

Acting on Camera - Fall 2017

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Office Hours – MW 1:30 – 3:20 – TTh – 1:30 – 2:20 and/or by appointment

*****Please email to make an appointment during office hours as I am often already scheduled with other students**

This course is a basic acting for the camera class taught through the production process. Students will develop skills that will allow them to:

- create a comfortable camera presence
- demonstrate an understanding of basic camera shots
- demonstrate an understanding of performing for the various styles for film and Television (i.e sit com, primetime, reality tv, children's shows, popular film styles, mockumentary,etc).
- demonstrate and awareness of the production process
- acquire basic production skills for a camera shoot.

*****Many of you in the class have had some camera experience. Much like being in a production – there are varying levels of experience in this class. If you have had a lot of “on camera” experience, perhaps you can pick up or fine tune a production skill as you never know where you will end up or how you will get your foot in the door. Perhaps you can enhance your on camera skills in a less high pressured environment. Whatever the case, commitment to the class process is required for everyone regardless of your skill level so that it is a positive and productive experience for all.***

******There are useful websites near the end of the syllabus (camera shots, terms, etc)***

Course Requirements

You are responsible for notifying me of any chronic conditions, injuries or issues which may prevent your full participation in class activities. I must be notified the first week of class.

Please remember that camera equipment is expensive and that you must handle it with care. Ripping cords out of the socket can damage them and therefore render them inactive. Slamming cameras or dropping them can damage them. Losing a screw or a tripod quick release plate might mean we can't use that piece of equipment until we order a new one. If I or anyone else in the class witnesses repeated misuse of equipment, you could be asked to replace the piece of equipment. Additionally, this will affect your final grade and could mean failure for the course. Please remember this, especially when you are breaking down to move to a new location or wrapping up near the end of class time. This is when there is usually a flurry of activity to get out quickly.

In an effort to help you better understand the environment for "on camera" work, you will not only perform on camera, you will also be introduced to various basic production responsibilities for a film and television crew (example: serve as director, camera person, script supervisor, wardrobe, continuity person, set and props.) You will participate as a member of the production team in some way for all projects. The aim is to mirror a film/ TV production process, however we have a limited amount of crew, some responsibilities will be combined. Each responsibility for each assignment/ project is worth 100pts. These major responsibilities include:

- Acting -On Camera Talent
 - Responsibilities include: providing wardrobe choices, providing personal props for shoot
 - you must be performance ready when your team is ready to shoot – memorized script, acting choices
 - an understanding of basic camera shots before you are on camera so you can adjust your acting style accordingly as the shots shift
 - you must familiarize yourself with the type of script being produced including: (style of show, basic info for characters and character types in the show/script)
 - accepting the director's choices for the project

- running off your own copy of the script to bring to the shoot once it is uploaded
- Directing or Assistant Directing at least one project
 - director's primary responsibilities will be:
 - in charge of the entire shoot
 - to determine basic camera shots and shooting schedule
 - create a basic storyboard
 - **with the help of your group** the director will create the set design, wardrobe ideas, props for the project
 - director must upload shots/storyboard and shooting schedule to group prior to day of shooting
 - you must familiarize yourself with the type of script being produced including: (style of show, basic info for characters and character types in the show/script)
 - Running off your own copy of the script to bring to the shoot once it is uploaded

Camera Operator

- running the camera when assigned for segment or episode- you will be assigned to run camera many times
- familiarize yourself with the equipment before your shoot so you don't hold up production
- you are responsible for setting up, running and breaking down your camera
- making sure your group has a new SD card for your project
- familiarize yourself with the shots or storyboard the director creates before you shoot
- Keep tabs on the sequence of shots for that day and the position of the camera – for instance- the tilt of the camera – was the height of where the actor was looking in sync with where the other actor is standing?
- you must familiarize yourself with the type of script being produced including: (style of show, basic info for characters and character types in the show/script)
- Running off your own copy of the script to bring to the shoot once it is uploaded

Continuity/ Props/ Set Design

- take notes on all the details required to recreate the continuity of a particular scene, location, or action. (For example: Exactly where the actor placed the prop, if the actor used the right hand or left, what prop was moved during the scene, how were the lights for this take?, appearance of the actor (did hair fall down in their face during this take?) In other words, when the piece is edited into one piece, this person makes sure that there is a flow from scene to scene
- Setting up the physical scene of the shoot (the look of the set)– how props are placed on the set, set pieces, making sure props have been located and arrive on set
- you must familiarize yourself with the type of script being produced including: (style of show, basic info for characters and character types in the show/script)
- Running off your own copy of the script to bring to the shoot once it is uploaded

Script Supervisor/Costumes/Make-up

- Staying on script to make sure an the lines are consistent
- Making sure you note what take is the best for the editing process
- Slating - The script supervisor makes sure that each take of exposed film has a consistent and meaningful slate. Before each shot the script supervisor will verbally say into the camera the scene that is being shot. There are several free online digital slating apps that you can download on your phone. Once the director decides on the best shots – for that particular shoot, the script supervisor will note which shot/s were the best – to give to the editor. This ensures that there is proper identification on the film footage in the editing room so the editor can find and use the correct takes.
- The script supervisor is responsible for keeping the most current version of the shooting script.
- Uploading the script to the cast and crew
- you must familiarize yourself with the type of script being produced including: (style of show, basic info for characters and character types in the show/script)
- Running off your own copy of the script and bring it to the shoot once it is uploaded

Editor, Sound, Graphics

- Part of the creative post-production process.
- Familiarize yourself with editing software (there is plenty of free software out there if your laptop did not come with Movie Edit Pro or iMovie- (the computer lab has iMovie loaded on each computer)
- Work with Director, Script Supervisor, Continuity during production to pre-plan before you start the editing process
- Discuss graphics with director for look and proper titles for the project
- Make sound choices that fit each particular scene

Tips on Production Company Requirements and Choosing Group Positions

Think of yourself as a small up and coming production company – you must help each other out in order to be successful.

Acting and Production Crew – Remember that you will be assigned an acting role **AND** a production role for each project.

- If you are directing, then you should have a small role in the project so that when you step away from your role as director, your AD can take over and it doesn't impact the project.
- Spread the lead roles around – look for ensemble projects that have several leads so everyone has acceptable camera time for each project.
- Responsibilities should rotate so that all students fulfill one of the major responsibilities at least once throughout the semester – i.e everyone should direct or assist direct at least one project, everyone should edit or share in the editing process for at least one project, and so on
- During the semester your group must shoot at least one sit com, one prime time police drama, one comic or romantic comedy film (one complete segment or several segments depending on the length), one dramatic or thriller (not slasher) film (one complete segment or several segments depending on the length),
- **Types of television shows that are off limits** – sketch comedy shows such as Key and Peele, Saturday Night Live, Any show where the style is too far from realism –Super Heroes, Reality Shows

Miscellaneous Crew Roles –There will be miscellaneous crew roles that will pop up as you are shooting – pitch in, help out so that the production runs smoothly

Location

- Your team is responsible for deciding on where the segment/ episode will be shot – in or outside of the PAC building (because of the time constraints, an outside shoot must take place close to the PAC building).

Set, Props, Costumes, Lights

- You and your team are responsible for designing and locating the set, props and costumes, and setting up lights for each shoot
- Once your segment/s is shot, your Group is responsible for making sure the editor uploads the completed segment/ episode to the Acting for the Camera Fall 16 Group FB page - schedule includes when edited version is due for each project. It is considered late if it is sent after that time.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

*Syllabus and assignments may change according to the needs of the class

*****You have approximately 8 hours of shooting time for each project (including setup and breakdown of equipment). Production values will be simple and shots will be less complicated than on a real set, so you might shoot about 2 - 3 short scenes per day – depending on how long the scenes are and how quickly you work.**

****Remember to find material that supports having everyone in your group “on camera” for each project so that everyone can be “on camera” for each project. This is a small class so we should be able to find projects that gives everyone good quality camera time to perhaps upload to your website.**

****Please be aware that missing class or coming in late, or not having your costumes, props, etc for the shoot, or not fulfilling your responsibility– can**

halt the filming process for the day and can impact the entire project. Be respectful, be responsible, be professional!!

