THFM-3110-001 (6 credit hours)

SCREEN ACTING

2013/14 Tu/Th 2:30-5:15 pm Room 0T10 Professor Blake Taylor Office: 4T04 Phone: 786-9953 E-Mail: <u>b.taylor@uwinnipeg.ca</u> Office Hours: Tu/Th 1:30-2:15 by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The intent of this course is to continue development of the student's overall acting skills with a focus on the demands of screen acting. Students will be assigned readings and will work through a series of exercises and scenes. Preparation outside of class time will be extensive.

Film acting as an art may be approached as a refined version of stage acting but film, unlike the stage, is an intimate medium where the slightest change of mood, emotion, or psychological action is felt and magnified. Emphasis will be placed on the unique rhythm of the process of film acting and on the self reliance and ability to take direction immediately that film acting requires. Using video to record and examine students' work, the course covers the basic principles of the art of acting as they apply to the specific requirements of film: script analysis, role preparation, inner and outer technique, rehearsal and blocking. In addition, students are introduced to the vocabulary, protocol, and culture of the film environment. Employment-related topics such as résumés, auditioning, and cold reading are also covered.

Preparatory work outside of class and rehearsal will be conducted in accordance with the discipline and responsibility appropriate to the profession of the actor. Students should be prepared to allot adequate hours **<u>outside</u>** of class time on a weekly basis for reading, rehearsal of exercises and scenes, and journal writing. Students are responsible to find their own scripts for major scene presentations and to submit their choices to the instructor for approval well in advance of the shoot date.

The student must assume responsibility for his/her own advancement in insight and technique, and must keep a journal to make that assumption more coherent and effective. A schedule of reading requirements is provided below. The journal will consist of analytical reflections on the readings, the class lectures and exercises and the rehearsals and presentations of both yourself and classmates. The focus will be on what you are learning that is, or may be, useful to you as an actor. The journals (approximately 500-600 words) will be submitted via Nexus to the instructor every second Monday.

Analytical Journal Instructions

When writing your bi-weekly journal, ask yourself "what specifically did I find useful about the classes and readings that I think I can apply (or have found I can apply) to my acting?"

There are two main parts to your journal.

1. **Readings**: Mention all of the main points that the readings discuss and comment on them. If you find them of value, i.e. things that you can apply to your acting, then explain why or how you apply them or how you intend to apply them. If you are not ready to use an idea, exercise or concept, at least try to explain it's intended use or value and add why you think you are not able to apply it or master it at this time. Concrete examples are always worth extra marks as are connections to other writing or class work.

2. **Class exercises, comments, and lectures**: As we do exercises (including scenes) in class, I will intertwine comments, concepts, techniques, and practical acting advice. Often I will explain the purpose of exercises we do in class. Your journal should briefly recall the exercises we did in class and if you find them useful you should explain how or why you think they can help you as an actor. Any examples of how the exercise applies positively to your work (or that of another actor) should be stated. The same applies to any concepts or acting principles or practical recommendations that I or classmates provide. If there are concepts, exercises, etc. that you are not ready to apply, try to explain the purpose of the exercise or concept and perhaps provide an analysis of why you are not able to apply it at this time. You may wish to

ask some questions of me or of yourself. Again, examples and connections to other sources of learning are given positive recognition.

Students are encouraged to engage in and continue a program of reading in the literature of acting to gain insight into the problems encountered in the practical work of the course.

Topics to be covered include:

- taking direction
- analyzing the script
- developing character arc or progression
- bringing truth to the work
- using the environment
- accessing emotion
- harnessing imagination to enrich the performance
- physicalizing the character and the scene
- understanding style
- embodying style
- working with the director/fellow actors
- understanding process and protocol
- using props
- mastering auditions
- mastering etiquette

PREPARATION AND PROTOCOL

The standards of the profession are expected in terms of discipline and commitment. This means that everyone must arrive on time (which means early) and be prepared mentally, emotionally, and physically to begin work immediately. Film actors are, by necessity, extremely self-reliant and disciplined. Students will be graded on preparation and readiness, ability to take direction, and contribution to a productive working atmosphere on all assignments. Students are expected to "hurry up and wait" with the appearance of cheerfulness.

