



Course Information

Course Title: On Camera Acting and The Biz of Showbiz
Course Number: THET328K-WB31
Term: *Summer 2021*
Credits: 3
Course Dates: June 1 - June 17
Course Times: Online

Professor: Shanara Gabrielle
Pronouns: she/her/any
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Office Hours: as scheduled by instructor
Classroom: ELMS/online

Course Description

Discover techniques for on-camera acting and build business skills for your acting career. Acting skills introduced will include film, tv, commercial, and industrial acting with a particular focus in applying your theatre or public speaking techniques to the on-camera medium. Introduction to: self-tapes, audition practices, and the process of “booking it.” Creating your personal business will include building the basic tools needed, such as: headshots and resumes, business websites, social media marketing, professional relationship tracking, and understanding industry standards.

Course Objectives

- To develop basic skills for on camera acting and auditioning.
- To demonstrate a knowledge of the business tools necessary to build an acting career.
- To create a personal business plan for your acting career as a basis for continued growth.
- To apply theatre, performance, and public speaking skills to the on-camera medium.
- To demonstrate an understanding of industry standards and vocabulary.

Required Resources

- Course Website: elms.umd.edu
 - THET328K-WB31: <https://umd.instructure.com/courses/1304973>
- Recording device for sound and video, Laptop or access to a computer
- [playbill.com](https://www.playbill.com), [backstage.com](https://www.backstage.com), [marketing4actors.com](https://www.marketing4actors.com)
- Various readings and recordings as assigned by instructor

Recommended Resources

- Professional Headshot
- Ring Light, USB microphone
- <https://www.scriptreaderpro.com/best-screenplays-to-read/>
- Books
 - The Science and Art of Acting for the Camera, by John Howard Swain
 - Acting for the Camera, by Tony Barr
 - Acting Professionally: Raw Facts about Careers in Acting, R. Cohen & J. Talleri
 - Professional Actors Handbook, Julio Augustin & Kathleen Potts
 - The Actor’s Business Plan, Jane Drake Brody
 - The Actors’ Life: A Survival Guide, Jenna Fischer
 - The Creative Habit, Twyla Tharp

Course Structure and Instructional Methods

Class will consist of group discussions, lectures, written work, quizzes, and practicum in the form of recorded on camera scene and audition work and performance. Class time may be used for individual or group scene/audition preparation as well. The online nature of this class will push you to take an active role in the learning process. You will do this by daily personal engagement, collaborating with other students and the instructor on a regular basis, participating in live sessions, and outside individual and collaborative work. This course has 6 live-sessions via Zoom that are mandatory. Those sessions will include lecture and discussion as well as scene work, coaching, and feedback. There are 6 additional intensive course engagements which will include: readings, written work, watching recorded resources materials, rehearsing alone and with a partner, researching performance projects, exploring resources, and more as assigned by instructor.

Tips for Success in an Online Course

- a. **Participate.** Discussions and group work are a critical part of the course. You can learn a great deal from discussing ideas and perspectives with your peers and professor. Participation can also help you articulate your thoughts and develop critical thinking skills.
- b. **Manage your time.** Make time for your online learning and participation in discussions each week. Give yourself plenty of time to complete assignments including extra time to handle any technology related problems.
- c. **Login regularly.** Log in to ELMS-Canvas several times a week to view announcements, discussion posts and replies to your posts. You may need to log in multiple times a day when group submissions are due.
- d. **Do not fall behind.** This class moves at a quick pace and each week builds on the previous. It will be hard to keep up with the course content if you fall behind in the pre-work or post-work.
- e. **Use ELMS-Canvas notification settings.** Canvas ELMS-Canvas can ensure you receive timely notifications in your email or via text. Be sure to enable announcements to be sent instantly or daily.
- f. **Ask for help if needed.** If you need help with ELMS-Canvas or other technology, IT Support. If you are struggling with a course concept, reach out to me, and your classmates, for support.

Course-Specific Policies

Requirements, expectations, policies:

- Active participation in a class activities , assignments, discussions - both in person and online, lectures, readings, coachings, and synchronous sessions.
- Satisfactory and punctual completion of all work *as assigned by instructor*.
- Demonstrated rehearsal time on all assigned performance elements.
- No cell phones, texting, or social media during class or rehearsals.
- Professionalism, Decorum, Content: The studio classroom is a laboratory where you should feel able to fully commit to a wide range of physical, emotional, and psychological acting choices. You will be encouraged to take risks and asked to explore outside of your comfort zone. This work is vital to your development as an actor and discomfort is a natural bi-product of this kind of work. The studio will be treated as a working and exploratory space where students are expected to create a professional and safe environment for taking risks and pushing themselves. Unprofessional or unsafe conduct will not be tolerated. Decorum in the classroom and during out-of-class rehearsals is expected as it strongly impacts the quality of instruction for you and your partners. You are expected to show respect for yourself, your colleagues, and the art and craft of music and theatre. You are also expected to respect the spaces in which we work by preparing the space for work and clearing it after you are finished working. Part of learning the acting process is also learning how to act professionally.

