

University of South Dakota
Theatre 401, Studio: Acting for Camera
3 credits

Time/Place: TTH 9:30-10:45 a.m.; Fine Arts 183 (Arena); Spring 2007;
Instructor: Priscilla Hagen, Fine Arts 184F; 677-5734; phagen@usd.edu
Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 MWF, 1:30-2:30 TTR and by appointment.

Department of Theatre Vision Statement

The Department of Theatre prepares the student for a career in the theatre and encourages personal and creative growth. It does this by providing a comprehensive humanistic education, supplemented by intensive craft training in which classroom study and practical experience are of equal and complementary value. The Department promotes excellence in education, research, and service; explores new questions, techniques, and practices in the theatre; and inspires students to become life-long learners who contribute to their respective discipline and profession while enhancing the cultural life of their community.

A. Course Objectives:

1. To introduce the student to the techniques, skills, and vocabulary required to act for the camera;
2. To explore camera acting technique utilizing scripts from commercials, corporate videos, feature films, and daytime television (soap opera);
3. To provide opportunities for the student to practice the craft of acting for the camera.

B. Instructional Methods:

Craft based exercises, performance, discussion, written analysis papers.

C. Required Text:

Shepard, John W. Auditioning and Acting for the Camera. Hanover, NH : Smith and Kraus, 2004.

D. Evaluation based upon:

1. Class work: this includes commitment, attitude, participation in class discussion, preparation and mastery of the exercises in the text re: memorization, the reaction shot/close-up, listening, blocking/ physical business techniques, and television commercial, industrial video reading techniques.....40%
2. Midterm Exam: the performance of a film monologue with emotional content utilizing both the medium and extreme close-up shot (20%), and monologue analysis (5%),25%
3. Scene Presentation: performance of a scene from daytime television utilizing “vis a vis” and “dosey do” blocking techniques, the close-up, daytime acting values (20%), and role analysis (5%).....25%
4. Final: Exam : performance of two spokesperson commercials.....10%

E. Attendance:

This course requires active participation from everyone on a daily basis. The material that is taught is sequential and others in the class will depend upon your daily presence. Thus, your timely attendance is vital. To facilitate your growth as an actor, attendance is mandatory. If you should miss more than two class periods, your final grade in the course will be lowered. Exceptions to this policy may occur due to family emergency, serious illness, or professional work.

F. Make-up Policy:

In the event of a family emergency or serious illness the student should, if able, contact the instructor prior to the performance so that the student's scene partner can be informed. The student will be expected to make up the performance during the next scheduled class period.

G. Freedom in Learning:

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should contact the dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

H. Course Outline: This outline is designed to be a flexible one and may change depending on the needs of the class.

- Jan 18: Review syllabus, simple on camera experience, read chp. 1 in text;
23: ACTF Conference in Ames, IA;
25: Work on listening, Extreme Close up, the "Reaction Shot";
30: Continue work on listening, the "Reaction Shot";

- Feb 1: Con't work on the reaction shot, extreme close-up, read pp 104-121;
6: Work on blocking and business, application exercises;
8: Explore character, work on application exercises;
13: Work on character application exercise, midterm monologue choice due;
15: Midterm exam preview;
20: Midterm exam preview;
22: Midterm exam preview;
27: Midterm exam, assign Chp 5;

- Mar 1: Introduction to daytime television acting values and techniques;
6: Spring Break;
8: Spring Break;
13: aytime television technique application exercises;
15: Daytime technique, begin working on scenes;

20: Daytime technique, begin working on scenes;
22: In class rehearsal of scenes;
27: In class rehearsal of scenes;
29: In class rehearsal of scenes;

Apr 3: Performance of Daytime Television Scene;
5: Performance of Daytime Television Scene;
10: Introduction to commercial acting, read chp 2 in text;
12: Commercial techniques con't, application exercises;
17: Commercial techniques;
19: Commercial techniques;
24: Industrial video, cd rom techniques, read chp 3 in text;
26: Industrial video, cd rom techniques;

May 1-3: Work on final exam.