



Acting for the Camera

PEIMS Code: N1170193
Abbreviation: ACT4CAM
Grade Level(s): 11–12
Award of Credit: 1.0

Approved Innovative Course

- Districts must have local board approval to implement innovative courses.
- In accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.27, school districts must provide instruction in all essential knowledge and skills identified in this innovative course.
- Innovative courses may only satisfy elective credit toward graduation requirements.
- Please refer to [TAC §74.13](#) for guidance on endorsements.

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to apply skills introduced in theatre classes to acting for the camera. Through the use of television, film, and commercial copy, students are introduced to basic on-camera technique and terminology. Students work one-on-one with the camera in exercises, television scenes, and film scenes, incorporating the skills developed in voice, movement, and acting classes into a variety of commercial situations.

By the end of the course, students will be comfortable with on-camera acting techniques, as well as on-camera blocking, business, subtext, and reactions. Through technique exercises, script analysis, and scene study, students will expand their range of emotional, intellectual, physical, and vocal expressiveness and be able to successfully prepare for on-camera auditioning.

Essential Knowledge and Skills:

- (a) General Requirements. Students shall receive one credit for the successful completion of this course. Recommended prerequisite: Theatre II or Musical Theatre II.
- (b) Introduction.
 - (1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.

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- (2) Four basic strands--foundations: inquiry and understanding; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Through the foundations: inquiry and understanding strand, students develop a perception of self, human relationships, and the world using elements of drama and conventions of theatre. Through the creative expression strand, students communicate in a dramatic form, engage in artistic thinking, build positive self-concepts, relate interpersonally, and integrate knowledge with other content areas in a relevant manner. Through the historical and cultural relevance strand, students increase their understanding of heritage and traditions in theatre and the diversity of world cultures as expressed in theatre. Through the critical evaluation and response strand, students engage in inquiry and dialogue, accept constructive criticism, revise personal views to promote creative and critical thinking, and develop the ability to appreciate and evaluate acting styles in various media.
 - (3) Through the use of television, film, commercial, web productions, and industrials, students will adapt acting techniques mastered in Theatre I and II classes by familiarizing, developing, and applying basic on-camera acting techniques and terminology to film material. Students will incorporate developed skills in voice, movement, and acting by demonstrating the differences between stage and film acting while developing skills with on-camera blocking, business, subtext, and reactions; cultivating creative tools and expressiveness for the camera; and preparing for on-camera auditioning.
 - (4) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (c) Knowledge and Skills.
- (1) Foundations: inquiry and understanding. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment using elements of drama and the conventions of film acting techniques. The student is expected to:
 - (A) apply on-camera acting preparation and warm-up techniques effectively;
 - (B) model proper on-camera physical and vocal techniques such as diction, inflection, and projection;
 - (C) identify and explain terminology associated with film industry or acting for the camera such as backlighting, cut, rolling, focus, follow shot, framing, master shot, montage, marking (such as hitting your mark), and voice over;
 - (D) analyze and evaluate dramatic structure and genre of various television, video, and film texts;
 - (E) distinguish among acting conventions and techniques of theatre versus film, television, commercials, web, and industrials;
 - (F) identify and describe the functions of various film equipment such as camera, light sources, boom microphone, video stabilizers, and gimbals; and
 - (G) develop and practice memorization and cold-reading skills.
 - (2) Creative Expression: performance. The student develops techniques and skills specific to screen acting. The student is expected to:

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- (A) modify acting conventions and performance to an on-camera acting environment and equipment, including specific shot sizes, picture composition, camera placement and focus, various microphones, and blocking, business, and reactions;
 - (B) model safe, appropriate on-camera acting communication techniques to allow for physical, vocal, and emotional expression;
 - (C) identify and apply professional film, commercial, and television audition skills;
 - (D) collaborate with the ensemble and analyze its effect on film production;
 - (E) analyze and interpret characters from various genres and styles, describing physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions;
 - (F) interpret scripted sides of various styles to portray believable characters; and
 - (G) create individually or devise collaboratively imaginative sides, scenarios, and characters.
- (3) Creative performance: production. The student applies on-camera production concepts and skills. The student is expected to:
- (A) apply terminology, procedures, and protocol for working on television and film sets;
 - (B) develop and practice safe and effective on-camera acting skills;
 - (C) read and analyze cultural, social, and political aspects of a script to determine technical elements and their effect on human emotions;
 - (D) analyze and evaluate films, television shows, commercials, web productions, or industrials as a basis for technical discussions, considering themes, settings, times, literary and filming styles, genres, or characters;
 - (E) identify the roles and responsibilities of film crew members such as producer, director, screenwriter, production designer, cinematographer, actor, line producer, key grip, and gaffer; and
 - (F) perform the role of actor demonstrating responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving.
- (4) Historical and cultural relevance. The student relates on-camera acting styles to history, society, and culture. The student is expected to:
- (A) explain the history and evolution of the film and television industries, including analyzing current trends and predicting future practices;
 - (B) describe how changing technology is impacting the film and television industries;
 - (C) evaluate historical and cultural influences on film production;
 - (D) analyze ways in which film, television, commercials, web productions, and industrials influence daily life, including societal values and behaviors;
 - (E) research camera and production styles and approaches around the world; and

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- (F) research film actors from various time periods and cultures and identify the actors' influence on the film and television industry and society.
- (5) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and evaluates on-camera acting and types of film production. The student is expected to:
 - (A) defend on-camera acting as an art form;
 - (B) evaluate self and others as a creative being;
 - (C) compare and contrast the elements of acting for the camera methods including film, television, commercial, web productions, and industrials;
 - (D) apply evaluation feedback by making adjustments to personal on-camera acting work; and
 - (E) offer and receive constructive criticism of on-camera performances of self and others.
- (6) Career readiness. The student demonstrates professional standards/employability skills as required by the film acting industry. The student is expected to:
 - (A) research opportunities in training, education, and certifications for employment;
 - (B) research career and avocational opportunities in the film industry;
 - (C) evaluate the applicability of on-camera acting skills and experiences to higher education and careers outside the film industry; and
 - (D) create a resume and personal acting reel demo suitable for professional use.

Recommended Resources and Materials:

Sudol, John. Acting Face to Face: The Actors Guide to Understanding. www.actingfacetoface.com, 2013.

Dhanraj, Balaji. The Complexity of Film Acting. International Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Science. October 2017.

Barr, Tony, and Eric Stephan. Kline. Acting for the Camera. HarperCollins, 1997.

Benedetti, Robert L. ACTION!: Acting for Film and Television. Allyn and Bacon, 2001.

Cardullo, Bert, et al. Playing to the Camera: Film Actors Discuss Their Craft. Yale University Press, 1998.

Haase, Cathy, and Ian McKellen. Acting for Film. Allworth Press, an Imprint of Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., 2018.

Lemack, Brad. The New Business of Acting: How to Build a Career in a Changing Landscape. Ingenuity Press USA, 2018.

Caine, Michael. Acting in Film: An Actors Take on Movie Making. Revised Expanded Edition. Applause Theatre Book Publishers, 1997.

Morris Andréa, and Paul Ekman. The Science of on-Camera Acting. Becoming Media

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Production, 2014.

Shepard, John Warren. Auditioning and Acting for the Camera: Proven Techniques for Auditioning and Performing in Film, Episodic TV, Sitcoms, Soap Operas, Commercials, and Industrials. Smith and Kraus, 2004.

Tucker, Patrick. "Secrets of Screen Acting." New York: Routledge, 2015.

Recommended Course Activities:

- Record sides or scene work and review for mastery of on-camera techniques.
- Write a screenplay from script meant for the stage.
- Adjust performance sides or scene work for specific shot sizes.
- Experiment filming a screenplay out of sequence while maintaining the integrity of the script.
- Explore physical and vocal awareness exercises to apply to on-camera acting recordings.
- Mock auditions with commercial, movie, and sitcom sides.
- Research and create what all is needed to set up a great camera shot for an individual's recording.

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

- Scene, sides, sitcom, and commercial work studies
- Taking direction on set
- Mock auditions/cold reads for the film actor
- Visit/experience working in a film studio
- Self-assessment (Ex: <https://nohoartsdistrict.com/industry-all-art/actors-advice/item/4922-actor-evaluation-checklist>)
- Create an actor reel: a compilation of a student's (best) acting work for the camera that shows range and gives a sense of acting abilities and on-camera presence

Teacher qualifications:

An assignment for this course is allowed with one of the following certificates.

- All-Level Speech/Drama.
- All-Level Speech Communications/Theatre Arts (Prekindergarten-Grade 12).
- All-Level Theatre Arts (Prekindergarten-Grade 12).
- Grades 6-12 or Grades 9-12--Theatre Arts.
- Junior High School (Grades 9-10 only) or High School--Drama.
- Junior High School (Grades 9-10 only) or High School--Speech and Drama.
- Secondary Theatre Arts (Grades 6-12).
- Theatre: Early Childhood-Grade 12.

Additional information: