PELLISSIPPI STATE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MASTER SYLLABUS

SCRIPTWRITING FOR MASS MEDIA
VPT 1400

Class Hours: 3.0 Credit Hours: 3.0
Laboratory Hours: 0.0 Date Revised: Fall 02

NOTE: This course is not designed for transfer credit.

Catalog Course Description:
Writing of visually oriented scripts for the following: commercials, training programs, communications and documentary programs, emphasizing the interdependence between the visual and auditory portions of the script.

Entry Level Standards:
The student should be able to effectively communicate with instructor and peers, complete assignments according to instructor specifications, and read and write at the required level.

Prerequisite:
ENGL 1010

Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:
Scripts and script models as provided

I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Class objectives/Introduction/Media Trends and Markets/Production limitations for writers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discuss creative preparation/components of the communications process/contracts: Print, Speech, Broadcast</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Script Mechanics: Rules for Scriptwriting/Layout forms for scripts/other considerations.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Review script mechanics/radio news stories</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Program Structure/Program elements/Program opening/Body of program/Program closing/analysis of program structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Review script Mechanics/ Program Structure/Sounds/Visuals</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Potential, available and actual audiences/ Target audience/ Audience gratification</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Researching commercial campaign/ Public Service Announcements/ Promos/ Editorials/ Organization and Sequence: Attracting Attention, Motivating action, organizing strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Review/ MIDTERM</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Criteria for selecting stories/ Management decisions/ Writing the news story/ Point of</td>
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view/ Types of stories

11 Review news stories

12 Characteristic of a Documentary/ Common Documentaries/ Writing Documentaries/ Radio Documentaries

13 Review of Commercials/ News/ Talk/ Interview/Discussion/ Documentary programs

14 Finish review including Corporate/ Instructional Program

15 Concept/ Treatment/ Final script for Dramatic program/ Radio Drama

16 First Amendment/Legal restraints/Ethical Concerns

FINAL EXAM

II. Course Objectives*:

A. Gain insight into the implications of the influence of electronic media in society and the ethical considerations faced by the writer. I, III

B. Learn to assess audience characteristics that suggest appropriate writing styles and approaches. III, IV

C. Develop the ability to develop and write scripts that best utilize the various technologies of electronic media. I, III, V

D. Acquire an awareness of cognitive and affective styles of writing. III, V

E. Learn to format a script so it is appropriate for the various media. III, IV

F. Begin to develop the ability to design scripts which are scaled to client needs in terms of communication requirements and overall production costs. III, V

*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the VPT program.

III. Instructional Processes*:

Students will:

1. Conduct research using the internet, ERC resources, and interviewing techniques. Communication Outcome, Information Literacy Outcome, Transitional Strategy

2. Create programs, commercials, PSA and other basic forms of writing from ideas to finish scripts. Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Active Learning Strategy

3. Touch on all basic types of both T.V. and radio script formats. Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcomes

*Strategies and outcomes listed after instructional processes reference Pellissippi State’s goals for strengthening general education knowledge and skills, connecting coursework to experiences beyond the classroom, and encouraging students to take active and responsible roles in the educational process.

IV. Expectations for Student Performance*:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Present arguments, which demonstrates his/her grasp of ethical and moral considerations faced by writers for mass audiences. A, B

2. Establish audience profiles, which can be used to determine suitable concept approaches, and writing styles. A, E, F
3. Incorporate the production techniques and technologies of film, radio, and television into production ready scripts. E, F

4. Write at least one example each of a script suitable for production as a radio commercial or PSA, a television commercial or PSA, a short tele-play, a newscast or news feature and a short documentary or informational program. C, D

5. Demonstrate, in written form, the ability to create 3 or more approaches for the solution of a particular communications problem. B, C, E

6. Identify and employ basic elements of creative writing. A, C

7. Discern the difference between delivering information and involving the viewer or listener on an emotional level. D, F

8. Demonstrate how to write in a format suitable for production in radio, TV or film. E

9. Demonstrate how to write a treatment and script and develop a storyboard. B, E

10. Estimate, in general terms, the overall production costs of a simple corporate or “industrial” production. F

11. Prepare for future VPT production work through development of strong scripts writing conceptual skills. A, C, D

*Letters after performance expectations reference the course objectives listed above.

**V. Evaluation:**

A. Testing Procedures: 30% of grade

Test scores will combine for 30% of the grade.

B. Laboratory Expectations: 40% of grade

The following four areas will combine to determine 40% of the grade.

1. Completion of written assignments on time.
2. In class attendance, participation and in-class writing.
3. Effort, growth, dedication, perseverance
4. Mastery of basic writing skills, creative talent, ability to focus and concentrate.

C. Field Work: 30% of grade

Structure, spelling, written assignments will represent 30% of the grade.

D. Other Evaluation Methods:

N/A

E. Grading Scale:

90 – 100 A
80 – 89 B
70 – 79 C
60 – 69 D
below 60 F

**VI. Policies:**

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State Technical Community College expects students to attend all scheduled
instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course (Pellissippi State Catalog). Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, may have requirements that are more stringent.

**VPT Program:**
The VPT program believes a more stringent requirement is realistic because of the contractual commitment made by the College with local area employers. Therefore, to successfully complete VPT courses, students must attend at least 85% of classes. To be considered “in attendance”, students are expected to be in class at the scheduled starting time for that class. Students will be considered “tardy” from that time until 10 minutes after the scheduled stating time. Three such “tardies” shall constitute an “absence”. Students arriving any time after 10 minutes beyond the scheduled starting time for a class will be considered “absent”.

**B. Academic Dishonesty:**
In keeping with college-wide policies, the student is expected to adhere to the general rules and regulations relevant to academic and classroom misconduct as outline in the catalog.

**C. Other Policies:**
Any act of misuse, vandalism, malicious or unwarranted damage or destruction, defacing, disfiguring, or unauthorized use of property/equipment belonging to Pellissippi State is subject to disciplinary sanction.