



Stony Brook University

**FILMMAKING AND TELEVISION WRITING COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR
SPRING 2024**

NO PREREQUISITES TO ENROLL IN THESE INTRODUCTORY FILM CLASSES :

**FLM 101 INTRODUCTION TO FILMMAKING AND TELEVISION: VISUAL
STORYTELLING SBC: ART**

A hands-on introduction to the art of film and television. Students will become familiar with the ideas, materials and technical skills needed for creative expression in these mediums. Participants will learn how to use images in conjunction with sound, text and narrative structure as a basis for communicating ideas on film and TV. Participants will craft ideas into short pieces using Smartphones or comparable devices.

FLM 101.01 #54091 M/W 2:30 - 3:50 PM

FLM 101.02 #54092 M/W 4:00 - 5:20 PM

FLM 101.03 #54093 M 2:30 - 5:20 PM

FLM 101.04 #54094 TU 2:30 - 5:20 PM

FLM 101.05 #54095 TU/TH 2:30 - 3:50 PM

FLM 101.06 #54096 TU/TH 4:00 - 5:20 PM

*FLM 101.07 #54098 TU 2:30 - 5:20 PM

FLM 101.08 #54099 TH 2:30 - 5:20 PM

FLM 101.09 #54100 F 11:00 - 1:50 PM

FLM 101.10 #56420 TU/TH 10:00 - 11:20 AM

FLM 101.11 #56421 TU/TH 11:30 - 12:50 PM

FLM 101.12 #56422 W 2:30 - 5:20 PM

**FLM 101.13 #56503 TH 11:30 - 2:20 PM

***FLM 101 Introduction to Filmmaking and Television with Visiting Artist Maja Cule**

FLM 101.07 #54098 TU 2:30pm-5:20pm

Film 101.07

Film 101.07 is a deep dive into film and video as a medium for telling breathtaking stories about the body. We will look at the ways the human body is represented on camera, from funny animal videos, all the way to research on invertebrates and zooplanktons. This class is strongly recommended to students in marine biology, and medicine or research projects in other fields, but everyone is invited. This is a film class for students interested in developing a unique voice and storytelling skills. We will use digital image making, internet, video and filmmaking techniques to create stories that engage online audiences. You will build strong filmmaking skills, writing stories, filming, editing, animating. We will work with generative AI videos, found

online footage, filmed footage. We will look at the examples of narrative and non-narrative world cinemas, storytelling formats within internet and digital media, as well as somatic practices. This is a hands-on class; by the end of semester you will develop a series of short films, one longer piece, and will have strong skills in creating films that tell captivating stories about your stories and research.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Maja Čule is a filmmaker, writer and visual artist, working across media from short form video, installations, non-fiction work to feature films. They organize a residency program House of Neda that hosts queer and trans artists from Yugoslavia in New York, named after the protagonist Neda from their upcoming feature film Electronic Witches, produced by Croatian AudioVisual Centre. Their short video works have been translated in more than ten languages, and screened worldwide.

****FLM 101 Introduction to Filmmaking and Television with Visiting Artist Liz Rohrbaugh**

FLM 101.13 TH 11:30am-2:20pm

Film 101.13 with Profesor Rohrbaugh is a dynamic and hands-on course that immerses students in the world of filmmaking through the creation of a short film centered on a friend or fellow classmate. Through a unique blend of documentary scriptwriting and narrative storytelling, you'll develop essential skills in interviewing, screenwriting, and film production. Explore the fundamentals of cinematography, art direction, costumes, hair and makeup, location scouting, and sound design as you bring your vision to life. Dive into post-production stages, including editing, music composition, sound mixing, graphic design, and title creation, to polish your cinematic masterpiece. By the end of this introductory course, you'll have a captivating short film that showcases the unique story of a fellow Stony Brook University student, providing you with a strong foundation in the art of filmmaking.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Elizabeth (Liz) is a writer and director from Brooklyn, NY. Her most recent film, Becks, is an independent musical drama starring Lena Hall, Mena Suvari, Christine Lahti, and Dan Fogler. The film premiered at the 2017 LA Film Festival, where it won Best US Narrative Film. Becks was released in theaters, Showtime Networks, and on VOD and other streaming platforms. Prior to Becks, Elizabeth wrote and directed the short film DYLAN, which played at a number of prestigious film festivals around the world and was a Vimeo Staff Pick and a Vimeo Short Of The Week. Elizabeth also directed and produced the documentary feature, The Perfect Victim which premiered at the Hot Springs International Film Festival and was a part of the PBS/World Channel documentary series America Reframed. She spent a decade as a writer, director and editor at MTV in their On-Air Promos department, where she developed campaigns for some of their biggest shows, movies and brand integrations.

