



## **SCWR 365**

401

### **Showrunning I**

Autumn 2021-22

Thursdays, 1:30 to 4:45 pm

Instructor: Jose A. Soto

Type of Course: Online

Course Management System: D2L

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1.30 to 3 pm  
& Thursdays, 5 to 6.30 pm

(All meetings via zoom).

Office Telephone: (312) 362-5846

Email: [jsoto23@depaul.edu](mailto:jsoto23@depaul.edu)

### **Course Description:**

This course provides an overview of the evolution of the Showrunner in network television, cable, and streaming media. Students will analyze how the success of a series is dependent on an astute Showrunner who knows how to handle the creative, financial, and managerial aspects of putting on a show. Emphasis will be placed on the vital role these executive producers play in the three stages of production to ensure the actualization and continuity of their artistic vision.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Identify the knowledge and abilities that a showrunner requires to carry a TV show.
2. Recognize the managerial styles that could be applied when running a show and determine which of these is better suited for themselves.
3. Apply the best strategies to effectively communicate with executives and colleagues during the development and production of a TV series.
4. Identify the basic managerial tools to effectively budget and schedule a show.

### **Reading:**

Suggested:

Landau, Neil (2013) **THE TV SHOWRUNNER'S ROADMAP**; Focal Press. ISBN-10 : 0415831679, ISBN-13 : 978-0415831673

Del Valle, Robert (2008) **THE ONE-HOUR DRAMA SERIES: PRODUCING EPISODIC TELEVISION**; Silman-James Press. ASIN : B00HK3D5QG

You are also invited to examine the following magazines that report on the newest developments in this thriving industry:

**VARIETY & THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER**

The lectures might be supplemented with handouts from the instructor over the course of the quarter.

### **Grading:**

Final grades will be based on 5 presentations, 6 module assignments, a reflection video and the creation of a Pitch and Bible for an Original Show. Because it has to present shows on time every hour of every day, television is one of the most demanding industries, this charge carries over to those who are preparing for it, which is why missed deadlines will result in assignment failure (0%).

#### **MODULE 01: The 5 Pillars**

Assignment 1: What you need...  
*Research and Discussion* – 10%

#### **MODULE 02: The Writer**

Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part I & II) – 10%  
Presentation 1: Showrunner as a Writer – 5%

#### **MODULE 03: The Producer**

Assignment 3: Coin Assignment – 5%  
Presentation 2: Showrunner as a Producer – 5%

#### **MODULE 04: The Director**

Assignment 4: Visualizing – 10%  
Presentation 3: Showrunner as a Director – 5%

#### **MODULE 05: The Manager**

Assignment 5: The Boat – 10%  
Presentation 4: Showrunner as a Manager – 5%

#### **MODULE 06: The Leader**

Assignment 6: Profiling your Leadership – 10%  
Presentation 5: Showrunner as a Leader – 5%

#### **FINAL ASSIGNMENTS**

Reflection Video – 5%  
Pitch and pitch Bible of an original Show – 15%

All assignments must be typed and free of grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. It's your work; you're responsible for its quality.



### **Grading Standards:**

Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points	Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points
A	92	C+	78
A-	90	C	72
B+	88	C-	70
B	82	D+	68
B-	80	D	60
		F	0

### **Course Policies:**

#### **1. Participation**

At this level, students should be interested in the subject of the course. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either taking part in the online activities, asking questions or adding constructive comments to other student's presentations and the instructor lectures.

#### **2. Attendance**

It does not constitute a specific part of your grade, but perfect attendance is required. Most of the information you need to complete your assignments will be discussed in-class; also, examples of what you have to do will be given there. Subjects and/or assignments will not be discussed outside of the programmed zoom meetings. This makes attendance critical, and thus not an issue to be negotiated. However, if you have to miss a zoom meeting or a deadline, make sure to plan ahead, and inform the instructor in advance. Calling in advance does not automatically excuse an absence or a missed deadline, but it is the only way to present your case. If you fail to communicate before the next class period to explain an absence or a missed deadline, they will not be excused. Please note that work, non-emergency medical and dental appointments, hangovers, intramural games, visitors from out of town, fixing your roommate's computer, fraternity/sorority events, arguments with boyfriends or girlfriends and studying for other classes do not constitute excused absences or missed assignments.

