

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY  
THEA 4306 –ACTING FOR THE CAMERA**

FALL 2021 Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm Motion Capture Soundstage Office hours: By appointment only	Marjie Scott Associate Prof. of Comm. and Theatre Chair, Department of Fine Arts Phone: 432-837-8039 E-mail: <a href="mailto:mscott3@sulross.edu">mscott3@sulross.edu</a> Office: FAB 106
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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Acting for the camera requires the same listening and honesty as stage acting, but the camera picks up the tiny details that live theater audiences don't always see. As the saying goes, "The camera doesn't lie."

In this class, you will learn to create truthful and authentic performances in front of the camera. You will practice listening, character development, and making thoughtful choices that are dynamic and based on text.

THEA 1352 (Acting II) is a pre-requisite for this course. THEA 3317 (Improvisation), while not an official pre-requisite, is highly recommended.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** *The graduating student will demonstrate:*

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**SLO 1** Students will develop the ability to express themselves creatively through appropriate theatrical performance and/or design.

**SLO 2** The student will develop the ability to employ analytical and critical thinking skills through directing, playwriting, theatre history and script analysis, so that they will work creatively and concretely with actors and technicians in mounting laboratory theatrical productions.

**SLO 3** The student will develop the ability to demonstrate and apply standard industry requirements to all aspects of technical production.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of this class, students will:

- Perform scripted scenes truthfully and spontaneously in front of a camera.
- Demonstrate bold, clear choices in scene work based on thoughtful analysis of beats, actions, and character.
- Demonstrate professional audition techniques and etiquette.
- Demonstrate knowledge of current industry standards regarding headshots, résumés, the casting process, and representation.

- Demonstrate knowledge of television/film production terminology and appropriate etiquette while on set.

### **MARKETABLE SKILLS:**

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- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong analytical skills.
- Strong teamwork and collaboration skills.
- Marketable Skills Dissemination Strategy:
- Through a combination of coursework and laboratory work, i.e., theatrical productions, our students will gain the opportunity to explore and develop all three program marketable skills. Specifically, students will learn how to analyze scripts, and communicate their findings via written assignments. They will also be encouraged to support their analysis orally through classroom discussion and their Comprehensive Oral Exam at the end of the senior year. Theatrical productions will provide the opportunity for actors and technicians to problem solve and work collaboratively developing strong teamwork skills

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

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- 1) Full participation in class exercises, shoots, viewings, and discussions.
- 2) Two auditions
- 3) Two (2) single-camera scenes. You must be off-book. Scenes will be provided.
- 4) You are responsible for all assigned reading and viewing. Be prepared to discuss readings and viewings in class.
- 5) Final Scene– Your final scene will be a 2-person, single-cam scene.
- 6) Professional resumé
- 7) Observation and feedback of your classmates' work is required

### **Required Reading:**

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1. Barr, Tony. *Acting for the Camera* (Revised edition, 1997). Harper Paperbacks.
2. Loughlin, Warner. *The Warner Loughlin Technique* (2018). Howland Tilley Press.

### **Recommended Reading:**

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1. Cohen, Robert & Calleri, James. *Acting Professionally* (8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2017). Palgrave.

### **Expectations and Resources:**

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#### **Attendance**

Punctuality is essential. Arriving *early* is arriving on time. In this class, two late arrivals (arriving after class has begun) will be counted as **one absence**.

As an actor, you should never miss acting class. This is your career and if you want to succeed in this business you must treat it like a business. Attendance in this class is **mandatory**. No more than *two* (2) unexcused absences are allowed. Each subsequent unexcused absence will lower your course grade by one whole letter grade. If you must miss a class for a school-related activity, the absence must be discussed (and arrangements made regarding coursework) **prior to the absence**. If you must miss a class for an emergency or serious illness, please contact me **by email or phone as soon as possible**. Six (6) unexcused absences will result in you being dropped from the course with a grade of “F” as per Sul Ross State University policy. **NOTE: Theatre majors must earn a minimum grade of “C” in all major courses for these courses to be counted toward completion of the degree.**

Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University 2020 Course Catalogue:

*“Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term.*

*A student will be dropped for excessive absences in remedial courses after nine (9) absences.*

*One absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered an authorized absence.”*

### **Personal Well-Being and Health**

Your body, face, voice, and mind are your instruments as an actor. Take care of yourself. Eat well, get 8 hours of sleep every night, and exercise at least 30 minutes a day. Consult with your doctor before starting a diet or exercise plan. I encourage you to take whatever preventative measures you need to stay healthy. Take care of your mental health.

