

BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program Handbook

**Department of Theatre & Dance
Missouri State University**



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Professional performance training at Missouri State...

Where conservatory quality meets the liberal arts.

A Message from the Acting Coordinator

Welcome,

You may be reading this as a new member of the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State University. Congratulations! You can be proud that you've earned admission to a vibrant, competitive, and successful actor training program where we focus our resources toward assisting you in becoming a *working* professional actor. At Missouri State, we aim for our actors to become triple threat performers:

1. Actors for the stage.
2. Actors for the camera.
3. Actors who are excellent businesspeople.

You'll quickly discover that we are also a family here. *Welcome!*

As a new member of our pre-professional training program, our expectations of you are high. In order to succeed, you need to be prepared to execute consistent diligence in work ethic, academic success, and both personal and artistic development. Reading this handbook is a first step in meeting those expectations. Within these pages you will find a host of comprehensive guidelines and vital information that will help guide you through your course of study and beyond.

We're thrilled you've decided to join us in the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State!

Kurt H.

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"For most actors, success is achieved through study, struggle, preparation, infinite trial and error, training, discipline, experience, and work!"

-Robert Cohen

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A. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

The BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program is a dynamic and rigorous course of study, designed to offer its graduates an exceptional foundation for a successful career. While the graduate will receive a complete university degree, much of the curriculum is specific and unique to performance. Students entering the Program should carefully assess their vocational goals and the depth of their commitment. The candidate should already possess exceptional artistic potential, professional sensibility, and a strong willingness to succeed. The curricular sequence aims to provide students with a personalized foundation in acting technique developed alongside a vital emphasis on collaborative work. Students take courses designed to provide the foundation necessary to compete as successful actors in the professional arena – including contemporary theatre, classical and non-traditional theatre, film, television, commercials, and new media. As noted, we aim for our actors to become triple-threat performers: 1. Actors for the stage. 2. Actors for the camera. 3. Actors who are excellent businesspeople.

The training is sequential, in that each academic semester builds upon the foundation of work from the previous one. The BFA in Acting Stage & Screen Acting Program admits a target number of 16 students in each first-year studio class. Performance track courses are kept at an educationally optimum size and capped according to NAST (National Association of School of Theatre) standards. Selective admission (by audition) and an advantageous student/faculty ratio promote Program attention to educational quality, student-centered teaching, and the corresponding success of our graduates.

B. PURPOSE OF THE BFA ACTING FOR STAGE & SCREEN HANDBOOK

The BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Handbook aims to provide the student of acting with a comprehensive resource that documents vital philosophical and practical information, aiding your success as an acting student at Missouri State University. Additionally, it contains many helpful resources to guide your entrance to becoming an industry professional. Each student entering the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program is required to read the Handbook before the first day of Fall semester classes and hand in a signed agreement form (located at the back of the Handbook) prior to beginning Acting Studio I. BFA Musical Theatre students are required to read the Musical Theatre Handbook and also hand in a signed agreement form.

"Life beats down and crushes our souls and theatre reminds us that we have one. At least the type of theatre that I'm interested in; that is, theatre that moves an audience. You have the opportunity to literally impact the lives of people if they work on material that has integrity...Being an actor is a religious calling because you've been given the ability, the gift to inspire humanity."

-Sanford Meisner

C. ACTING FACULTY & ALUMNI

Performance Faculty

The BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program houses a devoted, gifted faculty who maintain currency in research and work in the professional arena to inform their teaching and artistic skills. All Acting faculty are union affiliated (AEA, SAG-AFTRA) with credits that include Broadway, national tours, off-Broadway, regional theatre, film, television, voice-overs, and numerous national commercials. Importantly, each has the utmost commitment to excellence in education.

Alumni

Our alumni offer many workshops and educational opportunities for our current students throughout the year, both at MSU and in industry centers. Alumni from the BFA Acting Program at Missouri State University are meeting with phenomenal success in the performance industry, a fact growing exponentially with each graduating class. Of course, we like to mention our historic successes such as Kathleen Turner, John Goodman, and Tess Harper, but our more recent graduates are taking the industry by storm, working on and off-Broadway, in Equity regional theatres and summer stock, national commercials, soaps, sit-coms, as television hosts, and throughout the feature film industry. Perhaps most impressive is the high rate of graduates working and thriving in the professional arena. Our graduates have formed solid working networks in NYC, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, and throughout other industry centers in the United States.

D. ADMISSION PROCESS

The BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program at MSU is a pre-professional actor training program. Admission into the Program is highly selective, determined by audition, interview, academic grounding, and professional promise. Members of the Missouri State acting faculty work together to determine the applicant's suitability for the Program.

E. ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

The following serve as sample criteria for a student's acceptance into the BFA Acting Program:

1. Talent as a developing actor.
2. Intellectual curiosity and desire to learn.
3. Artistic sensibility.
4. Stage presence and ownership of one's own uniqueness.
5. Passion for the craft of performance as a medium.
6. Potential to succeed in the profession.
7. Desire and discipline to develop professional skills.
8. Collaborative spirit and positive attitude toward self and others.
9. Academic promise.

F. RETENTION GUIDELINES

Academic

1. Maintenance of a cumulative GPA of 2.5.
2. Enrollment as a fulltime student.
3. Completion of minimum 12 credits per semester.
4. Satisfy all demands as outlined in the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Handbook.
5. Meet all assessment parameters as noted in the Handbook.
6. A passing grade in all required major non-performance classes.
7. A grade of B- or above in all major performance classes.

Performance

1. Audition for all Department of Theatre and Dance mainstage productions and accept parts offered.
2. Participate and achieve advancement in required assessments.
3. Demonstrate artistic excellence throughout actor training.
4. Demonstrate growth and excellence in the defined areas of measure.
5. Satisfy all assessment requirements as outlined in the Handbook.

Competency

At each level of the BFA Acting Program, the student will be assessed on their competency and mastery of the skills. At the conclusion of study in the Program, the student should be able to:

1. Consistently demonstrate a high level of performance as an actor.
2. Live believably in word and action in imaginary circumstances.
3. Characterize convincingly in productions of different genres and styles.
4. Possess vocal technique with a strong foundation of breathing, support, and resonance.
5. Possess physical tools of the actor and the ability to access kinesthetic impulses.
6. Possess an appreciation for the people and ideas which contributed to the development of contemporary performance, including the corresponding panoply of theatrical literature.
7. Develop effective industry audition skills.
8. Prepare relevant professional marketing skills and tools.
9. Have met all assessment measures as outlined in the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Handbook.

Suitability to the Profession

Students in the BFA Acting Program are expected to demonstrate professional excellence in classwork, rehearsals, performances, external work, and in their daily involvement with others. *Sample* yardsticks for determining suitability to the profession include talent, motivation, discipline, temperament, and professional marketability.

1. Evidence of Talent may include:

- A marked ability for artistic accomplishment.
- Consistent success and growth in class and production work.
- Achievement of markers for artistic success, including excellence in scene work, auditions, and production work.
- Positive growth as disclosed in assessments.

2. Evidence of Motivation may include:

- Self-motivation in the pursuit of knowledge.
- Keeping apprised of and engaged in current industry trends.
- Taking initiative for personal development.
- Willingness to work and experiment in class and production.
- Dedication to learning in the classroom as well as in rehearsals.
- Taking responsibility for self-motivation and inspiring one's own work.
- Collaborative spirit with fellow student-artists.
- Care for the growth of oneself and others.
- Personal goal setting and a quest for continued excellence.
- Taking accountability for personal health.

3. Evidence of Discipline may include:

- Being fully prepared to work and in a state of "presentness" in the classroom, rehearsal, and performance.
- Bringing into the rehearsal process informed choices.
- Leaving personal issues outside of the classroom and rehearsal.
- Punctuality.
- Ability to take and integrate direction.
- Consistent personal motivation.
- Structure and discipline as evidenced in one's academic and professional ethic.
- Personal goal setting and a quest for continued excellence.
- Taking accountability for personal health as relevant to the profession.

4. Evidence of Temperament may include:

- A positive attitude toward self, others, and the Program.
- Humility and respect for the art and craft of performance, self, fellow students, faculty, and staff.
- Ability to work with others.
- Professional courtesy.

5. Evidence of Professional Marketability* may include:

- Excellence in craft and audition skills.
- Excellence in work ethic and interpersonal skills.
- A healthy understanding of self in relation to industry mechanics.
- Healthy attention to well-being.
- Comprehension of industry/business logistics.
- Demonstration and execution of personal marketing materials and skills.
- See “Suitability to the Profession” numbers 1-4.

Note: Marketability in relation to the profession of acting ultimately involves an exploration (and comprehension) of self in relation to the professional industry. The faculty strongly believe that your true and healthy self is your marketable self. As such, we encourage all students to approach their work with a combination of faculty mentoring and discussions within a positive classroom environment – importantly, with the goal of developing a *positive* self-image and a healthy outlook toward fitness and nutrition. Several classes are designated for this dialogue. Without exception, the faculty believe that a healthy view of self holds both psychological and physiological benefits, and correspondingly, contributes to a long and vibrant performance career. If you have questions or concerns in this regard, please consult your advisor, acting teacher, or Acting Coordinator.

G. ASSESSMENT OF BFA PROGRAM CANDIDACY

Students will be formally assessed in the spring of each year of degree candidacy. The purpose is to evaluate the student’s growth in relation to the assessment retention criteria. If the faculty deem the criteria are not being met, the student will be placed on probation for one semester. At the end of the probationary period, a determination will be made as to whether the student may continue in the Program. Participation in the acting assessment process is mandatory for continuation in the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program and the BFA Musical Theatre Programs. The assessment process consists of the following:

1. Self-Assessment. The candidate will submit required self-assessment materials yearly. Materials include a self-assessment form, a resume, and headshot.

2. Unified Auditions. Students in the program are required to prepare for and participate in unified mainstage auditions. In addition to being a format for being cast in mainstage shows, they also serve as a vital component in the assessment process by giving the faculty a key opportunity to view and evaluate student development.

3. Evaluation Meeting. The faculty of required acting classes will evaluate BFA Acting for Stage & Screen candidates at the end of the first two years of study, using assessment measures as a tool for assessing artistic and academic growth. The meeting also helps the student set goals for forthcoming semesters. A student who misses their assessment meeting will be removed from the Program.

4. Recommendation for Course of Study. At the assessment meeting, each student will be provided one of three recommendations from the faculty:

1. Recommended for continuation in the program.
2. Recommended with reservation (put on probation for the following semester).
3. Not recommended for continuation of study.

5. Seniors will have additional assessment criteria as outlined in the syllabi for their capstone class, and as pertaining to the development and performance of the senior showcase (including but not limited to professional marketing materials).

Note: All assessment materials, including faculty evaluations and recommendation for course of study, will be kept on digital file in the office of the Program Coordinator. A student may make an appointment to access their file/assessment scores at any time during the academic year.

H. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ACTING ASSESSMENTS

Acting Assessment Instructions for 1st & 2nd Year BFA AFSS & MT Students

What are Acting Assessments?

Assessments are held once a year. You submit the required materials, then sit for an assessment dialogue with acting faculty. We discuss your successes, challenges, and set goals. Acting assessments are also the time that we discuss any issues that may impact your retention in the program. (See the Retention Criteria and Assessment section in your BFA Acting for Stage & Screen and BFA Musical Theatre Program Handbooks).

Do I need to participate in an assessment meeting?

All *returning* BFA Acting and BFA Musical Theatre students who have taken Acting Studio 121, 221, 321, or 421 during the ____ academic year must participate in acting assessment meetings. Students who were put on probationary status in spring or fall ____ must also participate.

Do I need to participate in Unified Auditions as part of my assessment?

Those who did not take Acting 121, 221, 321, or 421 in the 2025-26 academic year should not schedule an assessment. However, all returning BFA Acting and MT students must participate in unified mainstage auditions. Your audition submission is viewed by the acting faculty as an integral part of your yearly development process.

Must I sing at Unified Audition?

BFA Acting students can *choose* whether or not to sing at unified auditions.

Do incoming BFA Acting or MT program students need to participate?

No. Only students who have already completed THE 121 (Acting Studio I) need to participate in acting assessments.

Can I sign up for assessment if I wasn't in acting class?

Acting assessments are focused upon year 1 and year 2 students. If you fall outside of that range but would like an assessment dialogue, you are encouraged to speak with your current acting teacher or area coordinator.

Do graduating seniors need to sign-up for an assessment?

No. Graduating seniors are assessed through the showcase curriculum. A feedback form asking for your input will be sent in late April.

When and where are they?

Assessment week is aligned with spring unified auditions week- _____. Your assessment meeting will last approximately 12 minutes.

What happens if I do not complete my required assessment?

Non-completion of the required assessment will result in an inability to advance to the next level of coursework, and ineligibility for casting. It may also result in dismissal from your degree program.

Where do I sign up?

[Acting Assessment Sign-Up Link](#)

What do I need to prepare, and how do I submit materials?

Please submit the following materials:

1. A completed copy of your completed self-evaluation form.

The completed form should be labeled: Last Name 2026 Self-Evaluation

Example: Streep 2026 Self-Evaluation

The self-assessment form is in the sign-up folder. A copy will also be sent from the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Coordinator.

2. A **pdf** of your photo/resume.

The photo/resume should be labeled: Last Name 2026 PR

Example: Streep 2026 PR

3. All properly labeled materials should be placed in **one digital folder**.

The folder should be labeled as: Last Name 2026 Assessment Materials

Example: Streep 2026 Assessment Materials

4. **Submit** your folder here (*once submitted, materials cannot be changed*).

[Acting Self-Assessments 2026 Drop Here](#)

Assessment Materials Due Dates

Place materials in the folder by _____.

Late, incomplete, or improperly organized materials will not be accepted. No exceptions.

"Giving up a lot of yourself isn't really that hard when you realize that you get more than you give up."

-John Goodman

Sample Self-Assessment Form

Missouri State University, Department of Theatre & Dance
BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Self-Evaluation Form
(To be completed by the student prior to spring acting assessment meeting)

Name	Program	Year in Program	Date

I. Performance Record. List roles in theatre or film productions since arriving at MSU (including this term).

Name of Work	Role	Producing Agency	Dates

II. Repertoire. List performance repertoire worked upon *this academic year* in or outside of class, including scenes, monologues, and songs learned in voice lessons and performance classes. Do not include productions from above.

Name of Work	Role	Class	Dates

III. Auditions. List performances and/or productions for which you have auditioned for *this academic year*.

Name of Work	Producing Agency

IV. Related Activities. List any other activities that have informed your progress (performances for special events, certifications, departmental service, workshops, etc).

V. Rank your progress in the measurable areas noted below:

NI = needs improvement
 FP = fair progress
 SP = significant progress
 EP = excellent progress
 NA = no improvement required
 NP = does not pertain

Measurable Area	Self-Ranking
Acting Strength and Development: Includes core skills of listening, responding, loss of negative self-awareness, living in imaginary circumstances, character development, emotional availability and risk-taking, and text analysis as applicable to acting performance.	
Movement Strength and Development: Includes core skills of physical listening and responding, loss of negative physical self-awareness, freedom from physical tension and constriction, personal fitness, and physical character development as applicable to acting performance.	
Vocal Strength and Development: Includes core skills of understanding the logistics of the vocal instrument, loss of negative vocal-awareness, freedom from tension and constriction, vocal health, projection and support, diction, enunciation, and dialects as applicable to acting performance.	
Stage Presence/Personality Strength and Development: Includes the actor's personal presence and personality as related to performance work and castability in the profession of acting performance.	
Collaborative Spirit Strength and Development: Includes the ability to participate in, and contribute to, a productive and trustful ensemble-based environment in both classroom and rehearsals.	
Desire/Discipline/Work Ethic Strength and Development: Includes desire for professional success, personal discipline, work habits, organizational skills, classroom and rehearsal work ethic, and interpersonal relations as related to the profession of acting performance.	
Supporting Materials/Personal Marketing Strength and Development: Includes all elements of personal/professional marketing tools, including health and appearance as related to personal career goals, business acumen, headshots, resumes, cover letters, industry research, professional outreach, and personal website development. Also includes a concerted effort toward awareness of current and developing industry market trends.	
Scholarship Strength and Development: Includes all elements of scholastic measure, including major GPA, cumulative GPA, receipt of scholarships, and other measurable scholarly activities.	
Self-Care: Includes all elements of self-care as related to personal career goals, type, the demands of the professional industry, and the corresponding development of self in relation to market needs.	

VI. Cumulative GPA	
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VII. Below, please provide a self-evaluation of your work this academic year.

1. What are your goals beyond Missouri State University?
2. Did you set immediate goals for this closing year? What were they?
3. Did you achieve those goals? Why? Why not? How?
4. Noting the measurable areas above, what are your strengths?
5. Noting the measurable areas above, what are your weaknesses?
6. How are you addressing these challenges?
7. What goals have you set for next year?

Please do not write below this line. Faculty Comments Only

Student Learner Outcomes/Yearly Assessment

- 1 Does Not Apply
- 2 Does Not Meet Established Program Standards
- 3 Marginally Meets Established Program Standards
- 4 Meets Established Program Standards
- 5 Meets and Contributes to the Development of Established Program Standards

Acting Strength and Development: Includes core skills of listening, responding, loss of negative self-awareness, living in imaginary circumstances, character development, emotional availability and risk-taking, and text analysis as applicable to acting performance.	
Movement Strength and Development: Includes core skills of physical listening and responding, loss of negative physical self-awareness, freedom from physical tension and constriction, personal fitness, and physical character development as applicable to acting performance.	
Vocal Strength and Development: Includes core skills of understanding the logistics of the vocal instrument, loss of negative vocal-awareness, freedom from tension and constriction, vocal health, projection and support, diction, enunciation, and dialects as applicable to acting performance.	
Stage Presence/Personality Strength and Development: Includes the actor's personal presence and personality as related to performance work and castability in the profession of acting performance.	
Collaborative Spirit Strength and Development: Includes the ability to participate in, and contribute to, a productive and trustful ensemble-based environment in both classroom and rehearsals.	
Desire/Discipline/Work Ethic Strength and Development: Includes desire for professional success, personal discipline, work habits, organizational skills, classroom and rehearsal work ethic, and interpersonal relations as related to the profession of acting performance.	
Supporting Materials/Personal Marketing Strength and Development: Includes all elements of personal/professional marketing tools, including health and appearance as related to personal career goals, business acumen, headshots, resumes, cover letters, industry research, professional outreach, and personal website development. Also includes a concerted effort toward awareness of current and developing industry market trends.	
Scholarship Strength and Development: Includes all elements of scholastic measure, including major GPA, cumulative GPA, receipt of scholarships, and other measurable scholarly activities.	
Self-Care: Includes all elements of self-care as related to personal career goals, type, the demands of the professional industry, and the corresponding development of self in relation to market needs.	

Faculty Recommendation for Course of Study

After examination of comprehensive student performance (including all components indicated in student assessment measures), the faculty comprising the BFA Acting Area at Missouri State University make the following recommendation regarding the student's course of study:

Recommendation	
Recommendation for continuation of study.	
Recommendation, with defined reservations, for continuation of study.	
Recommendation for discontinuation of study.	

Faculty Present at Assessment:

"I think there are huge lessons there, for young people who are getting started in life, as well as other people. And that is, to take responsibility for your own life. Only you are responsible for the course you take from there."

-Story Musgrave

I. PROBATION POLICY

If a candidate fails to meet the assessment retention criteria, they will be placed on probation for one semester ("Recommended with Reservation"). The faculty will specify the nature of the student's deficiencies and suggest remedies. At the end of the probationary semester, the faculty will reassess the student's status and make all necessary determinations and recommendations. The student's failure to remediate deficiencies will result in dismissal from the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program. Probationary status is limited to one semester only.

J. DISMISSAL FROM PROGRAM

If a student does not meet the identified goals during the probationary semester, they will be removed from the Program. Additionally, the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen faculty reserve the right, with Department Head approval, to remove a student without the benefit of a probationary semester if they deem it to be in the best interests of the student and/or the Program.

K. AUDITION POLICIES

1. All eligible BFA Acting for Stage & Screen students are required to audition for and accept roles, if cast, in departmental mainstage non-musicals. Students who, because of medical necessity, death in the family, academic probation, etc., wish to *not* be considered for casting, must submit a written request to the Acting Coordinator at least two weeks prior to auditions. Auditions are an integral part of the development and assessment process. For assessment purposes, students who are given a performance waiver are still required to participate in unified auditions. Acting majors must audition for every department mainstage drama. A student may elect to refuse a role if cast in a play that contains material that conflicts with their social, religious, cultural, or ethical framework, but only after consultation with the Acting Coordinator (at least 14 days prior to auditions).

Please note that those who choose to disregard this policy place their program status at the discretion of the faculty. Consequences could include being placed on program probation, being prohibited from auditioning for all MSU productions in the semester following the infraction, or removal from the Program.

2. A cumulative grade point average of 2.5 must be maintained in order to participate in all MSU Theatre & Dance productions. For example, in order to be eligible for a fall production, the student's *cumulative* grade point average following the previous spring must be at least 2.5. In addition, a grade of B- or above must be earned in all required performance classes. In the case of extreme circumstances, the student may submit an exception request. Requests must be put in written form and submitted to the Acting Coordinator, who will review the request, then forward it to the faculty and Department Head for final consideration.

