INTRODUCTION TO AUDIO PRODUCTION
Comm 130, Sec. 201, Spring 2019
Wednesdays, 7:00pm - 9:30pm
WTC, School of COMM - Room 002
Instructor: Casey Puccini
Email: ppuccini@luc.edu
Office Hours: TBD

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 storytelling, 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.

EQUIPMENT (Comprehensive list available on SAKAI)

- Zoom H4n Recorders
- Mics (Shotgun, Cardioid, Lavs, Pressure Contact Mics)
- Sound Device Field Recorder
- Adobe Audition

MATERIALS

- External Hard Drive or USB Key
- Headphones
- Note-Taking Materials

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

PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS (60%)
(More detailed requirements provided in Assignments section of SAKAI)

Audio 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%) Due: Week 4 (Feb. 6)

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%) Due: Week 6 (Feb. 20)

Audioplay: 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%) Due: Week 10 (Mar. 20)

Opposing Tone Film Soundtrack: Students choose a short scene from a film, remove the audio and spot, design and build the soundtrack with an opposing tone to the image. [ex. Turn The Shining into a comedy, Anchorman into a drama, etc]. (15%), Fine Cut: Week 13 (Apr. 10)

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. Projects should be a demonstration of your fluency in the concepts and techniques taught throughout the course. (20%). Rough Cut: Week 14 (Apr. 17), Fine Cut: Week 15 (Apr. 24)

TESTS & PARTICIPATION (40%)
Midterm Exam: 10% Due Week 9 (Mar. 13)
Final Exam: 20% Due Week 14 (Apr. 17)
Class Participation: 10%

COURSE SCHEDULE*

Week 1 - January 16 - Introduction

- Instructor/Student Introduction
- Syllabus/Course; Goals for the Semester
- Listening Techniques and Exercises
- Sound/Image Relationship
- Assign Sound Walk (Due Next Week)
- Assign Audio Interview Project (Due Week 4 FEB 6)

Homework:

- Sound Walk and Adaptation (Due Next Week)
- READ Voice and Vision Chapter 15, "Soundtrack for a Film in New York" by Michelangelo Antonioni (Due Next Week)

Week 2 - January 23 - Characteristics of Sound

- Selected Sound Walks/Adaptations
- Essentials of Audio
- Mics: Types, pick up patterns, ways of recording
- Mic/Audio Recorder Demo/Authorization
- Recording Practice

Homework:

- Record for Audio Interview Project (Due Week 5 FEB 13)
- READ Voice and Vision Chapter 23 (Due Next Week)

Week 3 - January 30 - No Class

Week 4 - February 6 - Intro to Audition

- Assign Soundscape Project (Due Week 7 FEB 27)
- File Logging
- Intro to Adobe Audition cont'd
  - Transitions
  - Presence
  - Layering
  - Bouncing
- Work on Audio Interview Project

Homework:

- Finish Audio Interview Project (Due Next Week)
- READ Voice and Vision Chapter 16 (Due Next Week)
- Plan concept for Soundscape Project (Due Week 7 10/10)

Week 5 - February 13 - Soundscapes

- Listen/Critique Audio Interview Project
- Soundscapes
  - Directing the Ear
  - Punctuation and Drones
  - Field Recording Techniques
  - Sound Effects
  - Critical Analysis and Spotting
  - Layering

Homework:

- Collect and Sounds for Soundscape (Due Week 6 Feb 20)
- Begin Mixing Soundscape Project

Week 6 - February 20 - Sound Design

- Further Sound Editing/Mixing Techniques
  - EQ
  - Reverb
  - Echo
  - Panning
- Students will have time to work on Soundscape/show and discuss with Casey

Homework:

- Finish Soundscape Project (Due Next Week)

Week 7 - February 27 - Storytelling

- Assign Audioplay Project (Due Week 10 MAR 20)
- Assign Midterm (Due Week 9 MAR 13)
- Listen/Critique Soundscape Project
- Discuss Audio Plays, docs, drama, spoken word, Podcasts, etc

Homework

- Decide concept/begin gathering sound for Audioplay Project (Due Week 10 MAR 20)
- Begin Midterm (Due MAR 13)

Week 8 - March 6 - Spring Break NO CLASS

Week 9 - March 13 - Sound Perspective, Sound Effects, Editing Dialogue

- