

**ACTING FOR THE CAMERA  
THEA3314/COMM 4350  
M-F 1:30-6:30, Room M404  
MAYMESTER 2019**

Professor: Kim McKean  
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Office: Worrell 114  
Office Hours: By Appointment

**Course Description**

This course teaches the fundamentals of on-camera acting and the difference between acting for the screen and stage.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To develop facility with the core elements of acting technique in on-camera work: circumstances, character, text analysis, action, personalization, eyeline, marks, shot size, listening, personalization, reaction shots, continuity, and consistency in performing multiple takes
- To instill a habit of practicing unguarded/spontaneous communication with a scene partner on-camera.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course you should begin to practice and demonstrate “living truthfully under imaginary circumstances” while acting on-camera. This will include:

- Rehearsing, Memorizing, and Performing in two on-camera scenes with a partner.
- Demonstrating an ability to connect a scene partner both authentically and spontaneously on-camera.
- Demonstrating a specific sense of stakes and commitment to the character’s wants and given circumstances in on-camera.
- Articulating a thorough knowledge of on-camera terminology.
- Demonstrating an ability to effectively critique peer’s on-camera work with discipline specific vocabulary.
- Demonstrate an understanding of basic on-camera skills while filming selected scenes.

**Recommended Texts**

*The Camera Smart Actor* by Richard Brestoff

*Acting for the Camera* by Tony Barr

*From Stage to Screen* by Bill Britten

*Acting in Film* by Michael Cain

*Playing to the Camera, Film Actors Discuss their Craft* by by Cardullo, Gottesman, and Woods

*Film and Television Acting* by Ian Bernard

*The Secrets of Screen Acting* by Patrick Tucker

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **Prepare** and memorize all assigned texts.
- Perform two on-camera scenes that demonstrate a thorough application of Learning Goals.
- Come to class **ON TIME** and ready to work. **Work with positivity and respect.**
- Meet scheduled deadlines and turn in assigned work on time. Late assignments will not be accepted.
- Be prepared to participate in all classroom discussions and exercises.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the nature of this course, attendance at every session is mandatory. If there is an emergency or illness, I will review options for making up the work, but you must document the reason for the absences prior to the review. If you know you will be absent, please let me know via email before class.

## Evaluation Criteria

All paperwork must be typed, double spaced, and printed.

1. Participation .....	15%
2. In-Class Exercises.....	15%
3. Work Responses .....	20%
4. Scene 1.....	20%
5. Scene 2.....	30%

## EVALUATION CRITERIA BREAKDOWN

### 1. PARTICIPATION

Active participation is vital to your growth as artists and to your success in this class. You will be expected to come to class on-time and fully prepared, actively engage in class discussions, and give your all to class exercises. Share your voice! We only get better by asking questions and taking risks.

### 2. IN-CLASS EXERCISES

Includes all work done in class and prepared for class (including participation in discussion about assigned reading). You will be evaluated on preparation, work ethic, professional standards, and ability to apply course concepts.

### 3. WORK RESPONSES

Over the course of the semester you will turn in two short papers or “Work Responses.” Responses should include questions/discoveries/responses to your work (or your classmates work) that is related to course concepts. Specific due dates are listed below. Responses should be uploaded to blackboard by the due date listed. No late work will be accepted unless pre-determined with me.

### 4. SCENE 1 & SCENE 2

There will be two short scenes that are prepped, rehearsed, and shot on-camera in class. An evaluation rubric will be provided for these grading these scenes, and growth over the course of the semester will be taken into consideration, along with application of course concepts. For all

work done outside of class, if a student misses a scene rehearsal or group meeting with another student or students, that student's grade drops by 25% for the first missed meeting or rehearsal; and receives a 0 (zero) on the assignment for a second missed meeting or rehearsal.

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### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

No electronic devices allowed in class unless permission is given beforehand. Students using electronic devices in class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day.

### **SUBJECT MATTER**

The scripts and scenes studied in this course deal with mature subject matters. Consequently, some of the discussion in class will require discussion of adult subject matter and language. If you have concerns, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. All classroom discussions must be held in a respectful and professional matter.

