

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What would I gain from a screenwriting course?

You would learn how to adapt your unique ideas into a professional-appearing screenplay.

2. Why can't I just write my ideas down?

Of course, you can. But, unless it is in proper screenplay form, it will not be saleable in the marketplace.

3. What does this course consist of?

Preparations for writing include a screenplay treatment, character biographies, how character traits influence the story, a step outline of the entire screenplay, and a written and re-written first act of a feature-length screenplay (25-30 pages).

4. What assistance will be given to me?

Working online, each step will be submitted to the professor, Dr. Paul Lazarus, who will provide comments and corrections.

5. How do I know I can do this?

In truth, you don't know until you try. If you have ideas for films in your head, this course will facilitate your getting those ideas on paper.

6. Is Dr. Lazarus the right person to teach me?

Yes. Dr. Lazarus is an award-winning screenwriter, producer of six major Hollywood films, and instructor to hundreds of budding screenwriters as Director of the University of Miami's School of Communication's prestigious Motion Picture Program.

7. How long will it take me to finish writing a screenplay?

This course runs for ten weeks. At its end, you will have the first act of a three-act screenplay written and re-written. With the outline completed, the remainder of the script should take two to three months to complete.

8. What does it mean that screenplays are re-written, not written?

Most screenplays are re-written at least five times by the time they get filmed. A first draft, then, is a first draft. It is the critical foundation on which all else is built.

9. Why don't I buy a book and do it on my own?

The honest answer is, you could, but chances are, you won't. Having deadlines to meet and feedback at every stage will keep you involved and help you realize your goal.

10. What do I do with my screenplay when I finish it?

If you hope to sell it, obtaining a literary agent will prove very useful. On your own, you can enter it in one of many screenplay contests. A successful result in a contest will render the screenplay more desirable to agents, and studios.