FLM 102 INTRO TO FILM AND TELEVISION COMPOSITION: HOW FILMS SAY WHAT THEY MEAN SBC: HUM

Introduction to the nuts and bolts of filmmaking and television as viewed through the lens of the working practitioner. By examining the creative aspects of films and TV shows, the tools, the language and the choices of professionals, participants learn to interpret the creative elements of a film and TV from a practitioner's perspective.

FLM 102.01 #54140 F 10:00 - 12:50 PM
FLM 102.02 #54141 TU 1:00 - 3:50 PM
FLM 102.03 #54173 F 11:00 - 1:50 PM
FLM 102.04 #54200 TH 4:00 - 6:50 PM
FLM 102.05 #56423 W 10:00 - 12:50 PM
FLM 102.06 #56424 M 4:00 - 6:50 PM

FLM 201 Visual Storytelling Across the Disciplines with Kate Levitt SBC: STAS

FLM 201.01 #56235 TU 11:30am-2:20pm
FLM 201.02 #56236 W 9:00am-11:50pm

Designed for students in all disciplines looking to create compelling visual stories about the issues at the core of their own studies.

Neuroimaging is cinema. So are video games, weather reports, commercial advertisements and memes. Find out how in FILM 201: Visual Storytelling Across the Disciplines. We will analyze stories captured every day in visual mediums across the disciplines and consider how they enrich our understanding of our world. From video guided endoscopies, to interrogation room security footage, to Instagram memes, we will analyze the stories captured every day on visual mediums, and consider how they enrich our understanding of the world we live in. Students will use this knowledge to develop a variety of short film projects, including writing scenes that can be shot using only security cameras, producing reaction videos, and developing a social media video campaign. Students will practice giving and receiving critiques as they consider how stories can be told visually through a variety of unique practical mediums. Using learned skills, students will develop a variety of short films relevant to their majors.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Kate Levitt is an award-winning screenwriter, script editor, and curator who focuses on nontraditional, coming-of-age narratives and experimental media. Her drama pilot, Living, won Showtime Network's Tony Cox Award for Best Scripted 60-minute pilot in 2019. Her scripts have also finaled in the Atlanta Film Festival, and the Page International Screenwriting Competition and have placed in the Austin Film Fest as well. Her new-media feature, Me,Me - a collage of social media footage - premiered earlier this year at Foxy Production Gallery. As a curator, Kate has worked with eminent video artists such as Paul McCarthy, Ryan Trecartin, and Petra Cortright.

**FLM 203 Podcasting: Audio Storytelling Skills for Filmmakers with Kathleen Russo
SBC: SPK**

FLM 203.01 #56311 M 5:30am-8:20pm

Podcasting is the next step in the technological liberation of storytelling via digital means. It is a companion and complement to video and filmmaking. In this introductory course, you will learn how to craft your own podcast—visualizing your stories with audio only—and present it to the world. You'll gain experience in writing for sound, interviewing styles and techniques, recording & editing basics, pitching ideas, marketing, branding, distribution, monetization and more. The focus is on learning and developing new storytelling and entrepreneurial skills, and strengthening oral communication and presenting skills by researching, writing and presenting proposals and pitches and participating in the evaluation of peer oral presentations of researched proposals and pitches.

