

INTRODUCTION TO AUDIO PRODUCTION (Comm 130), Winter 2016

Mondays: 7:00-9:30pm (WTC, School of COMM - Room 003)

Instructor: Marianna Milhorat

Email: mmilhorat@luc.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introduction to the world of audio production. It is meant for undergraduate students with an interest in audio and its applications in modern media and art. Students will learn to employ audio as a creative tool for documentary story telling, fiction filmmaking, video art, news media, radio production, comedy sketches, commercials and internet production.

Creativity and careful execution are major factors in the grading of ALL projects.

COURSE GOALS

- Understand basic audio concepts and terminology.
- Develop critical listening skills, learn how to effectively discuss sound.
- Gain a working knowledge of basic audio technology including microphones, recorders, mixers, and DAWs.
- Conceptualize, plan, and execute effective sound designs.
- Familiarity with audio editing, mixing, and design processes and methods.
- Practice the art of storytelling using sound.
- Develop directing and writing skills in regards to audio production.
- Understand audio workflows, practices, and standards.
- Develop interviewing and field recording skills.
- Learn basic music editing and concepts.
- Learn how sound and image work in tandem to tell stories.
- Provide and incorporate constructive criticism to and from your colleagues.
- Manage effective collaborations.

TECHNOLOGY

Adobe Audition CC

Microphones

Zoom Recorders

Mixers

MATERIALS

External Hard Drive or USB Key

Headphones- bring to class everyday

Note-Taking Materials

The student will be responsible for all backups of all media assets.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA & METHODS OF EVALUATING STUDENTS

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Completion of all assigned readings.
- Participation in all discussions, group projects, and critiques.
- Productive use of class time.
- Completion of all production exercises and assignments.
- Projects will be evaluated on their technical, aesthetic, and conceptual merit. The amount of effort you put into each project will guide the grading.

CLASS WORK

Throughout the semester you will work on a total of five audio projects that are worth a collective 45% of your final grade. Each project will be discussed in depth in class before it is assigned.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

50% Production Assignments

10% Quizzes (5% each)

5% Listening Exercises / Sound Diary

10% Analysis Presentation

5% Written Proposal for Final Project

20% Attendance & Participation (includes readings & Sakai participation)

PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS (45 Points)- *More detailed requirements provided later.*

- 1. Interview:** Record, log, and edit a short (1.5-3 minute) audio interview with a subject of your choosing, using a recording ratio of at least 10:1. (5 Points) **Due: 02/15**
- 2. Soundscape:** Plan and produce a short (1.5-3 minute) audio soundscape or sonic portrait of a specific (physical and/or psychological) environment, person, or event using only sound effects and ambient audio (no interviews or music!). (10 Points) **Due: 02/29**
- 3. Documentary/Drama:** Record and edit a short (2-4 minute) audio documentary, radio drama, or spoken word piece into a fully produced, radio-ready audio project. Your project must incorporate voice recordings, SFX, and music. (10 Points) **Due: 03/28**
- 4. Film Soundtrack:** Students will spot, design and build the soundtrack for a short video. (10 Points) **Rough Cut: 04/11, Fine Cut: 04/18**
- 5. Final Project:** Plan, record, edit and mix a short (2-5 minute) creative audio project of your choosing. The form and content are entirely up to you: it could be a short story, poem, comedy sketch show, experimental sound piece, drama- you name it. You must turn in a written proposal beforehand. We will have individual meetings to discuss the project ahead of time. Projects should be a demonstration of your fluency in the concepts and techniques taught throughout the course. *You can work individually or in pairs.* (15 Points) **Rough Cut: 04/25, Fine Cut: 05/02**

WRITING & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS (20 Points)

Listening Exercises and Sound Diary: Keep an ongoing diary of listening exercises. (5 Points)

Analysis Presentation: Critical analysis & Presentation of an audio piece selected from the Third Coast Audio Festival website. (10 Points) **Due: 03/14**

Written Proposal for Final Project: Including a script or spotting, a pitch, and a design analysis for final project. (5 Points) **Due: 04/18**

TESTS & PARTICIPATION (35 Points)

Quiz #1: (5 Points)

Quiz #2: (5 Points)

Class Participation: (20 Points)

GRADING SCALE

93-100% A = 4.0

90-92% A- = 3.67

87-89% B+ = 3.33

83-86% B = 3.00

80-82% B- = 2.67

77-79% C+ = 2.33

73-76% C = 2.00

70-72% C-=1.67
67-69% D+=1.33
60-66% D = 1.00
0-59% F

PARTICIPATION

Student participation is important in making this class vital and useful to everyone. All students need to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading(s), and with creative assignments fully completed and ready to show. During critiques, it is expected that everyone give constructive feedback. Attendance alone does not constitute participation. In-class participation that contributes to raising the level of informed dialogue in the course, will be taken into account during grading.

READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS & QUIZZES

Readings and assignments must be completed at the beginning of class on the date to which they are assigned. Production assignments must be in the correct media format, properly labeled, within the running time specifications and within all other specifications provided.

- **Always test your media before turning it in.**
- Always make a safety copy of your project and bring it with you on screening days in case of any technical difficulties.
- Production Exercises and Projects include the assigned paperwork.
- The days we go over rough cuts are for you. They are meant to help you complete the best possible project with the peer feedback you receive. They are not mandatory for the interview and the audio documentary/drama project, but **they are mandatory for the Film Soundtrack and Final Project**. This means that if you do not submit a rough cut, you will receive a significant grade reduction on your final cut.
- Quizzes will be drawn from material covered in readings, class lectures and discussions. Some topics will be covered only in the readings, some topics will be covered only in lectures and some will be covered in both readings & lectures. Students are responsible for ALL of the material.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS & DUE DATES

A penalty will be assessed for any assignment that is not turned in or uploaded to Sakai by the beginning of the class session that it is due.

- Assignments turned in one class late will lose one full letter grade.
- Assignments not turned in within the first 15 minutes of class will be considered late and lose one full letter grade.
- Assignments turned in two classes late will lose two full letter grades.
- **NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER IT IS MORE THAN 2 WEEKS LATE.**
- Late projects will not be screened in class.
- You must turn in a **FINAL PROJECT** in order to **PASS** the class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The class will meet every Monday from 7:00pm-9:30pm. Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and will be reflected in your grade. If it is unavoidable that you will have to miss class, you must consult the professor about the situation *beforehand* (via email or in person) and may be asked to provide a written excuse for the absence. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to class they will be marked absent. Three or more absences or frequent tardiness, whether or not for a reasonable cause, may result in the student failing the class if the student does not withdraw from the class prior to the deadline for withdrawal with a grade of "W."

It is the student's responsibility to find out any important information missed in their absence. You are expected to come to every class on time, prepared and ready to engage in classroom discussions and participate in group projects.

DEVICE POLICY

Laptops and other note taking devices may be used during lectures. All devices should be turned off and stored away during screenings and presentations. Phones must be turned off during class time. Texting and all forms of social media communication should happen outside of the classroom, during class breaks. Use of desktop computers in class is for course related work only and NOT for updating your facebook status, checking email or other activities not directly related to this course.

FOOD POLICY

To minimize distraction and the possibility of damage to equipment, food and beverages are not allowed in the classroom, editing area or studios. A water bottle is OK but please keep is capped or put away when working with the equipment or computers.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. If you have questions about what proper source referencing looks like, see someone at the Tutoring Center in the Sullivan Center, Suite 260, extension (773) 508-7708. It is also dishonest to turn in the same work for two classes, turn in a paper you have not written yourself, copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam. Visit and review Loyola's policies on Academic integrity here. <http://luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml>

ACCOMODATIONS

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from the Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of the course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to adjustments):

All Reading is to be completed for the class following where it is listed.