Communication about this course:

Faculty and advisors use email to convey important information, and students are responsible for keeping their email address up to date, and must ensure that forwarding to another address functions properly. Failure to check email, errors in forwarding, and returned email are the responsibility of the student, and do not constitute an excuse for missing announcements or deadlines. ELMS: I will send announcements via ELMS messaging. You must make sure that your email & announcement notifications (including changes in assignments and/or due dates) are enabled in ELMS so you do not miss any messages. You are responsible for checking your email and Canvas/ELMS inbox with regular frequency.

Outline of Modules and Schedule Overview

Because of the online nature of this class and the combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning, the schedule of learning will be formatted into 3 basic modules. You can expect that each module coincides with 1 week's worth of work, but there may be some flexibility depending on class progression and the timing of synchronous sessions.

Module 1:

- Welcome, syllabus, expectations, goals
- "You-ness" exercise
- Synchronous Discussion: What is good acting? Which skills cross-over from theatre to on-camera?
- ELMS Discussion: favorite on camera acting moment
- Readings: Headshots and Resumes
- Viewings: Slate How-to
- Acting Work: Record Slates
- Biz Work: Headshots/Resumes
- Lecture: Slates and Headshot/Resume Feedback
- Viewings: Lighting How-To
- Synchronous coachings: Slates
- Synchronous discussion: type, recording and lighting set-up, reflection
- Lecture: MOS guidelines and assignment
- DUE IN MODULE 1:
 - You-ness Worksheet
 - Slate recording
 - Lighting Set-up photo/recording
 - Headshot Resume

Module 2:

- Recorded Lecture: "The Biz Tools: Websites, Actors Access, and business sites"
- Synchronous Coaching: MOS
- Readings: Vocab
- ELMS Discussion: Vocab
- Readings: Website Must-Do's
- Lecture/Viewings: Commercials and Industrials
- Acting Work: Record Commercial/Industrial
- Biz Work: Website Scaffold or Actors Access
- Viewings: Marketing-4-Actors Social Media
- Synchronous coachings: Commercial/Industrial
- Synchronous discussion: social media, reflection
- DUE IN MODULE 2:
 - MOS recording
 - Website Scaffold or Actors Access
 - Commercial/Industrial recording
 - Social Media for Biz

Module 3:

- Readings: Local Resources
- ELMS Discussion: Local Resources
- Viewings: Self Tape how-to
- ELMS Discussion: Self Tape how-to
- Lecture: Scene Prep
- Viewings: Commercials and Industrials
- Elms Discussion: Classmate Viewings

- Lecture: Business Plan of YOU
- Acting Work: Rehearse and record final scenes
- Biz Work: Business Plan Outline for the Business of YOU
- Viewings/Readings: Actors Business Plan
- Synchronous coachings: Scenes
- Synchronous discussion: scene showings, next steps, reflection
- DUE IN MODULE 3:
 - Business of You Plan
 - Final scene/self-tape recording

Grading Structure

Assesment:

- Overall evaluation will be based on the student's effectiveness in meeting the course goals and requirements.
- Attendance is required at the 6 mandatory synchronous sessions. More than 1 absence will effect a full letter-grade penalty on the student's final grade for the course. An additional letter-grade penalty will occur for every absence thereafter. Two late-to-class attendances will count as one absence
- Late projects and/or assignments are not indicative of a serious acting student. Nor do they show the discipline required for student's professional development. Late assignments, projects, or performances may not be accepted and, if accepted, will receive no grade higher than 75%.
- No extra credit work is scheduled. If such work does become available, the opportunity will be presented to all students.
- All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades, or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet and discuss.

Grading Criteria:

This course will consist of 10 equally weighted assignments which include:

- "You-ness" worksheet
- Slate
- Lighting Set Up
- Headshot/Resume
- MOS
- Website Scaffold or Actors Access
- Comercial/Industrial
- Social Media for Biz
- Final Business Plan Outline
- Final Self Tape Scene

*if additional graded material is assigned, students will be given ample notice.

Final Grade Cutoffs									
+	100.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%	+	
A	95.00%	B	84.00%	C	74.00%	D	64.00%	F	<60.0%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%	-	

****This syllabus and tentative schedule are subject to change.** Students will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.

Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Resources & Accommodations

Names/Pronouns and Self-Identifications:

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering inclusive and equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more. Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Communication with Peers:

With a diversity of perspectives and experience, we may find ourselves in disagreement and/or debate with one another. As such, it is important that we agree to conduct ourselves in a professional manner and that we work together to foster and preserve a virtual classroom environment in which we can respectfully discuss and deliberate controversial questions.

I encourage you to confidently exercise your right to free speech—bearing in mind, of course, that you will be expected to craft and defend arguments that support your position. Keep in mind, that free speech has its limit and this course is NOT the space for hate speech, harassment, and derogatory language. I will make every reasonable attempt to create an atmosphere in which each student feels comfortable voicing their argument without fear of being personally attacked, mocked, demeaned, or devalued.

Any behavior (including harassment, sexual harassment, and racially and/or culturally derogatory language) that threatens this atmosphere will not be tolerated. Please alert me immediately if you feel threatened, dismissed, or silenced at any point during our semester together and/or if your engagement in discussion has been in some way hindered by the learning environment.

Accessibility and Disability Services

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The [Accessibility & Disability Service \(ADS\)](#) provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at adsfrontdesk@umd.edu. Information about [sharing your accommodations with instructors](#), [note taking assistance](#) and more is available from the [Counseling Center](#).

Student Resources and Services

Taking personal responsibility for your own learning means acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. I hope you will come talk to me so that I can help you find the right approach to success in this course, and I encourage you to visit [UMD's Student Academic Support Services website](#) to learn more about the wide range of campus resources available to you. In particular, everyone can use some help sharpen their communication skills (and improving their grade) by visiting [UMD's Writing Center](#) and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center. You should also know there are a wide range of resources to support you with whatever you might need ([UMD's Student Resources and Services website](#) may help). If you feel it would be helpful to have someone to talk to, visit [UMD's Counseling Center](#) or [one of the many other mental health resources on campus](#).

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit [UMD's Division of Student Affairs website](#) for information about resources the campus offers you and let me know if I can help in any way.

Technology Policy

Please refrain from using cellphones, laptops, and other electronic devices during class sessions unless we have designated such use as part of a class exercise.

Netiquette Policy

Netiquette is the social code of online classes. Students share a responsibility for the course's learning environment. Creating a cohesive online learning community requires learners to support and assist each other. To craft an open and interactive online learning environment, communication has to be conducted in a professional and courteous manner at all times, guided by common sense, collegiality and basic rules of etiquette.

Participation

- Given the interactive style of this class, attendance will be crucial to note-taking and thus your performance in this class. Attendance is particularly important also because class discussion will be a critical component for your learning.
- Each student is expected to make substantive contributions to the learning experience, and attendance is expected for every session.
- Students with a legitimate reason to miss a live session should communicate in advance with the instructor, except in the case of an emergency.
- Students who miss a live session are responsible for learning what they miss from that session.
- Additionally, students must complete all readings and assignments in a timely manner in order to fully participate in class.

Course Evaluation

Please submit a course evaluation through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. Campus will notify you when CourseEvalUM is open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses. Please go directly to the [Course Eval UM website](#) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing through Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Copyright Notice

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ON-CAMERA ACTING AND THE BIZ OF SHOWBIZ

MODULE 1

Session 1:

Welcome, Syllabus, expectations, goals
"You-ness" typing exercise
Discussion: What is good acting?

Session 2:

Readings: Headshots and Resumes
Viewings: Slate How-to
Acting Work: Record Slates
Biz work: Headshots/Resumes

Session 3:

Due: Slate #1
Due: Headshots/Resumes
Recorded Lecture: Slates & HS/Resumes
Viewings: Lighting How-to

Session 4:

Coaching: Slates
Due: Lighting Set-up
Discussion: typing, recording, reflection
Lecture: MOS guidelines and assignment

DUE:

You-ness worksheet
Slate
Headshot/Resume
Lighting Set up

ON-CAMERA ACTING AND THE BIZ OF SHOWBIZ

MODULE 2

Session 1:

Lecture: "The Biz Tools"

Readings: The Biz Vocab

Discussion: Which tools? What new words?

Due: MOS recordings

Session 2:

Coachings: MOS recordings

Readings: Website Must-have's

Lecture: Commercials and Industrials

Biz Work: Actor's Access/Website Scaffold

Session 3:

Due: Website Scaffold or Actor's Access

Acting Work: Record Commercial/Industrial

Viewings: Marketing-4-Actors Social Media

Session 4:

Due: Commercial/Industrial recording

Coaching: Commercials/Industrials

Due: Social Media for Biz

Discussion: social media, websites, reflection

Assigned: final scenes

DUE:

MOS Recording

Website Scaffold or Actor's Access

Commercial/Industrial Recording

Social Media for Biz