During the year we will be shooting film scenes involving two actors at a time. From time to time, students will be expected to serve as crew for classmates during this process. Also, because shooting is a time consuming process, students will periodically be released from parts of classes or even whole classes.

Teacher and students are responsible for a creative, supportive, and protective atmosphere in order to best serve the work. While the work in class may be exciting at times; students are reminded that respect for the work, fellow students, and the instructor are always a requirement. Socializing before and after classes or shoots is part of the actor's etiquette, but quiet, listening, focus, and attention during classes and shoots are absolutely necessary. Students unable to comply will be asked to withdraw from the course. Students must accept artistic individualities and help their colleagues with constructive criticism. The unity, creativity, and health of the class are more important than any antagonism, personal or artistic differences, temperaments, and idiosyncrasies. Students are strongly encouraged to speak with the instructor immediately if any concerns arise about activities or climate associated with the class.

Absenteeism and tardiness are absolutely not tolerated in the film industry and are usually grounds for immediate dismissal. **Full attendance is compulsory.** Lateness or failure to meet reasonable standards of responsible behaviour in relation to classmates and instructors may result in expulsion from the course. Please see attendance policy below.

There is no food allowed in the classroom. Beverages are allowed (water, coffee, tea, juice). Students are required to keep the room clean and put away all props/rehearsal items used.

NB. In the interest of safety and in recognition of the uniquely interdependent nature of film, students with physical or psychological conditions that may affect the work and/or progress of the class must report these to the instructor at the outset of classes.

TEXTS

Required

Acting for the Camera by Tony Barr

Reference Texts:

The Actor and the Target by Declan Donellan 99 Film Scenes for Actors by Angela Nichols Respect For Acting by Uta Hagen Action: Acting for Film and Television by Robert Benedetti Dreamwork for Actors by Janet Sonenberg The Body Speaks by Lorna Marshall Style for Actors by Toby Cole, et al Backwards and Forwards by David Ball

MARK BREAKDOWN

Fall Term: Major scene scheduled individually during term 1 (see schedule)	25%
Exercises scheduled individually during term one	10%
Journal evidence of reading, attention to class work, and perceptiveness 500-600 words bi-weekly)).	10%
Winter Term:	
Major scene scheduled individually during term (see schedule)	
Exercises scheduled individually in term two	
Journal(evidence of reading, attention to class work, and perceptiveness 500 -600 words bi-weekly).	10%
TOTAL	100%

N.B. As stated above, students are expected to keep an analytical journal of reflections on the readings along with observations, constructive critiques, and analyses of both their own and classmates work and progress. Journal submissions (approximately 500 words) are to be sent every second Monday to the course's Nexus address and must include the following information:

Student's Name Journal # (1 - 24) Dates being covered Pages being covered

Failure to hand in a journal will result in a penalty of .5% of the final grade per week. Please retain a copy for yourself.

CONVERSION SCALE

For the calculation of the final grade the following conversion table will be used:

A+	90 – 100%	GPA	4.5	C+	65 – 69.9%	GPA	2.5
А	85 - 89.9%	GPA	4.25	С	60 - 64.9%	GPA	2.0
A-	80 - 84.9%	GPA	4.0	D	50 - 59.9%	GPA	1.0
B+	75 – 79.9%	GPA	3.5	F	below 50%	GPA	0
В	70 – 74.9%	GPA	3.0				
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Work not submitted will be graded as 0%.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late papers will be penalized at the rate of 1% per day (weekends excluded). For example, if your essay (worth 20) is given a mark of 70% and it is a week late, you would receive 65%. The mark would then be converted to a mark out of 20. No assignments will be accepted after the final deadline, April 14, 2014.

