Advanced Audio Production

Spring 2023 – COMM374.202

Instructor: Chris Batte

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Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom

Course Information

Room: School of Communication, Water Tower Campus, 51 E. Pearson, Room 100.

Time: Wednesdays from 4:15PM to 6:45PM from January 18th through April 26th, 2022.

Materials: 16 GB or larger USB3.0 external hard drive (formatted MacOS) & quality headphones (Sony MDR7506 or equivalent, no Bluetooth, no noise cancelling). The cost of these items is under $100. There are no books to purchase for this class. You must buy these items for this class. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Course Description

This is an advanced course in audio production. It is meant for undergraduate and graduate students with an introductory background in audio and want to further explore audio production. Students will learn basics of capturing and mixing musical performances, setting up sound reinforcement for public address, location audio and postproduction for film and television, including VO, ADR, foley recording, and SFX creation. Creativity and careful execution are major factors in the grading of all projects.

Course Goals

• Reinforce basic audio concepts and terminology.

• Further develop critical listening skills.

• Understanding of gain staging, signal flow and audio reproduction methods.

• Study the different types of analog and digital audio formats.

• Discuss recording studio theories of tracking instruments and how musical sessions work.

• Learn how to mix different musical instruments into a coherent song.

• Practice editing, mixing, and other ways to manipulate audio in Pro Tools.

• Setup a public address system.

• Learn how to, then work on set as a sound mixer, boom operator, and/or sound assistant.

• Understand audio workflows, practices, and standards for mixing television and film.

• Setup and run sessions for voiceover, automatic dialog replacement, & foley.

• How to clean up location audio and other repair practices via Isotope RX

• Basic understanding of surround sound mixing and delivery.

Assignments, Grading, and Due Dates

Production Assignments (60 Points)

Mix A Song: Choose 1 of 5 recording sessions, import the track stems to Pro Tools, and mix the song to stereo. Deliver a .wav and .mp3 files via OneDrive. (10 Points) Due Week 4.

Location Sound: 2 days of working on set as either a mixer, boom op, or audio assistant over the weekends of 3/18-3/19 and 3/25-3/26. (10 points)

ADR/Foley/VO session: schedule and run a session from the available assignments, or come up with one of your own. Students will need to be either an engineer, actor, voice-over or foley artist on the session. (10 points) Due Week

Clean up dialog: Clean up the audio from a crummy location recording using Isotope RX then mix the scene together with natural sounds and music. (10 points)

Mix a scene from Vibrations: Download your assigned interview, import the AAF, organize your session, mix in your cleaned up interview, and deliver 5.1 session with any added audio files to Onedrive. (20 points) Due Week 14

Or Mix the production short: Download your assigned project, Import the AAF, organize your session. Find what's missing and execute as needed: ADR, foley, VO, sfx creation, music selection. Mix and deliver 5.1 session back to project folder. (20 points) Due Week 14

Or Mix another short: Find project (yours, another students, etc.), Import the AAF, organize your session. Find what's missing and execute as needed: ADR, foley, VO, sfx creation, music selection. Mix and deliver 5.1 session back to project folder. (20 points) Due Week 14

Homework

A couple of short docs and other video content that will be the subject of your pop quizzes**.**

Tests and Participation (40 Points)

Final Exam: (20 points) Week 16, finals week.

Pop Quizzes: (20 points)

Grading Scale

93-100%	A=4.0	77-79%	C+= 2.33
90-92%	A- = 3.67	73-76%	C=2.00
87-89%	B+= 3.33	70-72%	C-=1.67
83-86%	B=3.00	60-69%	D=1.00
80-82%	B-= 2.67	0-59%	F =0

Session Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 18) – Intros, Schedules, Audio review

Fundamentals of Audio, what you should be familiar with for this class.

Different jobs in audio: sound guy, sound mixer, tracking engineer, mixing, broadcast, ADR/dialog recordist, sound design, and mastering engineer.

This class' role & schedule in the 2 movies being produced this semester.

Week 2 (Jan 25) – Formats, A/D & D/A, Gain Structure

What is analog audio and what is digital audio.

Different audio formats and media

Basic tools of audio: mics, mixers, preamps, amps, compressors, & EQs

Gain structure and how to apply it

ASSIGN: Mix A Song

Week 3 (Feb 1) – Microphone types and applications, how to setup a PA

How microphones work

Different types of microphones and how to use them

Setting up a PA

ASSIGN: ADR/Foley/VO session

Week 4 (Feb 8) – Guest Lecturer: Nicky Ray Harris, intro to Pro Tools

Nicky Ray talks about working as sound mixer and on the set of *South Side*

Location audio: gear, methods, jobs, how to interact with other departments

Introduction to Pro Tools (brief)

ASSIGN: Location Sound

Week 5 (Feb 15) – Pro Tools continues

How to organize a session.

