown pitch of the series to network and cable executives. This MFA program will not be one that talks about writing in the abstract or muses on how it should be done. It will be a day-by-day grind through how it actually gets done when one is a staff member on a TV series, with all of its challenges and imperfections.

Students enrolled in the program will function as professional writers and producers as

they transition through the development, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution of the Central Project pilot and individual episodes. Students will be required to take 24 credits in writing and producing pedagogy, 9 credits in the ancillary areas of television history, intellectual property/marketplace and technology, 9 credits in moving image production and pre-production craft, 3 credits in independent study and 3 credits in capstone.

## **FACULTY**

Norman Steinberg is the Director of the MFA in Writing and Producing for Television Program Director. Before accepting his current position as Parsons Family University Professor at Long Island University, Steinberg's screenwriting career began under the tutelage of his mentor and friend Mel Brooks when he became part of the team with Andrew Bergman and Richard Pryor that wrote Blazing Saddles. What followed was an almost forty year screenwriting career that includes My Favorite Year starring Peter O'Toole; Johnny Dangerously and Mr. Mom starring Michael Keaton; Bryan DePalma's Wise Guys starring Danny DeVito and Joe Piscopo; and many others including the film that ended Luciano Pavarotti's screen career, Yes Giorgio. Steinberg's screenwriting career continues to this day.

Larry L. Banks is the Media Arts Department Chair. During the past twelve years, Larry Banks has distinguished himself as a feature cinematographer on such films as "Juice", "Strapped", "Fly By Night" and "Substitute 2". He has also been the Director of Photography on numerous music videos and TV shows. Working with notable directors such as Spike Lee and Forest Whitaker; Larry has also been the Director of Photography on, and directed commercials for Nike, Levi's and AT&T. In the latter part of 1997, Larry directed a documentary called "Blues Stories", on the roots of American music from the '20s and '30s featuring Taj Mahal as narrator. Most recently, Larry completed work on a TV pilot called "Black Jaq" produced by Sony TriStar and directed by Forest Whitaker

Dennis Broe is the Media Arts Department Graduate Program Coordinator. He was awarded his doctoral degree "With Distinction" from New York University's Department of Cinema Studies. He is currently editing the manuscript, "Outside the Law: Labor and the Crime Film, 1941-55" for publication. His articles and research on film and television history and theory and media theory have appeared in Cinema Journal, Framework, The Village Voice, Newsday, The Boston Phoenix, Social Justice, Science and Society, The Guardian and Visions Magazine. His work for series television includes scripts for It's Gary Shandling's Show and three series pilots: a sitcom - Public Access, a dramatic series with the actor Brad Dourif - "Hell on Earth", and a series about the conflict between government intelligence networks and anti-corporate activists called "Global Reach."

Kevin Lauth teaches single camera film style video, and multi camera-studio production classes. Professor Lauth is an experienced television director, videographer, editor, and

an authority on cable television programming and regulation. He has worked as a cable television consultant for several New York State municipalities. He currently serves as Associate Dean of Conolly College, LIU/Brooklyn Campus.

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Maureen Nappi is an artist, scholar and theorist committed to a thoughtful integration of the theory and practice of the creative use of computers and advanced technology. Internationally awarded and recognized as a computer artist, Nappi exhibits and lectures extensively on both. Nappi received a Ph.D. in the Critical Studies area of the Department of Art and Art Professions at New York University for her work on the aesthetics of computer arts and advanced technology. In addition to teaching in the Media Arts Department at LIU, she teaches at NYU and Mercy College.

Michele Darling is a veteran educator, audio and video engineer, electronic musician and sound designer, with extensive music recording and performance credits. She performs professionally as part of the group Aerostatic. Aerostatic's work has been featured in exhibitions and festivals in the U.S., Europe, and Australia. Aerostatic has performed throughout New York City and Brooklyn as well as in Chicago, Los Angeles, Italy, Vienna, and Argentina.