DEFINITIONS OF GRADING DESCRIPTIONS

A+ Exceptional. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill AND great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

A Superior. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill OR great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

A- Excellent. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B+ Very Good. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B Good. Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C+ Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C Fairly Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

D Barely Passing. Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

F Failing.

COURSE-SPECIFIC NOTES

This course requires the active participation of all students, hence attendance is compulsory.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Fall Term

Sept. 5	Th	Orientation-lecture / exercises
Sept. 10	Tu	Lecture / exercises
Sept. 12	Th	Lecture / exercises
Sept. 17	Tu	Lecture / exercises
Sept. 19	Th	Lecture / exercises
Sept. 24	Tu	Lecture / exercises / <u>Rehearse Scene 1</u>
Sept. 26	Th	<u>Shoot Scene 1</u>
Oct. 1	Tu	Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 1 / Rehearse Scene 2</u>
Oct. 3	Th	Shoot Scene 2
Oct. 8	Tu	Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 2 / Rehearse Scene 3</u>

Oct. 10 Oct. 15 Oct. 17 Oct. 22 Oct. 24 Oct. 29 Oct. 31	Th Tu Th Tu Th Tu Th	<u>Shoot Scene 3</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 3 / Rehearse Scene 4</u> <u>Shoot Scene 4</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 4 / Rehearse Scene 5</u> <u>Shoot Scene 5</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 5 / Rehearse Scene 6</u> <u>Shoot Scene 6</u>
Nov. 5 Nov. 7 Nov. 12 Nov. 14 Nov. 19 Nov. 21 Nov. 26	Tu Th Tu Th Tu Th Tu	Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 6 / Rehearse Scene 7</u> <u>Shoot Scene 7</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Rehearse Scene 8</u> <u>Shoot Scene 8</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 8</u> Catch up and reschedule as required Catch up and reschedule as required
Winter Term		
Jan. 7 Jan. 9 Jan. 14 Jan. 16 Jan. 21 Jan. 23 Jan. 28 Jan. 30 Feb. 4 Feb. 6 Feb. 11	Tu Th Tu Th Tu Th Tu Th Tu Tu	Lecture / exercises Lecture / exercises Lecture / exercises Lecture / exercises Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline Lecture / exercises / <u>Rehearse Scene 1</u> <u>Shoot Scene 1</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 1 / Rehearse Scene 2</u> <u>Shoot Scene 2</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 2 / Rehearse Scene 3</u> <u>Shoot Scene 3</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 3 / Rehearse Scene 4</u>
Feb. 13	Th	Shoot Scene 4
Feb. 18 and 2	_	Reading week; no classes
Feb. 25 Feb. 27	Tu Th	Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 4 / Rehearse Scene 5</u> Shoot Scene 5
Mar. 4 Mar. 6 Mar.11 Mar.13 Mar.18 Mar. 20 Mar. 25 Mar. 27 April 1 April 3 April 10	Tu Th Tu Th Tu Th Th Th Th	Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 5 / Rehearse Scene 6</u> <u>Shoot Scene 6</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 6 / Rehearse Scene 7</u> <u>Shoot Scene 7</u> Lecture / exercises / <u>Screen Scene 7 / Rehearse Scene 8</u> <u>Shoot Scene 8</u> Catch up / reschedules as required Catch up / reschedules as required Wrap up / catch up Wrap up / catch up Wrap up /catch up Evening Screening 7:00-9:30 PM, 0T10

NB : There is a final screening with invited guests on April 10 from 7:00-9:30 PM. <u>Students in the</u> course are required to attend.

Note: for some of the above times, students will be scheduled individually.

Lectures and exercises will include the topics in the texts including 2 minutes of real life and other Hagen exercises, exercises from *The Body Speaks*, exercises from *Dreamwork For Actors (time permitting),* found character, warm up techniques, emotional preparation, hitting marks, matching takes, text analysis, eye lines, playing to duct tape, intimate scene, and practice scenes. Students will be responsible for preparing presentations for this portion of the class as well as for submitting the journal entries.

