



**Division:** Humanities & Fine Arts  
**Course name:** Theater 278 Acting for Film and Television  
**Section:** 5126 / Semester Fall 2013

**Instructor Name:** Lee Grober

**School Website:** [www.wlac.edu](http://www.wlac.edu)

**Class Hours:** Monday

**Address:** 9000 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA 90230

6:45 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

**Office Hours:** Monday 5:45-6:45 p.m.

**Instructor E-mail:** [lgrober@wla.edu](mailto:lgrober@wla.edu)

HLRC 1115

**Phone:** (818) 609-8526

## Welcome

This semester, you will work on understanding the craft of acting for the camera. You will develop your acting technique as you master a vocabulary and basic skill set needed for on camera acting. Your involvement in performing and analyzing scene work in class will build critical thinking skills, an understanding of human emotions, and motivations as expressed through a variety of scripts. You will also learn and practice the fundamentals of working on a TV/film set including hitting marks, targeting, and physical positioning for the camera. The goal is for you to become a better actor, and develop a greater appreciation for the actor's craft by the end of this course. In addition, the skills you learn here will help you become more comfortable in expressing yourself in a variety of other social, work related, and public speaking situations. Your education is ultimately YOUR responsibility. YOU determine your level of success. Successful college students are self-motivated. Successful college students understand the importance of studying the material, coming to class prepared and practicing skills learned. YOU CAN DO IT and I'm here to help. 😊

## Course Description: Theater 278 (a CSU transferrable course)

The basic fundamentals of acting for the camera are explored. Demonstration, exercises and improvisations are used to practice the techniques. Scenes are practiced, taped and critiqued.

## Required Texts:

*Acting for the Camera*

Tony Barr

## Recommended Supplemental Texts:

*Audition*

By Michael Shurtleff

*Acting in Film*

By Michael Caine

## Student Learning Outcome for Theater 278

Students demonstrate the basic fundamentals of acting for the camera as opposed to acting for the stage.

## Student Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to . . .

- A. Evaluation of effective, compelling acting techniques
- B. Synthesize textual clues /information to produce professional performances
- C. Differentiate between acting requirements for theater and on-camera
- D. Experiment with improvisation exercises to explore a variety of forms of creative expression
- E. Explore technical demands of on camera acting craft (e.g. hitting marks, economizing performance , thought projection)
- F. Critique and evaluate (for effectiveness, emotional impact and improvement) student's own performances and those of classmates
- G. Explore and perform a variety of texts, including television, film and commercial scripts as well as blue screen/ CGI material
- H. Relate through written papers students' reflections on textbook material and experiences exploring the actors' craft through this course

## Institutional Learning Outcomes

**This course will also facilitate the following Institutional Learning Outcomes:**

- A. Critical Thinking: Evaluation of successful on-camera performances. Analyze positive and negative aspects of a scene and group discussion
- B. Communication: Create effective, compelling acting scenes in collaboration with classmates that are videotaped, reviewed and analyzed.
- C. Self-awareness/Interpersonal Skills: Apply self- awareness strategies as students review and critique their videotaped performances. Prepare scenes and participate in exercises and improvisations with a variety of students from diverse backgrounds.
- D. Technical Competence: Use competent technique in on camera performance. Distinguish between the demands of stage and film required of an actor, and utilize camera specific techniques.
- E. Cultural Diversity: Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them in the collaborative art form of acting.
- F. Ethics: Practice and demonstrate standards of personal and professional integrity, honesty and fairness; apply ethical principles in submission of all college work.
- G. Aesthetics: Use multiple approaches to produce creative, artistically satisfying acting performances.

## Course Requirements and assignment guidelines

### Scene work and exercises

This is a performance based class and a majority of your grade will be based on your participation in exercises and scenes that will be rehearsed, then provided instruction and feedback regarding on camera acting technique. Grade will be based on improvement, proficiency, and willingness to participate. Scenes will be regularly taped and played back to provide feedback. There will also be some lecture and demonstration.

### Reading Reflections and Character Studies

**Reading reflections** are to be one to two pages typed. For each of the two required reflections, you are to pick one or two chapters of the assigned reading that particularly resonate with you on your creative journey in this class. This is not meant to be a summary, but rather a reflection on what you are connecting with and hopefully, incorporating in your acting work in the class. You may also bring into your reflection any pertinent discoveries, realizations and breakthroughs that you have had on the craft of acting through this course.

