

Bergen Community College
Division of Business, Arts & Social Sciences
Department of Visual and Performing Arts

Course Syllabus

Acting for the Camera THR 212

Date of Most Recent Syllabus Revision: October 5, 2020
Course Typically Offered: Fall X Spring ___ Every Semester ___ Other ___
Syllabus last reviewed by: BCC General Education Committee _____
Curriculum Committee _____

Basic Information About Course and Instructor

Semester and Year: _____
Course and Sections Number: _____
Meeting Times and Location(s): _____

Instructor
Office Location: _____
Phone: _____
Departmental Secretary: _____
Office Hours: _____
Email Address: _____

Course Description:

This course permits students to apply the skills introduced in Basic Acting Techniques to acting for the camera. Through exercises and scene study, students will expand their range of emotional, intellectual, physical, and vocal expressiveness for the camera. Students will act in on-camera exercises, television scenes, and film scenes.

3 Credit Hours: (2 lect. 2 lab)
Prerequisite – THR 110 Basic Acting Techniques

Student Learning Outcomes: As a result of meeting the requirements of this course:

1. The student will be able to demonstrate an ability to perform in different types of media and genres including:
 - Film
 - Episodic Television
 - Sitcoms
 - Daytime Dramas
 - Commercials
 - Industrials
2. The student will be able to describe the technical needs to use and the uniqueness between acting on stage and acting for the camera.
3. The student will be able to create a “believable” performance by applying tone and subtleties of acting for the camera.
4. The student will be able to demonstrate an ability to use creative tools and expressiveness for the camera.
5. The student will be able to adeptly apply technical language used in the media.

Means of Assessment: In support of the above-mentioned goals, each student will be assessed as follows:

1. In-class peer evaluations and performances of the film/television shooting process.
2. In-class discussions and examinations as well as practical performance.
3. In-class performances and peer evaluations of basic film acting for scene work, monologues, and audition screen tests.
4. Examinations, written assignments, in-class performances, and evaluations of the technical skills necessary to succeed as a film actor through examinations, written assignments, in-class performance, evaluations.
5. Reading assignments and in-class discussions of the business of acting.

Course Content:

Acting for the Camera: Students will learn camera acting techniques by being in front of the camera as much as possible. Students will “crew” scenes their classmates are acting. The class will include extensive scene memorizations, class discussions, performance critique writing, and journal self-assessment writing.

Technological and Information Literacy:

Technological literacy is a key component to this course. Students will be required to research scripts, advancements in technology, and social media through video and reference material on-line and thru the BCC library theatre, art and design databases.

Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials:

- Bernard, Ian. *Film and Television Acting: From Stage to Screen*. 2nd ed. Focal Press, ISBN: 0240803019
- Tucker, Patrick. *Secrets of Screen Acting*. 2nd ed. Routledge. ISBN: 0878301771

Recommended Reading:

- Shurtleff, Michael. *Audition*. Walker & Co. ISMN: 9780802772404
- Caine, Michael. *Acting in Film*. Applause Theatre Book Publishers ISBN: 9781557832771
- Cohen, Robert. *Acting Professionally: Raw Facts About Careers in Acting*. 7th ed., McGraw-Hill Publishing, ISBN 9780230217249
- Barr, Tony. *Acting for the Camera*. Harper & Row Publishers, ISBN: 0-6-055009-0
- Callan, K. *New York Agent Book*. Sweden Press, ISBN: 1-878355-13-9

Assignments:

- This is an introduction to acting for the camera course.
- Students will participate in improvisational exercises to increase their spontaneity and improve their acting skills.
- Technical film acting exercises will be performed and observed by students.
- Students will audition for roles in front of the class and discuss their audition ‘tapes’ with the class and instructor.
- Monologues and short scenes from different genres will be performed and filmed by the students. This will require memorization of multiple scripts over the course of the semester.
- Students will work from in front and behind the camera to more fully understand the difference in shot selection as well as what is necessary to convey believability in their performance for the camera.
- A text covering acting for commercials, sitcoms, daytime dramas, industrials, episodic and film is used. There will be discussions on each chapter throughout the semester.
- Examples of each genre will occasionally be viewed during class time.
- There will be weekly lectures and discussions.

