

# Introduction to Audio Production

COMM 130

Tuesdays/Thursdays 2:30-3:45 PM

Fall 2018 – Loyola University Chicago, School of Communication

Instructor: Sara Condo

COMM 130 : Intro to Audio Production

OFFICE: Hours by appointment

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## OBJECTIVE

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 storytelling, fiction film making, video art, news media, radio production, comedy sketches, commercials, and internet production. Creativity is highly encouraged!

## 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.

## ATTENTION POLICY

Attendance is mandatory.

5 or more unexcused absences is a failure

Arriving late more than 3 times counts as an absence

Notify me in advance if you need to miss a class.

## REQUIRED TEXT

All readings will be posted on Sakai. There is no required book for this course.

## RECCOMENDED TEXTS

Roland Barthes – *Image, Music, Text*

Marshall McLuhan – *Medium is the Message*

## **CLASS RULES**

1. Watch actively.
2. Read attentively.
3. Participate.
4. **No cell phones or Internet.**
5. No food or drinks in the computer lab
6. **HAVE FUN**

## **GRADING**

- A.) Completion of 3 Production Assignments %50
- B.) Class Participation in Readings%10
- C.) Writings Responses %20
- C.) 2 Quizzes %20

### **EXTRA CREDIT**

\*\*\*\*Stay Tuned for extra credit opportunities throughout the semester if you attend exhibitions or other sound related activities outside of class\*\*\*\*

## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA & METHODS OF EVALUATING STUDENTS**

- Attendance and punctuality.
- 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.

## **GUIDELINE FOR PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT GRADING**

- Conceptual Merit (35%) -- Project demonstrates that the student has a clear idea driving the work.
- Aesthetic Merit (30%) -- Project is of high quality and demonstrates that the student put considerable time and effort into craftsmanship, or otherwise can conceptually "back up" why deviations from a high quality aesthetic were made.
- Technical Merit (35%) -- Project demonstrates a firm grasp on the technical skills taught in conjunction with the particular project and adheres to the project guidelines set by the instructor.

## **GUIDELINE FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT GRADING**

- Structure (25%) -- Organization, flow of thought, transitions, format
- Grammar/Mechanics (25%) -- Sentence structure, punctuation/mechanics
- Language (10%) -- Vocabulary, tone
- Content/information (40%) -- Clarity of purpose, critical and original thought, use of examples

## **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.
- 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.

## **EQUIPMENT** (Comprehensive list available on SAKAI)

- Zoom H4N Recorders
- Microphones
- Sound Device Field Recorder
- Mixers
- Adobe Audition

## **MATERIALS**

- External Hard Drive or USB Key\*
- Headphones (preferably "over-ear", Audio Technica, Sony and Sennheiser are quality for affordable Price)
- Note-taking materials
- AA Batteries (rechargeable)

***\*The student will be responsible for all backups of all media assets. Computers in the labs are auto-set to wipe any material/media saved to them once a station is logged off, so saving things to the CPUs of these computers "temporarily" is not even an option. Failure to backup or loss of media is not an excuse. In addition to backing up to a USB key or external hard drive, the student may back material/media to the cloud. All LUC students have a DropBox account (LUC Box) that they can use.\****

### **Recommended**

**LAPTOP** with Adobe Creative Cloud. Student discounts are available  
<http://www.adobe.com/education/students/how-to-buy-eligibility.edu.html?>

### **OWL**

To reserve equipment, go to: <https://equipmentloan.luc.edu/webcheckout/wco>. If you are unable to access the site, you can make a reservation by calling the OWL (Tech Coordinator Andi Pacheco) at 312-915-8830 or by stopping by the OWL (SOC 004) in person. For additional OWL or reservation questions, you can also e-mail Andi at: [apacheco@luc.edu](mailto:apacheco@luc.edu). Please refer to the equipment list for our class, posted on Sakai.