Acting For The Camera READING Schedule 2013/14:

Fall Term

Read up to Ch 4
To Ch 7
To Ch 10
To Ch 12
To Ch 14
To Ch 15
To Ch 16
To Ch 18
To Ch 20
To Ch 23

Winter Term

Jan.13	Read up to Ch 26
Jan. 20	To Ch 28
Jan 21	VW Date
Jan. 27	To Ch 30
Feb 3	To Ch 32
Feb. 10	To Ch 34
Feb 24	To Ch 37
Mar 3	To Ch 38
Mar 10	To Ch 38, p. 330
March 17	To Epilogue
March 24	To About the Author

SCENE GRADING CRITERIA

- 1. Are you truthful? Do we believe you?
- 2. Is your character personal (specific, detailed, and human)?
- 3. Is your performance rich, surprising, and recognisable?
- 4. Does your body speak?
- 5. Is your character emotionally connected and are the stakes appropriate?
- 6. Is your character receptive and vulnerable?
- 7. Is your character always alive and thinking?
- 8. Are you meeting the director's demands?
- 9. Did you take initiative and risks in creating the role and playing the scene?
- 10. Do your takes match?
- 11. Are your eye-lines appropriate?
- 12. Is the rhythm appropriate?
- 13. Do you avoid unwanted overlaps?
- 14. Do you avoid projecting?
- 15. Do you make effective use of direction both between audition/rehearsal and shoot, and

also immediately on shoot day.

Responding quickly and effectively to direction is central to the craft of the film actor and will weigh heavily in grading considerations along with artistic initiative.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS (for 2nd- through 4th-year Performance classes)

Given that this is a practical studio course, extensive participation and professionalism are required. As a result, punctuality and attendance at class and in out-of-class rehearsals are of the utmost importance.

Unexcused absences from lecture, lab, or rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of 2% per instance. Unexcused lateness for lecture, lab, or rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of 1% per instance. Attendance and punctuality will be recorded at the beginning of every class. After a <u>THIRD</u> late or absence, the instructor will schedule a meeting with the student to discuss withdrawal from the course. After a <u>FIFTH</u> unexcused absence the student will be required to meet with the Chair of the department to discuss withdrawal from the course.

In performance courses that cast and rehearse a show, unexcused lateness and absence will not be tolerated and may result in the recasting of your role after **ONE** incident.

Excused absences or lates require a medical note or prior arrangement with the instructor. It is at the instructor's discretion whether or not to excuse a non-medical absence. After <u>FIVE</u> excused absences the student will be required to meet with the Instructor to discuss whether it is realistic for him/her to continue in the course.

Given the rigorous, practical nature of studio courses, and the demands these courses make in terms of attendance and punctuality, students with chronic medical conditions that will require extensive absence should meet with the instructor at the beginning of the term to discuss whether the course is appropriate for them.

"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES

The Department of Theatre and Film is presenting a series of six lectures which will be held on Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**: Sept 18, Oct 23, Nov 13, Jan 15, Feb 12, Mar 12. This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance at <u>ALL</u> lectures is <u>MANDATORY</u> for <u>ALL</u> Honours students in Theatre (all areas), <u>as well</u> <u>as</u> students in: THFM-3101 Acting III: General, THFM-3110 Screen Acting, THFM-3701 Playwriting II, THFM-3801 Production II, and THFM-3920 Musical Theatre. Two percent (2%) of the student's final grade in the core course (above) will be deducted <u>for each lecture missed</u> to a maximum of ten percent (10%). Please arrange your schedule <u>NOW</u> so that you are available for these lectures; attendance will be taken. If you absolutely cannot attend, you must discuss this with your <u>professor</u> PRIOR to the event (don't call Patty).