**Character studies** may be handwritten on the paper I give you, and are a series of questions that you answer as you make choices about your character and create a history for them in your quest to produce complex characterizations. Grading rubrics will be attached to returned papers

### Late Assignments

Each student is allowed one late written assignment. It must be turned in by the next class meeting to receive credit and the grade will be reduced by one letter grade. **DO NOT** e-mail me your written assignments. They will not be accepted. Other late assignments will not be accepted.

## Grading

Assignment Category	# of Assign.	Points Per Assignment	Total Points	% of Total Grade
Class participation(exercises & scenes)	10	30	300	30%
Proficiency and improvement			400	40%
Character Studies	2	50	100	10%
Reading reflections	2	50	100	10%
Final	1	100	100	10%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>
900 - 1000 = <b>A</b>	800 - 899 = <b>B</b>	700 - 799 = <b>C</b>	600 - 699 = <b>D</b>	599 and below = <b>F</b>

## Class Policies

### Attendance

Because class discussions and scene work are an integral part of this course, attendance is mandatory. Up to 3 absences are allowed. After that, you could be dropped. Students are expected to attend every class meeting, to arrive on time and stay throughout the class period. **Excessive absenteeism will lower your grade, as well as walking in and out of class.** 3 tardies = 1 absence. Students may be dropped from class for excessive tardiness, or for failure to attend class the first day.

### **Walking In and Out of Class**

When you arrive to class, make sure you have used the restroom, had a chance to eat, checked your messages, etc. Walking in and out is rude and disruptive. If you need to leave early, or have some other problem, you need to notify me in advance.

### **Preparedness**

You are expected to arrive on time. You will come to each class session prepared having rehearsed scenes, made an attempt at memorization, and done required reading and writing assignments.

### **Cell Phones, iPods, etc.**

Turn them off and put them away when class begins! Although it may not seem possible, you can survive without talking and texting on your cell phone, or listening to your iPod. Talking and texting on cell phones not only distract you, but they are a distraction for me and your peers.

### **Contacting Me**

E-mail is the best and quickest way to contact me. You may also call me. Thanks to modern technology, my e-mail is linked to my phone. **If you have a problem, do not let it snowball. Contact me immediately.** Students are expected to ask questions and obtain help from instructor via email and/or during office hours.

## **College Policies:**

### **Academic Integrity (Plagiarism)**

In accordance with code 9803.28, **academic dishonesty is prohibited and will not be tolerated in this class.** Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following actions: cheating on an exam, plagiarism, working together on an assignment, paper or project when the instructor has specifically stated students should not do so, submitting the same term paper to more than one instructor, or allowing another individual to assume one's identity for the purpose of enhancing one's grade. Academic dishonesty of any type, such as cheating or knowingly furnishing false information, by a student provides grounds for disciplinary action by the instructor or college. In written work, no material may be copied from another without proper quotation marks, footnotes, or appropriate documentation.

## Student Conduct

According to code 9803.15, disruption of classes or college activities is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Refer to the catalog and the Standards of Student Conduct in the Schedule of Classes for more information.

## Recording Devices

State law in California prohibits the use of any electronic listening or recording device in a classroom without prior consent of the instructor and college administration. Any student who needs to use electronic aids must secure the consent of the instructor. If the instructor agrees to the request, a notice of consent must be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for approval (WLAC College Catalog)

## Campus Resources:

As stated earlier in this syllabus, **if you are having problems, don't let them snowball.** Come and talk with me and check out some of the campus resources available to you.

### Office of Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S)

Heldman Learning Resources Center (HLRC), Room 119 | (310) 287-4450.

West Los Angeles College recognizes and welcomes its responsibility to provide an equal educational opportunity to all disabled individuals. The Office of Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S) has been established to provide support services for all verified disabled students pursuing a college education. DSP&S students may qualify for: priority registration, registration assistance, special parking permits, sign language interpreters and assistive technology (WLAC College Catalog).

### Instructional Support (Tutoring) & Learning Skills Center

Heldman Learning Resources Center (HLRC) | (310) 287-4486

Improve your reading, language, vocabulary, spelling, math fundamentals and chemistry knowledge with convenient, self-paced computer-aided courses in the Learning Skills Center. Increase your knowledge and learning success: sign up for tutoring in various college subjects (WLAC College Catalog).

### Library Services

Heldman Learning Resources Center (HLRC) | (310) 287-4269 & (310) 287-4486

The WLAC Library provides instruction on how to use the online catalog, periodical and research databases. In addition to a large collection of books, periodicals and videos the WLAC Library has course textbooks which students may use while in the Library. Web access is available in LIRL as well as meeting rooms. The upper floors provide a beautiful view ideal for study (WLAC College Catalog).