### **RESPECT**

The work in this class may elicit a strong emotional response. In order for this work to be done respectfully, it is crucial that the classroom be a SAFE PLACE. Absolutely no bullying, gossiping, or judgement will be tolerated. Any student who is not contributing to a safe, creative, work environment will be asked to leave class and receive an absence for that class period. *Any student who engages in conduct that is harassment of any University community member, including sexual harassment as defined in Section VI. in the UTEP Handbook may be subject to discipline.*

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Any incident of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero on the assignment. This includes cheating and plagiarism. Please visit <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/> for more information.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT**

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at UTEP provides students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. For more information, visit <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 90%-100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 0% - 59%

**“A”**—indicates exceedingly high quality work. Masters all assigned work, completes work on time, shows originality and initiative, does more than required, and makes quality contributions in class.

**“B”** —indicates good progress, above the average, masters portions of the work, is alert and shows an interest in the work, completes work on time, and offers good discussion points in class.

**“C”** —indicates a quality of work acceptable at this level. Satisfactorily completes most assigned

work under normal conditions and direction, shows interest in work, and completes work on time.

“**D**” —indicates that although most assignments may be completed there is a need for greater effort to meet the expected level of work for this course, student is hesitant to engage in the work or at times shows little interest, and seldom responds in class.

“**F**” —indicates failure to produce an accepted quality of work for this course.

**Schedule of Classes & Assignments**

*(subject to change)*

*\*the reading and assignments are due the day they are listed*

Week	Date	IN CLASS	Assignment(s) Due
1	M 5/20	Intro, On-Camera Acting Clips. What makes us want to watch?  Film Listening Exercise  Repetition Exercises, Introduce Thread and Spontaneity  Film Listening Exercise 2  Critique Listening Exercise 1 & 2  Hitting your mark exercises	<b>Hand out Co-Star Scene</b>
	T 5/21	Review thread/repetition  Co-Star Scene intro— <b>What do I do when I prep a script?</b>  Film Co-Star scenes while practicing hitting your mark, focusing on thread and givens  Critique Co-Star Scenes  Activity Work, The Reality of Doing  <b>Choose Open Scene— and open scene script prep work time</b>	<b>CO-STAR SCENE MEMORIZED</b>  Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Big Differences” article in Blackboard</li> </ul>
	W 5/22	Continue Activity Work  Introduce Action Work and Review Given Circumstance work, 3-line scene	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘The Voice’</li> <li>• ‘Overlap’</li> <li>• ‘Continuity’</li> </ul>

		Vocal level and Continuity exercise with 3-line scene  Critique 3-line scene  Open Scene Work Time in Class	article in Blackboard
	TH 5/23	Discuss Shooting a scene and Shots, Shot breakdown video  Discuss Crew Positions  Shooting a scene—the master, 2 shot, and close up  SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 1 SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 2 SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 3	<b>Open Scene Memorized and Ready to Shoot</b>  <b>TURN in SCRIPT Prep for Open Scene when Shooting</b>  Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Glossary of Shots’ Article in Blackboard</li> </ul>
	F 5/24	SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 4 SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 5 SHOOT OPEN SCENE GROUP 6  Critique Open Scenes	<b>Work Response 1 Due by 5/26 at 5:00PM</b>  <b>Hand Out Scene 1</b>
Week 2	T 5/28	Personalizing the Text and Digging Deep, Activity Work with Meaning  AUDITION SCENE 1 Discuss Reading and basic process of getting a role, preparing it, rehearsing it, and performing it for TV and Film. Q&A  Critique Audition	
	W 5/29	Facial Awareness and Playing the Camera Exercises  Table Work Group 1-3  3-line Scene 2, with facial awareness exercises  Table Work 4-6	<b>Reading:</b> Facial Awareness, Playing the Camera, Loving the Camera article

	TH 5/30	Shoot Scene 1 Group 1 Shoot Scene 1 Group 2 Shoot Scene 1 Group 3	
	F 5/31	Shoot Scene 1 Group 4 Shoot Scene 1 Group 5 Shoot Scene 1 Group 6	
	S 6/1	Final Critique and Wrap Up. Option to Edit Final Scene	<b>WORK RESPONSE 2 DUE BY 11:00PM on 6/1.</b>