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/majors and for Film majors is optional but highly recommended.

NOTES FOR PERFORMANCE COURSES

Rehearsals for final presentations and public exercises are scheduled well in advance; students must arrange their university and work schedules so as not to conflict with them. Students must attend <u>ALL</u> scheduled rehearsals.

Any student who repeatedly misses rehearsals, comes late, or fails to rehearse adequately will be asked to withdraw from the course.

As many of our classes are physical in nature, students are asked to wear comfortable clothing.

Outdoor footwear <u>must be removed</u> before entering <u>ANY</u> of the Studios: **0T09** (Concourse Studio), **0T19** (Mime Lab), **1T15** (Theatre), **2T05** (2nd Floor Studio), **2T15** (Movement Studio). We suggest you bring suitable dance shoes or slippers to wear in class. Your professors will monitor and enforce this regulation in order to preserve the integrity of the special flooring in these rooms. Please respect this rule.

Student actors, like professionals, are expected to provide their own basic makeup supplies where required for public exercises. Due to the potential for the transmission of skin diseases it is not recommended that students share makeup.

Senior acting students scheduled to perform in a departmental public exercise are asked not to modify their hair colour or style without first checking with the instructor/director.

Students who bring props, costumes, or furnishings to support scene presentations please note:

- the University will **NOT** be responsible for the loss of any such materials;

- students are responsible for the **<u>IMMEDIATE</u>** removal of such materials after <u>**EACH**</u> use - the department does not provide storage;

- materials not claimed <u>WILL BE DISPOSED OF</u> at the student's expense. Grades may be withheld until such costs are recovered;

- students <u>MUST NOT</u> move existing furnishings from their current locations.

ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to introduce our new students to faculty and other students; to provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and to provide news about what's coming up. This year our *Orientation Assembly* will be held on **Wednesday, September 11, 2013, 12:30-13:20 in Theatre, 1T15**. <u>ATTENDANCE IS</u> <u>COMPULSORY</u> for all Majors and Honours students. Those considering Honours are strongly recommended to attend. All others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email <u>accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca</u> to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <u>http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility</u>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (which houses the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. weekdays. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE:** outside of regular building hours, it is <u>MANDATORY</u> that everyone in the building <u>EITHER</u> carry an access card <u>OR</u> have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). <u>ALL</u> **EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes** <u>MUST</u> have an access card. If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, <u>you may be evicted</u>.

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA

Students must check our website at <u>http://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca/tbooking.htm</u> and read the menu items called *Access Card/Building Use Policy* <u>AND</u> *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

GENERAL NOTES

This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.

The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines, or chemical sensitivities.

Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.

Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.

It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of <u>ALL</u> assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <u>http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-filesystem-action/pdfs/calendar/RegulationsandPolicies.pdf</u>) for information on Registration, Grading, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin in September 2013 and end in April 2014 (2013/14 Fall/Winter Term).

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Theatre is a communal art form in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals both within and outside of class times; and, in short, to exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

COURSE CONTENT NOTE

All Theatre and Film Classes

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.

Performance-Related Classes

Much of an actor's work is based upon actual experiences of life which become translated into fictional circumstances. Because of this, the teaching of acting may involve encouraging the student to examine personal and even intimate areas of life to help him or her access life experiences appropriate to the demands of the work.

Dramatic literature depicts a wide range of human actions, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. Acting students must learn to simulate life truthfully in interaction with other students in the safety of the acting class and the rehearsal hall through exercises, discussions, and directions which address rather than avoid truthful, particularized, personalized action.

Performance classes often require strenuous physical activity. Classes may also involve physical interaction between students as part of class exercises or character development and occasional physical contact by instructors for purposes such as the demonstration of a technique or to make a posture correction. Students are responsible for wearing clothing appropriate to these activities.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of actions and subject matter involved in drama are urged to discuss these concerns with their course instructor.