“Film and television acting is a tough business, tough to get into and tough to survive in, but not impossible.”
—Robert Benedetti

Instructor: Alison Frost
Office Hours: Tuesday/1:00-2:00, Wednesday/11:00-1:00, Thursday/1-3 or by appointment. Make an appointment by signing up for time slots on office door.
Office Location: BH 3.36
Office Phone: 361.825.2500
Instructors’ E-mail: alison.frost@tamucc.edu
Recommended Readings: Audition, Michael Shurtleff ISBN: 0-553-27295-0
I’ll Be in My Trailer: The Creative Wars Between Directors and Actors, John Badham & Craig Moddero ISBN: 1-932907-14-9
Film scripts: www.simplyscripts.com, www.script-o-rama.com, among others...

Required Purchases: Mini-DV tape or SD Disk (You may share the cost of this with your film team. They’re sold at CVS.)
Required Membership: www.turnitin.com (Information to follow.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This class emphasizes the practice of various acting styles for television, video, and film. The student will receive practical experience in commercial styles, public service announcements, television and video style acting, and film scene study. Through exercises and scene study, the student will expand their range of emotional, intellectual, physical, and vocal expressiveness for the camera. Students will act in numerous on-camera exercises, television, and film scenes.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** The student will:
- Demonstrate appropriate on-camera acting techniques.
- Analyze the differences between stage and film acting.
- Process and produce single-camera acting techniques for acting in film and dramatic television.
- Develop skills for a master shot, medium shot, and close-up shot.
- Develop skills for on-camera blocking, business, subtext, and reactions.
- Evaluate on-camera processes of successful professional film actors/directors.

**COURSE GUIDELINES:**
1. Bring your binder/journal/handouts/textbook with pencil to every class meeting.
2. Be respectful. Bodies, voices, and talent are different and will vary from person to person.
3. Due dates will be strictly observed. Assignments are due even if you are absent. If you know you will miss a class, it is your responsibility to turn your work in early. There will be no make-up work unless you have a verified medical emergency.
4. Students must keep duplicate copies of all work submitted.
5. It is the responsibility of each student to let the instructor know of any injury or illness that could in any way impact him/her in classes or in performance. Doctor’s documentation may be asked for verification.
6. Your participation in all discussion and exercises is necessary to the success of the class and to your personal growth.
7. Technology: This is a participation-oriented class. There will be no need for laptops or cell phones. Please leave them in a stored/off position for the duration of the semester.
8. Web and Blackboard Access. Students must have a TAMUCC e-mail account, a preferred email account, and access to the Web as well as TAMUCC’s Blackboard. Students should check their email and Blackboard daily.
GRADED EXERCISES:

A. **Reading assignments and quizzes (30%.)** You will be required to read handouts, book chapters, scripts and articles. In addition to participation in class discussions, you will also take periodic quizzes to determine your comprehension of the material. You are well advised to read ahead, highlight the book, etc…as the midterm will cover all 14 chapters.

B. **In-class Filmed Projects: ** PSA, Coffee scenes, Commercial, etc… **(10%)**

C. **Mid-term Exam: **(10%)

D. **Partner Presentations on Actor Process: **(10%) Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss this partner presentation. All group presentations must be approved by instructor. Do not be afraid to ask for help with this project. Your instructor is here to help you with this.

E. **Final Film Project: **(30%) You will work on 2 Final film projects: one as an actor and the other as behind-the-camera support crew. Each project is worth 15%--thus a total of 30%. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these film projects. All projects must be approved by instructor. Do not be afraid to ask for help with this project. Your instructor is here to help you with this. All students must turn in 2 Final Film Project Essays that includes answers to the following in depth:

- Please comment about your specific contributions to this project—as actor / production crew member. What tasks did you do that aided in its completion? How did you approach the acting with your film? What were your most important contributions? In what ways (if any) might you have contributed more?
- Please comment about each group members' contributions to this project. Be sure that you discuss each group member individually, by name. What tasks did each group member do that aided in the projects’ completion? What were their most important contributions? In what ways (if any) might each member have contributed more?
- What did you learn about film acting and successful film making from this project?
- What did you enjoy most from working on this project?