***Kathleen Russo** is the Director of the Audio Podcast Fellows Program at Stony Brook Southampton. She curates the Writer Speaks Wednesday Series and special events for the Summer Writers Conference at Stony Brook. In addition, she is currently in production for a new Hillary Clinton podcast with iheart radio to be launched soon. She was the executive producer with Tina Brown of the podcast TBD by Wondery, nominated one of the best podcasts of 2019 in Cosmopolitan, and created and produced the podcast/radio show Here's The Thing with Alec Baldwin (WNYC production). She has been a contributor to The Moth, This American Life and StoryCorps. Past producing credits include: two movies with Academy Award-winning director Steven Soderbergh (Gray's Anatomy, And Everything Is Going Fine) and an Obie Award-winning play called Spalding Gray: Stories Left To Tell.*

If you've taken FLM 101, you can enroll in any of these 3-credit 200 level courses:

****FLM 215 SCRIPTWRITING: TWEET BY TWEET with Hoang-Vu Nguyen**

SBC: HFA+

FLM 215.01 #54168 W 4:00 - 6:50 PM

American writer Anne Lamott once recalled her ten-year-old brother bursting into tears after realizing that an extensive bird report he'd had three months to write was due the next day. Then her father sat down beside him and his unopened books on birds, whispering the magic words: "Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird."

Writing 90 to 120+ pages of a feature script sounds daunting to any writer, rookies and veterans alike. One can choose to either painfully cry at the thought of doing it, or do it anyway, beat by beat, scene by scene, and empathetically cry with the characters and their stories along the way. This class aims to turn the former choice into the latter.

We'll take Anne Lamott's anecdotal approach and recontextualize it in our present-day digital culture. So instead of bird by bird, let's build our screenplays tweet by tweet, together. For the first half of the course, we'll bring an Intuitive Tweet(s) to every class that speaks to us as writers and walk out of it with a Cinematic Tweet(s) that speaks to the audience as well, through the craft of visual language, dramatic structure, characterization, and thematic arguments. For the second half of the course, we'll write and workshop the first act of our screenplays, informed by our tweets and strengthened by our critique circle's comments.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Hoang-Vu Nguyen (Vu, he/him) is a Fulbright scholar whose works have been showcased at film festivals in America, the Czech Republic, India, Italy, and

Vietnam. He enjoys getting to know his students through their stories and helping them translate their vulnerability onto the page. In addition to being a filmmaker, Vu is also a creative director and children's author. Embracing the word "play" in "screenplay," he encourages you to try new things and make mistakes together, including using Twitter to plan your scripts!

****FLM 215 SCRIPTWRITING: Writing the TV Pilot with Greg Abbey**

SBC: HFA+

FLM 215.02 #56237 TU 11:30 - 2:20 PM

Students will learn the craft of television writing through developing their idea for a pilot, analyzing produced television shows and scripts, and critique of fellow classmate's work. Working from the ground up, you'll begin by creating a series concept that has both a powerful emotional core and a story engine that can sustain multiple seasons. Next, students create stories for their pilot episode and then move on to outlining scripts and writing scenes with dialogue, working toward their finished pilot script.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Greg Abbey is a writer, actor and filmmaker. After studying acting at Rutgers Mason Gross School of the Arts, Greg moved to New York City where he has worked consistently in film, television and voice-over. He also has a production company through which he's written and directed numerous commercials, web series and short films. Greg just finished his MFA in Television Writing from Stony Brook University and has had several of his scripts place in top contests including Slamdance, Austin Film Festival and Final Draft Big Break.

****FLM 215 SCRIPTWRITING For Film with Liza J. Renzulli**

SBC: HFA+

FLM 215.03 #54169 F 10:00 - 12:50 PM

This course will see students complete the first draft of a screenplay. Through viewing films and reading screenplays we will examine topics such as story concepts, character development, narrative arcs, set pieces, structure, dialogue, exposition, scene dynamics, subtext, and conflict. Concurrently, we will work on ideating a concept, finding narrative and character arcs, and deeply outlining our features. In the second half of the class we will focus on writing our features and workshopping the scripts of our peers. We will also work on busting writer's block and the feeling of stuck-ness. By the end of the course, you will have written the first draft of a screenplay!