In addition to these assignments, readings will be assigned from the text. Additional articles and study materials may be handed out in class.

Attendance:

- Attendance is mandatory: You cannot learn if you are not here and your fellow students are deprived of your insights and contributions.
- The Visual & Performing Arts Department policy regarding attendance will be followed.
- The first two (2) unexcused absences will be accepted, after that you will lower your final grade by one letter grade for each additional absence.
- Three tardies of more than 10 minutes each will equal one absence.

- All handouts and assignments will be given in class; if you miss a class, you are responsible for getting all handouts and assignments.
- All course paperwork will also be posted on Moodle.

BCC Attendance Policy: All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

Evaluation and Grading:

Grading Policy:

The final grade in this course will be determined by a student's overall mastery of the subject matter as evidenced on exams, projects, presentations, homework assignments, consistent attendance and quality of class participation..

Attendance/Participation:	15%
Memorization, Preparation & Performance:	50%
On-Camera Monologue –	10%
TV Scene –	15 %
Movie Scene –	15%
Audition –	10%
Critiques:	15%
Mid-term Assessment Paper:	10%
Final Self-Assessment Journal:	10%

Criteria for Evaluation:

This is a skill building course where the grades will be based on the following criteria:

- Attendance/Participation Your level of participation, enthusiasm, energy, and willingness to work in this class is of the utmost importance. Watching others shoot a scene can be tremendously beneficial to your own acting.
- Memorization, Preparation & Performance – Each time you shoot an exercise, monologue, or scene in class, you need to come in with the material fully Off-Book.
 - All memorization, character choices, and business choices must be done before class.
 - It is your responsibility to physically and vocally warm-up before each class. (Relaxation is very important for camera acting).
 - Shut OFF cell phones.
 - No food is permitted in class or near any of the video equipment.
- Critiques – Your ability to self-critique as well as offer constructive criticism is required.
- Mid-term Paper – You will write a three page paper on your self-assessment for the first half of the semester; collecting and evaluating exercises, scenes and monologues.
- Self-Assessment Papers – You will articulate your on-camera strengths and weaknesses; reflect on your process when approaching on-camera scene work; track our acting development and the differences between stage acting and camera acting. The journal should have a collection of ALL your scene, monologue and critiques.

90-100 = A 86-89 = B+ 80-85 = B 76-79 = C+ 70-75 = C 65-69 = D 0- 64 = F

E = Unofficial Withdrawal W = Official Withdrawal INC = Incomplete

- Disruptive behavior: Students will be warned to cease any disruptive behavior, failure to do so will result in a request to leave the classroom.
- Use of electronic devices in the classroom: Please turn off your cell phones. This is a courtesy to your fellow students and to the faculty. This includes TEXTING!

Academic Support Services:

Bergen Community College provides many valuable services for students.

The Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Assistance Center (CLAC)

- Tutoring Center (L-125)
- Writing Center (L-125)
- Math & Science Walk-In Center (L-131)
- English Language Resources Center (C-212)
- Testing & Tutoring at the Meadowlands Campus (LYN-202)

The twice award-winning Cerullo Learning Assistance Center offers the following free tutorial services to currently enrolled Bergen Community College students.

- One-on-One Appointments
- Drop-in Assistance
- Writing Walk-In
- Reading Comprehension
- Supplemental Instruction (SI)
- In-Class/In-Lab Tutoring
- Study Groups
- Permanent Appointments
- Online Tutoring: *Smarthinking*
- Workshops
- Intercultural Conversation Partners (ICP)

Along with helping you with specific subjects, the CLAC also can help you improve your academic self-confidence!