**THESE FINAL FILM PROJECT ESSAYS MUST BE PRINTED AND SUBMITTED ON THE DAY THAT YOUR FILM(S) ARE PRESENTED.**

F. **Final Written Assignment: **(10%) Your final essay will be a close reading/viewing research and analysis paper on one of the following AFI Top 9 Films—paying particular attention to actor process and how the mise-en-scene contributes to the storytelling: CITIZEN KANE (#1), CASABLANCA (#2), THE GODFATHER (#3), GONE WITH THE WIND (#4), LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (#5), THE GRADUATE (#7), ON THE WATERFRONT (#8), SCHINDLER’S LIST (#9) and SINGIN’ IN THE RAIN (#10). Your observations and writing will be based on your readings from the Tucker textbook and the on-camera acting techniques that we will learn during the semester. Even if you have already seen the film, see it again—with fresh, newly-informed analytical eyes. All papers MUST be submitted online through www.turnitin.com. All papers are to be submitted in MLA format, double-spaced, Calibri or Arial 12 point font, and all quotations should be accurately and exhaustively cited according to the MLA handbook. YOU MAY NOT USE WIKIPEDIA AS A SOURCE! YOU MUST USE AT LEAST 2 BOOKS AS A SOURCE.

All papers and presentations will be graded on originality, demonstration of analysis, and attention to detail. ‘A’ grades are reserved for those presentations/papers that demonstrate forethought, research, creativity, follow-through, and teamwork.

Extra Credit Each student is allowed to accumulate extra credit totaling no more than five percent of your grade. Five percentage points of extra credit will be awarded to students who complete a mini-research project on an Emmy or Academy Award-winning director focusing on their process of working with actors. These projects can be fun—including what they’re working on now, what they’ve said on “Inside the Actor’s Studio” or “Charlie Rose”, etc… Projects should be no less than 750 words and should follow MLA format. Each project must be approved by the instructor in advance.

**GRADING SCALE:** The final course grade will be based on the student’s earned percentage of total points available.

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D
- 0-59% = F

2 | P a g e  A C T I N G  F O R  T H E  C A M E R A  S P R I N G  2 0 1 4
ATTENDANCE
Attendance in this course is critical to your success. For purposes of grading, no distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences (excluding absences for recognized religious holidays, death in your family, doctor’s excuse with documentation, and approved university functions.) Your absence affects the progress of the entire class. Each absence in excess of two will lower your average a full letter grade. More than three absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Exceptions under extreme circumstances may be made at the discretion of the instructor. You must consult with the instructor immediately to make such an exception viable.

Being on time: means being in the classroom ready to work and discuss the coursework.

Lateness: Two late arrivals constitute one absence. If you arrive more than ten minutes late you will be considered absent. Time management skills are one of the most significant tools of the profession. The practice and development of these skills is expected.

Missed Assignments: No make-up work for quizzes or missed in-class activities. Assignments are due on the assigned deadlines and will not be accepted late. If you know you will be absent, turn the assignment in early. An unexcused absence on the date of an assignment will result in a zero.

COURSE CONTENT
Some of the material in this course will include language and topics that some people might find objectionable. If some of this material is so offensive to you that it negatively affects your ability to learn, you are encouraged to take another course to satisfy this requirement. If you have any concerns about this issue, please see the instructor during the add/drop period.

SAFE ZONES AND PERSONAL SPACE
It may be necessary for your instructor or fellow classmates to make physical contact with you to determine breathing, muscle tension, alignment, or perhaps in the form of interactive role play. If this ever makes you feel uncomfortable, please let the instructor know immediately.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism or cheating will receive an “F” for the assignment, and, if the situation warrants it, for the entire course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101.

PERSONAL COUNSELING: SHORT-TERM COUNSELING SERVICES
University Counseling Center staff provide short-term individual counseling and psychiatric services to help students address personal problems that interfere with meeting the demands of college life and their academic success. Counselors can work with you to aide you in increasing self-awareness, improving self-confidence and acceptance, enhancing your ability to cope during changes and challenges, improving your decision making and communication abilities, and teaching you strategies to replace hurtful or self-defeating thoughts, feelings, and actions with healthy, adaptive, alternatives. Services are available to TAMUCC students who are currently enrolled and whose needs match our services. Walk-ins are welcome 8am to 5pm. Driftwood Bldg. #107 361-825-2703

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Arts and Humanities requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.
### TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

