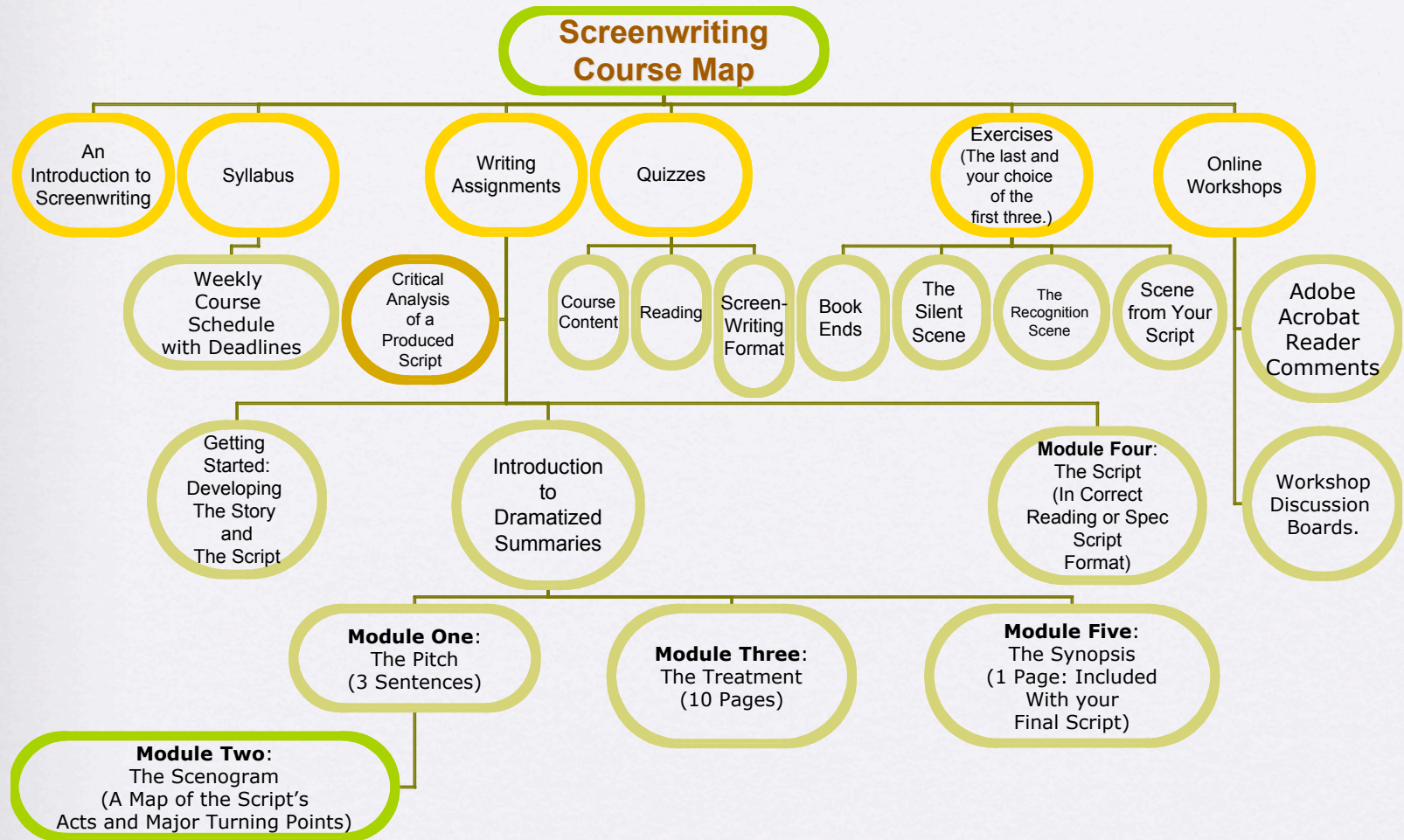


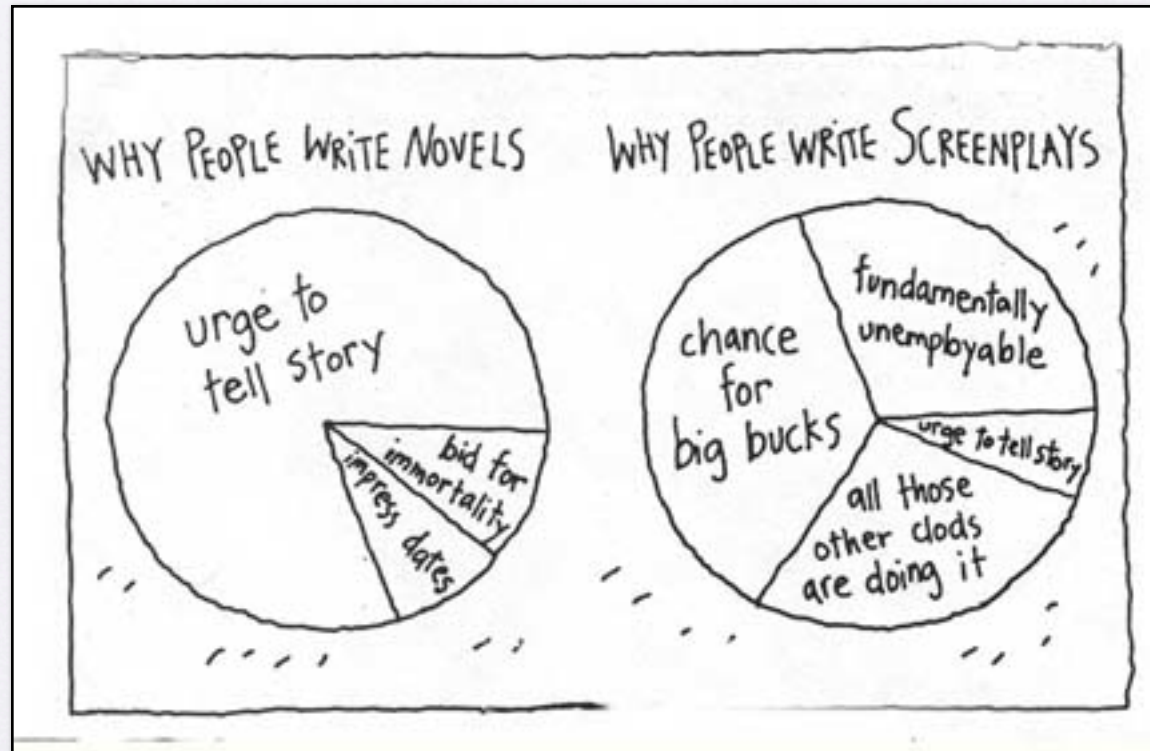
# Screenwriting Course Map

# Here's a visual overview of this screenwriting course:

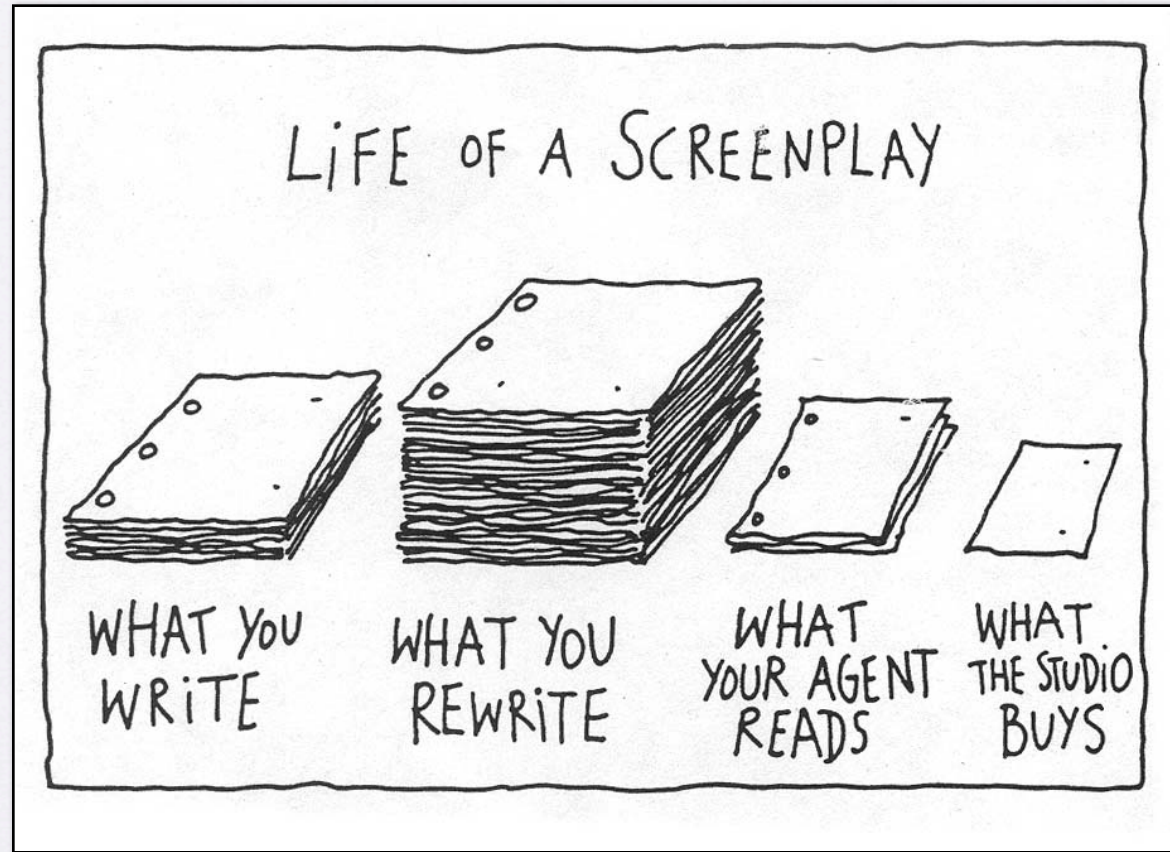


# An Introduction to Screenwriting

## Why do I want to write a screenplay?

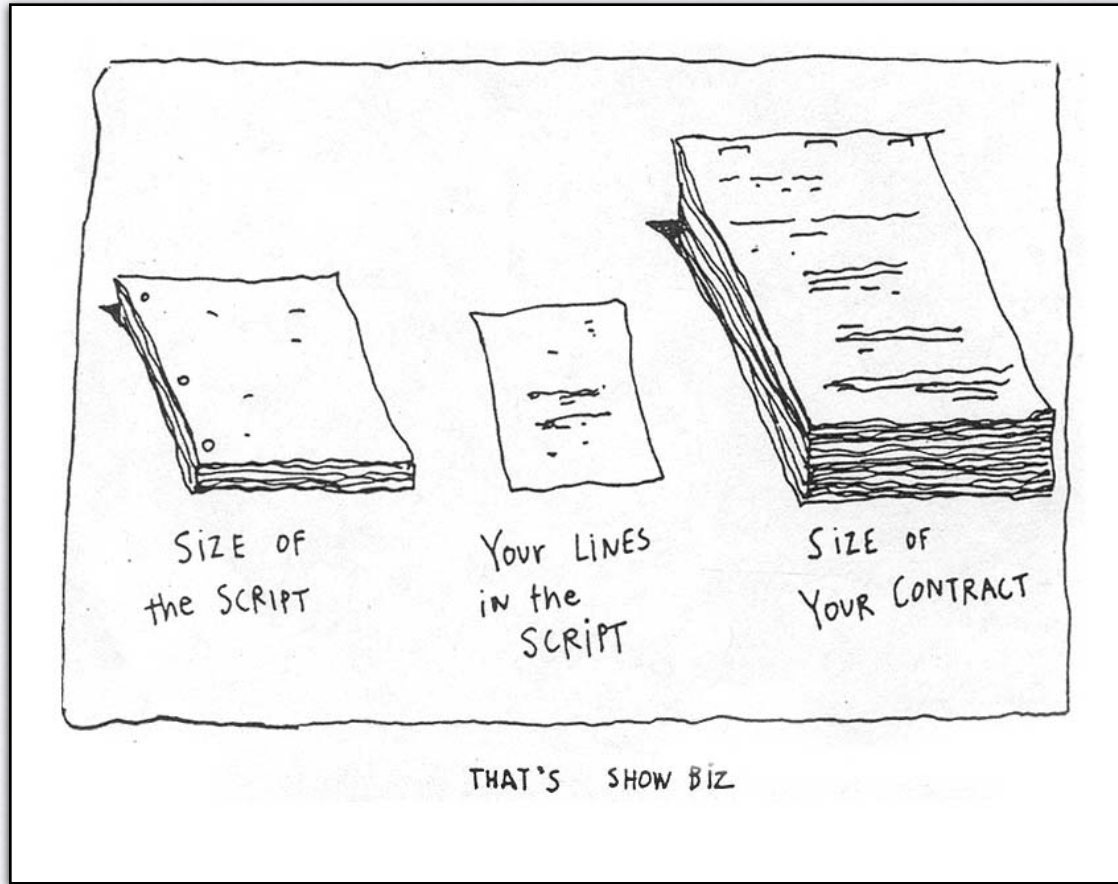


# Will my script be produced?



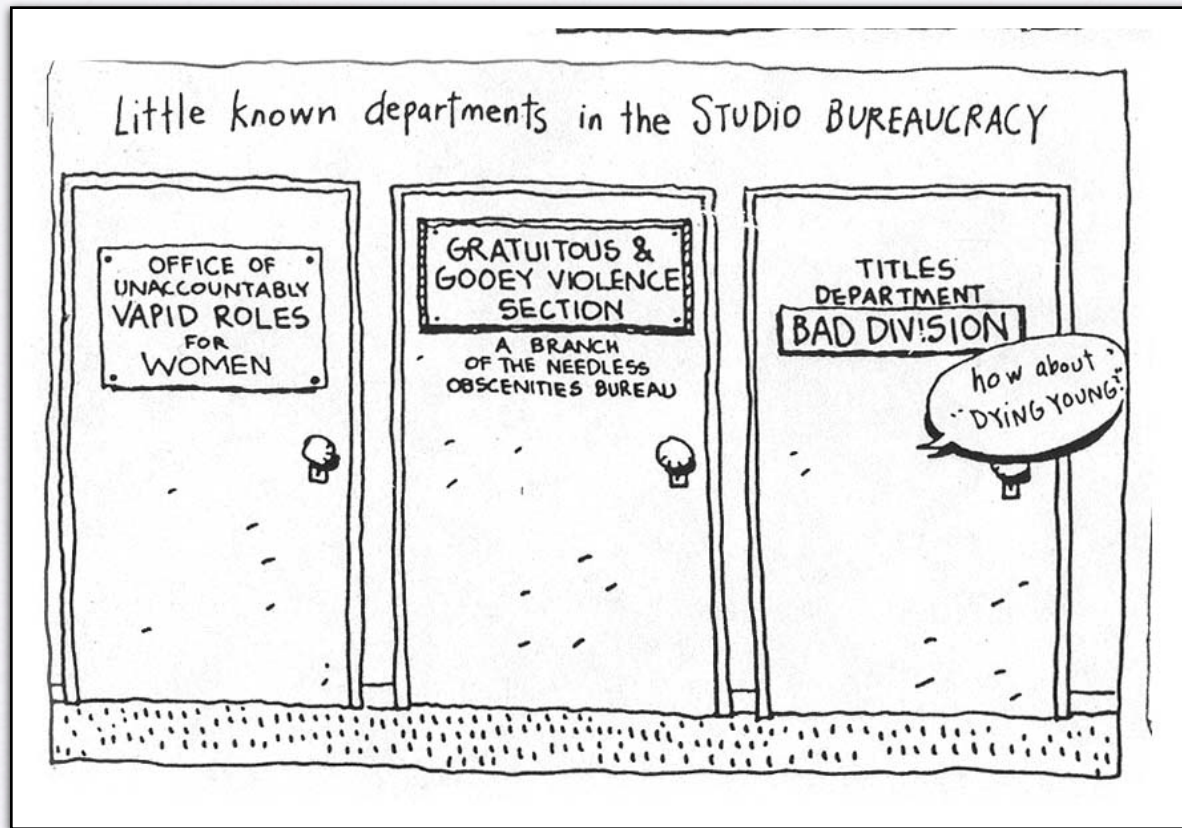
Well, maybe not all of it anyway.

# Will I make big bucks?



Guess I'll keep my day job at Blockbuster Video for now.

# Will I become the next Quentin Tarantino?



Even Tarantino had to start somewhere—at a video store like me.

# Trends in Script Writing

- The film industry has never been more competitive *or* promising for aspiring screenwriters.
- Hollywood is making fewer films, many of them blockbusters with huge budgets and stunning visual effects, based on video games and amusement park rides, replacing meaningful drama and deep characterization with action scenes, chase scenes and explosions.
