Regent University Mission Statement:
Our mission is to serve as a leading center of Christian thought and action providing an excellent education from a Biblical perspective and global context in pivotal professions to equip Christian leaders to change the world.

School of Communication & the Arts Mission Statement:
To prepare emerging and established Christian leaders to inspire, enrich and transform the media, the arts, and the academy through excellence and innovation in scholarship and practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION & THE ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CINEMA-TELEVISION

SSW 511
PLAYWRITING
SPRING 2012
COURSE TYPE: CAMPUS

MEETING LOCATION: COMM. 101
MEETING TIME: 6-9 P.M.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: GILLETTE ELVGREN, PH.D.

All students are required to read and have a thorough understanding of the syllabus. Any questions or concerns need to be addressed to the instructor.
SECTION 1 – COURSE OVERVIEW

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:
Instructor: Gil Elvgren
Telephone: 757 548-2071
E-mail: gillelv@regent.edu SSW 511
Office Hours: Thursday 10-4p.m.
Office Location: 215 Comm Bldg.
Best time to contact me: Call at home: 548-2071

GREETINGS! We live in a media driven age. Film and television are the thing. So why write a play? For me, it’s several reasons. I write plays because I find that the excitement generated through the interplay of live actor and live audience is precious. It’s a more basic representation of the storytelling nature of our humanness. It’s immediate. It changes, it adapts, and the play itself is reinterpreted with every different production.

I also write plays because I find that I can explore character in a deeper manner, and have more fun and be more digressive with dialogue than you can in film or television, and create a ‘theatricalism' that defies being realized in film or TV. For example: a man stands on an empty stage; he is nowhere. He is everywhere. He puts his palm out, looks up, and hunches down in his jacket. It’s raining. Of course it isn’t raining on the stage. It would be in a film. And on this stage for a brief moment we’ve shared the special nature of pretend in a way that is totally theatrical.

So, have fun this term. Find your voice. Love your characters. Write from your heart.

Blessings, Gillette Elvgren

SHORT BIO
Gillette Elvgren has been writing for over thirty years; his plays have been produced by professional theatre companies throughout the United States and Canada. He is co-founder and resident playwright for Saltworks Theatre Company in Pittsburgh, PA., as well as being resident writer for Children’s Ministries, Scripture Union, Philadelphia, PA. There have been approximately 8,000 performances of Elvgren scripts.

While a professor at the University of Pittsburgh he was head of the M.F.A. directing program and staff director for the Three Rivers Shakespeare Festival. Presently he is a professor in Cinema/Television at Regent University, Virginia Beach.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will investigate the building blocks of writing a full length play for the stage: dramatic action, exposition, subtext, characterization, dialogue, imagery, and theatrical viability. In addition, various readings will introduce the student to the playwright’s traditional and non-traditional place in the cultural milieu in which he/she creates—in other words, the role of the playwright will be under constant examination as one who holds a “mirror up to nature.” Numerous contemporary playscripts will be read and discussed in order to better understand the “state of the art” as it exists today.

Theme Scripture:
“Work in My Vineyard” - Mathew 20:7
SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE: An ongoing dialogue will be initiated in class which will challenge the student to justify his/her creative work in relationship to his/her faith. This will be done through discussion and an examination of the writings that the student produces, as well as various readings that will be assigned, pointing towards an understanding of the writer and worldview. Some of the questions addressed will be:
- What does it mean to live in a moral universe?
- What role does 'destiny' play in the dramatic action of a play?
- How does the Christian belief system support the idea of change in play construction?
- How does one approach both the reality of evil and of man's fallenness in a redemptive context?

SECTION 2 – COURSE EXPECTATIONS

COURSE OUTCOMES

Students will write substantial portions of a full length play in which they will display a knowledge and understanding of the following:
- Create a play with an understanding of both the traditional and alternative structural or formalistic approaches to the art.
- Create a play in which the characters exhibit consistency, originality, and passion.
- Create a play which makes a meaningful contribution to the world of ideas, to a deeper and more profound understanding of human relationships, and which exhibits a creative witness to the student’s Judeo-Christian worldview.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Students are responsible for acquiring the following books and materials for this course before the first class meeting:
- Perkins, Sarah. “Christian Ethical Issues in Playwriting. (To be distributed through handouts.)
- Elvgren, Gillette. Paper Wings. (Originally published in “Faith on Stage’, but a manuscript copy will be made available to students at no cost.)
- Harrel, Wayne. Song of the Bow. Unpublished manuscript sent over e-mail.
- Various handouts and playscripts as provided.