3. First semester Acting for Stage & Screen and Musical Theatre students may not engage in public performance while enrolled in THE 121. This stipulation applies to all public performances, both internal and external. In exceptional circumstances, students may submit a waiver request to allow their participation in a public performance. Every request will be given due consideration, but students should be aware that a request does not infer automatic permission. The academic and artistic circumstances will be carefully and fairly evaluated in each unique circumstance, underscored by the intent of best serving the student's long-term developmental needs.

4. There is an 8-semester eligibility to audition for MSU mainstage productions as a BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Acting student. We expect our students to graduate in a timely manner so they can begin auditioning for professional work outside of academia. The 8-semester eligibility allows students to audition for the MSU mainstage season 8 times after they become a BFA Candidate. Since students enrolled in THE 121 are ineligible for performing on the mainstage, this allows our BFA candidates 4½ years of eligibility at MSU.

5. After completion of THE 451 (Auditions), Acting for Stage & Screen students are required to submit a *professional* photo/resume for all program auditions and assessments.
6. Prior to entering their final/senior year, Acting students are required to have a live professional website and list the web address on their resume/audition materials. Website development begins during Acting & Auditioning for the Camera and Auditions classes.
7. Acting students are required to attend all earned callbacks for MSU productions.
8. Part-time seniors (enrolled for less than 12 hours) may audition for departmental productions with approval of the Acting Coordinator. Approval will only be provided for one semester.
9. Students may not perform while on Program probation.
10. See "N. Outside Production Activities."

L. PRODUCTION CASTING PHILOSOPHY

The BFA Acting for Stage & Screen and BFA Musical Theatre Programs at MSU are both pre-professional training programs. The goal is to prepare every student for the professional rigors of the industry. In relation, our casting philosophy is trifold: encompassing the dynamic of individual development/opportunity, promoting excellence in production, and embodying a "real-world" sense of industry dynamics. Our casting outlook aims to:

1. Provide developmental opportunities for each student.
2. Contribute to excellence in production and the maintenance of professional values.
3. Provide students with a real-world casting model.

Following unified auditions, all production directors meet to thoroughly discuss these dynamics in relation to the casting process and the forthcoming production season. Student actors should be comforted that faculty directors make every attempt to equitably incorporate these principles. However, it is also important for the student actor to note that there will likely be times of frustration involving development and casting opportunities. If a student feels unfairly treated in the casting process, they are encouraged to visit with a faculty mentor, advisor, or the Acting Coordinator.

M. REHEARSAL POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Theatre & Dance rehearsal policies are outlined clearly in the departmental handbook. Rehearsal expectations include:

1. Warm up your body and voice prior to rehearsal.
2. Arrive at rehearsal at least 5 minutes prior to your start time.
3. Be prepared to work at the top of rehearsal.
4. Wear appropriate rehearsal attire.
5. No smoking, eating, or gum chewing.
6. No cell phone use or texting. All cell phones should be turned off during rehearsals.
7. Stay in the rehearsal room.
8. If you are unable to be on time for rehearsal, notify the stage manager immediately.
9. Check your department e-mail two times daily.
10. Stay healthy. Keep your body and voice in condition for rehearsals and performances.
11. Attend all classes. Production is an extension of classroom learning. If you are unable to attend any class, your director may not allow you to attend rehearsal that evening.
12. State all rehearsal period conflicts on your audition form. Conflicts not presented on the audition form will not be granted by the director.
13. Be present and professional at all production-related functions.
14. Attend and participate in production strike.

Note: Failure to rise to these expectations and the policies outlined in the department handbook will result in removal from production and possible probation or removal from the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program.

N. OUTSIDE PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

The city of Springfield has a vibrant Arts community and many exciting opportunities. However, as an Acting candidate, the student's primary obligation is to the Program and its attendant department productions. Students must be clear of departmental obligations prior to auditioning for or committing to outside performance/production projects. It is highly recommended that students consult with their advisor or the Acting coordinator *before* considering opportunities that may impact their Program responsibilities, i.e. rehearsals, classwork, or productions. We encourage you to see and support as much external theatre and film as you are able, but please remember that you are a student here for only 4 years, and we want to ensure that you are able to fully immerse yourself in the intensive training that is part of the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State University. Intentionally or unintentionally failing to adhere to this policy may result in probation or dismissal from the Program.

O. CLASSROOM/CLASS REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

Specific expectations and policies for each performance class are outlined in the syllabus for the given class. All classes within the BFA Acting curriculum share the following guidelines:

1. Attendance and Prompt Arrival

All required BFA Acting performance classes share a uniform attendance/late policy. Regular attendance and on-time arrival are expected of all students. We're working together to form the building blocks of professionalism and industry success, and attendance is a keystone. Absences equal to the number of 6 contact hours (3 total classes) are permitted. There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. Any reason for an absence falls under the umbrella of three that are allowed, including but not limited to: illness, family crisis, family events, oversleeping, appointments with professors, university sanctioned events, external work taken, mental health days, jury rehearsals, showcase events, production commitments, etc. After three absences, the student's grade will be lowered by one full letter grade for each additional class absence. It is advised that students use their three allowed absences wisely.

In very exceptional/rare circumstances such as hospitalization/severe illness or a death in the immediate family, a student may appeal to the professor for an exception to surpass three absences. However, in such cases the student *must* present official documentation and a letter of explanation. Please be advised, a professor may ask for additional documentation. A request for documentation does not infer mistrust. In contrast, it's intended to create an equitable playing field where students are working with the same expectations and obligations. If an exception is approved, the professor may provide the student with an opportunity to make-up an absence(s).

Additionally, students may not enter the performance classroom late without prior approval. Two tardies will count as one full absence. A gentle reminder: a final grade of B- or above is required for advancement to the next level of acting classes/BFA Acting curriculum. It's important that students understand that the absence policy is not in place as a disciplinary measure. In contrast, it's intended to help build professional ethic, orient focus toward craft development, and to support a classroom environment where students consistently lend to the development of one another.

Sample Scenario

Based upon his work, Tim has a 92% (A-) average in Acting Studio 1 (121).

If he has 3 absences- the 92% (A-) is retained.

If he has 4 absences- the 92% grade becomes an 82% (B-).

If he has 5 absences- the 92% becomes a 72% (C-). This means Tim cannot advance to Acting II (221).

If he has 4 absences and 2 tardies- the 92% becomes a 72% (C-). This means Tim cannot advance to Acting II (221).

2. Equipment and Space Maintenance

Students are expected to restore the space following all classes and rehearsals. This includes restoring all chairs, rehearsal furniture, props, and personal items. Food and drink are not allowed in classroom and rehearsal spaces. Water is allowed in an enclosed container. Always leave the space *better* than you found it.

3. Partnering and Scene Work

As a member of a training ensemble, you hold a responsibility toward the growth of others. Positive and responsible scene partnership is a key part of this responsibility. Partnering expectations and guidelines include:

- Create a schedule in advance with your partner. Set a goal for each rehearsal.
- If something comes up and you absolutely must cancel, do so immediately and schedule a make-up rehearsal.
- Be open and available to new experiences. Say “yes” to your partner’s ideas and listen to their opinions.
- Respect your partner’s boundaries and allow your boundaries to be challenged but never compromised.
- Treat your partner in a professional and ethical way at all times.

4. Sexual Harassment Awareness

Sexual harassment takes many forms, both conscious and unintended. Performance classes involve a good deal of partnering, body work, and emotional vulnerability. Please be mindful of the feelings and sensitivities of others. Harassment of any kind undermines the trust necessary in a successful ensemble atmosphere. Any inappropriate behavior – emotional, physical, or verbal – will be dealt with severely and will impact your status in the Program.

5. Scene Intimacy and Physical Violence

Theatrical intimacy and physical violence in scene and classroom work must be clearly defined and agreed upon by all parties involved. A third party should be present at all rehearsals involving intimacy and/or physical violence. Please see *Pillars of Safe Intimacy*.

6. Trust

A foundation of ensemble trust is one of the most essential ingredients for successful growth in a professional training program. In addition to noted forms of sexual harassment, the disintegration of trust wears many masks. Behavior that negatively impacts the trustful ensemble atmosphere of the classroom and the program at large is entirely unacceptable and will result in probation or removal from the BFA Acting Program.

7. Attire

Students are required to wear black clothes in all movement and voice classes. As appropriate to gender identification, students should be prepared to utilize the wardrobe items noted below in both class and/or rehearsals.

- Solid black clothing.
- A corset. These can be found at many lingerie stores and online – you do not need to spend a lot of money. Ideally it is a front button or hook and a back lace-up, with boning. Something simple – this is not about finding an attractive corset, but finding a *working* corset!
- A rehearsal skirt. Floor length, medium fullness. Must fit over the corset.
- Character shoes and ballet slippers.
- A dressy button-down blouse.
- A suit coat that fits you well.
- A button down (collared) shirt.
- A suit vest that fits you well.
- Hard soled dress shoes.
- Dress pants
- Quality sneakers

Note: Except for black classroom clothing, many of the above are items that you will be expected to have along the way. You do not need to come to college with all those items in hand.

8. Camera & Audition Equipment

Students will be expected to have regular access to the equipment below for class and audition purposes:

- A filming device (dslr/mirrorless camera, standalone video camera, or smart phone)
- A tripod
- Basic editing software
- An external mic (Suggested by Voice Over)
- A Neutral backdrop (Suggested by THE 522)
- Ring light and/or basic 4pt. light setup (Suggested by THE 522)
- A set of 2 lavalier mics (body mics) compatible with your filming device (Suggested by THE 522)

9. Scene Material

All students are challenged to expand their intellectual and artistic horizons while in the Program. One means of accomplishing this is by choices in scene material. However, it is never a faculty member's intent to mandate a scene that the student deems inappropriate in relation to their religious, social, cultural, or ethical framework. Students are highly encouraged to discuss relevant concerns with their course professor, Program Coordinator, or the Theatre & Dance Department Head.

10. Addressing Faculty

Students are asked to address faculty by title until they are instructed otherwise.

11. Classroom Privacy Policy

As noted, a foundation of ensemble trust is one of the most essential ingredients for successful growth in a professional training program. A core component in building a trustful training environment is maintaining a closed and private classroom environment. It is expected that all discussion of student work will stay within the classroom setting and under the guidance of the professor. In relation, discussing the coursework of your peers outside of the classroom (in any context including verbal, written, or social media) is strictly prohibited. Violation of this understanding will result in probation or removal from the Program.

12. Cell Phones

Cell phone use, recording, and texting during class is strictly prohibited unless directed by the instructor. Cell phones should be turned off before entering the classroom. The instructor will leave their personal device on in order to receive emergency alerts.