- But independent films are cropping up everywhere at a growing number of film festivals, and Hollywood is buying these up and sending them to theaters all over the country.
- What's the best way to get your script produced and shot? Make the film yourself. And more screenwriters are doing just that—and succeeding.
- Now more than ever, there's a great hunger for new voices and original stories. If you write and learn your craft, spending many months in revision until readers find it impossible to put down your script, people *will* buy it, but . . .
- Much of the hard work is learning how to market your script, sending it to agents, screenwriting contests, online websites and studios and . . . being doggedly persistent.
- It's a gamble, yes, but a gamble worth taking, especially if writing a screenplay is something you *have* to do because you love it and you're committed to the writing craft for its own sake alone.

# How will this course help me become a screenwriter?

The main goal of this course, first and foremost, is to help you to become a better writer.

Other important goals include helping you to:

- Learn how to read a script like any other piece of literature you love.
- Learn scriptwriting terminology and format (for the Spec, or reading, script).
- Learn how to write scenes and summaries concisely and directly, showing rather than telling.
- Learn about dramatic structure and how to identify such dramatic elements as beats, scenes, sequences and acts.
- Write a script based on a character's internal changes rather than artificial and overly-simplified plot points.
- Brainstorm and develop a compelling story with interesting turns, taking it from idea to completed script.
- Use specific and constructive comments to help improve other writers' work in class.



# The Syllabus

Please read the syllabus closely for:

- My contact information, technical support contact information, course outcomes and the required and suggested texts and scriptwriting software.
- Online community and late-assignment policies, manuscript-format and -submission guidelines and deadlines. Grading criteria, major assignments and percentages.
- Class pacing and workload.
- A brief outline of weekly reading assignments, quizzes, exercises and writing assignment due dates.

Please refer to the *Weekly Course Schedule and Deadlines* for a more specific review of weekly deadlines for submitting manuscripts and manuscript comments.

# Weekly Course Schedule and Deadlines: Meet Them

Read the *Weekly Course Schedule and Deadlines* closely the first week of class and refer to it often. It includes weekly deadlines for:

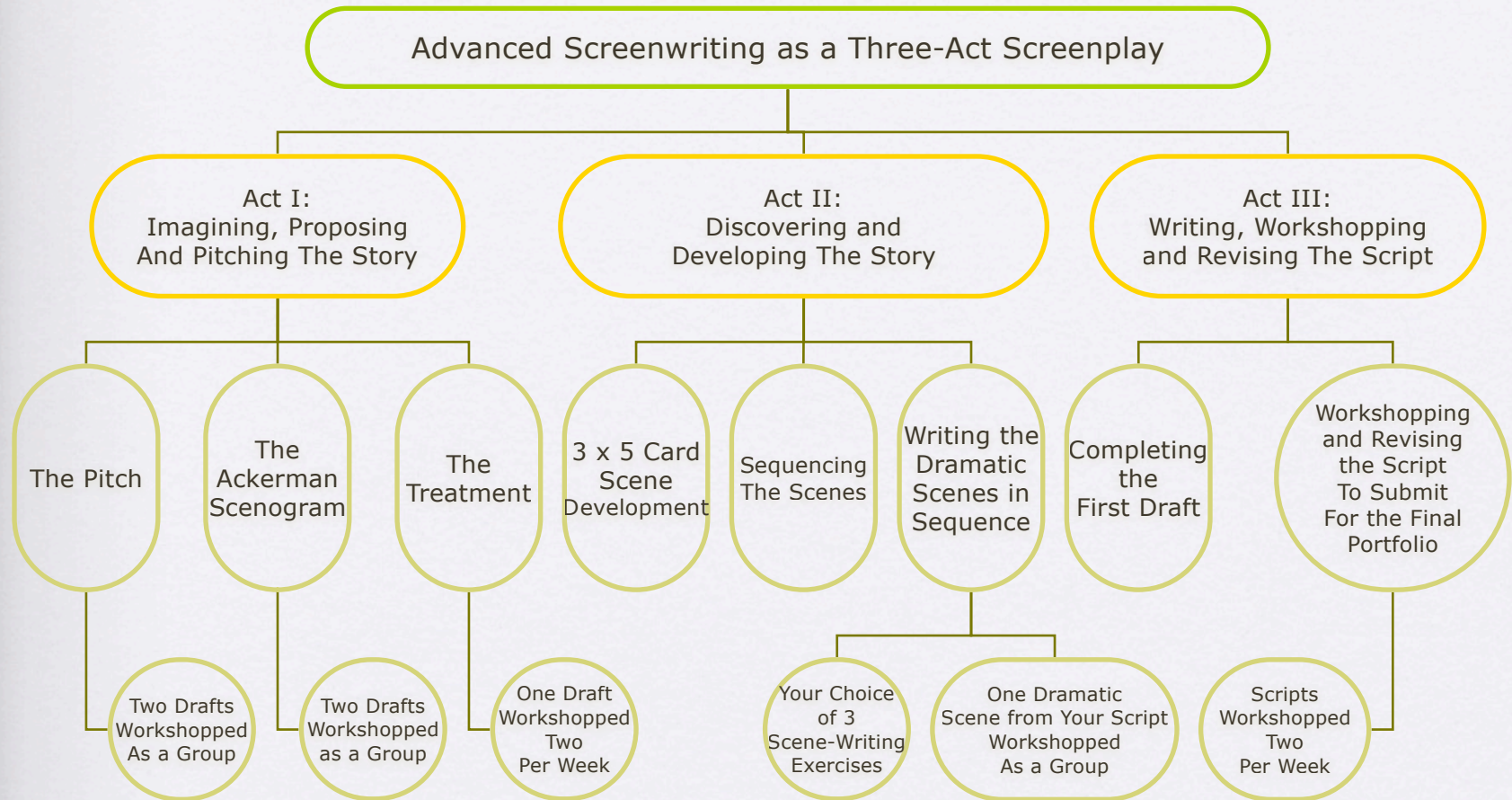
- All quizzes, exercises, writing assignments and comments.
- All e-mailed workshop assignments.
- All Adobe Acrobat comments.
- All Workshop Discussion Board comments.

These deadlines will come at you fast and without let up throughout the semester so please *plan and write ahead* whenever possible.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

# The Course's Structure in Three Acts

This course is composed of three roughly equivalent acts divided over the semester:



# Writing Assignments

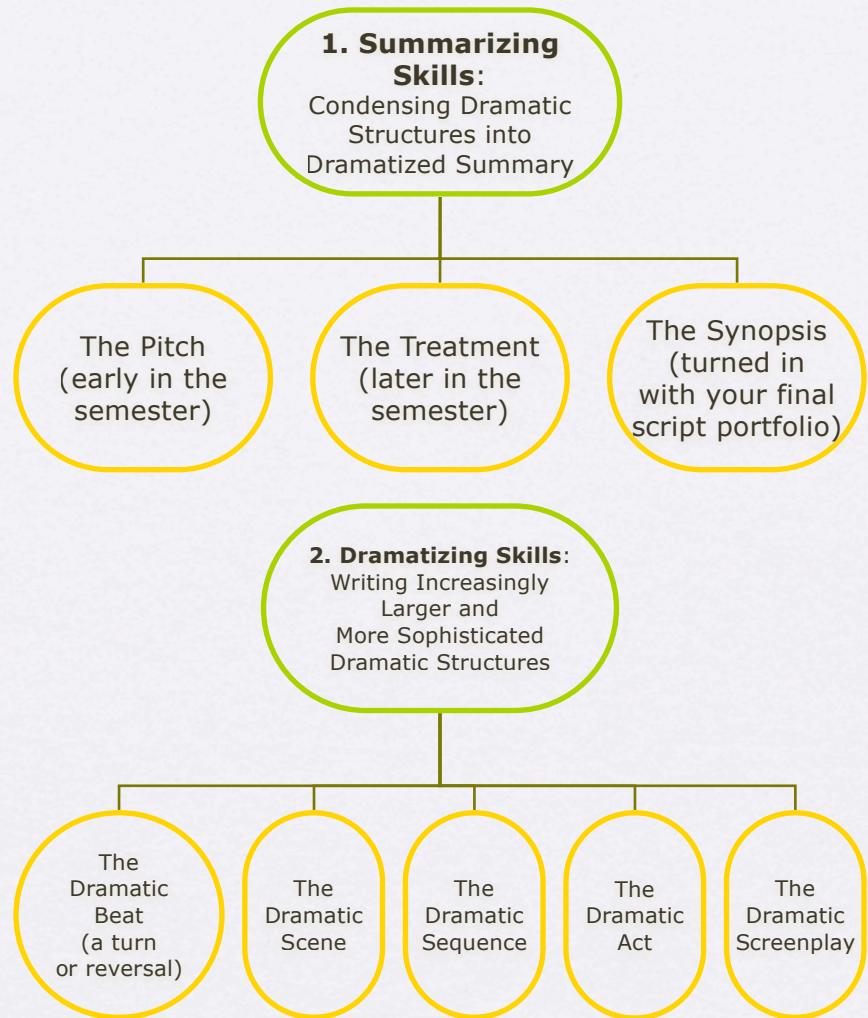
This course's writing assignments will help you develop two primary writing skills:

## Writing the dramatic summary:

- The Pitch (3 sentences: one for each act.)
- The Treatment (10 pages: 3 pages for each act)
- The Synopsis (1 page)

## Writing dramatic structures that show and tell:

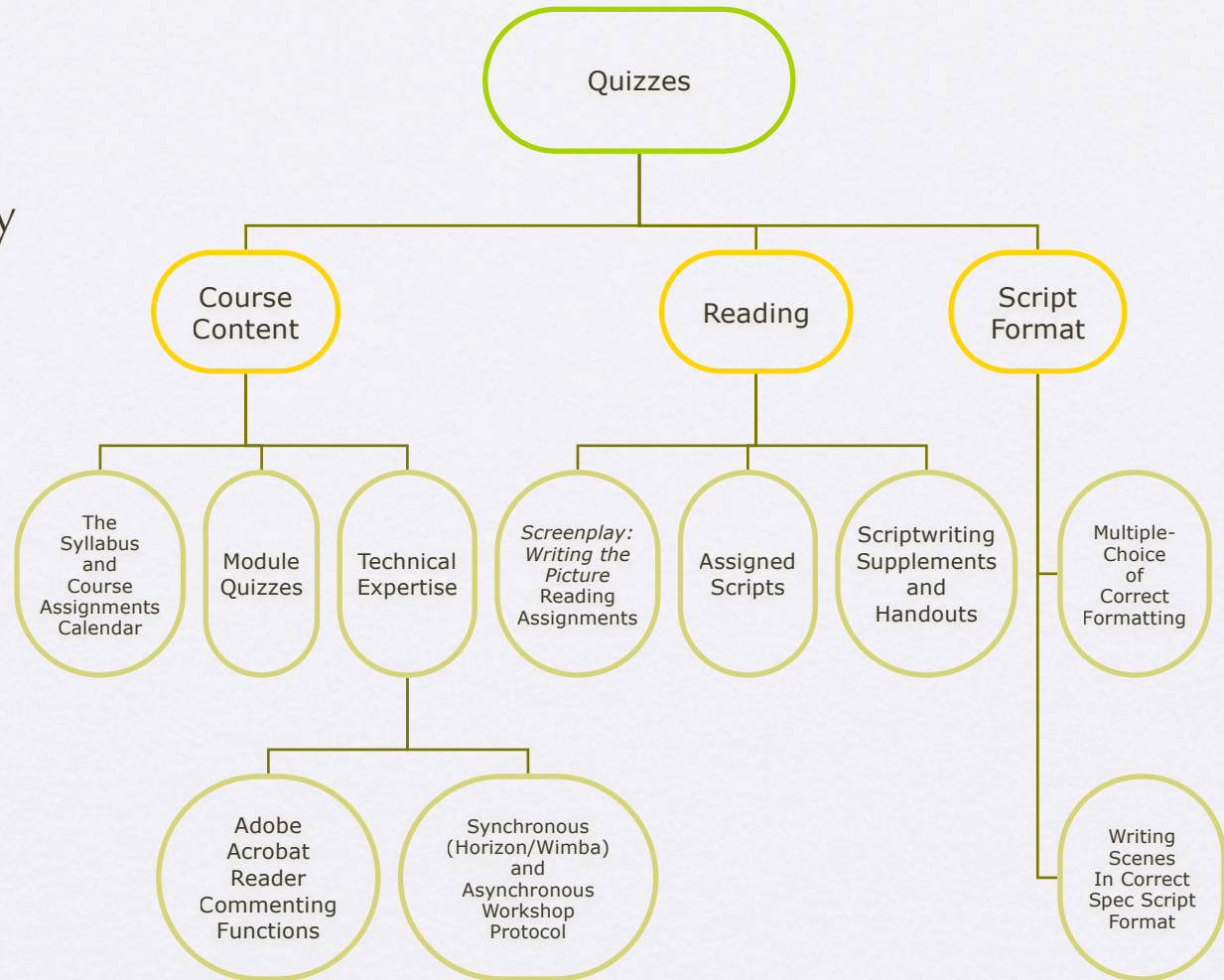
- Dramatizing exposition and background through conflict, significant details and deep characterization.
- Discovering structures based on dramatic reversal: beats, scenes, sequences, acts that build the dramatic script.
- Writing dramatic scenes and dialogue.
- Writing the Feature-Length Script (90-120 pages.)



