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MAR 470.01: Advanced Acting for Film I

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MAR 470 Advanced Acting for Film I

Autumn 2013 - The University of Montana, Missoula

Professor Michael Murphy - McGill 229

michael.murphy@mso.umt.edu

Office Hours: 2:00-3:30 Mon./1:00-2:00 Wed./Thur. 9:30-11

TA—Aaron Roos: aaron.roos@umontana.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is designed to acquaint you with the basic acting techniques involved in realistic film work. The class will consist of scene work, exercises in class, interaction with graduate directors, study of existing film actors, and online discussion of issues encountered of the course of the semester. You will also get experience in the collaborative process of filmmaking by performing various roles by crewing in-class shoots.

Scene Work Criteria

You must demonstrate the ability to:

- Be prepared to work, physically and emotionally
 - Physically:** Lines memorized, costumes and props secured and ready, full screenplay read and analyzed, scenes divided into beats and named.
 - Emotionally:** The goals and intentions of the character have been personally explored in a manner that allows you to “arrive” at the scene ready to engage.
- Understand and work within continuity restrictions called for by the editing process
 - Because of the nature of editing in film, you must be able to create business and blocking that can be repeated exactly from take-to-take—this, while keeping the “improvisational” nature of your acting work.
- Work in an uninflected, non-presentational manner and to be emotionally available for the camera:
 - Acting work emphasizes being present in each unfolding moment of time that you inhabit. It requires that you allow the camera to come to you and that you open yourself to the process. You need to be in contact with your partner on a moment-to-moment basis, approaching the scene “as if” for the first time.
- Create grounded, believable business
 - Truth of physical action is one of the keys to the work.
- Layer your character development
 - Goals/Objectives are important for the work, but working with the five senses is critical as well—hearing, seeing, smelling, touching, and tasting.

Discussion Board Posting Criteria

Pay attention to calls formally and informally for online interactions. Generally these are discussion board topics related to the work being done in class. Two longer postings happen during the semester and are based in research into a specific actor. These postings should be approximately 700 words in length. For these longer posts the following are a list of areas to be addressed:

- Types of roles played.
- Growth or change in career. Why?

- **Them addressing their work**
- **Others addressing their work**
- What was their training?
- **Analyze scenes from their work in relation to goals in this class**
- **How did they structure a role over the course of an entire film?**
- Perhaps compare his or her work with someone who is a contemporary of his or hers but not as good. Why?
- Have they done bad work? Most of us have. What's different? Why?
- Why do you feel strongly about them?

Crew/Support Work Criteria

You must demonstrate the ability to:

- Show up on time and ready to work
- Stay concentrated on the scene and your role in optimizing the outcome
- Know your place in the chain of command and function within it
- Understand the script you are filming
- Understand why different shots are used
- Be competent in set up and breakdown of equipment

Graduate Increment

A graduate student taking this class will be required to:

1. Function as an editor or director on selected class scenes.
2. Submit a ten-page paper researching an area within the world of film acting agreed upon by the instructor

Grading

You will be graded on the following:

Scene Work:	45 pts
Preparation	30 pts
Competence in Acting:	15 pts
Collaboration:	10 pts
Online Posting Assignments	40 pts
#1	15 pts
#2	15 pts
General Forum	10 pts
Attendance:	5 pts

ATTENDANCE and ACADEMIC HONESTY

Complete attendance is expected for this class. With that said, you are allowed 1 absence over the course of the semester. For each class you miss over that 1 your grade will be dropped 5 percentage points. There are no excused absences.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/vpsa/index.cfm/page/1339>

CLASS TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES

Week 1 Aug. 30	A- INTRODUCTIONS B- Watch <i>Day for Night</i> Assignment #1: Monologue for next week Assignment #2: Read and complete Rabiger Exercise #1/List of Interesting People
Week 2 Sept. 6	A- Review Rabiger Exercises/Lists with Grad Directors B- Monologue from Film Solo Assignment #3: SCENE #1 (2-person seated)
Week 3 Sep. 13	A- Casting Work with Directors/Exercises B- 5-Shot Scene Work with Monologues
Week 4 Sept. 20	A- Finish 5-Shot Work with Monologues B- View Film Scenes
Week 5 Sept. 27	Shoot Scene #1 Sept. 28! Online: Posting #1 Due on D-Board (700 words) Assignment: Scene #2
Week 6 Oct. 4	A- Scene 1 B- Scene 1
Week 7 Oct. 11	A- Scene 1 B- View Scene 1 Edits in class Rehearse Scene 2 Out of Class
Week 8 Oct. 18	A- Scene 2 B- Scene 2
Week 9 Oct. 25	A- Scene 2 B- Scene 2
Week 10 Nov. 1	C- Scene 2 D- Viewing Footage! POSTING #2 DUE
Week 11 Nov. 8	A- SKYPE With JEFF B- Viewing of Scene 2 C- Outside of Class Rehearsals Scheduled with Murphy
Week 12 Nov. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scene 3 • Scene 3
Week 13 Nov. 22	Thanksgiving!

Week 14 Nov. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene 3 • Scene 3
Week 15 Dec. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene 3 • Scene 3
Tues. Dec. 12 8:00-10:00 FINAL CLASS	Viewing of Final Scenes/Grad Film footage, etc.