Our course, English 190F, is designed as a bridge from creative writing to film studies. We will be reading adapted screenplays and source material (short stories), completing writing exercises to help us learn the form and craft of screenplays, and also watching and analyzing movies to see how films work. We’ll be visited by a working screenwriter during the middle of the quarter.

Our major writing project will be a 12- to 20-page screenplay that will either be a self-contained short or the beginning of a feature-length project. This can be either original or adapted work. As a class we’ll workshop these screenplays, and then writers will have a choice of writing a second project or of revising the first.

Our class is actually two sections of the same course, but we’ve decided to combine forces for the first-half of the quarter. This is for the purposes of fun and also for the purposes of learning within a collaborative mindset.

Note: ENG 90 is a prerequisite for this class, and 190F will later be a prerequisite for taking a screenwriting class in film studies.

Texts and Materials:
1. *The Shawshank Redemption*. Screenplay and notes
2. *Different Seasons*, Stephen King
4. Screenwriting software. *Final Draft* is considered the standard in screenwriting software, but retails for $150 or more. *Celtx* is an open-source program that is free and recommended. It can be found online at versiontracker.com.
5. Other materials will be a combination of online resources and handouts. Many of the scripts we will be reading are available at simplyscripts.com or dailyscript.com
6. You will be required to provide paper copies of your work to everyone else in the class, so please do budget for this expense. Approximately 16 copies of 20 pages (320 pages)

Requirements:
*Class Participation*—30% This figure includes attendance, punctuality, and preparedness and involvement in class discussions, and the completion of written comments on others’ stories. Full attendance is of utmost importance in a workshop, as it is impossible to “catch up” on a workshop discussion you have missed, and as the workshop discussion itself suffers whenever even one voice is missing. If you will miss a class, please let us know ahead of time by email. If you miss more than two classes or are late on a regular basis, your grade will be dropped by letter grades. If you miss five classes, you will have to drop the course. If there is a health issue with you or your family, please talk with us about it.

*Adaptations and other short assignments*—25%. Three story adaptations (exercises) into screenplay format of 5-pp. each, and a few other short assignments.

*Original screenplay*—35% An original or adapted 12-20 pp. screenplay and its revision. This can be a self-contained short film, or it can be the start of a feature-length project.

*Reading Attendance*—10% You’ll attend three campus readings or film events during the quarter. If the
event is not an official Stanford event, please do clear it with either Shimon or Tom ahead of time. We’ll announce many of them in class, but the best way to stay informed is to join “cw-undergrad” on the Stanford Mailman system. Link: https://mailman.stanford.edu/mailman/listinfo/cw-undergrad

Also…

Conferences: Do stop in at any time during our office hours with any concerns you have regarding class, or just to talk about writing. We also highly recommend setting up an appointment to conference with us sometime in the week following the workshopping of your screenplay. This is not required, but generally speaking, students who come in to talk about their revision strategies consistently produce better revisions.

Laptops may be used during in-class writing exercises. Feel free to bring them to class, but please don’t leave them open during general discussion. Cell phones must be turned off and should not be checked during class.

Late Assignments The highest grade any late assignments will receive is a C. Assignments will not be accepted by email unless worked out in advance. We don’t accept the excuse of a printer being out of ink. So stock up on black ink at the beginning of the course so that you will not have this problem. Also, purchase a stapler if you do not own one.

Your Favorite Class. This quarter, if it’s within Tom and Shimon’s power, this will be your favorite class.