# Quizzes

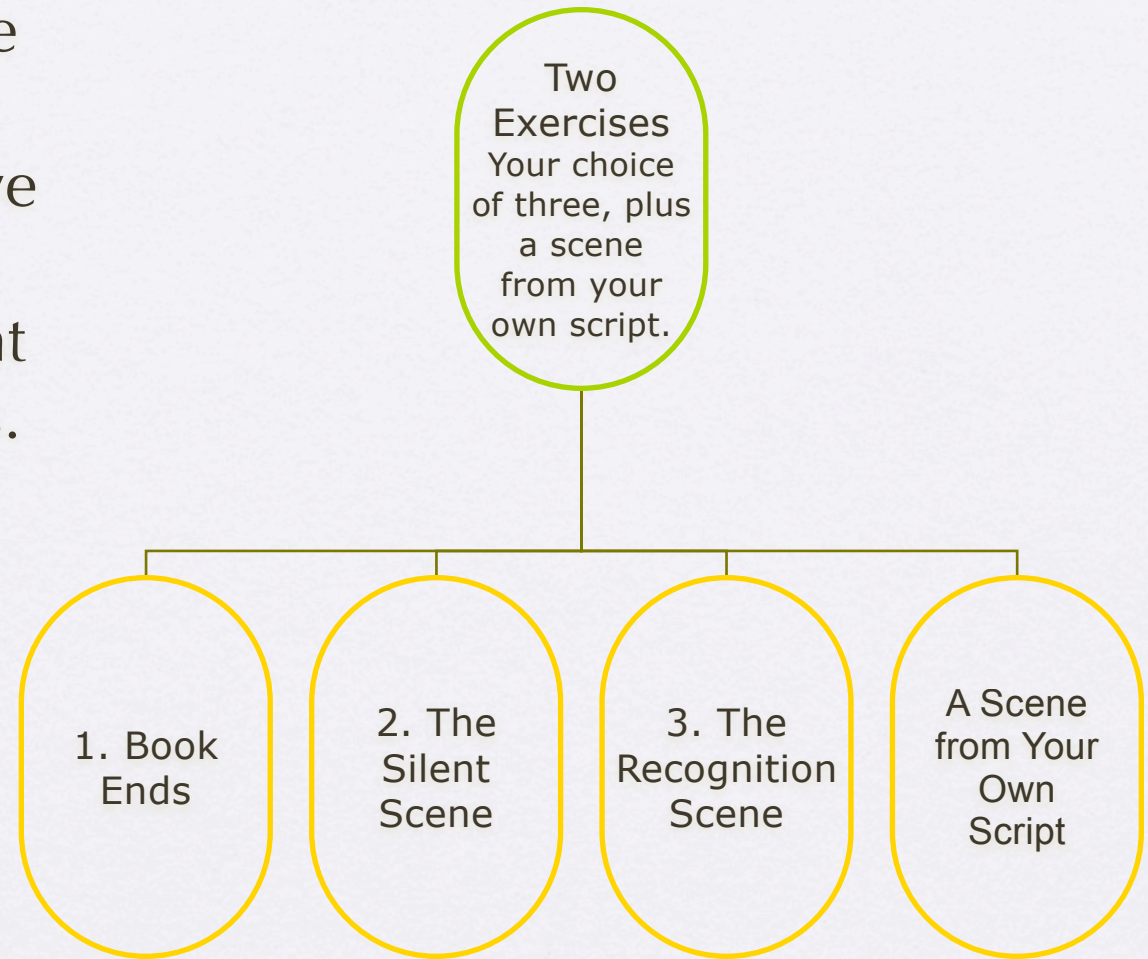
You may have several pop quizzes to test your familiarity with:

- Course Content.
- Reading Assignments and
- Script Formatting Rules



# Writing Exercises

You'll also have several writing exercises to give you practice in writing different kinds of scenes. We may workshop a selection of these.