Week 1	01/25 INTRODUCTION & SYLLABUS REVIEW, LISTENING TECHNIQUES, ACOUSTIC CONCEPTS, ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY
DO:	Introductions, Owl Orientation, Survey
LAB:	Listening & Ear Cleaning Exercises
LISTEN:	<i>Selections</i> , R. Murray Shafer; <i>In Love with Another Sound</i> , John Cage, <i>Beneath the Forest Floor & Breathing Room</i> , Hildegard Westerkamp
READ:	<i>Soundtrack for a Film in New York</i> , Antonioni; <i>Science and Art of Listening</i> , Horowitz, <i>The Filmmaker's Handbook</i> : Ch 10 Sound Systems and Ch 11 Sound Recording
HOMEWORK:	Sound Walk- 20mins
ASSIGN:	<i>Interview Project</i>
Week 2	02/01 RECORDING TECHNIQUES
DISCUSS:	Sound Walk, Intro to Interview Techniques
DEMO:	Microphones Zoom Audio Recorders
LAB:	Recording Exercise
LISTEN:	<i>Tom's Diner</i> , Suzanne Vega; <i>moDernisT</i> , Ryan Patrick Maguire
READING:	<i>Filmmaker's Handbook</i> : Ch 15 Sound Editing and Mixing
Week 3	02/08 SOUND EDITING, LISTEN TO RECORDING EXERCISE
DUE:	Recordings for Interview Project
LISTEN:	Recording Exercise
DEMO:	Introduction to Audition, Basic Audio Editing, Transitions & Techniques, Presence and Layering, Bouncing
LAB:	Editing Interview Project
HOMEWORK:	Finish Editing Interview Project
ASSIGN:	<i>Soundscape Project & Log</i>
Week 4	02/15 INTERVIEWS DUE, SOUNDSCAPES, MUSIC CONCRETE
DUE:	Interview Project
DO:	Listen to Select Interviews (rest to be critiqued on Sakai)
DISCUSS:	Tension through ambience, Directing the Ear, Review Field Recording Techniques, Roundtable on Soundscape Ideas & Approaches
LISTEN:	<i>In the Echo of No Towers</i> , Steven Vitiello, <i>Selections</i> : Olivia Block, Andrea Polli, Christina Kubish, and Francesco Lopez, <i>Weekend</i> , Walter Ruttmann, <i>Etude aux chemins de fer</i> , Pierre Schaefer; <i>Stalker</i> , Andrei Tarkovsky
WATCH:	<i>Once Upon a Time in the West</i> , Sergio Leone; <i>Blue Velvet</i> , David Lynch
Week 5	02/22 SOUND DESIGN, ACOUSTIC CONCEPTS #2, QUIZ #1 REVIEW
DUE:	Treatment & Field Recordings / Sound Effects for Soundscape Project
DO:	Quiz #1 Review
DISCUSS:	Acoustic Concepts Pt. 2
LISTEN:	<i>Selections</i> , Alvin Lucier, Various sound phenomena
WATCH:	Selections- EQ and Reverb; <i>White Trypps Number Three</i> , Ben Russell
DEMO:	Audio Effects (EQ, Reverb, Echo), Panning, Basic Mixing
LAB:	Logging Field Recordings / Sound Effects, Editing Soundscape Project

Week 6	02/29 SOUNSCAPES DUE, QUIZ #1, STORYTELLING
DUE:	Soundscape & Library of Sounds
DO:	Quiz #1
DISCUSS:	Begin to Discuss Storytelling Techniques; Analysis Tips
LISTEN:	<i>The Idea of North</i> , Glenn Gould
WATCH:	Excerpts: Errol Morris, Orson Welles, Chris Marker, Select radio dramas
ASSIGN:	<i>Analysis Presentation & Audio Documentary/Drama</i>
Week 7	03/07 SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS
Week 8	03/14 ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS, AUDIO DOCUMENTARY/ DRAMA & SPOKEN WORD
DUE:	Analysis Presentations
DO:	Analysis Presentations
DISCUSS:	Cont. Storytelling Techniques, Sound as Storytelling Device
REVIEW:	Voice Recording Techniques, Interview Techniques
Week 9	03/21 SOUND PERSEPCTIVE, SOUND EFFECTS, EDITING DIALOGUE
DUE:	<i>Audio Documentary/Drama Recordings</i>
DISCUSS:	Finding/Downloading Copyright Free Sound Effects & Found Sound
DEMO:	Working with Sound Effects, Editing Dialogue, Spotting
WATCH:	<i>Worldizing</i> , Walter Murch
LAB:	Audio doc editing
Week 10	03/28 AUDIO DOCUMENTARY/DRAMA CRITIQUES, FILM SOUNDTRACKS
DUE:	<i>Audio Documentary/Drama</i>
DO:	Audio Documentary/Drama Critique, Share Video Footage for Film Soundtrack
DISCUSS:	Elements of a soundtrack: Dialogue, Sound Effects, and Music, Scripting Soundtrack, Watch and Analyze Film for Film Soundtrack
READ:	<i>The Dancing Shadow</i> , Walter Murch, <i>The Real and Rendered</i> , Michel Chion, <i>Music and Noises</i> , Tarkovsky
ASSIGN:	<i>Film Soundtrack</i>
Week 11	04/04 SOUND FOR FILM; FOLEY
DISCUSS:	Production Sound with Post in Mind, Scripting Soundtrack, Resources for Public Domain Music
DEMO:	Working with Video and Time Code, Spotting to Sync
WATCH:	Foley Artists, Excerpts: <i>Playtime</i> , Jacques Tati, <i>Huckle</i> , Gyorgy Palfi, <i>A Man Escaped</i> , Robert Bresson, <i>Persona</i> , Ingmar Bergman
LISTEN:	Select Soundtracks
LAB:	Film Soundtrack (Cont. Scripting Soundtrack, Collecting Sounds or Editing)
READ:	<i>Notes on Sound</i> , Robert Bresson
ASSIGN:	<i>Written Proposal for Final Project & Final Project</i>
Week 12	04/11 TBD: GUEST ARTIST OR ADVANCED TOPICS IN AUDIO EDITING
DUE:	Film Soundtrack Rough Cuts
DISCUSS:	Bussing, Compression, and More
LAB:	Feedback on Rough Cuts