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

*Liza Renzulli is a writer, director, and editor who has been working in film in various capacities for 10 years. She has produced two feature films, written and directed several short films and two seasons of a web series, and edited for MTV, Comedy Central, Animal Planet, and PBS. She is currently a thesis student in the SUNY Stony Brook / Killer Films MFA program. Her most recent short film *A Lot of You Are Asking* played at several film festivals in 2023. She is a recipient of the New York Women in Film and Television 2023 scholarship.*

**Students may repeat FLM 215 as topic changes to fulfill requirements*

****FOR CREATIVE WRITING MAJORS/MINORS: FLM 215 is the equivalent of CWL 315: TVW 220 and FLM 310 will count as Creative Writing workshops as well. Please email Liz McRae (elizabeth.mcrae@stonybrook.edu) and provide ID # and course section.**

FLM 221 Fiction Filmmaking with Niav Conty SBC: HFA+

FLM 221.01 #54170 TU 1:00pm-3:50pm

Through hands-on exercises in-class and out, students will leave FLM 221 with the theory, skills, and practical experience to direct short-form narrative film. Key focuses will be on the intersection of writing and directing, an introduction to directing actors, cinematography, editing and production fundamentals. Students will develop their own vision for what kind of storyteller they want to be and apply this to the creation of a short film.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

*Niav Conty is a writer, director, DP and editor. She appreciates the humor in darkness and the depth in fluff and celebrates all forms of contradiction. Her multi-award winning 2020 feature *Small Time* can be seen on Amazon Prime video, Apple TV and Google Play. *Small Time* is about a young girl growing up in rural America in the shadow of the opioid crisis and “the war on terror.” Her 2022 feature *Person Woman Man Camera TV* is currently touring the festivals. It’s a tragicomedy about race, romance and remembering, cutting between the first day and last night of an interracial couple’s 7-year relationship.*

If you’ve taken FLM 215, you can enroll in this 3-credit 200 level courses:

****TVW 220 Advanced TV Writing with Dave Chan SBC: HFA+, WRTD**

TVW 220.01 #54190 M 11:00 - 1:50 PM

Adapting content from one medium to another is very much an art by itself. In this course, you will workshop material you previously created—feature or short script/film, web series, play, novel, short story, essay, poem, etc.—and adapt it into a television series. What elements of your original story would make it a compelling episodic program? Television is the “little big screen” and though it follows the same principles of traditional storytelling, there are nuances that make this format entirely unique. At the successful completion of this course, you will write at least a Teaser and Three Acts of a TV pilot script adapted from your own original work in a different medium.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

*Dave Chan is an award-winning AAPI writer/filmmaker and recovering tech support guy. Out of 1200 applicants, he was selected as a Finalist in both the Nickelodeon Writing Fellowship and the Television Academy Internship Program. He has written and produced a number of acclaimed short films including *A Father's Son*, a crime-drama starring comedian Ronny Chieng (*Crazy Rich Asians*) and veteran actor Tzi Ma (*The Farewell*). Dave served as Guest Festival Director for The Art of Brooklyn Film Festival in 2017 and has been their Screenplay Judge ever since. He holds an MFA in Television Writing from Stony Brook University where he teaches and shares his passion for storytelling in his Film and TV Writing courses. And he loves to create Asian American characters who shatter stereotypes and piss off their immigrant parents. Because write what you know.*

****With permission of the director, filmmaking minors can enroll in TVW 220 to fulfill one of their 200 level course requirements. Please email Liz McRae(elizabeth.mcrae@stonybrook.edu) for permission to enroll in TVW 220 without the prerequisite.**

If you've taken FLM 102, you can enroll in this 3-credit, 300 level course:

FLM 301 Filmmaker's Toolbox with Visiting Artist Walter Strafford SBC: TECH
FLM 301.01 #54171 F 10 - 12:50 PM

"First, learn to be a craftsman. It won't keep you from being a genius." -Delacroix
In this section of Film 301, in order to hone technical skills, students will create original works as well as shot-by-shot remakes of shorts and scenes from professional productions. Students will complete a series of individual and group assignments using filmmaking techniques they will then apply to the production of a short, narrative, scripted film (two to five minutes in length) to be created as a group project.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Walter Strafford is a freelance filmmaker based in New York City. With over two decades of experience as a crew member on features, shorts, commercials, music videos, and documentaries, Walter has worked in nearly every aspect of film and tv production and post-production. His first feature film as a writer-director, KILIMANJARO, premiered at the SXSW Film Festival and was screened on PBS. Walter earned a BFA in Film and TV Production from New York University and an MFA in TV Writing from SUNY Stony Brook.