13. Ten Recommendations for the First Day of Acting Class

- One: Check the location the *day before* to be sure you can find the studio.
- Two: Arrive 10 minutes *early* to class. Sit in *front*.
- Three: Be seated, quiet, and ready to listen/work when your teacher arrives. (*A teacher should never have to ask for your focus.*)
- Four: Be prepared/dressed to move. No hats. (*You can look nice and be ready to work.*) Be 100% sure to follow any and all pre-determined attire guidelines for *that* specific class/session.
- Five: Have access to your class outline/syllabus and all writing/notetaking materials.
- Six: No food. Water is permitted in a closed container.
- Seven: Address the teacher by title until instructed to do otherwise.
- Eight: Arrive without ego and defense mechanisms. *Everyone* is nervous and uncertain about their abilities in relation to those around them.
- Nine: Be open and generous to those around you.
- Ten: If asked to participate, jump in, "ready" or not.
- And one more: Enjoy!

"Surround yourself with good people, surround yourself with positivity and people who are going to challenge you to make you better. You can control two things, your work ethic and your attitude about anything."

-Ali Krieger

14. Recommended Items for College

These items have been suggested by current students.

- scooter (if classes are far apart).
- shower caddy
- fan
- noise canceling headphones
- any medicine you may need (people get sick a lot)
- medicine kit with all medicine you think you might need (reflux pills, melatonin, Benadryl, anti-diarrheal, ibuprofen, allergy, band aids, etc.)
- rolling laundry hamper with wheels
- yoga mat (and some wipes)
- any plays you own (for scene/monologue searching)
- kitchen size trash can
- dryer balls (they have the same purpose as dryer sheets, but are reusable)
- colored pencils or markers
- a ruler (for A2 Class)
- if you have back issues, get a rolling backpack
- small safe for valuables and prescription meds
- masks (in case you aren't feeling well but still need to go to class)
- flashlight
- batteries
- electric hand warmers (some double as portable chargers)
- lamp (make sure it's UL certified or it might get confiscated)
- VITAMINS!!!!
- large supply of laundry detergent (it will save you money)
- Dampriid (it collects excess water; you could also just get a dehumidifier)
- small toolbox (to build something during move-in or fix something in your dorm)
- week to week planner for your desk (it will help you plan out what assignments you want to do during which days of the week).
- broom and dustpan or a vacuum if (vacuums at the front desk of dorms are terrible)
- a *reliable* laptop

15. Missouri State University and TITLE IX

Missouri State does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, and it is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) not to discriminate. The university is committed to maintaining an environment that is safe and free from sexual violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault including domestic or dating violence, and stalking. If you would like to speak with someone in our Title IX Office, they are located in Carrington 205 and can be reached at (417) 836-6810 or TitleIX@missouristate.edu.

"Every time you fall down, it gives you an opportunity to question yourself, question your integrity. It's not about the actual failure itself — it's how you respond to it."

-Abby Wambach

Generosity Chart (by Christopher Cherry)

Generosity Chart ©2013 C. Cherry	STALLED 0	DESIRE 1	DISCOVERY 2	DEVELOPMENT 3	MATURATION 4	EXPERTISE 5
Generosity Giving generously and joyfully to self, fellow actors, mentors, and the audience	<u>Grumbles</u> Is miserly with self and others Operates from a position of scarcity and fear Fails to build community or practice hospitality in the rehearsal hall or classroom Lacks kindness and patience in relating to self and others; uses coercive speech or conduct Does not listen Clenches, grips, grasps, and holds in life and in performance Prefers wallowing in sensations produced by over-muscularized emotion and selfish performance rather than freely offering a gift to the audience and fellow actors	Desires to be generous, but lacks the grace, courage, or will to give joyfully	Understands that generosity with self and others is essential to fostering growth Understands that generosity is fundamental to good acting Illuminating moment: Realizes the extent and frequency of grumbling and the pernicious damage it causes to self and community Illuminating moment: Experiences and prefers open-handed, open-hearted offering of performance	Lessens grumbling and listening to grumbling Sporadically operates from a position of abundance, freedom, and joy Sporadically builds community and practices hospitality in the rehearsal hall and classroom Sometimes relates to self and others with kindness and patience, free of coercive speech or conduct Sporadically listens Sporadically chooses the good actor's sacrifice: Sometimes declines the self-indulgence of wallowing in the sensation produced by over-muscularized emotion and selfish performance in order to give the audience and fellow players a superior experience	Seldom grumbles or listens to grumbling Frequently operates from a position of abundance, freedom, and joy Frequently builds community and practices hospitality in the rehearsal hall and classroom Usually relates to self and others with kindness and patience, free of coercive speech or conduct Frequently listens Frequently chooses the good actor's sacrifice: Usually declines the self-indulgence of wallowing in the sensation produced by over-muscularized emotion and selfish performance in order to give the audience and fellow players a superior experience	Never grumbles or listens to grumbling Consistently operates from a position of abundance, freedom, and joy Consistently builds community and practices hospitality in the rehearsal hall and classroom Consistently relates to self and others with kindness and patience, free of coercive speech or conduct Consistently listens Consistently chooses the good actor's sacrifice: Always declines the self-indulgence of wallowing in the sensation produced by over-muscularized emotion and selfish performance in order to give the audience and fellow players a superior experience

PILLARS OF SAFE INTIMACY: REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Context - Communication - Consent - Choreography - Closure

FIRST, A NOTE ON THE ROLE OF INTIMACY DIRECTOR: The Intimacy Director is more than a choreographer; they are an advocate for the ensemble and for each actor. The Intimacy Director takes responsibility for the emotional safety of the actors and anyone else in the rehearsal hall while they are present. For this reason, we recommend seeking out a certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors International. Should that be out of reach, please refer to the guidelines below. For additional resources and materials, consider becoming a member at www.intimacydirectorsinternational.com. Thank you for supporting the work.

CONTEXT

Before any choreography can be considered, there must first be an understanding of the story and the given circumstances surrounding a scene of intimacy. All parties must be aware of how the scene of intimacy meets the needs of the story and must also understand the story within the intimacy itself. This not only creates sense of safety, but also eliminates the unexpected and ensures that the intimacy is always in service of the story.

COMMUNICATION

There must be open and continuous communication between the director, intimacy director, stage management and the actors. This communication includes but is not limited to, discussion of the scene, understanding of the choreography, continued discussion throughout the rehearsal period, frequent check ins during the run, and an openness to dissent any actions in the process. Avenues for reporting harassment must be made available to the entire ensemble.

CONSENT

Before any scene of intimacy can be addressed, consent must be established between the actors. Permission may be given by a director, script, or choreographer; however, consent can only be given from the person receiving the action. Starting choreography from a place of understanding consent ensures that all parties are clear about to which actions they are consenting, and it provides actors with the agency to remove consent at any time.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Each scene of intimacy must be choreographed, and that choreography will be adhered to for the entire production. Any changes to the choreography must first be approved by the intimacy choreographer. It is the job of stage management to ensure that the choreography is performed as intended. Stage management must also address any discrepancies that may appear in the rehearsal process and all performances.

CLOSURE

At the end of every rehearsal or scene of intimacy, actors are encouraged to develop a closing moment between them to signify the ending of the work. This small moment or simple ritual can be used between takes or runs of the scene, and/or upon the close of rehearsal. We encourage this as a moment to leave our characters, relationships, and actions from the work behind, and walk back into our lives. Likewise, we suggest all parties (including outside eyes) exercise proper self-care during and after the run or filming of intimate projects.



INTIMACY DIRECTORS
INTERNATIONAL

info@intimacydirectorsinternational.com
www.intimacydirectorsinternational.com

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P. COURSEWORK & ACADEMIC ADVISING

In the pages below are tracking charts of required course work, including the semester breakdown for the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen candidate's 4-year and 3-year (transfer) programs of study. The MSU General Education Requirements are readily available in the undergraduate catalogue. Your advisor will be one of your core acting teachers, so please consult with them regularly in order to ensure that your class work meets your needs both artistically and academically. The BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program is rigorous, but if you follow the suggested schedule, you will be able to complete your studies in the noted years. Please make sure to consult with your advisor EVERY semester in order to ensure that you are completing your coursework in a manner that will allow you to graduate in a timely manner.

"If you are to do justice to [the great roles], you must fly up to them – rather than dragging them down to you – by expanding your range of knowledge and strengthening your imagination. Your imagination must become as real to you as your memories and feelings. What you take into yourself about psychology, politics, sociology, history and so on, will allow you to reach places in yourself you didn't know existed. No line, no image, no thought can be left general. Each must be specific and personal. Your work is not complete until this is so."

-Harold Guskin

"Boldness be my friend."

-William Shakespeare

Curriculum Table – Three Year Transfer Plan

BFA Acting for Stage & Screen -Three Year (Transfer) Plan

Pre-Entry Semester (Spring)	Hours
THE 130 Introduction to Script Analysis	3
General ed. course: Written Communication II	3
General education courses	9
THE Elective or Production Practicum (THE 495)	3
	18

First Semester (Fall)	Hours
THE 121 Acting Studio I	3
THE 122 The Tools of the Actor	3
THE 541 Theatre History I	3
THE 250 or THE 260 or THE 255	2
THE 251 or THE 261	1
General ed. course or THE 495 Prod. Practicum	3
General education course	3
	18

Second Semester (Spring)	Hours
THE 221 Acting Studio II	3
THE 226 Intermediate Voice and Movement	2
THE 250 or THE 260 or THE 255	2
THE 251 or THE 261	1
THE 542 Theatre History II	3
General education course	3
General education course	4
	18

Third Semester (Fall)	Hours
THE 321 Acting Studio III	3
THE 326 Advanced Voice & Move. for the Actor	3
THE 430 Directing I	3
THE 250 Voice-Over or THE 228 Acting the Song	2
Practicum (THE 495)	3
General education course	3
	18

Fourth Semester (Spring)	Hours
THE 421 Acting Studio IV	3
THE 328 Combat and Viol. for Stage and Screen	3
THE 522 Auditioning and Acting for the Camera	3
Practicum (THE 495)	3
Elective	3
General education course	3
	18

Fifth Semester (Fall)	Hours
THE 511 Structures and Styles Shakespeare	3
THE 510 or THE 530 or THE 543 or THE 545	3
THE 489 Advanced Actor Seminar	2
THE 451 Auditions	2
Electives and/or practicum	3
General education course	3
	16

Sixth Semester (Spring)	Hours
THE 513 Senior BFA Project	3
THE 424 Dialects	1
THE 524 Acting on Film	3
THE 513 Senior BFA Project	3
Electives and/or practicum	3
Happy Graduation!	13

Transfer tips for success:

This major requires a departmental audition. The acting requirements in this degree plan take six semesters to complete, allowing you (transferring from another institution or an internal major change) to complete the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen track in a three-year course of study. Also, each transfer situation is unique in the number and types of general education credit hours brought in. This tracking sheet is meant to serve as a guide, and it is likely that your general education course equivalencies may vary somewhat. Please see your advisor early in your first program year and in each following semester to discuss variations of your own degree plan. All statements in this document concerning requirements, prerequisites, conditions or other matters are for informational purposes and are subject to change. Effective academic advisement is a partnership, with advisees sharing in the responsibility. Additionally, this degree plan does not list options for department intersession and summer courses. It is recommended that transfers students in the three-year BFA acting track consider summer classes to ease the major course load in the junior and senior years. Degree plan last reviewed 5/1/2026.

