

ACTING FOR THE CAMERA
THEA 3314
WEDNESDAY 12:00-2:50pm
Spring 2021

Professor: Kim McKean
Email: kamckean@utep.edu

Office: Worrell 114
Zoom Virtual Office Hours: T/Th 11:00am-12:00pm
(or 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

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 Cardullo, Gottesman, and Woods

Film and Television Acting by Ian Bernard

The Secrets of Screen Acting by Patrick Tucker

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required text books for our class, but there will be a number of articles to be read throughout the semester. All will be available on our class Blackboard page.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Complete assigned reading on time. Take notes and be prepared to discuss the text.
- Attend a performance of *Love Song* or *Lysistrata* and submit a paragraph response on Blackboard.
- Complete quiz on readings.
- 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.
- **Prepare** and memorize all assigned texts.
- Perform two on-camera scenes that demonstrates a thorough application of Learning Goals.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the nature of this course, attendance at every session is mandatory. You will be allowed **TWO** “unexcused” absences during the semester. **Each absence after TWO lowers your overall grade a whole letter grade. For example, a ‘B’ becomes a ‘C.’ Three tardies are equivalent to one absence.** 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.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

1. UTEP Show Attendance and Paragraph Responses	5%
2. Blackboard Assignments.....	10%
3. Work Responses.....	10%
4. Quiz.....	15%
5. Class Exercises.....	20%
6. Scene 1 Performance	20%
7. Scene 2, Final Performance	25%

EVALUATION CRITERIA BREAKDOWN

1. UTEP SHOW ATTENDANCE

You must see one production produced by the Department of Theatre and Dance this spring, either *Love Song* or *Lysistrata*. A paragraph response critiquing/observing an acting choice from one of the actors—and relating this to course concepts—is required. This response is due by the Monday after the show closes.

A NOTE ON SUBJECT MATTER FOR REQUIRED SHOWS

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations.

2. BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS

You will be submitting three assignments on Blackboard over the course of the semester. These will be described in detail as the semester progresses.

3. WORK RESPONSES

You will be submitting two work responses over the course of the semester. Work responses can include questions/discoveries/responses to reading, feedback from class critiques, or something significant you noticed when watching an on-camera performance. Work responses should be at least 1-page, typed and double spaced.

4. QUIZ

There will be 1 quiz on blackboard from the assigned reading/viewing. See course calendar for due date.

5. CLASS EXERCISES

Exercises include all work done in class. You will be evaluated on participation, preparation, work ethic, professional standards, and ability to apply course concepts.

6. 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.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Due to current conditions in El Paso and to the nature of this course being physically active, this course will begin as a Synchronous Zoom course. I will continue to monitor the situation, and if conditions improve and I feel that we can safely do our work in person, we will move to a hybrid in-person model for class.

If we move to a hybrid model, you must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at screening.utep.edu. If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu. For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website (screening.utep.edu) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. Students are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present. You must wear a face covering over your nose and mouth at all times in this class. If you choose not to wear a face covering, you may not enter the classroom. If you remove your face covering, you will be asked to put it on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear a face covering and follow preventive COVID-19 guidelines will be dismissed from the class and will be subject to disciplinary action according to Section 1.2.3 *Health and Safety* and Section 1.2.2.5 *Disruptions* in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. (*classes with on-campus meetings*). Please note that if COVID-19 conditions deteriorate in the City of El Paso, all course and lab activities may be transitioned to remote delivery.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered via the Internet through Zoom. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser. You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Course Communication:

- **Office Hours:** We will not be able to meet on campus, but I will have virtual office house. My office hours will be held on Tuesday and Thursdays from 11:00am-12:00pm. Please email me in advance to setup an appointment if you would like to use my office hours.
- You can login to office hours the same way you do for our zoom class: <https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/83673849345?pwd=bTJzeTRlbFl0SnJXWF15QXZ2bit1UT09>
- **Email:** UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt.

ZOOM SESSIONS

This class requires that you participate in scheduled Zoom sessions. Students are expected to participate in these sessions with a webcam and microphone. Students should not record the sessions and post them to any sites outside of Blackboard, unless asked to by instructor.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/83673849345?pwd=bTJzeTRlbFl0SnJXWF15QXZ2bit1UT09>

Meeting ID: 836 7384 9345

Passcode: 5n369f75

CLASSROOM ATTIRE

Please wear clothing that allows you to participate in class fully, with ease and without inhibition.