NOTE: This syllabus and class schedule is subject to change if circumstances warrant it (e.g. student performance, etc.). **Expect revisions and divergences.**

Date	Course topics	Assignment (Due Next Class Meeting)
Mon. 8/26	Introductory lecture stressing “thought projection and the importance of <b>listening and reacting</b> ” in On Camera performance. Improv exercises. Hand out short two person scenes. Students rehearse on their own and then perform. Emphasis is on listening and reacting	
Mon. 9/9	Lecture on <b>intensity levels</b> . Improv intensity levels. Lecture on “ <b>beats, objectives and scoring the script</b> ,” with additional background information on the Stanislavski Method as relating to these techniques. Students do individual work establishing beats from new scenes that are distributed. Brief discussion of <b>cold readings</b> . Students rehearse with scene partners, then perform scenes for the class and are given feedback.  •	Read chapters 1-5 and page 297 Memorize scenes to be taped next class
Mon. 9/16	Discuss slating. Students are videotaped (last week’s scenes) Lecture on the “ <b>history of acting styles</b> ” and the evolution of stage acting into television and film acting. Taped student scenes are viewed and critiqued. Improvs if time permits.  •	Read Chapters 6-10
Mon. 9/23	Lecture and exercises on the importance of “ <b>creating a character</b> ” to add richness to a performance. Also, given physical circumstances are discussed. New scenes are handed out with new scene partners and rehearsed. Character Study Questionnaire is handed out.	Read Chapters 11-14 Complete Character Study 1 Memorize scenes for next week’s taping
Mon. 9/30	Character Study 1 is collected. Scenes from week four are rehearsed, videotaped, viewed, and critiqued.	Read Chapters 15-18

	<b>Course Topics</b>	<b>Assignment (Due next class meeting)</b>
Mon. 10/7	. Lecture on the <b>“audition process.”</b> Cold reading techniques and practice with multiple brief one or two line roles. Mock casting session (videotaped). Commercial scripts handed out for next week.	Read Chapters 19-22 Reading Reflection #1, memorize commercials
Mon. 10/14	Reading Reflection #1 is collected. Lecture on “commercials.” Commercial scenes are rehearsed and videotaped. Improv exercises as time permits	Read Chapters 23-27
Mon.. 10/21	New scenes are handed out and worked on	Memorize scenes to be taped next class
Mon. 10/28	Videotape and critique material from last week. Improvisation exercises	
Mon. 11/4	Students practice <b>hitting their marks.</b> New scenes and Character Study #2 are distributed.	Read chapters 28- 30. Complete Character Study #2 Memorize scenes to be taped next class
Mon. 11/18	Character Study #2 is collected. Lecture about the <b>“path to becoming a working actor”</b> with discussion of agents, casting directors, head shots and resumes. Videotape and critique prior week’s scenes.	Read Chapters 35-37 Reading Reflection #2
Mon. 11/25	Reading Reflection #2 is collected. Lecture on <b>“film and television sets”</b> incorporating job descriptions of various creative and technical support staff. Rehearse new scenes	Read Chapters 31-34 and memorize scenes for taping next week
Mon. 12/2	Improvisation exercises. Videotape and critique prior week’s scenes.	Memorize scenes for next week’s taping
Mon.. 12/2	Videotape previous week’s scenes and review them. . Review all course concepts in preparation for the final written test. Monologues or short scenes are distributed	Written final. Videotape final performance and critique
Mon. 5/27	<b>Memorial Day- No Class</b>	
Mon. 6/3	Written final. Videotape final performance and critique.	

Some faculty has used a “Student Acknowledgement” sheet such as the one below as a means to check students’ understanding of the material on the course syllabus. The sheet can be placed at the end of the syllabus and removed by students after they have signed the form. The sheet can also be given as a handout.

Another way to check understanding is to give a quiz on syllabus material at the beginning of the second class period

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### Student Acknowledgment

(Please return this sheet to the instructor)

“I \_\_\_\_\_, have completely read this syllabus and understand and agree to the course requirements.”

Please indicate below, any special needs or circumstances that may have some impact on your work in this class, and for which you may require special accommodations, including but not limited to physical or mental disabilities, inability to arrive in class on time or need to leave class early, observance of religious holidays, ect.

Special needs or circumstances:

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