# Online Writing Workshops

We'll comment upon each other's work extensively, giving writers an opportunity to brainstorm and change their stories.

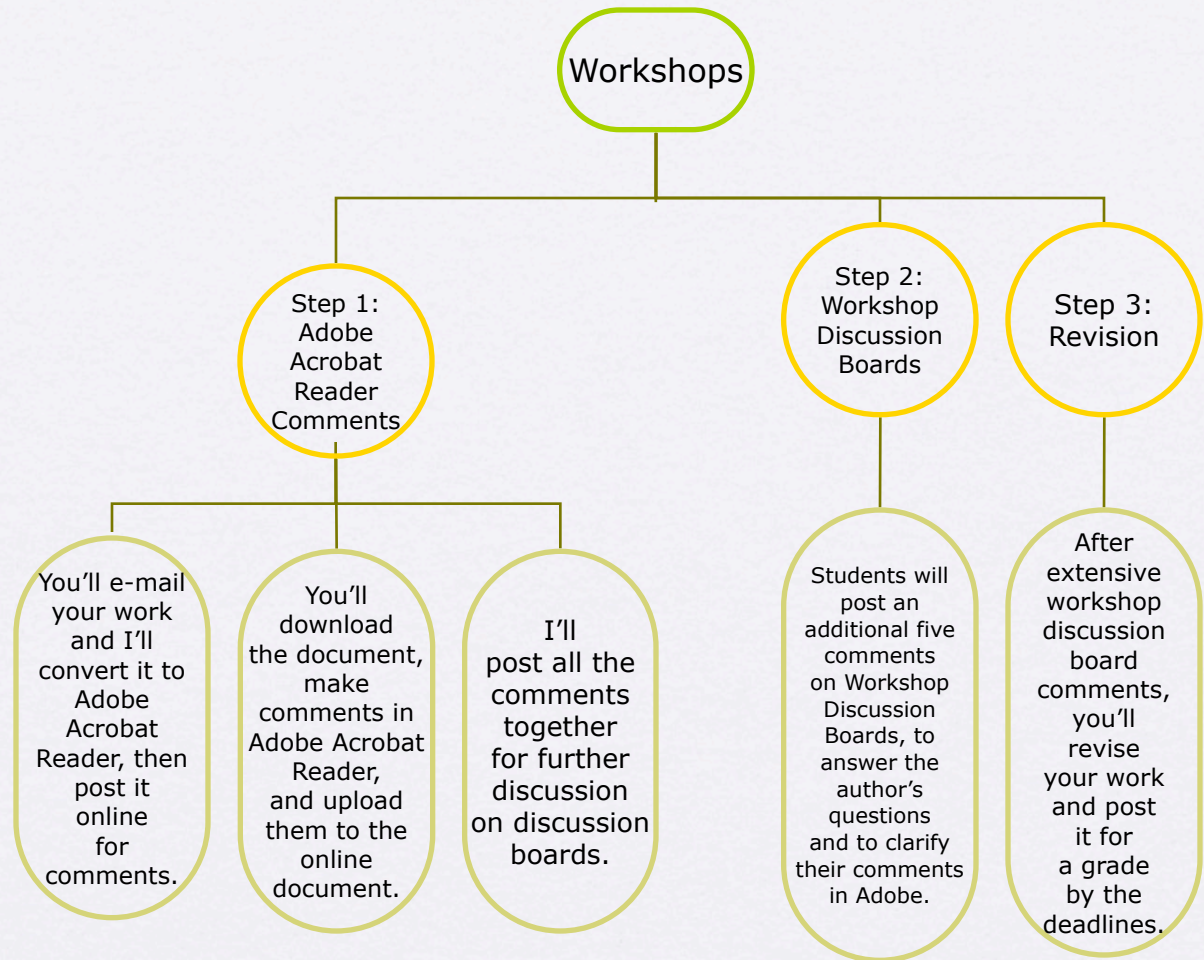
Online workshops will consist of three main steps:

1. You'll make comments on each others' work with Adobe's free Acrobat Reader.
2. You'll add five or more new comments to Workshop Discussion Boards.
3. You'll have an opportunity to revise all your assignments at *least once* for a grade.

*Note:*

*We'll workshop all the pitches and Scenograms in one single document the first month of the course.*

*Students will sign up for specific weekly workshop dates for their treatments and scripts.*



# Course Overview and Questions

You may find more information about specific assignments and deadlines in each of the modules throughout the semester.

*This course is fast-paced.* Please remember I'll post *only* those assignments we're discussing each week, and *keep up with your weekly assignments and deadlines and don't fall behind*; doing so could affect your grades.

If you have any questions, first go to the **Frequently-Asked-Questions Discussion Board**, and I'll answer your questions there for everyone.

If you still have specific questions after reviewing the *Syllabus* and the *Weekly Course Schedule and Deadlines*, feel free to e-mail me at [lex@utep.edu](mailto:lex@utep.edu); I may post relevant questions on the FAQ Discussion Board.