Note: The School has partnered with the Regent Bookstore to have textbooks available for purchase for all students, including distance students. Items may be ordered using the secured online catalog found at www.regentbookstore.net.
• Daily access to the Internet and email
• Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) version 2007 or later.
• The latest version of a web browser compatible with Blackboard and media players. For assistance, visit the links provided in the Helpful Resources section of the course in Blackboard or contact IT Helpdesk via their website, phone at 757-352-4076, or email helpdesk@regent.edu.
• Additional materials (e.g., PowerPoint files, quizzes, media, and the like) may be provided via Blackboard. Students are responsible for the information and materials distributed in class and on Blackboard (see “Use of Blackboard” below for more information).
• Understand and adhere to the Regent Honor Code found in the Student Handbook. A persistent link can also be found in Blackboard’s “RU Resources” tab.

USE OF BLACKBOARD
Blackboard will be used to aid communication and delivery of extemporaneous and other content as the semester progresses. We may also utilize the Discussion Board to extend our in-class discussions. Participation in Blackboard does not supplant course requirements for attendance or class participation. Therefore, while access to and use of Blackboard is required for this course, it should not be seen as a surrogate for class attendance or other course requirements. Also, please keep the following in mind:

• All discussion posts should be scholarly in nature and respectful of colleagues.
• Students are expected to check the Announcements section of Blackboard each week beginning one week before the start of the course.
• Students must keep their e-mail address current in Genisys in order to receive communications from Blackboard and the instructor. Students are expected to check their Regent e-mail daily to ensure timely receipt of messages from the professor.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
Attendance is required in order to complete this course. Students failing to attend a minimum number of campus class meetings will automatically fail the course unless arrangement is made with the professor to take an “Incomplete” grade in order to complete the course at a later date in accordance with University policy (see student handbook for more information about withdrawing from a course or the University or for incomplete grades). To prevent automatic failure of a course, the minimum class attendance is as follows:

• For a 16 week course: Must attend at least 9 weeks of campus class meetings.
• For a 10 week course: Must attend at least 6 weeks of campus class meetings.
• For a 5 day Modular (Intensive) course: Must attend all 5 days of campus class meetings.

Note: International students should consult the Office of International Student Services for how immigration status may be impacted if you fail to meet attendance requirements for this course. All students should consult the Financial Aid office for information on how their funding may be impacted as well. International students should consult the Office of International Student Services before registering for a Distance or Modular course.

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for Regent University to suspend normal operations. During this time, Regent University may opt to continue delivery of traditional classroom instruction using the Blackboard Course Management System. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor the course Blackboard site in the event of campus closure.
SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments for this course must be submitted via the “Assignment Link” found in Blackboard. All files should be submitted using the following naming convention:

Your Name_AssignmentName (e.g. John Smith_Essay 1)

- Papers should be in MS Word format (.docx) compliant with the MLA writing style guide.
- Scripts should be in Final Draft or Movie Magic software format.

Unless otherwise stated in Blackboard, no assignment will be accepted if submitted via any method other than Blackboard. Assignments are due no later than 11:59 pm on Thursday. It is recommended that students give themselves a buffer of time before the deadline to allow for troubleshooting should your upload attempt fail. Students should look at the assignment submission page to verify that the submission was successful.

Late Assignments

Your grade can be adversely affected if you are chronically absent from class or if you hand in your assignments late.

NOTE: Technical difficulties when submitting to Blackboard will not be accepted unless documented by the IT Help Desk. The IT Help Desk is your first point of contact for problems with Blackboard. Deadline extensions will be allowed only when a system issue occurring on Blackboard’s side is documented by Regent University IT department.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

The final grade for the course will reflect mastery of course content and quality of thought as expressed in:

Assignments:

- Treatment for full length play: 30%
- Scenes from full length play: 40%
- Other Writing Assignments: 10%
- Reviews of film/theatre
- Offerings at Regent Univ. 5%
- Rehearsal response to EVERYWOMAN 5%
- Attendance and response to Blackboard lectures, etc. 10%
**Grading Rubric**

The following grading scale will be used:

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**SECTION 3 – SCHEDULE AND EVALUATION**

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

The schedule below includes the due dates for all assignments in this course. It is recommended that you place this Course Schedule in a convenient place and refer to it each week of the course. You need to follow it closely, as late assignments may be subject to a grade reduction.

Thursday marks the beginning of the week for this course. Therefore, **unless otherwise stated in Blackboard, assignments for each week must be submitted no later than Thursday, 11:59 pm (Eastern time) of each week.**