*(Subject to change at instructor’s discretion and depending upon the progress of the students in the class.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>In class</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>Stage vs. Screen TV vs. film Acting</td>
<td>Discussion of syllabus and text</td>
<td>Discussion Chapters 1, 2 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>Stage vs. Screen TV vs. film Acting</td>
<td>Discussion continued Chapters 1, 2 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Quiz: Chapters 1, 2 &amp; 8, Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>The Frame, The Camera, Film jobs, Vocabulary</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Quiz: Chapters 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>The Frame, The Camera, Film jobs, Vocabulary</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Film in class: PSA FILM: 30-second Public Service Announcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Film in class: PSA FILM &amp; VIEW 30-second Public Service Announcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>Valentine’s Day: Love Scenes</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Travis &amp; Kayla—scene prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>Reactions, Business/Continuity, Sound, Vocal</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Quiz: Chapters 5, 6, Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>Coffee Scenes / Business</td>
<td>Assign / Rehearse coffee scenes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>Coffee Scenes / KC ACTF</td>
<td>Rehearse / film coffee scenes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>Coffee Scenes / KC ACTF</td>
<td>Rehearse / film coffee scenes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>View and discuss coffee scenes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3-Min Film Project</td>
<td>GROUPS 1/4 &amp; 2/5: 3:30</td>
<td>Groups meet and plan.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>GROUPS 3/6 &amp; 4/1: 3:55</td>
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<td>GROUPS 5/2 &amp; 6/3: 4:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3-Min Film Project</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>Acting in Commercials</td>
<td>Discuss/rehearse</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>Acting in Commercials</td>
<td>Film commercials</td>
<td>DUE: Commercial prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Shooting and Editing</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Quiz: Chapters 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM: Chapters 1-14 &amp; Discussions</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Film Actors &amp;/or Directors: Their Process</td>
<td>Group Presentations: 7 minutes total each group</td>
<td>DUE: Process presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3-Minute Film Prep</td>
<td>Dry-run, filming prep, nuts and bolts</td>
<td>DUE: costume list, prop list, shot list, script, location approval, addendum of scene requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.6-12</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 1 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.7-4.13 Filming may not overlap with Groups 2/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.6-12</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 2 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.7-4.13 Filming may not overlap with Groups 1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.13-19</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 3 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.14-4.20 Filming may not overlap with Groups 4/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.13-19</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 4 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.14-4.20 Filming may not overlap with Groups 4/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.20-26</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 5 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.21-4.27 Filming may not overlap with Groups 6/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4.20-26</td>
<td>3-Minute Film On-set</td>
<td>Group 6 acts 3-minute scene</td>
<td>2 hours, 30 minutes maximum Filming must be completed from 4.21-4.27 Filming may not overlap with Groups 2/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td></td>
<td>GROUPS 1/4 &amp; 2/5 PRESENT / DISCUSS</td>
<td>DUE: 3-Minute Film, presentation, evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>GROUPS 3/6 &amp; 4/1 PRESENT / DISCUSS</td>
<td>DUE: 3-Minute Film, presentation, evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>GROUPS 5/2 &amp; 6/3 PRESENT / DISCUSS</td>
<td>DUE: 3-Minute Film, presentation, evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>FINAL EXAM: 1:45-4:15 p.m.</td>
<td>PAPER DUE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN Acting For THE CAMERA

THEA/COMM 4371

☑ Attend class
☑ Keep up with your syllabus—and work ahead. (There’s always a copy on Blackboard.)
☑ Read the assigned material in advance—and not 30 minutes before class.
☑ Use highlighters and make notes in the margins of everything you read, cut, rehearse...
☑ Contribute to class discussions.
☑ Rehearse your scenes aloud—never silently.
☑ Get someone to watch you—even if it’s you. (Use a smartphone and film yourself.)
☑ Watch film/television this semester with an analytical eye, turn down the volume, listen instead of watch, explore what the actors/directors are communicating through eye movement, camera angles, prop placement, composition, etc....
☑ Communicate with your groups / partners—exchange phone numbers, emails, and collaborate.
☑ Meet with your instructor during office hours if you need advice, assistance, etc... Alison.frost@tamucc.edu / Alison.frost@gmail.com / Mobile: 281.705.7606
I have read the entire syllabus for COMM 4371.001 ACTING FOR THE CAMERA, Spring 2014. I have read and understand the policies and requirements of the course particularly in regard to attendance, readings, exams, cheating, and assignments. I understand the fluidity of the syllabus and that all changes, updates and additions will be posted on Blackboard. I understand that any special provisions or accommodations must be presented in advance of any deadlines and that these accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Signature of Student                               Date

Student Name (PRINTED)  ___________________________________________

Student TAMUCC Email  ___________________________________________

Student Preferred Phone  ___________________________________________

This sheet must be returned to Alison Frost at the end of the first class day.