Curriculum Table – Four Year Degree Plan

BFA for Stage & Screen -Four Year Plan

First Semester (Fall)		Second Semester (Spring)	
THE 121 Acting Studio I	3	THE 130 Introduction to Script Analysis	3
THE 122 The Tools of the Actor	3	THE 221 Acting Studio II	3
THE 495 Production Practicum	3	THE 226 Intermediate Voice and Movement	2
General education course	3	THE 250(2) or THE 260(2) or THE 255(3)	2-3
General education course	3	THE 251 or THE 261	1
ENG 110 Writing I (Written Communication I)	3	General education course	3
	18	General ed. course: Written Communication II	3
			17-18
Third Semester (Fall)		Fourth Semester (Spring)	
THE 230 Voice-Over or THE 228 Acting the Song	2	THE 421 Acting Studio IV	3
THE 321 Acting Studio III	3	THE 250 or THE 255 or THE 260	2
THE 541 Theatre History I	3	THE 251 or THE 256 or THE 261	1
General education course	3	THE 542 Theatre History II	3
General education course	3	General education course	3
General education course	3	General education course	4
	18		16
Fifth Semester (Fall)		Sixth Semester (Spring)	
THE 326 Adv. Voice & Movement for the Actor	3	THE 328 Combat and Viol. for Stage and Screen	3
THE 451 Auditions	2	THE 424 Dialects	1
THE 430 Directing I	3	THE 522 Auditioning and Acting for the Camera	3
General education course	3	General education course	4
General education course	3	Electives and/or practicum (THE 495)	2-4
Electives and/or practicum (THE 495)	2-3		13-15
	16-17		
Seventh Semester (Fall)		Eighth Semester (Spring)	
THE 511 Structures and Styles Shakespeare	3	THE 513 Acting Senior Project	2
THE 489 Advanced Actor Seminar	2	THE 524 Acting on Film	3
THE 510 or THE 520 or THE 543 or THE 545	3	Electives and/or Practicum (THE 495)	3-4
Electives and/or practicum (THE 495)	3	General education course	3
General education course	3	Happy Graduation!	12
	15		

Tips for success:

This four-year BFA Acting for Stage & Screen degree plan does not consider dual credit or transfer credit that may be counted upon admission to the University. Your degree plan may vary due to availability of courses and course offerings. This sample schedule should only serve as a guide and should not replace regular meetings with your advisor. Be sure to verify your schedule with the projected course offerings. Degree plan last reviewed 5/1/2026.

Suggested Acting for Stage & Screen Program Electives

Animal Science

Introduction to Riding (AGS 162, 1 credit)

Computers

Introduction to Computing (CSC 111, 3 credits)

Dance

Dance Fundamentals: Tap Dance (Dan 125, 2 credits)

Dance Fundamentals: Ballet (DAN 130, 2 credits)

Dance Fundamentals: Contemporary Dance (DAN 131, 2 credits)

English

Writing for Social Change (ENG 222, 3 credits)

Playwriting (ENG 235, 3 credits)

Introduction to Shakespeare (ENG 312, 3 credits)

Shakespeare (ENG 513, 3 credits)

Film

Introduction to Film (MED 274, 3 credits)

Fundamentals of Media Production (MED 345, 3 credits)

Screen Writing (MED 360, 3 credits)

Audio Production (MED 382, 3 credits)

Television Production (MED 383, 3 credits)

Interactive Web Design (MED 390, 3 credits)

TV/Film Producing (MED 462, 3 credits)

Writ. Adaptations for TV and Film (MED 463, 3 credits)

Genre Writing for Film and TV (MED 464, 3 credits)

Editing for Film and TV (MED 466, 3 credits)

Directing the Short Film (MED 472, 3 credits)

Finance

Personal Finance (FIN 150, 3 hours)

Kinesiology

Beginning Swimming (KIN 101, 1 credit)

Weight Training (KIN 127, 1 credit)

Pistol Marksmanship (KIN 135, 1 credit)

Rifle Marksmanship (KIN 135, 1 credit)

Beginning Yoga (KIN 135, 1 credit)

Ballroom dance (KIN 136, 1 credit)

Beginning Judo (KIN 147, 1 credit)

Self-Defense (KIN 149, 1 credit)

Healthy Lifestyles: Preventative Approaches (KIN 210, 3 credits)

First Aid (KIN 253, 2 credits)

Personal Health (KIN 257, 2 credits)

Aquatics (KIN 273, 1 credit)

Marketing

Marketing Fundamentals (MKT 150, 3 credits)

Music

Beginning Piano (MUS 101, 2 credits)

Voice Class I (MUS 135, 1 credit)

Voice Class II (MUS 136, 1 credit)

Nutrition

Essentials of Nutrition (DTN 130, 3 hours)

Introduction to Nutrition (DTN 240, 3 credits)

Theatre

Acting-Performance and Literature (THE 323, 3 credits)

Stage Management (THE 354, 3 credits)

Scene Study (THE 422, 3 credits)

*Scripting and Performing (THE 510, 3 credits) *If not taken to fulfill a core degree requirement.*

Theatre for Social Change (THE 515, 3 credits)

"I believe you make your day. You make your life. So much of it is all perception, and this is the form that I built for myself. I have to accept it and work within those compounds, and it's up to me."

-Brad Pitt

Q. SENIOR ACTING SHOWCASE

During the final year in residence, each BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen student must register for Advanced Actor's Seminar (Fall THE 489, 2 Credits), and Senior BFA Project (Spring THE 513, 2 Credits). Advanced Actor's Seminar and Senior BFA Project are defined as a "Performance project that demonstrates the student's mastery of skills received during Acting degree training..." As such, these two capstone classes are designed to mentor the graduating student toward successful completion of the showcase experience. Under the guidance of the course professor(s) and area coordinator, graduating seniors will develop and perform in the showcase. Participation in on-camera showcase performances and in local showcase activities is mandatory for completion of the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen degree. Performance in Los Angeles Showcase Week *requires an audition* and is limited to graduating students who have completed all the sequential BFA Acting for Stage & Screen track prerequisites to THE 498 and THE 513 (see below), and who successfully completed all required yearly assessments. It is important to note that selection for participation in LA Showcase Week is competitive, contingent upon the audition/interview process, and is an opportunity that should not be taken lightly or for granted by the student.

The showcase capstone experience aims to demonstrate the individual growth, talent, marketing skills, and the capability for industry success present in each BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen participant. It also highlights their abilities for collaboration. LA Showcase Week is focused upon connecting graduating students to industry professionals, successful alumni, and in garnering professional representation.

Primary Los Angeles Showcase Week Goals include:

1. Assist graduating seniors in garnering professional representation.
2. Help graduating seniors develop vital professional relationships and industry connections, including MSU alumni working in the industry.
3. Allow graduating seniors the opportunity to experience the professional and logistical mechanics of a large industry center.
4. Provide opportunities for graduating seniors to participate in workshops with noted alumni and high-level industry professionals.

The Los Angeles Showcase features the talents of the graduating class in the Acting for Stage & Screen Program. Graduating BFA Musical Theatre Students may participate (via audition) with the approval and invitation of the acting faculty, provided they have completed the curricular Acting 121-421 sequence and all required assessments. They must have also completed THE 522-Auditioning for the Camera or THE 524-Acting on Film.

"Read, read, read, read, read. Read everything. You can't work unless you know the world, and outside of living in the world the best way to learn about the world is to read about it."

-John Goodman

R. SAMPLE DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

BFA Acting students are eligible for scholarships granted by the Theatre & Dance Department. Students are responsible for researching yearly application processes and due dates (generally January). To be considered, students must fill out a FAFSA and scholarship application through the financial aid office. No departmental level application is necessary, though some do require an audition. Recipients of Department of Theatre & Dance scholarships will be notified in late spring. Please visit the Financial Aid or Theatre and Dance offices for information regarding selection/retention criteria.

SCHOLARSHIP	REQUIREMENTS
Kathleen Turner	75 hours, GPA 3.0. Commitment to work in Professional World. Requires audition – two monologues.
Irene Coger	50 hours, GPA 3.2. Special consideration for Acting majors.
Professional Performance	Senior, intending to enter performance market. Demonstrated skill as an actor. Enrolled in at least 12 hours / semester.
Bob Comer Memorial	Grad or Undergrad, first preference to student who worked in Tent Theatre box office, second to staff member during regular academic year.
Byrne Blackwood Scenic Design	30 hours, GPA 2.5. Student pursuing design. Preference to student who has worked in scene design during TENT season.
Ben Soto Costume	SO, GPA 2.5. Interested in costume design & construction.
Robert Gilmore Tent Theatre Founders	30 hours, GPA 2.5. Financial need and interest in directing.
Howard Orms Memorial	Enrolled (or having taken) THE 430: Dir I. Potential & desire to stage direct.
Chyrel Miller	Any academic level dance major. Could be FR. Awarded on basis of audition or participation in performance productions.
Mike McElhanney Shakespeare Award	Graduate or Undergrad, GPA 2.5, must carry 12 hours (undergrad) or 9 hours (grad) who deserves recognition for excellence in Shakespeare studies.
Sam and Adele Huber	30 hours, GPA 2.5. Renewable, given “with regard to financial need.”
Ann Page	Major in theatre. Renewable, “regard for financial need.”
Jean Jones Johnston	SO, GPA 2.5, financial need and first priority to a student from Hartville or Mansfield.
Dennis Warning	Given for “outstanding contributions.”
Joseph Cantlin	Given for “outstanding contributions.”
Brad Ferguson	Awarded annually to a student that has worked in the Theatre Department's Costume Shop and has a cumulative GPA of 3.0.
Ruth McKenney	Awarded to B.S.Ed. junior or senior with a minimum 3.0 GPA. Financial need.
Regents Scholarships	Awarded at the recommendation of Acting Area Faculty and the Dept. Scholarship Committee.
COAL OOS Tuition Waivers	Recommended by Area Faculty and the T&D Department Head. For students who do not receive the university out-of-state-waiver. Must meet minimum requirements.

S. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND ACTOR TRAINING

The faculty in the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State University embrace the philosophy that ethical behavior is essential for a successful career in the industry. We view it as our responsibility to consistently model positive ethical behavior for our students and hold the corresponding expectation that our students will integrate those same behaviors into their own outlook and work. Please consider the following:

Professional Ethics: Codes of conduct established by professionals to govern ethical behavior within that profession.