Bernard Orenstein is a seasoned television writer and producer who will be teaching the History of TV. There are few people as qualified as Bernard Orenstein to take students on a guided tour through the history of the medium simply because he because he has been a significant part of that history. In a writing career that spans more than fifty years, he has been associated with some of the most successful and long-running series in television. During that half century, he has worked with Icons like Dick van Dyke, Redd Foxx and Bill Cosby. By virtue of his extensive experience on series like Sanford and Son, What's Happening!! and Cosby, he has become a sought-after authority on the history and impact of African American performers and the TV series in which they appeared.

Greg Sutton, a lifelong resident of Brooklyn, will be joining the TV Writers Studio as its New Media guru. Greg currently serves as Executive Producer of the Brooklyn Cable Access (BCAT) Television Network, a post he's held since 2004. He has also served as Director of Community Media for Brooklyn Information and Culture (BRIC) since 2007. Added to this, Greg joins the faculty with over twenty years of college teaching experience.

Brooklyn Independent Television, which Greg oversees, produces television programs for and about Brooklyn (and garnered a 2010 NYC Emmy Nomination for its art program, Caught in the Act: Art in Brooklyn); Brooklyn Free Speech TV, which provides the community with free access to a state-of-the-art \$8 million broadcast facility; and Brooklyn Bulletin Board, a 24-hour service utilized by over 800 non-profit organizations.

Additionally, students will be exposed to industry professionals and guest lecturers such as: Andrew Bergman, David Frankel, Tom Fontana, Gail Berman, Jon Markus, David Picker, Chris Downey & John Rogers, Mitch Semel, Tree Adams, , and some "surprise guests"

## CURRICULUM

The MFA in Writing and Producing for Television will use a unique teaching and learning approach that mimics the real world of contemporary television. Students enrolled in the program will be grounded in the structure and theory of dramatic writing. The Cohort will be exposed to the craft of television writing and guided in developing an insider's knowledge of the industry while examining the historical, theoretical, and entrepreneurial issues connected to the field. The curriculum will include graduate level writing, history and theory courses, the opportunity for independent study, and seminars and tutorial conducted by industry professionals.

By the end of two years, candidates for the degree will be required to demonstrate proficiency in the field of television script writing and the craft of producing. They will be expected to communicate their ideas effectively, both orally in class sessions as well as in their writing.

## DISTRIBUTION

Each MFA degree candidate will be required to complete:

- 24 credits in writing and producing practicum
- 3 credits in the ancillary areas of television history
- 3 credits in intellectual property and marketing
- 3 credits in distribution and technology
- 9 credits in moving image production and pre-production craft
- 3 credits in independent study/internship
- 3 credits in capstone portfolio (MFA thesis)

## COURSE TRAJECTORY

FALL		SPRING		FALL		SPRING	
COURSE TITLE	CRED ITS	COURSE TITLE	CRED ITS	COURSE TITLE	CRED ITS	COURSE TITLE	CRED ITS
WPT 610 - TELEVISION SERIES & PROGRAMS	6	WPT 620 - TELEVISION SERIES & PROGRAMS - WRITING AND PRE-PRODUCTION	6	WPT 630 - TELEVISION SERIES & PROGRAMS/WRITI NG AND PRODUCTION	6	WPT 642 - POST- PRODUCTION	3
WPT 611 - THE HISTORY OF TELEVISION	3	WPT 622 - THE NEW MEDIA: AN INTRODUCTION	3	WPT 631 - SINGLE CAMERA FILM- STYLE VIDEO PRODUCTION (3 credits)	3	WPT 643 - INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CUTTING THE DEAL	3
WPT 612 - THE WRITER'S TABLE (January/Winter Intensive)	3	WPT 698 INDEPENDENT STUDY EPISODE WRITING, and WPT 699 INTERNSHIP 0 credits (Summer)	3	WPT 632 - LOCATION PRODUCTION (Winter Intensive)	3	WPT 644 - THE INTERNET & NEW DISTRIBUTION TECHNOLOGIES	3
						WPT 700 - CAPSTONE THESIS COURSE	3
Total Credits	12	Total Credits	12	Total Credits	12	Total Credits	12

## **COURSES**

#### **WPT 610**

Writing and Development - The Television Series

An introduction to the basics and complexities of television script writing, and the seamless integration of the written script into the development stage of the television production process. Students begin work on the Central Project pilot script.

