

WRITING FOR THE SCREEN AND STAGE MFA

Degree Requirements

The following requirements are in addition to, or further elaborate upon, those requirements outlined in The Graduate School Policy Guide (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/>).

Master's

Total Units Required: 18

Course	Title
Core Courses	
RTVF 561-0	Foundations of Writing for Screen & Stage ¹
RTVF 562-0	Writing the Short Play
RTVF 563-0	Writing the TV Episode
RTVF 564-0	Full Length Project (Feature Thesis 1) ²
RTVF 565-0	Full-length Project II (Feature Thesis 2) ³
RTVF 566-0	Full-length Project III (Feature Thesis 3) ⁴
Topics Courses	
RTVF 360-0	Topics in Media Writing (or other media writing electives with approval of the Director of the MFA)
or RTVF 464-0	Advanced Media Writing

Sample courses include:

Writing the Production-Ready Short Film
Writing Romantic Comedy
The Art, Business, and Ethics of Assignment Writing
Writing Horror/Fantasy/Supernatural
Writing the Dramatic Pilot
Writing the Comedy Screenplay
Writing the ½ Hour Spec Script
Writing the Sci-Fi Script
Advanced Sitcom Writing
Writing the Anti-Hero
Writing the Fact-Based Drama
LGBTQIA for Theater, TV, and/or Web
Improv for Writers
Pitching the TV Series
Writing and Performing Stand-Up
Political Drama Between Stage and Screen
Writing the Historical Drama
Activist Video for the Web
Creativity and Flow in Screenwriting
Writing the Feature Film
Workshopping the Full-Length Project
Writing Styles
Advanced Scene Workshop

Production Course

RTVF or Theatre (300-level or higher) with the approval of the Director of the MFA.

Theory/history/culture Courses (300-level or higher)

From Screen Cultures/RTVF, Performance Studies, Art Theory and Practice, Theatre, or other departments with approval of MFA program director.

Electives

From Production, Screen Cultures, or Writing/RTVF, Performance Studies, Art Theory and Practice, Theatre or other departments with approval of MFA program director. Maximum of two screenwriting, playwriting or television writing electives.

Internship	
RTVF 490-1	Summer Internship Seminar
RTVF 490-2	Fall Internship Capstone

- Parameters of media writing (character, dialogue, tone/voice, scope, context, intent, etc). Structure. Story analysis. What distinguishes one medium from another. Product: 30-page screenplay.
- With an emphasis on understanding the structure of a feature play, film, innovative theatre piece, or interactive narrative (student's choice) students produce: Outline, first act.
- With an emphasis on writing the first draft.
- With an emphasis on adaptation, revision, and preparing the writer for the business of writing.

Other MFA Degree Requirements

MFA students will be allowed to take a maximum of 20 credits.

Grade average: Students must maintain a B average. If a student's average is not a B or higher by the end of the first year, he or she may be asked to leave the program.

Final portfolio Review/Defense: In consultation with the Director of the Program, each student will choose a committee of two faculty members to review his/her final portfolio (at least 3 substantial scripts created within the context of courses) and to judge his/her final defense of that portfolio.