

Advanced English: Creative Writing - Page to Screen: A Creative Approach to Adapting Literature for Film

James Reese

Academic year 2023-2024 - **Language Department** - Spring semester.

This course is meant for students of the advanced C1 and C2 levels. Theme-based language classes aim at developing written and oral skills through the study of a specific topic.

Course Objectives

This is a 12-week course exploring the creative transition from novel to film intended to improve student understanding and use of English.

The course has three main objectives:

- Introducing students to literary works spanning multiple genres, and all having been adapted for film.
- Facilitating critical analysis of selected works in various media.
- Expanding appreciation of narrative in its myriad forms through in-class discussion as well as both creative and critical writing.

Course Description

At the outset, students will be introduced to the tenets of both narrative and visual storytelling. We will then study these as practiced by selected writers and filmmakers in line with the semester's chosen focus: for example, "dark" sub-genres spanning horror, crime, and the psychological thriller; love stories; or classical theater.

Together we will read writers ranging from Shakespeare to Stephen King, depending on the semester's theme. Our focus will be on tracing the chosen works from source through screenplay to film. Outside of class, students will study selected film adaptations of these works and, in small groups, lead in-class scene analyses.

Classes will be devoted to student-led discussions of the source works and resultant films, tracing the storyteller's art as the works are adapted from page to screen.

Finally, students will "practice" creative writing by producing either an original short-form piece of fiction (with notes for its adaptation to film), a critique of an adapted work or the first ten pages of a screenplay

adaptation, adhering to all formatting requirements. Time allowing, we will refine these original works via in-class workshops and readings.

Organization

Activities will cover the four language skills:

- Speaking.
- Writing.
- Listening.
- Reading.

While in-class discussion of course content will emphasize **speaking** (including pronunciation, stress, et cetera, evinced in the reading aloud of scenes), preparation will require **reading** (assigned plays, stories, novels and adapted screenplays); **writing** (both critical and creative); and **listening** (including film extracts, author readings and presentations).