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.*

INCLUSIVE LEARNING AND ANTI-RACIST CLASSROOM

In this class, we disavow all racism, xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, classism, ableism, and hate speech or actions that attempt to silence, threaten, and degrade others. We will work together to develop a learning community that is inclusive and respectful for all people.

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.

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. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student or possessing unauthorized materials during a test. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action.

CLASS RECORDINGS

The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other

extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP's acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. I will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants. **You may not share recordings outside of this course. Our class will only be recorded if/when a student lets me know in advance that they need to miss a class.**

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work will be given *only* in the case of a *documented* emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

COVID-19 Accommodations

Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus and our class has moved to in-person, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations. Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with

individuals who are considered high risk may contact [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

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	W 1/20	Syllabus On-Camera Acting Clips. What makes us want to watch? Object Share and Film in Breakout Room Observe Object Share, Introduce Personal Meaning	
2	W 1/27	What is the difference between stage and screen?	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Big Differences, The Inner

		<p>Watch listening examples. Listening Exercise adding ‘Inner Monologue’ and ‘sitting/standing’ into shot.</p> <p>Critique Listening</p>	<p>World, and Listening” articles in Blackboard</p>
3	W 2/3	<p>Introduce subtext and hitting your mark with “co-star” scenes</p> <p>Film Co-Star scenes in Breakout Rooms</p> <p>Critique Co-Star Scenes</p> <p>Assign Open Scene 1 Partners</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subtext “article” and “hitting your mark” article in Blackboard <p>Co-Star Scene 1 Memorized</p>
4	W 2/10	<p>5Ws, GOTE, Beats, as IF-- What do I do when I prep a film script?</p> <p>GOTE and 5Ws for Open Scene</p> <p>Work subtext and inner monologue in open scene.</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Closer</i> Play scene and <i>Closer</i> Screenplay scene <p>Open Scene 1 Memorized</p>
5	W 2/17	<p>Vocal level and Overlap exercise with Open Scene 1</p> <p>Critique Vocal Level and Overlap work</p> <p>Continuity Work</p> <p>Assign Film/TV Scene 1</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘The Voice’ article in blackboard • ‘Overlap’ article in Blackboard • ‘Continuity’ article in Blackboard

			<p>Blackboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit GOTE, 5Ws, As If Beats on Blackboard DUE BY 11am WED 2/17
6	W 2/24	<p>Discuss Shooting a scene and Shots, Shot breakdown video</p> <p>Discuss Crew Positions</p> <p>Shooting a scene—the master, 2 shot, and close up</p> <p>Work time with partner for Film/TV Scene 1</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Glossary of Shots’ Articles in Blackboard <p>Blackboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Response 1 DUE BY 11am WED 2/24
7	W 3/3	<p>‘Shoot’ Group 1 Group 2 Group 3</p>	<p>Blackboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit GOTE 5Ws, Beat and Actions on Blackboard for DUE BY 11am WED 3/3
8	W 3/10	<p>‘Shoot’ Group 4 Group 5 Group 6</p>	<p>Midterm QUIZ 1 on BLACKBOARD DUE BY Monday, 3/08 at 11am (On all reading thus far)</p>
9	W 3/17	No Class, Spring Break	
10	W 3/24	SCREEN & CRITIQUE Film/TV Scene	
11	W 3/31	Facial Awareness and Playing the Camera	Reading:

		Exercises Assign Scene 2	“Playing the Camera” articles
12	W 4/7	Facial Awareness Exercise with Phone Call Work	Reading: Phone Call article Short phone call memorized.
13	W 4/14	Commercial Work	
14	W 4/21	AUDITION SCENE 2 Discuss Reading and basic process of getting a role, preparing it, rehearsing it, and performing it for TV and Film. Q&A Review “Film Acting” Technique	Be prepared to Audition for SCENE 2 Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Getting The Job’ article in blackboard
15	W 4/28	‘Shoot’ Group 1 Group 2 Group 3	Blackboard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit GOTE 5Ws, Beats, Actions, As If, and Subtext on Blackboard for DUE BY 11am WED 4/28
16	W 5/5	‘Shoot’ Group 4 Group 5 Group 6	
FINAL	Friday, May 14 th 1:00-3:30PM	Critique Final Scenes	Blackboard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Response 2 DUE BY 11am WED 5/14