Week 13 04/18 FILM SOUNDTRACK CRITIQUES
DUE: **Film Soundtrack; Final Project Proposals**
DO: Film Soundtrack Critique, Quiz #2 Review
DISCUSS: Final Project Proposals

Week 14 04/25 MIXING AND MASTERING
DUE: **Final Project Recordings or Rough Cuts**
DEMO: Aesthetics and Techniques for Mixing, Mastering
DISCUSS: Formats and Media
LISTEN: Excerpts: *The Conversation & Apocalypse Now*, Francis Ford Coppolla

Week 15 (Finals) 05/02 FINAL PROJECT CRITIQUES, QUIZ #2
DUE: **Final Project**
DO: Final Project Critiques, Quiz #2

Local Venues and Resources

Third Coast International Audio Festival - <http://www.thirdcoastfestival.org/>

Based in Chicago, the Third Coast International Audio Festival (TCIAF) curates sound-rich audio stories from around the world and shares them with as many ears as possible – on the radio, on the Internet, and at public listening events all over the place.

Constellation – <http://www.constellation-chicago.com>

Constellation is a venue on Chicago's northwest side founded by drummer/composer Mike Reed. Constellation's mission is to present progressive performance and forward-thinking music with a focus on jazz, improvisation and contemporary classical. **Frequency Festival: 02/25-02/28*

Lampo – <http://www.lampo.org/>

The organization, which is based in Chicago, promotes and supports artists working in electronic and electroacoustic music, free improvisation, sound art and other new forms.

Experimental Sound Studio – www.experimentalsoundstudio.org

ESS is a non-profit, artist-run organization focused on sound in all its exploratory cultural manifestations, including music, sound art, installation, cinema, performing arts, sound poetry, broadcast, new media, and more.

Elastic Arts - elasticarts.org/

Elastic Arts is a non-profit organization fostering a community of music, art and performance through developing, hosting, producing, and promoting creative, independent, and local music concerts, exhibitions, and multi-arts performances.

Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology - <http://mwsae.org/>

The Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology (MSAE) is a regional chapter of the American Society for Acoustic Ecology (ASAE), a membership organization dedicated to exploring the role of sound in natural habitats and human societies, while promoting public dialogue concerning the identification, preservation, and restoration of natural and cultural sound environments.

Internet

Audio Network music catalog: <http://www.audionetwork.com>

School of Communications school-wide music catalog.

Ubu – <http://www.ubu.com>

Canonical sound works.

Ear Room - <https://earroom.wordpress.com/>

Ear Room is an online interview platform exploring the subject of sound in artistic practice.

Freesound – <http://freesound.org>

Free sound library with user submitted recordings.

Free Music: <http://dig.ccmixer.org/> <http://freemusicarchive.org/> & <https://musopen.org/music/>

Internet Archive- <http://archive.org>

Source for copyright free/public domain music, video, and text.

Macaulay Library – <http://macaulaylibrary.org>

The world's largest archive of animal sounds