- Your first unexcused absence will lower your final grade five points, your second unexcused absence will lower your grade 10 points (which will lower it a full letter), and your third unexcused absence will result in a failure of the course.
- Participating in a show is not a valid excuse for missing class or lack of preparation for an assignment.

ONLY THE FOLLOWING ARE CONSIDERED EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- university sponsored and excused events
- serious illness that is documented by a doctor's note
- death or serious illness in the immediate family – please be aware you may be asked to provide documentation

Major Assignments

***Please remember that you will be graded on attendance, promptness to class, attitude, handling of equipment and professionalism as well as the major assignments.*

Camera Projects and Schedule

August 22 – 31- Orientation, Choose Projects, Basic Camera Terms, Editing Tutorial, Create Facebook Page for Group

- Each group must have a **new SD card** for **each** project that way there is no danger of shooting over a prior project and no danger of holding up the editing process. Remember that if you have multiple cameras – you need an **SD card** for **each** of the cameras.

- Remember to factor in set time, travel time and break down time when scheduling your shoot. Although class starts at 2:30, it would be best to come collect camera equipment no later than 10 minutes before class time.
- You may choose only **ONE project to shoot off campus** this semester. All other locations must be shot on campus.
- Create a team of people for each project to scout the location of your next project so we don't waste time.
- Off campus shoot requirements:
 - Only shoots that require a living room, bedroom space, etc
 - You must be finished with your shoot in time to return equipment and end class on time.
 - You must supply the address for the shoot
 - You cannot take departmental camera equipment to an off campus shoot. If you choose to shoot off campus you must have your own equipment.

Shooting Schedule for the Fall

- 1. Project One – Sept 5 – Sep 14 – 200pts – 3 - 5 minutes of final edited version – Final Edited Version Uploaded to Group Facebook Page by 5pm Sept 21 – Journal Due – Monday Sept 18**
- 2. Project Two - Sept 19 – Sept 28 - 200pts – 5- 7 minutes of final edited version – Final Edited Version Uploaded to Group Facebook Page by 5pm Oct 5 – Journal Due – Monday Oct 2**
- 3. Project Three – Oct 3–Oct 17 200pts – 8- 10 minutes of final edited version - Final Edited Version Uploaded to Group Facebook Page by 5pm Oct 24 – Journal Due Friday Oct 20**

4. Project Four - Oct 19 – Nov 2– 300pts – 10 - 12 minutes of final edited version - Final Edited Version Uploaded to Group Facebook Page by 5pm Nov 9 – Journal Due Monday Nov 6

5. Final Project - Nov 7 – Nov 30 – 400pts - 18 - 20 minutes of final edited version - Final Edited Version Uploaded to Group Facebook Page by 5pm by Thur Dec 7 – Journal Due Monday Dec 4

II. Journal Response for Each Project

You will turn in one journal entry for **each** project. Please be aware that failure to turn in Journal Responses will lower your final grade.

Requirements for Journal

- Journal responses must be at least **375 words** to be acceptable **and must be MS word documents**
- Journal responses should not exceed **600 words**
- The journal should be in narrative form and complete sentences– not lists, or phrases
- Journals will not be accepted beyond the due time and date
- Journals must be sent through email and are due by 5pm on the following days:

Journal Responses Should Include:

- A brief narrative of your production assignment/s for this project. Describe how you fulfilled your assigned responsibilities. Be specific.

- Acting challenges you ran into, acting for the camera strengths/weaknesses. What was your “take away” for this project?
- Group Challenges/Successes - What your group needs to work on for the next project? What worked well for your group? Any challenges with specific group members?

Instruction / Content

Since Film and TV requires the use of mind, voice, and body, there may be situations requiring a certain amount of physical contact between you and the instructor and the other students.

There are plays and materials which may express adult or controversial themes as well as strong language.

Grading

All work will be based on a 100pt grading scale. Point value for each project is listed above. Your grades in this class will be based on your growth, preparation and demonstration of the skills needed for each area of Camera work covered in class. Your overall final grade for the class will be based on the accumulation of points from the following areas:

Major Assignments (see weekly schedule)

Participation on daily assignments and exercises

Assignment deadlines and punctuality

Willingness and Consistency when rehearsing with partners outside of the scheduled class time

Professionalism (including attitude toward criticism, and respect for fellow classmates)

Demonstration a clear understanding of the work covered in class

Grading Scale

95 – 100 – A, 94 – 90 – A-, 89-87 – B+, 86 – 84 – B, 83 – 80 – B-, 79 – 77 C+, 76-74 – C, 73 – 70 – C-, 69-67 – D+

66-64 – D
63 - 60 – D-
Below 60 - F

Excellent Website for On Camera and On the Set Terms
***there are several pages

<http://www.moviex.com/guides/vocabulary01.php>

Basic Camera Shots



EWS (Extreme Wide Shot)

The view is so far from the subject that she isn't even visible. This is often used as an establishing shot.



VWS (Very Wide Shot)

The subject is visible (barely), but the emphasis is still on placing her in her environment.



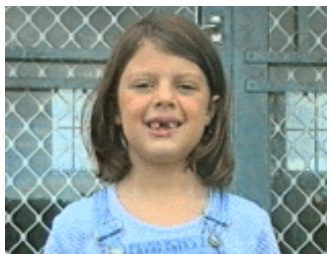
WS (Wide Shot)

The subject takes up the full frame, or at least as much as possible. The same as a [long shot](#).



MS (Mid Shot)

Shows some part of the subject in more detail whilst still giving an impression of the whole subject.



MCU (Medium Close Up)

Half way between a MS and a CU.



CU (Close Up)

A certain feature or part of the subject takes up the whole frame.



ECU (Extreme Close Up)

The ECU gets right in and shows extreme detail.



CA (Cutaway)

A shot of something other than the current action.



Cut-In

Shows some part of the subject in detail.



Two-Shot

A comfortable shot of two people, framed similarly to a mid shot.



(OSS) Over-the-Shoulder Shot

Looking from behind a person at the subject.



Noddy Shot

Usually refers to a shot of the interviewer listening and reacting to the subject, although noddies can be used in drama and other situations.



Point-of-View Shot (POV)

Shows a view from the subject's perspective.



Weather Shot

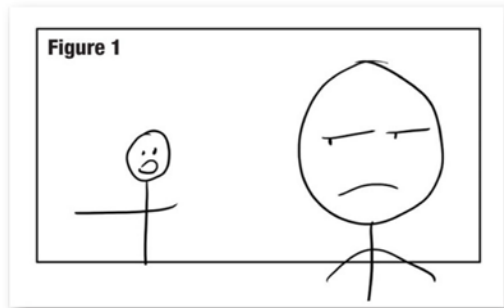
The subject is the weather, usually the sky.

Directing for Camera - Storyboard

A **storyboard** is one method of planning ahead. By visualizing your shots with a storyboard, you can see how your shots fit together before you've shot a single foot of film or frame of video, which will prevent you from wasting both time and footage. A good storyboard allows you to show your crew what you have in mind, and saves you from trying to convey what you want with wordy explanations and frustrated hand

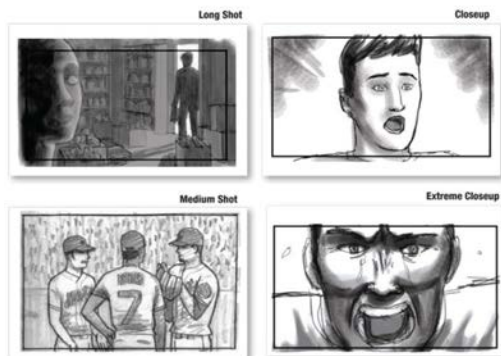
gestures. When you show your Director of Photography (DP) and camera person your boards, they will immediately know what type of shot you need and how to frame the subjects.

