

Introduction to Audio Production: COM 2570

Spring 2008

T, TH 4:00pm-5:50pm

Instructor: Dr. Rebekah Farrugia
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Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 2:00-3:50pm and by appointment

Course Overview

The purpose of this class is to familiarize you with the facets of audio and radio production used in contemporary studios and to encourage thinking beyond these boundaries. As such, course work will consist of in-class and out-of-class assignments and projects, lectures, discussions, critique sessions, and hands-on experience. While this class will be valuable for students considering any career in radio or audio production, it is **NOT** designed to produce DJs. In addition to learning the mechanics of production, you will be expected to cultivate your creativity, writing, and critical thinking skills. **If you have significant experience with audio production I recommend that you enroll in another course.**

Class time will be spread between lecture, discussion, hands-on learning, and individual work time. The class time officially allotted for the course will by no means provide enough time for completion of any of your production projects. **Be prepared for homework the way you are expected to be for any other university level course.** Be ready to spend additional hours either in the studio, editing lab, out doing fieldwork, writing, and otherwise producing your projects.

Note: The control rooms and editing labs are ONLY open from 8am-5pm Monday-Friday. If you have a busy semester during which most of this time is taken up with other classes or work then it is recommended that you drop the course as you will not have time to complete projects, many of which are group assignments. I CANNOT STRESS THIS ENOUGH!

Note: All of your editing must be done in Logic Pro on the hard drives provided by the CRC on the 4th floor of Moore Hall. A failing grade will be given for all projects NOT completed on your assigned hard drive in the designated facilities.

Required Course Texts

Carl Hausman, Philip Benoit, Lewis O'Donell. Modern Radio Production: Production, Programming, and Performance. 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2006.

Course pack

*All texts are available at the bookstore in the Bronco Mall.

Optional Materials

Jump drive/Blank writeable CD/Mini-disc

Equipment

Portable recording equipment and microphones are available at the Communication Resource Center (CRC) on the 4th floor of Moore Hall. Stay tuned for more information on check-out/check-in procedures and equipment rules. Remember when you sign out equipment, you are responsible for it – any damage or loss of equipment must be paid by the individual or group who has signed out the equipment. The radio production studios contain the audio consoles and some of the editing equipment we will use over the semester. Most of your editing will be completed

in the editing room down the hall from the studios. **Editing facilities are ONLY open between 8am-5pm so PLAN AHEAD! Note: All of your editing must be done in Logic Pro on the hard drives provided by the CRC on the 4th floor of Moore Hall. A failing grade will be given for all projects NOT completed on your assigned hard drive in the designated editing room.**

In general, take care of the equipment – keep in mind that others must use it this semester and in future semesters. **NO FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN THE STUDIOS/EDITING LAB!**

ONE FINAL NOTE: I do not recommend that you wait until the last minute to complete assignments. There are only 2 studios so if you wait until the last minute you will not finish projects on time. Late projects will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made. If you are having difficulty finishing an assignment please talk to me about it before hand.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to show a level of proficiency in the following areas:

- Production principles as related to the operation of audio console and radio station equipment.
- Apply principles of audio control, mixing, editing and production.
- Demonstrate overall proficiency by announcing, writing, and producing a variety of projects.
- Knowledge and competency of non-linear, digital editing.
- Learn and practice the discipline, attitudes, and skills required of a broadcast professional.

Accommodations:

I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Please contact me **PRIVATELY** during my office hours.

Course Requirements

Projects and Grade Breakdown

You will be required to complete the following in class/out-of class production projects. Some projects required you to work individually while others are group assignments. Brief summaries of each of the projects are listed below and detailed criteria are included in the course pack. The projects will be weighted as follows:

Board Exercise 5%
 Interview 10%
 News 10%
 Drama 15%
 Documentary/Feature Rough Cut 10%
 Doc/Feature Script & Process Statement 5%
 Doc/Feature Final Project 20%
 Short Assignments/In Class Exercises 5%
 Reading Quizzes 10%
 Participation/Attendance 10%

YOU MUST STAPLE ALL YOUR PAPERWORK BEFORE YOU TURN IT IN. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN POINT DEDUCTIONS.

YOU MUST CLEARLY LABEL ALL YOUR AUDIO TRACKS/MP3S BEFORE YOU TURN THEM IN. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN POINT DEDUCTIONS.

Board Exercise

Your first project will require you to demonstrate your ability to operate studio equipment and complete basic digital editing tasks.

Interview

You will conduct a five minute interview with an interviewee of your choice on a topic worthy of airing on an NPR type program.

News

You will write and produce three news stories.

Commercial

Working in pairs you will produce and edit a 30 second radio commercial.

Documentary/Feature story

Your final project will be an opportunity for you to utilize all that you will have learned throughout the semester. Working individually you will produce a documentary or feature story (5-6 min. in length) about a topic of personal interest to you.

Reading Quizzes

Because the reading load for this course is not heavy, you will have no excuse for not having completed assigned readings. Additionally, readings are fairly self-explanatory and will be useful to you as you complete your projects, but may not always need to be discussed in detail during class time. Therefore, you will be held accountable for the readings with regular reading quizzes. Any unexcused absences on days when quizzes are given will result in a 0% for that day's quiz. Quiz grades will not be curved.