Accountability: The responsibility of moral agents for their own actions.

Altruism: An action in the interest or welfare of others.

Character: The totality of a person's disposition or personality.

Conflict of Interest: The clash of a public or formal obligation with a private (personal) need or interest.

Honesty: Honesty is the value of speaking truth and creating trust in minds of others. This includes all varieties of communication, both verbal and non-verbal.

Integrity: Integrity is consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcomes.

Leadership: Always lead by example.

Moral Responsibility: Answerability or accountability for actions.

Pluralism: The tolerance of different and often incompatible views.

Pride: Taking positive ownership of all of your work and behavior.

Prudence: Sound judgment in practical affairs.

Stewardship: Moral responsibility for the management of one's life, the right of others, and the environment in which they live.

“Do no harm to the earth, she is your mother.
Being is more important than having.
Never promote yourself at another's expense.
Hold life sacred; treat it with reverence.
Allow each person the dignity of his or her labor.
Open your home to the wayfarer.
Be ready to receive your deepest dreams;
sometimes they are the speech of unblighted conscience.
Always make restitutions to the ones you have harmed.
Never think less of yourself than you are.
Never think that you are more than another.”

-Arthur Bobrin

T. ACTING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As actors we hold the gift to publicly engage and inform our regional and national communities. In line with the Program philosophy on professional ethics, it is the belief of the Program that all faculty and students within be active stewards of the public affairs mission at Missouri State University. Missouri State University was granted a statewide mission in public affairs in 1995 when Senate Bill 340 was signed into law. The public affairs mission defines a primary way in which an education from Missouri State is different from that of other universities and one way by which we educate our students to imagine the future.

The Missouri State University public affairs mission has three pillars:

1. Ethical Leadership
2. Cultural Competence
3. Community Engagement

Ethical leadership

Goal: Students will articulate their value systems, act ethically within the context of a democratic society, and demonstrate engaged and principled leadership.

Missouri State is preparing students for the future by helping them understand the ethical dimensions of leadership and take what they learn in the classrooms and use it to help solve problems and bring about change.

Cultural Competence

Goal: Students will recognize and respect multiple perspectives and cultures.

Missouri State works to build up students' cultural knowledge in several ways. Through study abroad programs, interaction with international students and the opportunity to study different languages, histories, and religions, students broaden their horizons, help build relationships, and bring about better competition for the future.

Community engagement

Goal: Students will recognize the importance of contributing their knowledge and experiences to their own community and the broader society.

Community engagement lets students branch out and see how the world is working through a different lens, giving them the opportunity to work with their communities and build up their ability to lead in their careers.

U. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become a vital professional tool for actors. However, it is also important to remember that you have no control over how your social media posts are shared and viewed. In that respect, social media can also have considerable negative consequences upon your life and early career. Some helpful practices that you are expected to adhere to include:

1. Avoid all posts that are negative in tone or outlook. You never know who may be viewing your posts, and no wants to work with a negative personality.
2. Keep your opinions professional and never use social media to comment upon the work of others (either local or beyond), class-related items, or relationships with your faculty and/or peers.
3. Remember that your social media posts are a reflection of who you are. Are you so sure a casting director isn't viewing your images and posts to get a sense of you? Perhaps keep the content to a level Grandma would approve of.
4. Protect yourself. Social media is a goldmine for those preying upon young performers, financially, emotionally, and sexually. Protect yourself and your personal information at every digital angle.
5. Do not vent. Never use social media or public forums to vent your frustrations about a teacher, director, or fellow student. Furthermore, students may not engage in social media posts of any kind that the faculty determine to undermine the collaborative trust within the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program.
6. This should go without saying, but do not engage in online harassment. Harassment comes in many forms, including but not limited to: online bullying, unsolicited romantic/sexual communications, or inappropriately discussing another student in a public or private digital thread.

Students who do not adhere to these guidelines may be placed upon Program probation, have opportunities removed, or face immediate dismissal, at the discretion of the acting area faculty.

"Excuses are like losses. Everyone has them, except champions."

-Alex Morgan

V. ACTING ON CAMERA CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The Department of Theatre & Dance and The Department of Communications, Media, Journalism and Film collaborate to house an 18-hour certificate program in Acting on Camera. The certificate prepares performers for the professional on-camera marketplace. Acceptance is based upon audition and application. Current students from any Missouri State degree program may apply.

<https://theatreanddance.missouristate.edu/ActingOnCamera/default.htm>

W. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

1. Student Productions

The department houses and supports several student-run organizations that produce films and public performances. These provide Theatre & Dance students with additional opportunities to be a vital and exciting part of the MSU arts community.

2. Tent Theatre

Tent Theatre is a professional AEA summer Company (summer stock) housed within the Department of Theatre & Dance at Missouri State. Students participate in a wide variety of capacities, including performing, stage managing, marketing, technical positions, house staff, and much more. All students are encouraged to audition or apply for participation in Tent Theatre.

3. Movement and Stage Combat Training

In addition to the movement and stage combat training present in the curriculum, the Department of Theatre and Dance at Missouri State has strong relationships with the Association of Theatre Movement Educators, Fight Director's Canada, the United Stuntmen's Association, and the Society of American Fight Directors. Many external training workshops are available to our students from these organizations.

4. Study Away

Study Away is supported and encouraged by the faculty in the Program. However, due to the focused and sequential nature of the curriculum, it is recommended that students begin planning early and with advisor assistance. Ideally, planning should begin during freshman year and be executed during sophomore or junior year. Information can be found at <http://international.missouristate.edu/studyaway/>.

5. Department of Communication, Media, Journalism and Film

The Theatre & Dance Department has an excellent creative relationship with The Department of Communications, Media, Journalism, and Film. This relationship provides acting students with opportunities to perform in a wide number of on-camera projects, including short and feature films. Acting students are encouraged to immerse themselves within the opportunities this relationship provides.

6. Department of Theatre and Dance Mainstage Season Genre Rotation Schedules

Category	Guideline Dates	Est. number of times this category repeats in 4 year rotation
Musical	Any period	8 (including 1 youth musical)
Youth Theatre	Any period	1
Dance	Any period	4
New and Recent Works	Scripts published in the last 10-15 years	2
Late 20th Century	1950s-1990s	1
Realism/Early 20th Century	Late 1800s-1950s	1
Restoration-Melodrama	1660-late 1800s	1
Shakespeare/Renaissance	1500-1660	2
Greek/Roman/Medieval	As Noted	1
Multicultural/Non-Western	Any period	1
OPEN (non-musical)	Any period	2

Schedule of Categories

2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Musical	Musical	Musical	Musical
Open	Youth	Open	Multicultural/Non-West.
Musical	Musical	Musical	Musical
Spring Dance	Spring Dance	Spring Dance	Spring Dance
New and Recent	Realism/Early 20th Cent.	New and Recent	Late 20th century
Style	Shakespeare/Renaissance	Restoration, Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Melodrama	Shakespeare/Renaissance

7. Sample Events, Conferences, Auditions, and Training Workshops

SETC Professional Auditions

-For Professionals and Pre-Professionals, performers and designers, seeking year-round work.

September

www.setc.org

STAM-Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri

September

<https://speechandtheatremo.org/>

Shakespeare & Company

Provides Intensive and Summer Shakespeare Training

Summer on-site in Mass., Year-Round Various Locations

www.shakespeare.org

University Resident Theatre Association (URTA)

Unified Auditions/Interviews for MFA Programs

January

www.urta.com

Unified Professional Theatre Auditions (UPTA)

Unified Prof. Theatre/Dance Auditions, Interviews, Workshop/Training Opportunities

February

www.upta.org

Southeastern Theatre Association

Unified Auditions for Prof. Theatre/Dance work and Graduate Programs,

Workshop/Training Opportunities. Design Interviews. Excellent for Musical Theatre!

Non-Professional Auditionees Must First Pass Regional Screening!

March

www.setc.org

Institute of Outdoor Drama Auditions

Unified Professional Outdoor Drama/Tech. Auditions, Workshop/Training Opportunities

March

Chapel Hill, NC

<http://www.stahome.org/institute-of-outdoor-theatre>

Fight Director's Canada

Combat Certification Workshop

Toronto, Canada

www.fdc.ca/

Bread and Puppet Theatre

Internship Program

Summer

<http://breadandpuppet.org/>

National Stage Combat Workshop

Workshop for Beginning and Intermediate Actor/Combatants. Testing Provided at Workshops End.

Society of American Fight Directors

July

Las Vegas, NV and North Carolina

www.safd.org

SAFD Fight Directors and Action Film International Workshop

Workshop for Fight Directors and Advanced Combatants.

August

www.safd.org

Association of Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)

*Provides Presentation, Workshop, & Training Opportunities in Theatre,
Both Practical and Scholastic.*

August

www.athe.org

Association of Theatre Movement Educators (ATME)

*Provides Presentation, Workshop, & Training Opportunities in Theatre,
Both Practical and Scholastic.*

Summer

www.atmeweb.org

DellArte School of Physical Theatre

Training Workshops in Theatre Movement

Summer

www.dellarte.com

"This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

-William Shakespeare

In my moments of doubt, I've told myself firmly, "If not me, who? If not now, when?"

-Emma Watson

8. Sample Theatre Resume

Note: This is only a sample. Your resume should highlight your individualized outlook and assets.

Billy Budd

SAG-AFTRA, EMC

billybudd@hotmail.com

www.billybudd.com

Hgt: 6'0"

Wgt: 160 (*your choice of inclusion or not*)

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Blue

Professional Theatre

Death of a Salesman

My Fair Lady

Carnival

Biff

Freddie

Ensemble

Flat Rock Playhouse

Interact Theatre

Alabama Shakes. Festival

University Theatre

The Crucible (fight capt.)

Hamlet

Safe Sex

Mad Dog Blues

Jail House Rock

Lysistrata

Bent (Irene Ryan Nom.)

Parris

Laertes

Arthur

Coby

Ensemble

Ensemble

Wolf

University of Alabama (UA)

UA

UA

UA

UA

UA

York Tech. College

Film and Television

The Patriot

Dawson's Creek

Release

Extra

U5

Ted

Universal

Fox

AU Student Film

Special Skills

Dialects

Combat

Dance

Singing

Technical

Additional

Standard British, Southern, Irish

Recognized SAFD Combatant

Jazz (5 yrs.), Tap (7 yrs.), Modern (2 yrs.)

Lyric Baritone, Private Voice (3 yrs.)

Scene Painting, Carpentry, Props, Publicity

Juggling, Horses (western)

Education

B.F.A. Candidate

Workshops

Theatre, University of Alabama

Auditioning (Edward Albee), Shakespeare (Tina Packer)

9. Sample On-Camera Resume

Note: This is only a sample. Your resume should highlight your individualized outlook and assets.

