Syllabus

2024-2025 School Year

**Course Title:** Dramatic Writing for Stage, TV, and Film

**Instructor:** Brian Neill

Hours of availability for tutoring, remediation and conferences: Very flexible. Most days after school, with prior notification.

Contact: (706) 823-6924, Neilbr1@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us

**Materials provided by the student:**

* Laptop (school-assigned or brought from home) \* Spiral notebook \* Ballpoint pens (blue or black)
* Notebook paper \* A binder to keep graded assignments \* A composition notebook

**Assigned Text:** Various titles, as well as short and extended reads, will be used throughout the course.

**Course Description and philosophy:**

This course gives students an overview of the entertainment industry and the basic fundamentals to produce marketable written works for the stage, film, and television. Students learn the basics of the entertainment writing process, including how to create, revise and properly format plays, screenplays, and scripts, potentially for submission to agents and development executives. We will also analyze various plays, TV shows, and motion picture productions. Desire to become a professional writer IS NOT a prerequisite for the course. There are also writing and research components that can transfer to many other professions. Anyone with even a remote interest and love for the written and/or acted word, will likely find something of value in the course.

Course Outline (*All unit activities are abbreviated and include additional content).*

**Unit 1: The Writing Life –**

The writing and revising processes. Deconstructing TV and movie scenes. Finding your inner writer and story.

**Unit 2: The Nature of Story and Writing for the Stage –**

The playwright’s craft. Creating compelling dialogue for the stage. Proper play formatting.

**Unit 3: Dramatic Writing for TV and Film, Part 1 —**

Screenplays vs. plays. Screenplay jargon (cold open, log lines, beat sheets, pitch decks, etc.). Creating compelling and convincing characters. Act structure. TV format, and writing for TV.

**Unit 4: Dramatic Writing for TV and Film, Part 2 —**

Incorporating crisis and conflict in a script. Writing for film. Creating a screenplay. Screenplay, revision and final product.

Canvas: The majority of all assignments for the class will be turned in through Canvas, Richmond County’s online learning platform. Students MUST be able to access Canvas and have a laptop in order to access and turn in assignments. Cell phones MAY NOT be used in class. ***Students who choose to not check out or bring a laptop will quickly get behind!***

Discipline Policy The following consequences will result if students misbehave: 1st incident- counsel student, 2nd incident-parental contact, 3rd incident-office referral. More serious infractions may go straight to referral.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were the student’s original thoughts. The student will learn and develop the correct techniques to reference material from other authors and sources.

Cheating is talking or passing papers between students during a test, or giving and/or receiving answers. Cheating will NOT be tolerated! The Richmond County Board of Education policy on plagiarism and cheating will be followed.

Class Rules

* Be in your assigned seat and ready to work immediately upon entering the classroom.
* No eating or drinking (water is fine)
* Do not talk while the teacher or a classmate is talking.
* No leaving seat without permission.
* **Treat everyone with respect.**

**Cell Phones and Communication Devices:**

All cellular phones, smart phones, smart watches, iPads, tablets, any type of headphones, earbuds, and other devices or accessories used to electronically communicate are considered personal electronic communication devices. All devices are prohibited for all students during the instructional day, which is defined as the time a student arrives on campus until the end of the school day. Students are NOT allowed to use cell phones ANYWHERE during the school day! They MUST turn them off (not on silent or vibrate mode) and leave them out of sight. Earbuds & headphones are not permitted. Please see the acceptable use policy and the BYOT agreement for additional guidelines. If a student chooses to bring a cell phone or electronic communication device on school property, it is at their own risk and damage to their property will not be investigated. RCSS is not responsible in any way for lost or damaged devices and cell phones.

IF AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE IS USED INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF THE AUTHORIZED CLASSROOM, OR WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF A TEACHER, THE CONSEQUENCES ARE: 1st Offense---- Device confiscated and student can pick up at the end of the day. 2nd Offense--- Device confiscated and parent can pick up Friday of that week. 3rd Offense----Device confiscated and picked up by the parent the Friday of that week. One day of in-school suspension.

Noncompliance: If student refuses to give up their phone/device to a staff member, they will receive two days of suspension.

Methods of Evaluation/Distribution of Grades

Students will have numerous opportunities to demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully master the standards. Students will be given remediation for any standards not met. Assignments may include: daily class work and homework, quizzes (oral and written), tests (oral and written), writing assignments, class discussions, independent work using the computer, projects (individual and group), oral presentations, and reports (oral and written). Maintaining a neat, well-organized notebook is a must. Class participation will be monitored daily and is also mandatory.

There will be two assignment categories:

* Minor grades - 60 %
* Major grades - 40 %

**LATE GRADING POLICY**

Late assignments **must be turned in within five days of the due date**, and will be subject to 5-point reduction in the **earned grade** for each day they are late. **Assignments turned in after five days will not be accepted.**

**Non-negotiables to relearn/and be reassessed on major assignments:**

1. Student **MAY NOT** have missing assignments less than five days late in current tested unit/module.

2. Assessment **MUST** be different from initial assessment, and will be determined by teacher. Only **ONE** reassessment will be given.

3. Student **MUST** relearn/reassess within 7 days once the grade is posted to Canvas.

4. The reassessment grade **MUST**replace the initial grade (*no averages*).

I have read this syllabus and I understand the content and requirements of the year. I understand that this syllabus is to be kept in the front of my notebook after it is signed by my parent/guardian. I understand that course expectations may change due to time constraints or other unavoidable circumstances.

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Signature of Student Signature of Parent or Guardian