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>. Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

### **3. Tardiness**

One true thing in all professional fields is the lack of tolerance for tardiness. Employers do not generally tolerate such behavior, and employees who offer weak, irritating excuses frequently find themselves unemployed and unemployable. We will be working under the same rules.

Remember it is your responsibility to make the arrangements when a deadline or a class has to be missed. I will treat you professionally, expecting of you a responsible attitude. This means that it is you who must be worried about solving the problem, not me.

### **4. Missed Assignments**

Since television creation is a cumulative effort, if you fail to turn in any of the assignments you will fail it with 0%. There will be no exceptions. This is a zero-tolerance policy. Turning-in an assignment does not guarantee you will have a passing grade, although the opposite will be true: Not turning them in will fail you inevitably.

### **5. Attitude**

We are going to be spending a lot of time discussing other student's or your own work. This will be made in an orderly fashion, no matter how vehemently we feel for an argument, we have to be able to provide it in a disciplined manner. It is better to wait and later speak than not speaking at all. My evaluation of your attitude and attention will be based on your participation during discussions, as much as it will be based on your assertiveness when making a comment.

### **6. Uncivilized Behavior**

Even though you are students who must constantly thrive to grow, we need to start acting professionally. This is why there will be no tolerance for uncivilized behavior. I require an orderly ambiance to be able to make the most of each session.

By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand my expectations for students concerning attitude and work ethic.

I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she has excessive absences (more than four, and if he/she doesn't participate in any of the assignments), engages in disruptive behavior, has a poor attitude, or in any other way is clearly not taking the class seriously.



## **7. Ethics**

Although your grade does not contain an ethics component like some other courses, I require complete honesty in producing your work. By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize there will be serious sanctions if it is proven that you have engaged in such behavior. You are also indicating that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty; claims that a student did not know he/she was engaging in academic dishonesty will not be contemplated.

## **8. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, cheating and/or fabrication will not be tolerated. They are serious offenses – both in course and in media careers. Thus, I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate.

Plagiarism is useless to you anyway. By having someone else do the work for you, you are missing an opportunity to immerse yourself in the television industry. You are also waiving your right to learn.

More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.

## **9. Withdrawal**

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system <http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>. Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

For more information on DePaul's withdrawal policy visit: <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/late-withdrawal-process.aspx>

## **10. Special Accommodations:**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should inform the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370



Phone number: (773)325.1677

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296

### **11. Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns:**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

### **Course Organization and Schedule:**

We will meet Thursdays from 1:30 to 4:45 pm. Students should've reviewed all the pertinent material and have their presentations ready before the meeting starts. We will begin by answering questions that students may have regarding the content of the class or upcoming assignments. Then, we will proceed to discussion and presentation activities. Towards the end of the class we will leave a few minutes to answer specific questions of the projects you will be handling.

This syllabus is subject to modification; there may be several circumstances that will most likely change it. I reserve the right to amend the class schedule, or the syllabus, if circumstances make it necessary. You may receive at least one revised syllabus or schedule before the quarter is over. If assignments or deadline dates change, I will inform you well in advance. Constantly reviewing D2L announcements and emails is recommended for these purposes.

### ***Schedule***

#### **Module 01 THE 5 PILLARS**

9-Sep	Meeting	Introduction to the course.
13-Sep	Assignment 1: What you need...	
13-Sep to 15-Sep	Comments on peer's posts	

**Module 02** THE WRITER

16-Sep	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Writer I
20 to 23 Sep	Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part I)	
23-Sep	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Writer II
23 to 30 Sep	Assignment 2: Network Notes (Part II)	

**Module 03** THE PRODUCER

30-Sep	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Producer I
07, 14 and 21 Oct	Assignment 3: Coin Assignment	
07-Oct	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Producer II

**Module 04** THE DIRECTOR

14-Oct	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Director I
21-Oct	Assignment 5: Visualizing (Part I)	
21-Oct	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Director I
28-Oct	Assignment 5: Visualizing (Part II)	

**Module 05** THE MANAGER

28-Oct	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Manager I
04-Nov	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Manager II
11-Nov	Assignment 6: The Boat	

**Module 06** THE LEADER

11-Nov	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Leader I
18 Nov	Assignment 7: The Profiling your Leadership	
18-Nov	Meeting	The Showrunner as a Leader II

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

18-Nov	Reflection Video & Final Pitch and Brief for Original Show	
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