Even simple stick figures can give people a good idea of what your shot sequence will look like, for example, the illustration in Figure 1.



The example above may be crude, but it's clearly a two-shot with one character closer to the camera. In other words, rudimentary art skills are perfectly fine. What you do need to know, however, is how you're going to frame the subjects of your film. A basic knowledge of camera shots, paired with a few simple perspective tricks, will enable you to map out your scene in an easy-to-read visual shorthand.

The Different Types of Shots



LONG SHOT

Generally speaking, a long shot will include the entire body of the subject or subjects.

MEDIUM SHOT

A medium shot will usually depict your subject anywhere from above the knees and up to just above the

waist and up. Remember not to cut off your subjects at the knees, or any other juncture of the body - It looks awkward and poorly composed. Try to frame them just above or below the joint in question.

CLOSEUP

Closeups are where we most often see the emotional content of a scene. They allow us to see the character's faces up close, and thus their state of mind. Close ups are usually framed from the chest up. Occasionally, however, they can be framed from forehead to chin, or will even involve just the subject's eyes. We call this an extreme Closeup.

EXTREME CLOSEUP

ECUs, as they are sometimes written add drama. These shots benefit the most from having a very tight focus. For the most part, they're used sparingly, but a single ECU can add a real punch to a scene.

MASTER SHOT

A quick note about the master shot: this is a term referring to a shot that runs for the length of a scene and shows all of the characters in view. It's the most conservative way of staging a scene. Think of a master shot as being like watching a play from somewhere out in the audience. You see the entire set and where the characters are in relation to each other on the stage. In older films, and multiple-camera productions like sitcoms, scenes often begin with a master shot in order to orient the audience, and all of the rest of the shots in the scene relate back to this shot.

Most single-camera productions don't rely so heavily on the master shot; however, keeping the master shot in mind can help you plan out the rest of your shot list. For example, in a scene depicting a conversation between two people, you may decide to cut to closeups of each person talking, plus an insert shot of an item that they're talking about, and then cut back to the master shot after each one. This is a very basic way of editing a scene. There are also some special shots you might want to use in your storyboard. Here are a couple of examples.

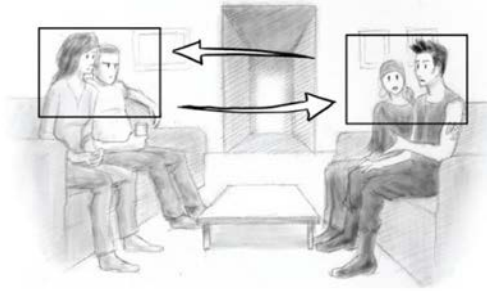


POV

POV, or the point-of-view shot, is just that: it allows the audience to see what's going on through a character's eyes. The easiest way to indicate this is to show a character looking at something, and then cut to what they're looking at from an appropriate angle that makes it look as though the camera is in that character's place. In our storyboard example (see Figure 2), a woman is working at her desk when the family dog enters the frame (A). The woman looks down (B) and sees the dog looking up at her, wagging his tail (C). Notice how the juxtaposition of shots conveys the woman's and dog's POV to the audience. POV shots tend to be used sparingly, although there have been some films with entire sequences shot from a character's point of view. In fact, the 1947 film noir *Lady in the Lake* was shot entirely from the POV of the main character.

Depicting Camera Movement

Figure 3



PAN/TILT

Panning and tilting involves a sideways or up/down rotation of the camera on a tripod or pivotal point. It's one way to put the camera on another subject without cutting to a different shot. It can also be used to follow a character or characters when they're moving within the frame.

A panning shot can be storyboarded by first placing a couple of frames in order to show where the camera will start and where it will end up, and then adding arrows to describe the camera movement. In Figure 3 we see a panning shot for a simple dialogue scene.

As depicted, the camera moves first from one set of characters to the other, then back again. The arrows show the direction of movement.

Figure 4

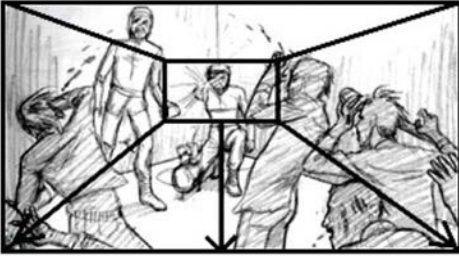


TRACK

A tracking shot is another way to follow subjects. This type of shot involves moving the entire camera from one place to another, and often follows a moving subject. Tracking can involve moving the camera with tracks or on a dolly, or it can be done handheld.

In Figure 4 the camera follows the mother as she runs. Note the arrow showing the camera direction.

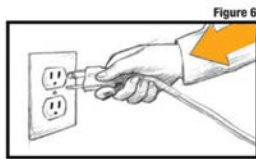
Figure 5



ZOOM

Zooming is a movement of the camera lens as opposed to a movement of the camera itself. Zooming in means adjusting the lens to frame in closer on the subject, while zooming out means the opposite: adjusting the lens to take in more of the scene. (See Figure 5).

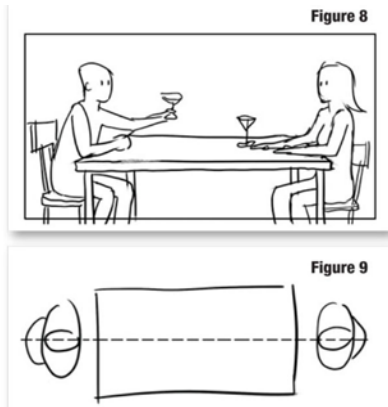
The interior frame indicates where the shot begins. As the action proceeds, the camera pulls out, as shown by the arrows. The outside frame shows where the shot finishes - on a wide angle showing the entire room and all the characters in frame.



REVEAL

What if you don't need the camera itself to move, but want to show characters moving into, out of, or through the frame during a shot? An easy way to do this is by drawing arrows. (See Figures 6 and 7). Arrows can also depict smaller movements within the frame, such as a head turning. Something unseen moving into a scene is called a reveal.

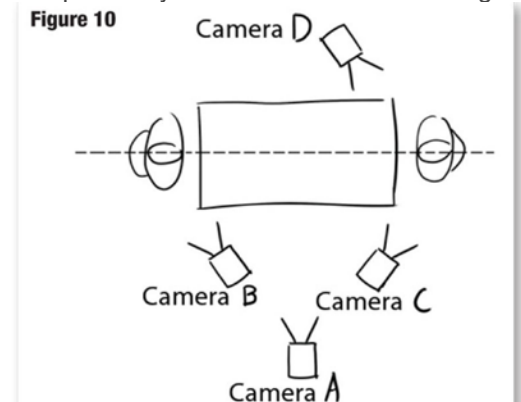
The 180 Degree Rule



Here are a couple of other things to keep in mind when setting up your shots. First, you may have heard people talk about "not crossing the line" when they're setting up a scene. They're using a slang term for the **180 degree rule** or line of action, which is a very important rule of thumb for filmmaking.

Here the master shot, shows Bill and Carol seated at a table together – a simple dialogue scene (See Figure 8). Now imagine this scene from overhead, with a straight line running through the middle of the subjects (See Figure 9).

Keeping your camera on the same side of this line - aka the 180 degree line - will assure visual continuity and prevent your viewers from becoming disoriented.



Now we see the same diagram with a few possible camera placements. (Figure 10). Notice that cameras for A, B and C are on the same side of the line.

Let's put shots A, B, and C into a storyboard. It will end up looking like Figure 10a, 10b and 10c.