### **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>

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, or mental illness to discuss with me, before/after class appropriate accommodations that might be helpful for them for this class. For further information please visit Loyola Disability Resource Center.  
<https://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS** (50 %)

Audio Interview: Record, log, and edit a short (1.5-3 minute) audio interview with subject of your choosing, using a recording ratio of at least 10:1. Please try to "think outside of the box" regarding your subject matter, and use this as an opportunity to satiate your own curiosity about someone or something that piques your interest or inspires you, or shines light on someone or something that you feel is under-represented, or people might be surprised to find worthy of their attention. While the guidelines for the project are pretty open, please don't just interview your roommate. (10%)

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. (10%)

Audio Documentary or 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. If you wish, you may expand upon your previously completed interview projects with this assignment. Think about how sounds, when edited and placed next to other sounds, take on new narrative or conceptual significance, and about how disparate types of sound, such as the spoken word, music, and sound effects, can flow and interweave to build a fully formed narrative experience for the listener. (15%)

Film Soundtrack: Build a soundtrack from the ground up for a video clip of your choosing, from a selection of four I will provide for you (TBD). The point of this assignment is to think and act critically regarding sound's relation to image, and to develop a sort of "parallel" or "oppositional" sonic world which does more than passively reinforce what we see on the screen. A corresponding critical "treatment", which outlines your plan and analyzes your sound design decisions, will be due beforehand and discussed over with me. (15%)

### **WRITING AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS** (20%)

Sound Walk: Go on a sound walk, record notes, and discuss in class. (2.5%)

Podcast Analysis: Listen to a podcast of your choosing and write about it (2.5)

Audio Analysis of Film, Sound Piece or Live Event: Written analysis of how sound is deployed in a film, sound piece or live sound event. Students are encouraged to attend a screening at an independent cinema, an experimental music concert, or performance, art show, or play in which sound is a vital component, though watching a movie at home or listening to an audio piece is acceptable. Suggestions for screenings, venues and live events provided at the end of the syllabus. (10%)

Accompanying Analysis for Film Soundtrack Project: Consider this a sort of "treatment" for your final film soundtrack project, wherein you outline your sound design strategy and critically analyze your sound design choices. Does the sound work with or against the image? What are you accomplishing narratively or tonally with your use of sound? Are your sounds "natural" and "realistic", or do they stretch the perceived reality of the image? (5%)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **ART**

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY  
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO  
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

### **CINEMA**

GENE SISSEL FILM CENTER – Local cinema with screenings, lectures, performances. Chance for extra credit if you attend <http://www.saic.edu/cate>  
THE NIGHTINGALE – Local micro-cinema displaying avant-garde/experimental/expanded media

### **MUSIC**

OLD TOWN SCHOOL OF FOLK MUSIC  
RECKLESS RECORDS

### **INTERNET**

AUDIO NETWORK MUSIC CATALOG : <http://www.audionetwork.com>  
UBU – Sound Works <http://www.ubu.com>  
EAR ROOM – Online Interview platform exploring the subject of sound in artistic practice <http://www.earroom.wordpress.com/>  
FREESOUND –Free sound library with user submitted recordings <http://freesound.org>  
INTERNET ARCHIVE – Source for copyright free/public domain music, video, and text <http://archive.org>  
MACAULAY LIBRARY – The world’s largest archive of animal sounds. <http://macaulaylibrary.org>

### **CAREER**

CHICAGO ARTISTS COALITION -- postings for jobs, grants, etc in Chicago  
NYFA

### **GEAR/SUPPLIES**

SWEETWATER – Place to find discounted audio Equipment  
GUITAR CENTER – Can purchase directly in store, Locally  
BH PHOTO/VIDEO  
CHICAGO MUSIC EXCHANGE

### **LIFE**

LOYOLA COUNSELLING CENTER -- resource for LOYOLA students for personal or couples counseling  
<https://www.luc.edu/wellness/services/counseling/>

