

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

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| FALL 2023<br>Tuesdays/Thursdays<br>2:00 pm – 3:50 pm<br>Motion Capture Soundstage<br>Office hours: T/TH 11:00 am – 12:00 pm<br>All other times by appointment | Marjorie (Marjie) Scott, M.F.A.<br>Assoc. Professor of Comm. and Theatre<br>Chair, Department of VAPA<br>Phone: 432-837-8039<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:mscott3@sulross.edu">mscott3@sulross.edu</a><br>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 necessarily see.

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, dynamic acting choices inspired by 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. They will work creatively and concretely with actors and technicians in mounting laboratory theatrical productions.

**SLO 3** The student will demonstrate and apply standard industry practices to all aspects of production.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of this class, students will:

- Demonstrate beginner-level mastery of playing scripted scenes honestly and spontaneously in front of a camera.
- Demonstrate bold and clear choices in scene work using analysis of beats, action, and character.
- Demonstrate proper audition and set etiquette.
- Demonstrate knowledge of current industry standards regarding headshots, résumés, the casting process, and agent/manager representation.

## **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 audition exercises.
- 3) Three 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 two or three-person, single-cam scene.
- 6) Professional resumé

## **Required Reading:**

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1. Stone, Peter Allen. *Acting for the Camera: Back to One. Back to One*, (1<sup>st</sup> edition), 2021, Routledge.
2. Bialy, Sharon. *How to Audition on Camera* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), 2016, Tilbury House.

## **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.**

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

Your body, face, voice, and mind are your instruments as an actor. Take care of yourself. Eat a balanced and nutritious diet, exercise regularly, drink plenty of water, reduce stress, and get enough sleep. Consult with your doctor before starting a diet or exercise plan or taking any supplements. I encourage you to take whatever preventative measures you need to stay healthy. Your mental health is an essential part of your overall 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 based on 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.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

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Assignments are valued as follows:

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| 1) Assignments and Exercises | 20% |
| 2) Audition Exercise         | 15% |
| 3) Single Cam Scenes (2)     | 30% |
| 4) Final Scene               | 20% |
| 5) Résumé                    | 15% |

### **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**

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SRSU Disability Services. 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. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203, or email [mschwartze@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartze@sulross.edu) Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall – room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

## CLASS CALENDAR

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

| Day          | Date          | Topics and Assignments   |
|--------------|---------------|--|
| Tues         | Aug 29        | Review syllabus and course expectations. Listening exercise.   |
| Thurs        | Aug 31        | In-class exercise. Pick a physical activity. Bring in the necessary props to do the activity (examples include sewing a button on a shirt, writing a letter, making a sandwich, folding laundry, ironing, mixing a drink, polishing a pair of shoes, packing a suitcase). Keep it simple. Keep it honest. Make it something you can do for real. Create a simple reason <u>why</u> you're doing what you're doing. Make it SIMPLE and believable to you. Plan to do this activity for 2 minutes in front of the class. You are <u>you</u> in this exercise, not a character. |
| Tues         | Sep 5         | Listening. Listening. Listening. <b>Classroom exercise with partners. VIEWING DUE:</b> Michael Caine's <i>Acting in Film</i> (on Blackboard) <b>(Assign partners for first scenes. Scripts provided by instructor).</b>  |
| Thurs        | Sep 7         | Rehearse 1 <sup>st</sup> scenes in class.  |
| Tues         | Sep 12        | Rehearse 1 <sup>st</sup> scenes in class.  |
| Thurs        | Sep 14        | Shoot first scene  |
| Tues         | Sep 19        | Shoot first scene  |
| Thurs        | Sep 21        | Shoot first scene  |
| Tues         | Sep 26        | View first scenes  |
| Thurs        | Sep 28        | View first scenes ( <b>Assign 2<sup>nd</sup> scenes/partners</b> )   |
| Tues         | Oct 3         | Who is my character? How to read and analyze the text for clues.   |
| Thurs        | Oct 5         | Classroom character exercise. <b>Assign audition exercise (taped).</b>   |
| Tues         | Oct 10        | Classroom character exercise (continued).  |
| Thurs        | Oct 12        | Shoot 2 <sup>nd</sup> scene.   |
| Tues         | Oct 17        | Shoot 2 <sup>nd</sup> scene.   |
| <b>Thurs</b> | <b>Oct 19</b> | <b>NO CLASS MEETING – Submit your taped audition by 10:00 pm</b>   |

Tues Oct 24 Shoot 2<sup>nd</sup> scene.

Thurs Oct 26 View second scenes.

Tues Oct 31 View second scenes (continued). Discuss auditions.

Thurs Nov 2 Discuss audition etiquette. Audition Exercise in class. **Discuss resumé.**

Tues Nov 7 View auditions. **More on resumé.**

Thurs Nov 9 Rehearse final scene #1

Tues Nov 14 Rehearse final scene #2

Thurs Nov 16 Rehearse final scene #3

Tues Nov 21 Shoot final scene #1

Thurs Nov 23 **NO CLASS MEETING – Thanksgiving Holiday**

Tues Nov 28 Shoot final scene #2

Thurs Nov 30 Shoot final scene #3

Tues Dec 5 Last class meeting - **Submit final version of resumé.**

Thurs Dec 7 **DEAD DAY – No class meeting.**

**FINAL Monday, December 11th 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. View final scenes.**