If you've taken FLM 102 and one 200 or higher level film course, you can enroll in this 3-credit, 300 level course:

FLM 310 Story Analysis for Filmmakers and TV Writers with Will Chandler
SBC: HFA+

FLM 310.01 #54174 M 2:30-5:20PM

Every future screenwriter, director and creative producer needs to know how to identify the dramatic elements of Story. This course will teach students the skills one needs in the world of visual storytelling/filmmaking - whether as a screenwriter, a spec reader or as an assistant to a producer/production company, studio or streaming platform. Students will learn how to read, deconstruct and evaluate screenplays and short stories by identifying their elements and writing cogent analyses of the material. Participants will leave prepared to answer the question every future screenwriter, director and creative producer must know: Is this material a film, a limited series or something else? Is it a Recommend or a Pass - and Why? Students will read both produced and unproduced screenplays as well as short stories. They will synopsise the material and write comments that evaluate the key dramatic elements: concept, characters, conflict, dialogue, theme and structure. Students will also develop an original project and write a story treatment that engages the audience and helps them "see" what this would look like as a film or limited series.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

An Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences NICHOLL FELLOWSHIP in SCREENWRITING winner, WILL CHANDLER has sold scripts and worked on assignments for major studios and independent producers. His Nicholl-winning script CYRANO OF LINDEN VIEW was optioned by writer/producer Michael Schiffer, his spec script THUMB was sold to Sony Pictures in a preemptive bid, and actor Russell Crowe hired him for BUSHRANGER, a sweeping historical drama based on the life of Australian outlaw Ben Hall. Will has also written for The Jim Henson Company, L-Squared Entertainment and others. Before that, Will was a Script Development executive in movies and miniseries for Green-Epstein Productions, where he guided dozens of projects for ABC, CBS, NBC and HBO. Will got his start in the entertainment business as a story analyst/script doctor for CBS, Viacom, Harpo Productions, New World Pictures, Lifetime and more. In addition to screenwriting, maintaining his scriptwriting column and teaching, Will is a judge for an internationally recognized screenwriting competition.

FLM 320 Topics for Filmmakers and TV Writers with Amy Gaipa SBC: HFA+

FLM 320.01 #56426 M 2:30am-5:20pm

Television's Impact on American Culture and How it (Black) Mirrors Society

Through a selection of television sitcoms and dramas of various formats, we'll explore how societal "norms," story structure and visual language for the "small screen" have played a pivotal part in some ground breaking and innovative episodes in television that have been informed by and then, in turn, impacted American culture spanning the decades from I LOVE LUCY to BLACK MIRROR.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

In addition to a solid base of studio film and TV credits, AMY GAIPA's first love of independent and developmental projects began in front of the camera and on stage and continues to this day. Amy recently received her MFA in Film Directing at SBU as well as serving as Director, Production Designer and Producer on multiple projects in collaboration with her fellow classmates as well as Donna's House Productions. Amy is bridging the gap on a joint Korean and US feature film of SONGBIRD slated to shoot in December 2023 with an award winning director. Most recently Amy wrapped producing, production design and acting in the feature film Dirty Rhetoric with Tovah Feldshuh and will be producing and designing the 5th year of the MASTIC BEACH MINI INDIE FILM FESTIVAL. Amy teaches undergrad film at SBU and is a member of New York Women In Film and Television (NYWIFT). Amy was a 2021 NYWIFT scholarship fund recipient for the next generation of women filmmakers and content creators.

IF YOU ARE READY TO COMPLETE THE CAPSTONE:

FLM 402 CAPSTONE PROJECT with Amy Gaipa

SBC: EXP+

FLM 402.01 #54172 W 2:30pm-5:20pm

A weekly seminar in planning and executing an independent, interdisciplinary project.

INTERNSHIP:

FLM 488 Create + Imagine Fest Internship with Kate Levitt

C+I Fest is an evening-long, intern-driven, event that exhibits the best work by SBU students in the Filmmaking, Creative Writing, and Podcasting disciplines; it's a celebration of our creative family. Interns are responsible for curating media, acquiring sponsors, advertising on campus, and aspects of technical production. This is a great opportunity to learn the mechanics of film festival development, and build your resume. To apply, please email Kate.levitt@stonybrook.edu. Course limited to three students.

PLEASE NOTE: You can enroll in an INTERNSHIP (FLM 488) or an ADVANCED FILMMAKING or TV WRITING WORKSHOP (200+ level) to satisfy the CAPSTONE Requirement with the permission of the Director.