### **ONLINE TUTORIALS**

LYNDA - Lynda.com – resource for learning technical skills for photography not covered in class  
<https://www.lynda.com/Audition-training-tutorials/159-0.html>  
KADENZE – Online Courses on specific topics <https://www.kadenze.com/>

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

\*\*\*\*Subject to change. Check Google Drive for updates\*\*\*\*

<b>WEEK 1 August 28/30 – WELCOME TO AUDIO PRODUCTION</b>	
<p><b><u>Tuesday</u></b>            Introductions to class -- what are your interests?            Overview of Syllabus  <b>TECH:</b> Basics of Sound in our world, Audio Concepts  <b>VIEW/HEAR:</b> <i>Hearing and Listening</i>, Pauline Oliveros            R. Murray Schafer  <b>HW:</b> Read <i>Soundwalking</i> (Hildegard Westerkamp), <i>Science and Art of Listening</i> (Seth Horowitz)</p>	<p><b><u>Thursday</u></b>            Physical Properties of Sounds and Psychoacoustics  <b>DUE :</b> Discuss Essays  <b>TECH:</b> Properties of Sound as waves  <b>VIEW/HEAR:</b> <i>I am Sitting in a Room</i> (Alvin Lucier)  <b>HW :</b> Sound Walk, Read Ch. 10 <i>Sound Recording Systems</i> from <i>Filmmaker's Handbook</i> (Ascher &amp; Pincus)</p>

**Assignment: Sound Walk Due September 4, Interview due Week 5**

<b>WEEK 2 Sept 4/6 – Recording Techniques</b>	
<p><b><u>Tuesday</u></b>  <b>DUE :</b> Sound Walk Assignment            Discuss Soundwalks  <b>TECH :</b> Zoom H4N recorders            Microphones            Different approaches to digital recording &amp; recording set-ups</p>	<p><b><u>Thursday</u></b>  <b>TECH :</b> Review Digital Work-Flow  <b>VIEW/HEAR :</b>  <b>READ :</b> <i>The Art of Noise</i> (Russalo)</p>

<b>WEEK 3 Sept 11/13 – Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), Sound Editing, Art of the Audio Interview</b>	
<p><b><u>Tuesday</u></b> Different Approaches to interviews and platforms for their dissemination, radio, podcasts, film/tv  <b>VIEW/HEAR :</b> Terri Gross, Ira Glass, Story Corps, Errol Morris, Decline of Western Civilization (Penelope Spheeris), <i>Women's Lib Demonstration NYC</i> (Videofreex), <i>Portrait of Jason</i> (Shirley Clarke)  <b>TECH :</b> Adobe Audition Basics  <b>HW:</b> Find a podcast you like and write a few paragraph analysis describing what you find interesting.</p>	<p><b><u>Thursday</u></b> Adobe Audition – Getting Started            Introduce Soundscape Assignment  <b>TECH:</b> Importing files            Volume/gain            Multi-track            Editing            Transitions  <b>VIEW/HEAR :</b> TBD  <b>HW :</b> <i>Rhythm and Tempo in the Landscape</i> (Schaeffer)</p>

**Assignment: SOUNDSCAPE Due Week 8 Oct 16/18**

<b>WEEK 4 Sept 11/13 – Professional Practices – Audio in the World</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> Storytelling, Art, Music, Sound in the world <b>DUE</b> : Podcast Analysis <b>VIEW</b> : Guest Speaker – TBD***	<b>Thursday</b> Audio in the World – we will visit a local recording studio <b>AUDIO FIELD TRIP Recording Studio</b> LOCATION : TBD

<b>WEEK 5 September 25/27 – Sound Design</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>DUE</b> : Critique Interviews	<b>Thursday</b> <b>DUE</b> : Finish Interview Critiques <b>TECH</b> : Mixing Adobe Audition Panning EQ Compression Reverb <b>HW</b> : Review Quiz 1, Read <i>The Future of Music</i> (Cage)