Figure 10a



Figure 10b

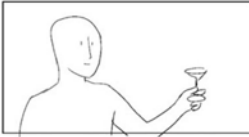
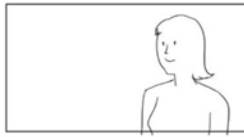


Figure 10c



180 degree rule - using cameras A, B and C

This shot sequence adheres to the 180 degree rule. Bill and Carol are having a conversation. First we have a master shot of the two of them, showing the audience where they are in the scene and where they are in relationship to each other (Figure 10a) Next is a close up of Bill (Figure 10b), and then one of Carol (Figure 10c.) When the individual shots are edited together, Bill and Carol appear to be facing each other, just as they are in the master shot.

Now let's try putting together shots A, B, and D from the diagram. The storyboard will look confusing, as in Figures 11a, 11b and 11d.

Figure 11a



Figure 11b



Figure 11d



Breaks the 180 degree rule - using cameras A, B and D

Additional Camera Terms for this Semester

Arc Shot - A shot in which a moving camera circles round the subject being photographed.

Continuity Consistency of physical detail between shots intended to match.

Contrast ratio Ratio of lightest to darkest areas in an image.

Dolly: (1) A truck built to any camera and camera operator to facilitate movement of the camera during the shooting of scenes. (2) To move the camera toward or away from the subject while shooting a scene.

Dissolve The gradual merging of the end of one shot with the beginning of the next, produced by superimposing a fade-out onto a fade-in of equal length or by imposing one scene over another.

Establishing shot A shot that establishes a scene's geographical and human contents.

Eye-line shot A shot that shows us what a character is seeing.

Ext. Exterior.

FI Fade in. Fade-out/fade-in * A transitional device in which the last image of one scene fades to black as the first image of the next scene is gradually illuminated.

Flash forward Moving temporarily forward in time, the cinematic equivalent of the future tense. This quickly becomes a new form of present.

Flashback Moving temporarily backwards in time; a cinematic past tense that soon becomes an ongoing present.

FO Fade out.

Genre A kind or type of film (horror, sitcom, drama, etc.)

Headroom Compositional space left above heads.

High angle Camera mounted high, looking down.

Int. Interior.

LA Low angle. Camera looking up at subject.

Master shot Shot that shows most or all of the scene and most or all of the characters.

Pan Short for panorama. Horizontal camera movement.

SFX Sound effects.

Shooting ratio The ratio of material shot for a scene in relation to its eventual edited length. 8:1 is a not unusual ratio for dramatic film.

Shooting script Screenplay with scenes numbered and amended to show intended camera coverage and editing.

Single shot A shot containing only one character.

Slow Motion The effect of slowed action created by exposing frames in the camera at greater-than-normal speed and then projecting that footage at normal speed (twenty-four frames per second).

Storyboard Series of key images sketched to suggest what a series of shots will look like.

Take One filmed attempt from one setup. Each setup may have several takes.

Three-shot/3S Shot containing three people.

Treatment Usually a synopsis in present tense, short story form of a screenplay summarizing dialogue and describing only what an audience would see and hear. Can also be a puff piece designed to sell the script rather than give comprehensive information about content.

Two-shot/2S Shot of two people.

VO Voice over.

WA Wide angle.

Whip pan Very fast panning movement.

White balance Video camera setup procedure in which circuitry is adjusted to the color temperature of the lighting source so that a white object is rendered as white on screen.

XLS Extra long shot.

Basic Camera and On Camera Tips

To help you "play to the camera," keep these ideas in mind:

- **Know where the camera (or cameras) are at all times.** You can give the best performance of your life, but it will be worthless if the camera can't see your face.
- **Know what the camera is trying to capture.** If the camera is capturing a long shot of you off in the distance, concentrating on arching your eyebrow to convey emotion will just be a waste of time since the camera won't be able to see it.
- **Know where the other actors and props are located in relation to the camera.** If you step too far forward or back, your body or a simple gesture, such as waving your hand, can block the camera's view of another actor.

Activity

Watch a television show or movie on video with the sound turned off. Pay attention to the shots that are being used in each segment. How is the actor communicating in the particular shot? Study a film or a single camera sitcom (Nurse Jackie, The Office, 30

Rock, Veep, Community) and a multi-camera set up (How I Met Your Mother, Two and Half Men, Two Broke Girls).