Mixing different musical elements together.

Using inserts, aux sends, subgroups and reverb.

Other audio tricks in the studio

Week 6 (Feb 22) – Recording Session

Recording music in class.

Week 7 (Mar 1) – Group Critique

Mix A Song assignment reviews

DUE: Mix A Song

Week 8 (Mar 8) – Spring Break, no class

Week 9 (Mar 15) – Location Sound Clinic

Setting up the mixer

Building your bag

Wireless lav setup and micing techniques

How to operate a boom mic

Week 10 (Mar 22) – Guest Lecturer Chris Cosgrove, RX Intro

Chris is a broadcast sound engineer for Kansas City PBS and sister station The Bridge(radio)

Introduction to Isotope RX

Assign: Clean Up Dialog

Week 11 (Mar 29) – Surround Sound

History and delivery of surround sound systems

How to setup a PT session for surround mixing

Week 12 (Apr 5) – Foley, ADR, and VO

DUE: Clean Up Dialog

Week 13 (Apr 12) – Flex Lecture Day

Week 14 (Apr 19) – Group Critique

DUE: Mix a scene

Week 15 (Apr 26) – Group Critique

DUE: Mix a scene

Week 16 (May 3rd) – Final Exam

Policies and Expectations

Policy on Late Work: Late work will not be accepted. It will receive a zero. You are allowed to redo most projects if they are turned in on time. There will be no makeup exams.

Policy on Absences: Attendance is crucial. We will be covering a large amount of information and work each session. Since this is a production class that meets only once a week, if you are to miss more than two classes without a reasonable excuse (illness, family emergency, etc.) you will receive one letter grade reduction on your final grade. Any further absences will equal a full grade reduction per missed class. It is the responsibility of the student to acquire notes or materials for any missed class.

Rough Cuts: 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 mandatory for the Sound Design and Final Project.

Redoing Projects: You are almost always allowed to redo any project for a better grade, barring the final project or the mid-term. Please check with me before you do this.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity
A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy.
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.
- Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of their findings and sanction.

The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.
Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:
http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

Students with Learning Disabilities
Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from 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 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.

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support
Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – please email me or schedule a meeting with me during office hours. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites at LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa. Or you may contact them directly at 773-508-8840 and at deanofstudents@luc.edu.

Notice of Reporting Obligations for Responsible Campus Partners

As an instructor, I am considered a Responsible Campus Partner ("RCP") under Loyola's Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation (located at www.luc.edu/equity). While my goal is for you to be able to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, I want to be transparent that as a RCP I am required to report certain disclosures of sexual misconduct (such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner and/or domestic violence, and/or stalking) to the University's Title IX Coordinator.

As an instructor, I also have a mandatory obligation under Illinois law to report disclosures of or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect (https://www.luc.edu/hr/legal-notices/mandatedreportingofchildabuseandneglect/).

The purpose of these reporting requirements is for the University to inform students who have experienced sexual/gender-based violence of available resources and support. Such a report **will not generate a report to law enforcement** (no student will ever be forced to file a report with the police). Furthermore, the University's resources and supports are available to all students even if a student chooses that they do not want any other action taken. Please note that in certain situations, based on the nature of the disclosure, the University may need to take additional action to ensure the safety of the University community. If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact the Office for Equity & Compliance at equity@luc.edu or 773-508-7766.

If you wish to speak with a confidential resource regarding gender-based violence, I encourage you to call The Line at 773-494-3810. The Line is staffed by confidential advocates from 8:30am-5pm M-F and 24 hours on the weekend when school is in session. Advocates can provide support, talk through your options (medical, legal, LUC reporting, safety planning, etc.), and connect you with additional resources as needed. More information can be found at luc.edu/coalition or luc.edu/wellness.

Use of Appropriate Names and Pronouns

Addressing one another at all times by using appropriate names and gender pronouns honors and affirms individuals of all gender identities and gender expressions. Misgendering and heteronormative language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.

If you wish, please share your gender pronouns with me and the class when you introduce yourself; and/or on your name placard; and/or on your Zoom profile. If you do not wish to be called by the name that appears on the class roster or attendance sheet, please let me know. My goal is to create an affirming environment for all students with regard to their names and gender pronouns.

COVID STUFF: for the latest Loyola University Chicago policies regaring COVID protocols and pandemic procedures, go to this website: **https://www.luc.edu/returntocampus/**

Privacy Statement
Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Students will be informed of such recordings by a statement in the syllabus for the course in which they will be recorded. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording. Recordings including student activity that have been initiated by the instructor may be retained by the instructor only for individual use.

This syllabus may be amended by the instructor at any time during the semester. Students will be informed of any changes via Sakai.