<b>WEEK 6 October 2/4 – Quiz – Deep Listening - Sound Art - Visit Local Cinema</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> Sound Art, Sound as material for Fine Art, Sound Space <b>DUE</b> : Quiz 1 <b>VIEW/HEAR</b> : John Cage – <i>Bird Cage</i> Brian Eno – <i>Music for Airports</i> Pauline Oliveros – <i>Rattlesnake Mountain Proving Grounds</i>	<b>Thursday</b> <b>INSTRUCTOR OUT OF TOWN ... plans TBA**</b> <b>HW</b> : Visit 1 Local Cinema and write a paragraph describing your experience

<b>WEEK 7 October 9/11 – Midterm SEMESTER BREAK</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>NO CLASSES MID SEMESTER BREAK</b>	<b>Thursday</b> <b>TECH</b> : Sound Perspective, Sound Effects, Editing Dialog

<b>WEEK 8 October 16/18 - Soundscapes Critiques</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>DUE</b> : Critique Sound Scape	<b>Thursday</b> <b>DUE</b> : Finish Critiquing Soundscapes Free Sound archives Locating sound effects and music <b>HW</b> : Read “Projections of Sound on Image” (Chion), <i>Sun Ra Lecture Berkley 1973</i>



## Assignment: Film Soundtrack (due December 4/6)

<b>WEEK 9 October 23/25 – Space and Sound / Sound and Image</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b> ambient sound, sound effects, music, sound as third language  <b>VIEW/HEAR</b> : Various film clips – Soundtracks                  Sun Ra – <i>Space is the Place</i>  <i>Golden Voyager Record</i></p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> How does sound and image effect each other                  Diagetit/non-diagetit                  Dialog, on/off-screen  <b>VIEW</b>: Various film clips - Dialog</p>

<b>WEEK 10 October 30/Nov 1 – Investigations into Film Sound, Foley</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b>                  What is sound for film?  <b>VIEW</b> : <i>Hacked Circuit</i> (Deborah Stratman)  <b>TECH</b> : Export omf files for video sound editing</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> Foley  <b>TECH</b> : Foley Workshop part 1  <b>HW</b> : Audio Analysis Papers Due November 13</p>

<b>WEEK 11 November 6/8 – Foley and Critique Audio Documentary</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b>  <b>DUE</b> : Critique Audio Documentary</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b>  <b>TECH</b> : Foley workshop part 2</p>

<b>WEEK 12 - November 13/15 – Mixing and Mastering</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b>  <b>TECH</b> : Mixing and Mastering Techniques  <b>DUE</b> : Audio Analysis Paper</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b>                  Mixing and Mastering continued  <b>DUE</b> : Audio Analysis Papers turn in on SAKAI  <b>TECH</b> : Lab time Mixing and Mastering for final output  <b>HW</b> : Final Project Proposals</p>

### Assignment Final Project Proposals: Film Soundtrack Due Nov 20

<b>WEEK 13 November 20/22 - Thanksgiving</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b>                  Class Optional                  Individual Meetings for Final Project *sign up on for meetings on google drive*  <b>DUE</b> : Final Project Proposals SAKAI</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b>                  Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS  <b>DUE</b> : Final Project Proposals SAKAI</p>

**Individual Meetings to discuss needs for final project**

<b>WEEK 14 November 27/29 – Basic Music Editing and Concepts</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> Quiz 2 <b>TECH</b> : Audio Interfaces, recording external instruments Multi-tracking, mixing Class recording <b>Bring instruments if wanted!</b> <b>HW</b> : Final Projects	<b>Thursday</b> Lab time <b>TECH</b> : Trouble shoot any questions for Final Projects <b>HW</b> : Final projects

<b>WEEK 15 December 4/6 – FINAL PROJECTS</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>DUE</b> : FILM SOUNDTRACK PROJECTS listen/critique	<b>Thursday</b> <b>DUE</b> : Finish Critiquing Projects <b>Celebrate end of Class!</b>

# CRITIQUE FINAL PROJECTS

\*\*\*\*\***WINTER BREAK!**\*\*\*\*\*