#### **WPT 611**

The History of Television

An examination of the development and evolution of television as a creative medium, with an emphasis placed on the role of the writer and producer. How did we get from

the dawn of the medium of TV to the digital age? Influential TV programs will be screened and technological advances will be highlighted. Important TV scripts of historical and contemporary importance will be studied.

#### **WPT 612**

The Writers' Table - Revising & Delivering the Pilot

Students enter the inner sanctum of the creative television scripting world, the writer's table. During this course students revise and complete a draft of the Central Project pilot script.

#### **WPT 620**

Television Series and Programs- Writing & Pre-Production

The completed draft of the Central Project has been submitted. Students will start to explore the intricacies of production as the pilot moves from the development stage into pre-production.

#### **WPT 621**

Genre Theory & Writing

This course will examine the concept and theory of genre as it applies to well-known television and film forms, with an emphasis placed on authoring creative works within and beyond the confines of specific genres.

#### **WPT 698**

Independent Study - Episode Writing

During the Summer session students, with the help of their mentors, will complete the individual episode script and refine their treatments for an original TV series together with a verbal pitch that could be made to a broadcast or cable network. A completed episode script must be submitted by the end of the first month of the Fall Term.

#### **WPT 699**

#### Internship

Students will have the opportunity to do a prestigious internship at a media production company, or media organization. Internship placements must be cleared in advance with MFA Advisor.

WPT 630: Television Series and Programs - Writing & Production: During this course,

students see their words and images come alive as the creative process transitions from the page to the screen.

#### **WPT 631**

Single Camera Film-Style Video Production

Using state of the art digital video cameras and non-linear editing systems (Final-Cut Pro), students will explore the basic aspects, procedures and stages of the video production process from "development to distribution." Students will work in small production teams, creating EFP style, short-dramatic sequences.

#### **WPT 632**

#### Location Production

Intensive five (5) day shoot of two scenes from the Central Project pilot episode at locations in Brooklyn. Students will not only observe, but will function as members of the crew on the shoot. There will be ongoing discussions with the director, DP and editor about each take and whether everything that is needed to assemble a great scene has been captured on film. During the process, the cohorts will view "dailies" and participate in the decision as to which takes should be used to compile the scenes. At the end of the week a first assemblage of both scenes will be viewed.

#### **WPT 642**

#### Post Production

Students will expand upon the knowledge and skill sets they acquired in WPT 631 and 632 as they delve into the world of High Definition video editing or post-production. Topics to be covered include: Non-linear editing systems (Avid, Final-Cut, Vegas), SFX generation, color correction, audio sweetening techniques and aesthetics, advanced shooting for the edit techniques, advanced editing aesthetics, motion graphics and motion capture.

#### **WPT 643**

Intellectual Property and Cutting the Deal

The "property"—the script or the concept has been created, and there is someone or some entity actually interested in producing it. That means money will be changing hands and rights and ownership will have to be granted and retained. What rights? What ownership? Who gets what? This segment of the MFA is about those issues and self-defense.

#### **WPT 644**

The Internet and New Distribution Technologies

This is an introductory course dealing with the tectonic impact that the Internet and New Media and the New Distribution Technologies have had on the television industry.

#### **WPT 700**

The Capstone Portfolio

This is the MFA Thesis project.

## CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO THESIS PROJECT GUIDELINES

The Capstone project will consist of the following elements:

- 1) The Central Project Pilot Script.
- 2) An individual four act episodic script of at least sixty (60) properly formatted pages in length.
- 3) A treatment for an original TV series including the premise, character breakdowns and story synopsis.
- 4) A verbal network "pitch."
- 5) A half hour genre script at least 25 properly formatted pages.

All elements of the Capstone Project must be delivered by April 30th.

#### Network Pitch

A full-blown presentation to invited broadcast and cable network executives and advertisers on the LIU campus. It will consist of a staged reading of the TV pilot script by actors, a screening of the scenes that were filmed, a presentation of Internet components together with a "bible" of the first season episodes accompanied by copies of the student cohorts' scripts.

Then, we will enter "nervous time" when we discover if any of the prospective buyers decided to order the pilot.

Then, in the "extremely highly unlikely event" that a sale is not made, the hell with 'em, we'll launch our own series on the Internet.