You can visit the CLAC in **Room L-125 in the Pitkin Education Center**, or call **201-879-7489**.

The BCC Library:

Bergen Community College has an excellent library with outstanding staff. In addition to the physical materials (books, magazines, videos, etc.) available in the library students with a current ID number can access a broad range of electronic databases by going to the library website at:

<http://www.bergen.edu/library>

Accommodation for Students with Special Needs:

In compliance with the BCC policy and equal access laws, faculty are available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with special needs. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, so arrangements can be made through the BCC Office of Specialized Services.

Course Outline:

Note to Students: This Course Outline and Calendar are tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

Acting for the Camera Course Outline:

DAY	DATE	Topic	Assignments	Objective(s) Met
Week 1				
		INTRODUCTION: Course overview and purpose Personal Histories. Discussion of Film/Television Acting vs. Acting for the stage. Review of Acting Fundamentals	Read: Ch. 1 - "Acting for the Camera" Mid-Term Paper & Final Journal	
Week 2				
		SPONTANEITY AND IMPROVISATION – Improv Exercises, relaxation and breathing fundamentals. Discuss Ch. 1	Read: Ch. 2 "Acting for the Camera"	
Week 3				
		AUDITIONS Slating and Cold Readings Discussion of the Film/Television casting process; Agents, Managers & Casting Directors. Discuss Ch. 2 Acting exercises.		1, 2, 5
Week 4				
		TERMINOLOGY AND STUDIO JARGON Discussion of film/tv terminology. Tour of studio, booth, equipment. Acting exercises	Commercial copy	1, 2, 5
Week 5				
		COMMERCIALS	Read:	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

		Introduction/Viewing of Commercials. Shooting Commercials. Critique/Evaluations Playback	Ch. 3 – “Acting for the Camera”	
Week 6				
		COMMERCIALS (CON’T) Continue shooting and discussing Commercials. The Improv Audition. Cold readings. Discuss Ch. 3	Monologues	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Week 7				
		MIDTERM/MONOLOGUES Rehearse and shoot monologues Watch and critique monologues.	Industrial Copy Read: Ch. 4 – “Acting for the Camera”	2, 3, 4
Week 8				
		CORPORATE VIDEOS Acting Exercises for Corporate Video. Shoot Corporate Videos Critique/Evaluation Playback Cast Daytime Drama Scripts Discuss Ch. 4	Daytime Drama Copy – Scene work	1, 2, 3, 4
Week 9				
		DAYTIME DRAMA Shoot Daytime Drama Videos Critique/Evaluate playback Cast Sit Com Scenes Acting exercises.	Read: Ch. 5 – “Acting for the Camera” Sit Com Copy	1, 2, 3, 4
Week 10				
		SIT COMS Introduction to Sit Coms/Viewing Shoot Sit Com scenes Camera blocking Critique/Evaluate playback. Discuss Ch. 5		1, 2, 4
Week 11				
		SIT COMS (CON’T) Continue with shooting Sit Com scenes. Critique /Evaluate playback Acting exercises.	Read: Ch. 6 – “Acting for Camera.	1, 2, 4
Week 12				
		FILM View selected scenes from films. Discuss scenes.	Film Monologue Read	1, 2, 3, 4

		Audition technique for Film. Discuss Ch. 6	Ch. 7 – “Acting for the Camera”	
Week 13				
		FILM (CON’T) Shoot Film Monologues Critique/Evaluate Playback Cast Film Scenes Discuss Ch. 7	Film scenes Read: Ch. 8 – “Acting for the Camera”	1, 2, 3, 4
Week 14				
		FINAL SCENES Camera block scenes Rehearse, run Evaluate/Critique playback Discuss Ch. 8		1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Week 15				
		FILM SCENES Final filming. Viewing Films and Evaluates/Critiques Reflections		1, 2, 3, 4, 5