

**PRODUCING 1: ROLE OF THE PRODUCER**  
**Syllabus**

**Fall 2009, Monday, 6:00pm – 9:00pm, Room 511 Dodge Hall**

Prof. Richard Brick, Ira Deutchman, Leon Falk, Richard Guay, Maureen Ryan

office hours: (appointments available before class by arrangement, inquire in Producing Office)

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject of Lecture</b>	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Small Group Sessions</b>
1	9/14	6:00 – 9:00: History & Evolution of the Producing Role	Falk	
2	9/21	6:00 – 8:00: Development	Falk	
*	<b>9/28</b>	<b>NO CLASS: YOM KIPPUR</b>		
3	10/5	6:00 – 8:00: Financing 8:00 – 8:30: Tax Incentives	Deutchman Guay	8:30 – 9:00: Project Ideas Due
4	10/12	6:00 – 8:00: Pre-Production Conceptualization and Planning	Brick	8:00 – 9:00: Group Meeting - Decide on project
5	10/19	6:00 – 8:00: The Breakdown & Shooting Schedule <b>SCRIPT BREAKDOWN EXERCISE HANDED OUT</b>	Brick	8:00 – 9:00: Group Meeting
6	10/26	6:00 – 8:00: Budgeting: Fundamentals & Variables <b>BREAKDOWNS DUE IN CLASS</b>	Brick	8:00 – 9:00: Group Meeting
*	11/2	<b>NO CLASS: UNIVERSITY CLOSED</b>		
7	11/9	6:00 – 8:00: Principal Photography: Who Does What on the Set?	Guay	8:00 – 9:00: Group Meeting
8	11/16	6:00 – 8:00: Organizing a Shooting Day 8:00 – 9:00: Short Film Breakdowns <b>SHORT BREAKDOWN EXERCISE HANDED OUT</b>	Guay Ryan	
*	<b>FRIDAY 11/20 – TIME TBA</b>	<b>SPECIAL REQUIRED SESSION: COLUMBIA INSURANCE SEMINAR</b>	<b>Ryan</b>	
9	11/23	6:00 – 8:00: Supervising Post-Production	Guay	<b>Presentations</b>
10	11/30	6:00 – 8:00: The Afterlife: A Producer's Role Never Ends <b>SHORT BREAKDOWNS DUE</b>	Deutchman	<b>Presentations</b>
11	12/7	6:00 – 8:00: New Technologies and New Directions	Deutchman	<b>Presentations</b>
12	12/14	6:00 – 7:30: Wrap Up	Brick, Deutchman, Falk & Guay	7:30 – 8:30: <b>Presentations</b> 8:30: Producing Concentration Informational Session

**Course Requirements:**

**Project 1:** Each student will be expected to do a one-line breakdown of a 30 page screenplay that will be handed out in class. This will be based on material covered in class on 10/19 and will be due on **10/26**.

**Project 2:** Each student will be expected to do a one-line breakdown of their own 8-12 screenplay. This will be based on material covered in class on 11/16 and will be due on **11/30**.

**Project 3:** Each student will be required to participate in a group project over the course of the semester, culminating in an oral presentation on **11/23, 11/30, 12/7 or 12/14**.

The first stage is for each student to come up with 3-5 feature film ideas, and to turn them in during the group sessions at the end of class on **10/5**. The ideas can be original, from an item clipped out of a newspaper or magazine, an adaptation of a book, play, etc. Each student in the class will be assigned to a group with a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year producing student acting as facilitator.

For the next 5 weeks, the project groups will meet after the lecture portion of the class. The film ideas will be discussed in terms of their viability as potential films in the current marketplace. By the end of the session on **10/12**, based on the discussions, each group will choose the idea they are most enthusiastic about.

The balance of the small group sessions will be spent preparing for presentations that will be given in class. On the presentation days, each group will come up in front of the class and present its plan for the film they want to get made. Each member of the group should participate in a portion of the presentation, which should include a short pitch of the concept of the film, an analysis of the type of film you would like it to be, your priorities from a creative perspective, and how that affects your strategy. Cover packaging issues, and the type of ballpark budget necessary, and the likely sources that you would expect to go to for financing. Also, deal with the difficulties you expect to encounter due to the material, and how you would attempt to overcome them. If the project is based on an underlying source, explain how you would try to secure the rights.

Presentations should be around 15 minutes total, and will be critiqued in class. These are exercises, and there is no right or wrong answer.

**Grading:**

Grades will be Pass or Fail for Arts students and letter grades for those from other schools. Incompletes and CPs will not be given except under dire circumstances.

**Required Reading:**

*The Genius of the System* by Thomas Schatz (this book is out of print, but copies will be sold in class)

*Final Cut* by Steven Bach (this book is also out of print, but is available USED both at Amazon and other locations. They are both also in the Columbia Library.

*Weekly Variety* available every Sunday on most newsstands or by home delivery