Sarah Smith

SAG-AFTRA, EMC

bsmith@hotmail.com

www.sarahsmith.com

Hgt: 5'6"
Eyes: Blue

Wgt: 120 (*your choice*)
Hair: Brown

Film and Television

Film	Role	Production Company
Film	Role	Production Company
Film	Role	Production Company
Film	Role	Production Company
Film	Role	Production Company

Commercial Spots

Commercial (national, principal), Commercial (national, principal), Commercial (national, principal), Commercial (national, principal), Commercial (regional, principal), Commercial (regional, principal)

Industrial

Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role), Company (role)

New York Theatre

Play	Role	Theatre
Play	Role	Theatre
Play	Role	Theatre

Regional Theatre

Play	Role	Theatre
Play	Role	Theatre
Play	Role	Theatre

Special Skills

Combat/Stunts	Certified: SAFD, USA (resume available upon request)
Dialects	Standard British, Irish, Southern, Rural Southern
Additional	Juggling, Class A Driver's License, Athletics, Horses

Training

B.F.A.	University of South Carolina
Workshops	Auditioning (Edward Albee), Shakespeare (Tina Packer)

10. Sample agent meeting request

Note: This is only a sample. Your version should highlight your individualized outlook and assets.

Hi [Name of Agent/Manager],

I am preparing to graduate from the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State University and will be arriving permanently in Los Angeles on May 15th.

I would like to invite you to an industry showcase featuring myself and 13 other talented young actors from MSU. We will be performing April 12th at 7:30pm at the Garry Marshall Theatre in Burbank. I am a talented, disciplined, and marketable performer ready to get to work.

I look forward to seeing you at the showcase and hope to meet with you in a more personal forum to discuss representation.

<http://theatreanddance.missouristate.edu/showcases/linkhere>

Sincerely,

Your Name

11. Actor Tool Chart - STAGE

Guiding Principles

1. Moment to moment discovery.
2. Illusion of the 1st time.

Meisner	
Time	
Place	
Relationship	
Want	
Why Want it?	
Why now?	
Shurtleff	
Moment Before	
Humor	
Opposites	

12. Actor Tool Chart - FILM

Guiding Principles

1. Moment to moment discovery.
2. Illusion of the 1st time.
3. Behave, don't act.

Moment Before	
Environment-Scope	
Relationship	
Strong Internal Want	
Active Silence/Listening	
Active Internal Discovery	
Humor	
Secret	
Feel Deeply	
Veil the Emotion	
Emotional Duplicity	

13. Actor Tool Chart - COMMERCIALS

Guiding Principles

1. Think as a businessperson.
2. Product first.

What is the problem?	
What is the solution?	
What IS the product?	
Who is the market audience?	
Who <i>exactly</i> are you speaking to?	
What <i>type</i> of energy is required to sell it?	
Product First	
Positive Choices	
Sensuality Sells	

Common Commercial Formats

Naturalism	
Heightened Realism	
Spokesperson	
Fantasy/Fashion	

14. Actor Tool Chart – TV COMEDY

Guiding Principles

1. Moment to moment discovery.
2. Illusion of the 1st time.

Time	
Place/Scope	
Relationship	
Want	
Why Do I Want It?	
Why now? Immediacy!	
Moment Before	
Level of Self- Abandon	
Scene Rhythm	
Takes	
Bold Choices	
Play the Situation (not the laugh)	

15. Actor Tool Chart – FILMED SELF-SUBMISSIONS

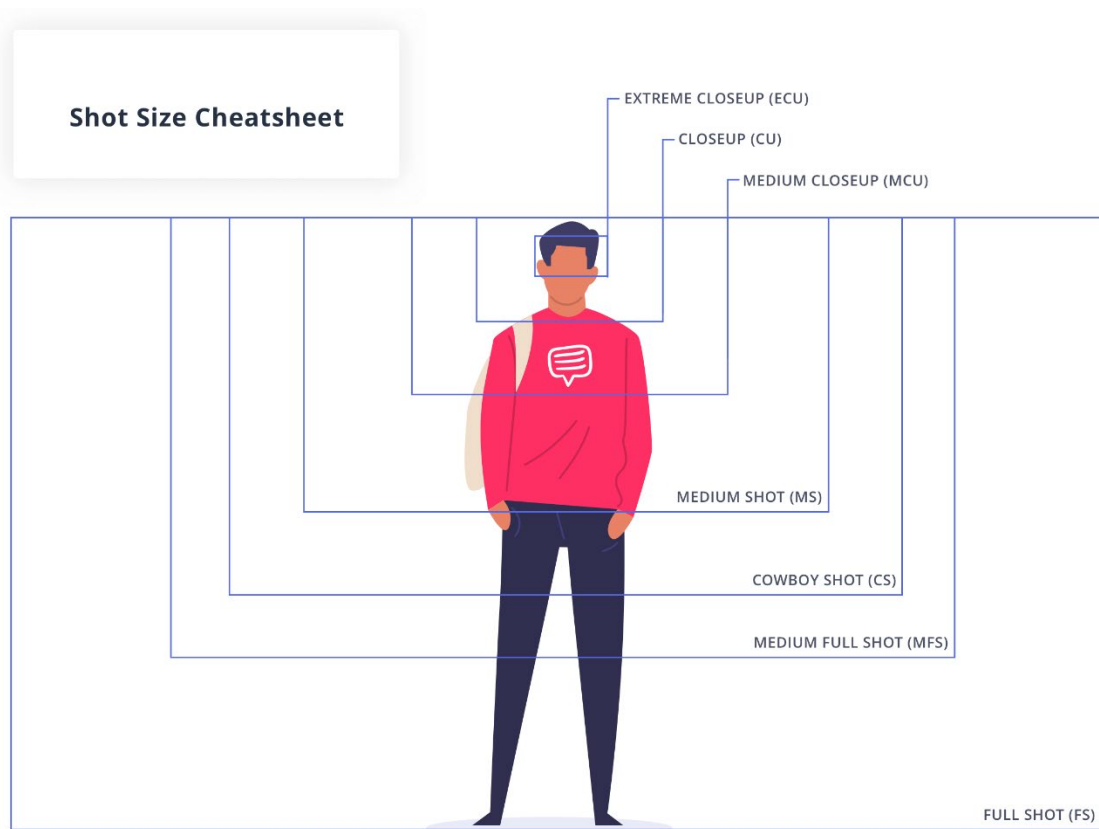
What your auditor is looking for:

1. Are you right for the role?
2. Who are you?
3. Can you act the role?

Goal: Does your self-submission allow your auditor to clearly note the above three without distraction?

Logistical considerations that help the auditor remain undistracted from what they need to see:	
Sound Quality	Is the sound quality good and full? Is it free of white noise and intrusive environmental sounds, allowing the viewer to focus on your performance?
Light Balance	Is the lighting appropriately balanced? Does the viewer have full visual access to you, allowing them to focus on your performance?
Neutral Background	Is your background neutral, allowing the viewer to focus upon you without environmental distractions?
Quality of File	Is your file quality high enough to allow the viewer to view your work without being distracted by graininess or fisheye distortion?
Slate?	Is a slate requested? If so, is your slate friendly, allowing the viewer a sense of who you are when not inside of character?
Reader Placement	If using a reader, are they slightly off camera, thus allowing the viewer full visual access you without you directly addressing the camera?
Point of Focus	If not using a reader, is your eye line where the reader would be?
Directions	Are you following instructions regarding your slate, framing, file type and size, the chosen medium for sharing content, and file labeling?
Framing	For stage drama, television, and film, framing should be in medium-closeup unless otherwise instructed, or the physical life of the submission requires a broader frame.

Shot Cheatsheet



“The film camera does not like acting. The camera is only interested in filming behavior.”

-B. Kingsley

16. Actor Tool Chart – COLD READS

Guiding Principles

1. Moment to moment discovery.
2. Illusion of the 1st time.
3. Strong, positive choices.
4. Head out of the page.
5. Effective Tracking technique.

Time	
Place/Scope	
Relationship	
Want	
Why Do I Want It?	
Why now? Immediacy!	
Moment Before	
Scene Rhythm	
Bold Choices	

17. Actor Tool Chart – VOICE OVERS

Guiding Principles

1. Welcome the listener for a full sensory connection.
2. Illusion of the 1st time.

Time	
Place	
Relationship	
Want	
Why Want it?	
Why now? Immediacy!	
Moment Before	
Scene Rhythm	
Character Pitch & Volume	
Bold Choices	
Character Physicality	
Lifting the End of Lines (Commercial)	

“Your voice carries the melodies of your dreams.”

18. Sample (Outside of Class) Rehearsal Schedule

This is a *sample* schedule for rehearsing outside of studio class with your assigned scene partner. Your actual schedule may vary in content, depending upon the goals and learning tools provided in the specific studio class. Excellent partnering is crucial to learning the craft of acting. As such, it is vital that one be a reliable partner, always aware that their own work ethic impacts the growth of others.

Rehearsal One:	Table Reads (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Two:	Table Reads/Meisner Questions (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Three:	Environment (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Four:	Environment/Get on Feet. (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Five:	Relationship (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Six:	Wants (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Seven:	Moment Before (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Eight:	Run/Work (45-60min)
▽	
Rehearsal Nine:	Run/Work (45-60min)
▽	

In-Class Performance

19. Tips for Professional Headshot Sessions

Practice Sessions: Many emerging actors wait until they have immediate need to have their first professional headshots taken. This is a mistake. Headshots are a *key* marketing tool in your early career, so the process shouldn't be rushed, and you shouldn't enter as a "headshot novice." Getting good shots, like good acting, requires letting go of self-awareness. It takes time and practice. Bad self-awareness in a shoot leads to images that appear forced, stiff, and don't let the real you resonate. Get comfortable in front of the camera through practice sessions with peers, or other means you have at your disposal, so that when you arrive for that vital shoot you are free and engaged in front of the camera.

Choosing a Photographer: It's great to use your friends and novice photographers for *practice* sessions. You learn together, and you begin to let go of inhibiting "on camera" self-awareness. However, it is vital to use a professional HEADSHOT photographer for your working headshots. These days, it's pretty easy for anyone to buy an expensive digital device and take some headshots, and sometimes they get lucky with an image or two. This is not the route you want for your professional images. In addition to knowing how to take images that offer consistent quality, a professional, *industry centered* headshot photographer also understands the industry and market changes in headshot needs and trends. Remember, this is a *KEY* marketing tool and needs to be a professional priority. Be sure to examine the work of potential headshot photographers. Some are better than others, some more appropriate for distinct markets, and some have their own sense of photographic style that may or may not be right for you. Make sure the photographer's work aligns with your marketing needs *before* you book. It can also be helpful to meet with the photographer in advance, so you can see if you have a good rapport with them. This will help you feel more comfortable on the day you take your headshots.