### **Electronic Devices**

Turn off and put away all cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices upon entering class. If your cell phone goes off during class, you may be asked to leave, and you will be marked absent. We will be filming in this class and cell phone and watch pings and rings are disruptive. Get used to turning your phone off while on set.

### **Libraries**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine.

Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

**Academic Integrity:**

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

**Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

**Diversity Statement**

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could make an impact on the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student. If you feel like your performance in the class is being disrupted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

**COURSE EVALUATION**

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Assignments and Exercises	25%
2) Audition	10%
3) Single Cam Scenes	30% (15% each)
4) Final Scene (final)	25%
5) Résumé	10%

**Grading Criteria:**

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. Work is of better-than-expected quality, but not quite professional. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Less than proficient with material. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.

### **SRSU Disability Services**

**ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)** Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Rebecca Greathouse Wren, LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email [rebecca.wren@sulross.edu](mailto:rebecca.wren@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

### **CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines**

*Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

Day	Date	Topics and Assignments
Tues	Aug 24	Review syllabus and course expectations. Discuss the craft. Discuss health and well-being.
Thurs	Aug 26	In-class exercise. Pick a physical activity. Bring in the necessary props to do the activity (i.e. sewing a button on a shirt, writing a letter, making a sandwich). Keep it simple. Keep it honest. Make it something you can do for real. Create using your imagination a backstory, including a reason <u>why</u> you're doing what you're doing that is believable to you. Plan to do this activity for 1 minute in front of the class. You are you in this exercise, not a character. <b>READING DUE: <u>Acting for the Camera</u> Chapters 1-5 and <u>The Warner Loughlin Technique</u>, Pages 1-18 (The Journey &amp; The Givens)</b>
Tues	Aug 31	Listening. Listening. Listening. <b>Classroom exercise with partners. VIEWING DUE: Michael Caine's <i>Acting in Film</i> (on Blackboard) (Assign partners for first scenes. Scripts provided by instructor).</b>
Thurs	Sep 2	Rehearse 1 <sup>st</sup> scenes in class

**READING DUE: Acting for the Camera Chapters 6-11 and  
READING DUE: The Warner Loughlin Technique pages 19-54  
(The Hows of Behavior)**

- Tues Sep 7 Rehearse 1<sup>st</sup> scenes in class (continued)
- Thurs Sep 9 Shoot first scene
- Tues Sep 14 Shoot first scene
- Thurs Sep 16 Shoot first scene
- Tues Sep 21 View first scenes (**Assign 2<sup>nd</sup> single-cam scenes/partners**)
- Thurs Sep 23 View first scenes (continued)
- Tues Sep 28 Who is my character? How to read and analyze the text for clues.  
**READING DUE: Acting for the Camera, Chapters 11-14, and The Warner Loughlin Technique pages 55-89 (The Whys That Lead to Core Knowledge)**
- Thurs Sep 30 Classroom character exercise  
**READING DUE: The Warner Loughlin Technique pages 91-104 (The Base Human Emotion)**
- Tues Oct 5 Classroom character exercise (continued)  
**READING DUE: Acting for the Camera Chapter 15-27**
- Thurs Oct 7 Shoot second scenes  
**READING DUE: The Warner Loughlin Technique pages 105-194**
- Tues Oct 12 Shoot second scenes
- Thurs Oct 14 Shoot second scenes
- Tues Oct 19 View second scenes
- Thurs Oct 21 View second scenes. **Audition etiquette prep.**
- Tues Oct 26 Audition Exercise in class
- Thurs Oct 28 View auditions
- Tues Nov 2 View auditions (continued). **Resumé review.**
- Thurs Nov 4 Rehearse final scene #1

Tues	Nov 9	Rehearse final scene #2
Thurs	Nov 11	Rehearse final scene #3
Tues	Nov 16	Shoot final scene #1
Thurs	Nov 18	Shoot final scene #2
Tues	Nov 23	Shoot final scene #3
Thurs	Nov 25	<b>No class – Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
Tues	Nov 30	Last Class Meeting – <b>Resumés due in class.</b>
Thurs	Dec 2	<b>DEAD DAY – No Class.</b>
<b>FINAL</b>		<b>Wednesday, December 8th 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. View final scenes. Bring edited version of resumé to class.</b>