Creating Consistency with Different Takes

In the world of film and television, you don't just perform a scene once. You perform the same scene over and over again, so the director can capture that scene from different angles, or so the actors can try different variations on their acting. The same scene may be shot three or four or ten different times.

If a director wants to shoot the same scene over and over, don't take it personally as if you're doing something wrong. Sometimes, the director just wants to capture several different versions of the same scene, so he/she can choose the best one to use later. Actor John Ritter once did a commercial where he had to kiss a woman on the beach, and the director made him do it over and over and over again. John Ritter couldn't understand what he was doing wrong, so he asked the director. The director told him that he wasn't doing anything wrong. The director just wanted to capture the different appearances of the sunset in the background.

To maintain consistency from take to take (a *take* is a short scene that is captured on film or videotape), you have to be aware of continuity each time you perform a scene on camera. (*Continuity* means making sure your body movements and appearance are identical in every take.)

From an actor's point of view, the problem with shooting the same scene over and over again is that the actors never know which scene (or parts of each scene) will ultimately be used, so they need to be consistent in appearance, movement, and acting in every scene. Part of the first scene that they filmed may possibly be used followed by part of the last take of that same scene and ending with part of the fourth take of that same scene. When viewed one after another, the different mish-mash of scene takes need to blend together seamlessly as if the camera recorded the whole scene at once from start to finish.

To achieve this illusionary blend of reality, film and television actors must know how to act consistently each time they perform a scene, no matter how many times they need to perform it. For example, if an actor is filming a dinner scene and picks up a glass with his right hand, he needs to remember to keep picking up that same glass with his right

hand and not suddenly do a retake of the same scene and pick up the glass with his left hand.

The script supervisor is supposed to make sure that the actors perform, dress, and act as closely as possible with each retake of a scene. That way, when the director chooses which scene takes to use, the film or television show gives the illusion that every part of the scene was captured at the same time (even if part of the scene was captured in the morning, another part captured in the afternoon, and the beginning part of the scene captured last).

When doing multiple takes, you need to know the difference between acting and action. *Acting* deals with how you portray a character, while *action* is what you do with your body and any props. When shooting another take, subtly altering your acting is okay, but make sure that your actions remain exactly the same.

Activity

Choose a simple activity you can do at home – folding the laundry, cleaning or clearing an area, loading the dishwasher, sweeping the floor, dressing for the day. Pay attention the action, steps and order of the way you do it. Do the activity several times and try to hit the same steps with the same order each time.

Successfully Acting Scenes Out of Order

Besides maintaining continuity throughout multiple takes of the same scene, you also have to worry about continuity between different scenes. For financial reasons, film and TV shows are often shot out of order. For example, if a film opens and ends with a scene on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, the director has two choices:

- He/She can shoot the beginning scene on the Golden Gate Bridge and then move on to shoot the rest of the film until the end when the film crew and actors will need to travel back to the Golden Gate Bridge to film the ending.
- Or, he/she can save travel and lodging expenses by shooting both the beginning and ending of the film on the Golden Gate Bridge at the same time (while the actors and film crew are already set up).

Not surprisingly, most directors opt to save money and shoot scenes out of order.

As a result, on your first day on the set, you may possibly shoot the last scene of the film. Then on the final day on the set, you may shoot the first scene. If your character is

supposed to be timid and shy at the beginning of the film but aggressive and domineering by the end, your acting must reflect these characteristics. If you fail to act appropriately in a scene, your character won't make any sense when someone views the scenes in their correct order.

(Many actors mark up their scripts with notes for how their character should be acting and feeling in every scene. That way, when director shoots a scene out of order, the notes in the actors' scripts can remind them how to portray their characters accurately.)

Activity

Choose a long monologue you have already committed to memory. Break the monologue up into 4 sections. Perform the monologue in order. Now, perform the monologue out of order i.e. do the last section – then the second, etc. Is there a smooth quality to the work – do you bring the energy of the end of the third section into the beginning of the fourth section if you do them out of order?