Makeup: You may or may not choose to engage a makeup artist. Make your decision thoughtfully. If using one, actors must communicate respectfully but clearly with the artist. The makeup artist should not be left to "brand" you or guess your needs. Never put that responsibility in the hands of the makeup artist. Be clear about your look and needs. The actor needs to feel empowered and responsible for the makeup outcome.

Photographer Communication: The same applies to the photographer. A photographer should not have to “brand” or guess an actor’s needs. The best photos come when the actor is very clear about photographic wants and needs and is free of inhibiting self-awareness in front of the camera.

Marketing Considerations: Many emerging actors aim for an “all purpose headshot,” and there are times when that may be successful in starting career communications. But, in general it can be an ill-advised strategy. Again, the headshot is a key marketing tool. In order to create and engage a marketing tool you must know your target “customer.” What is the specific purpose of your headshot? Headshot trends vary by region and professional purpose. For example, your commercial headshot may not suit your needs accordingly when submitting to a regional theatre, and the headshot you submit in an attempt to garner a commercial agent will likely vary from your NY stage shot. As a result, actors aiming at an “all-purpose headshot” sometimes end up with a no purpose headshot. If you can only afford to have one look reproduced, set clear goals and strategize what your first marketing target will be and aim your headshot squarely at it.

Know Your Target Market: Set specific marketing goals. Many actors think “I just want to go to NYC or LA and work.” Of course you do, but getting to work takes a marketing strategy, with purpose in each career step. Look at yourself. Research your chosen market. Create a timeline and list of articulated goals. What is your first goal? Is it getting a commercial agent? Is it being cast in an Equity stage production? Is it booking daily work on a daytime drama? If you haven’t articulated your first steps, it’s unlikely you’ll climb the staircase. These choices heartily inform your headshot process.

Before the Shoot: Get a good night’s sleep. Stay away from caffeine and alcohol in the 24 hours prior, as both dehydrate. You want to be feeling healthy, relaxed, and confident entering your session.

Clothing: Actors frequently ask, “What should I wear at my session?” The first primary answer is, “Who are you? How are you going to market YOU?” You’ve already focused the marketing goal of your shots, so choose attire that aligns YOU with that. With that in mind, the focus in the shot should be you and not your clothing. It’s *generally* advisable to stay away from busy patterns, logos, and colors that wash you out. Most photographers recommend choosing a color that compliments your eye color. One consistent common denominator in variances in headshot market applications is that they should always look like YOU. Your vibe, your age, your personality. Whether at a commercial audition or an AEA open call for King Lear, the person they see in the headshot should look like the same one that walks through the door.

The GLAM Factor: Emerging actors commonly “over-glam” in their early rounds of headshots. It’s an easy mistake. It feels glamorous and we love the attention those beautiful shots bring us from our friends and family. This is a fatal marketing error. Your friends and family are certainly not the target audience of your headshots and cannot book you auditions. Put all your focus in your session upon looking like you in your shots – from clothing selection to photographer communication to image selection – it should all be pointed at capturing the real you as respective to your target early career goals.

Some Helpful Thoughts for the Shoot:

1. Bring a friend. As a courtesy, touch base with the photographer first, but it’s generally great to bring along a good friend. Having a friend present will contribute to your fun and ease, creating an environment that helps you get your best shots.
2. Inform your shots. This is vital. Your shots have to be informed from the inside. Working in front of a still camera is acting, and acting requires filling moments from within. If the photographer asks for more warmth, that just doesn’t mean smile bigger. It means make a choice from within that radiates warmth and a connection to your partner, the camera. Yes. That camera is your acting partner.
3. Eyes, eyes, eyes. This relates to informing your shots. If your shots are informed, your eyes will be engaged in your shots. If not, you’ll end up with “dead eyes” that don’t resonate interest and connection to the person viewing your shots.

Selecting Images: With digital photography, photographers fire images faster and in greater number than they used to. Many do no pre-sorting before passing the images to you. In relation, it is extremely important that the actor learn to choose images with purpose and clarity and with the guidance of a professional – yep, not friends or social media. If a photographer shoots consistently during a shoot, some transitional images may indicate changes in camera focus. In relation, an actor *must* view potential images at full scale. There is no reason EVER for an actor to ever have an image from a professional session that is slightly out of focus. Take time to choose. Again, seek the advice of a professional. Do NOT seek advice from friends and family in choosing your headshot. DO NOT post it on social media to see how many likes each image gets. This will confuse your selection process with opinions of uninformed parties who have a view of you that may not coincide with your goals or marketing strategy.

Reproductions: If in need of hardcopy headshots, professional repros are a non-negotiable. Use a reliable reproduction source that specializes in performer headshots. Reproductions should have a border. Name in border. Walgreens or Walmart glossies are never acceptable.

20. Some Digital Resources for the Actor

Digital Resources

iActor	http://www.sag.org/iactor-online-casting
Backstage	http://www.backstage.com
CallSheet	http://www.backstage.com/bso/call-sheet/index.jsp
Actors Access	http://www.actorsaccess.com
ArtSearch	http://www.tcg.org/artsearch/
Dept. Webpage	http://theatreanddance.missouristate.edu/
BFA Acting Showcase	http://theatreanddance.missouristate.edu/showcases/LA.htm
Voice-Over	https://voice123.com

Union/Organizational

SAG/AFTRA	www.sagaftra.org
Actors Equity	www.actorsequity.org
Am. Guild of Variety Artists	www.agvausa.com/
Assoc. Theatre Movement Educators	www.atmeweb.org/
Voice & Speech Trainers	www.vasta.org/
Society of Am. Fight Directors	www.safd.org
Fight Directors Canada	www.fdc.ca
Am. Council on Exercise	www.AceFitness.org

Headshots

Jeff Nicholson (LA/KC)	www.theshotphotography.com
Melissa Hamburg (NY)	www.melissahamburg.com/
Adriana Tomeu (OK)	www.adrianatomeu.com

21. Some Recommended Publications for the Actor

Acting

Improvisation for the Theatre by Viola Spolin (Improv)
Theatre Games for the Classroom by Viola Spolin (Improv/Games)
An Actor Prepares by Stanislavski
Building a Character by Stanislavski
Creating a Role by Stanislavski
On Acting by Sanford Meisner
Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen
Free to Act by Mira Felner (Good Beginning Text)
Audition by Michael Shurtleff (Audition)
How to Stop Acting by Harold Guskin (Support Reading)
Irreverent Acting by Eric Morris (Advanced)
No Acting Please by Eric Morris (Acting)
Acting Onstage and Off by Robert Barton (good exercises)
Advanced Acting by Robert Cohen (Style)
On the Technique of Acting by Michael Chekhov
To the Actor by Michael Chekhov
The Art of Acting by Stella Adler
At Work with Grotowski by Thomas Richards
The Incredible Indoor Games Book (Youth Games)
Acting in Musical Theatre: A Comprehensive Course by Rocco Dal Vera
Lessons for the Professional Actor by Michael Chekhov
Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen
A Challenge for the Actor by Uta Hagen

Acting Styles

Freeing Shakespeare's Voice by Kristin Linklater (Voice/Style)
Acting in Shakespeare by Robert Cohen (Shakespeare)
Style: Acting in High Comedy by Maria Aitken (Comedy)
Secrets of Acting Shakespeare by Patrick Tucker (Great Read)
Style: Acting in High Comedy by Maria Aitken (Comedy)
Acting with Style by John Harrop
Playing Shakespeare by John Barton
Acting in Restoration Comedy by Simon Callow

Analysis

Backwards and Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays by David Ball

Acting for the Camera

Acting in the Million Dollar Minute by Tom Logan (Commercial)
Acting for the Camera by Tony Barr (TV/Film)
Acting in Commercials by Joan See

Stage Combat

Fight Directing for the Theatre by J. Allen Suddeth
Actors on Guard by Dale Girard
Swashbuckling by Richard Lane

Voice

Freeing the Natural Voice by Kristen Linklater
The Right to Speak by Patsy Rodenburg
Voice and the Actor by Cicely Berry
The Use and Training of the Human Voice by Arthur Lessac
The Actor and the Text by Cicely Berry

Movement

How to Learn the Alexander Technique by Barbara Conable
Team Building Through Physical Challenges by Donald Glover
The Actor and His Body by Mitz Pisk
The Alexander Technique: A Skill for Life by Pedro de Alcantara
The Alexander Technique: Freedom in Thought and Action by T. Miller and D. Langstroth
Awareness Through Movement Moshe Feldenkrais
The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints by *Anne Bogart & Tina Landau*
The Thinking Body by Mabel Todd
Human Movement Potential by Lulu Sweigard
Body Movement: Coping with the Environment by Irmgard Bartenieff

Career

Unfu*k Yourself: Get Out of Your Head and into Your Life by Gary John Bishop
Acting is Everything by Judy Kerr LA
LA Access by Richard Saul Wurman (current ed.)
NY Access by Richard Saul Wurman (current ed.)
The Courage to create by Rolo May
The Artists Way by Julia Cameron
Directory of Theatre Training Programs
Regional Theatre Directory
Summer Theatre Directory
Acting Professionally: Raw Facts about Careers in Acting by Robert Cohen
Fodor's Guide to New York City
Fodor's Guides (NYC, LA, Chicago)

Faculty Written Books

Performing Disability: Staging the Actual, Dr. Telory Davies
Evangeline Drowning (play), Kurt Gerard Heinlein
Green Theatre, Kurt Gerard Heinlein
Clifford Odets and American Political Theatre, Dr. Chris Herr
Giving Voice, The Power of Theatre for Positive Change, Dr. C.J. Maples
Auditioning for Pre-Professional Programs, Kurt Gerard Heinlein

“Being authentic is when you rise, when you reach for your greatest influence, your best self at times when every cell in your body is screaming reasons, excuses, justifications and revenge. Being authentic is when you look back on those moments with a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction that you did not betray the one thing you need to hold dearest. Yourself.”

-Gary John Bishop

X. LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Acknowledgement of the Policies Presented in the BFA Acting for Stage & Screen Handbook

I (Please print name) _____ have read the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program Handbook in full. I understand that any questions I have regarding policy may be addressed through inquiry to the Area Coordinator before this letter is signed and submitted.

By signing this letter, I acknowledge that I comprehend and choose to abide by all the policies contained within, and that all exceptions must be requested in writing to the Acting Area Coordinator, who will review and respond to the request accordingly. I also acknowledge that failure to abide by area guidelines may result in probation or suspension from the BFA in Acting for Stage & Screen Program at Missouri State University.

Signature_____

Date_____

New students, please submit a signed copy of this letter to the BFA Acting Area Coordinator in your first day of Acting Studio I (THE 121)

“Life won’t stop for your pauses and procrastinations. It won’t stop for your confusion or fear. It will continue right along without you. Whether you play an active part or not, the show will go on.”

-Gary John Bishop