Short Assignments

Class time will involve a lot of discussion and hands-on work. Therefore, it is important that you come to class ready to participate in the day's activities. On certain occasions you will be required to complete some shorter outside assignments. These assignments must be turned in at the following class period. Also, realize that in-class projects may include some downtime as students take turns using the equipment. You should try to find ways to utilize this time best, whether it be by working on your own projects or even helping out other students.

Attendance/Participation

To learn and work you need to be in class; therefore, class attendance is mandatory. More than one unexcused absence will affect your participation grade for this course. Unless an absence is accompanied by a doctor's note or prior approval for a University-sanctioned event, it will be considered unexcused. You will also be penalized for excessive tardiness. Assisting other students when they are having difficulties will contribute to an above-average grade for participation.

Problems or Complaints

If at any time during the course you have a problem or complaint, please come see me so that we may work things out as soon as possible. If we are unable to reach a satisfactory arrangement, please feel free to contact the Director of the School of Communication, Dr. Steve Rhodes (387-3130, steve.rhodes@wmich.edu). In addition, please consult the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures for additional information regarding this process.

Academic Policies

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate (pp. 274-276) Catalog that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

Tentative Daily Schedule

WEEK 1	
T Jan 8	Introductions
TH Jan 10	The Radio Studio/Chapter 2 – The Console
WEEK 2	
T Jan 15	QUIZ #1 /Mikes, CD players, records (Ch. 3 & 5)
TH Jan 17	Editing Tutorial #1/ QUIZ #2 Chapters 4 & 6
WEEK 3	
T Jan 22	Editing Tutorial #2/ QUIZ #3 Chapter 9
TH Jan 24	WMUK Tour
WEEK 4	
T Jan 29	Formats: Chapters 1 & 16
TH Jan 31	Board Exercise DUE/QUIZ #4 Interviewing Hilliard, R. Ch. 7 “Interview and Talk Programs.” <i>Writing for Television, Radio and New Media</i> . Belmont: Wadsworth, 2000. pp. 211-244. (coursepack)
WEEK 5	
T Feb 5	QUIZ #5 Using portable recorders/gathering natural sound/Man On the Street McLeish, R. (1999). Ch. 12 “The Vox Pop” from <i>Radio Production: A manual for broadcasters</i> . 3rd ed. (pp. 147-152). Oxford: Focal Press. (coursepack)

TH Feb 7	gathering sound continued/ QUIZ #6
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WEEK 6

T Feb 12	Editing Tutorial #3/ Interview Project DUE
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TH Feb 14	News and Public Affairs Chapter 13
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WEEK 7

T Feb 19	QUIZ #7/ Writing/In class assignment *Robert McLeish. Chapter 5 “Writing.” <i>Radio Production: A manual for broadcasters</i> . 4 th ed. (pp. 65-75). Oxford: Focal Press, 1999. (coursepack)
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TH Feb 21	Newsreading Hausman, C., O'Donnell, L, & Benoit, P. Ch. 3 “Understanding the Message.” <i>Announcing: Broadcast Communicating Today</i> . 4 th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2000. (coursepack).
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WEEK 7

T Feb 19	QUIZ #7/ Newsreading Hausman, C., O'Donnell, L, & Benoit, P. Ch. 3 “Understanding the Message.” <i>Announcing: Broadcast Communicating Today</i> . 4 th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2000. (coursepack).
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TH Feb 21	QUIZ #8 (on writing chapter from course pack) Read Ch. 11, Radio Dramas *Crook, T. (1999). Ch. 17 “Creating the Character and Effective Use of Characterisation.” In <i>Radio Drama: Theory and Practice</i> . (pp. 183-187).
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WEEK 8

T Feb 26	QUIZ #9 (on announcing chapter in course pack)
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TH Feb 28	News projects DUE Work on dramas in class
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WEEK 9

Spring Break	
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WEEK 10

T March 11	work on dramas in class
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TH March 13	Final Project Proposal DUE—1-2 pgs double spaced Writing for documentaries and features
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McLeish, R. (1999). Ch. 20 “Documentary and Feature Programmes.” *Radio Production: A manual for broadcasters*. 4th ed. Oxford: Focal Press.

Crook, T. (1999). Ch. 20 “Making the Documentary/Feature.” In *Radio Drama: Theory and Practice*. (pp. 213-231). New York: Routledge.

WEEK 11

T March 18 **Radio Dramas DUE at end of class**

TH March 20 **Final project outline DUE at the beginning of class**

WEEK 12

T March 25 **QUIZ #10/commercials overview**

TH March 27 **Final Project scripts due – workshop**

WEEK 13

T April 1 work on final projects in class

TH April 3 work on final projects in class

WEEK 14

T April 8 **MANDATORY Final Project rough cut workshop**

TH April 10 **MANDATORY Final Project rough cut workshop**

WEEK 15

T April 15 **Final Project clean-up day**

TH April 17 **FINAL PROJECTS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS,
4PM SHARP!**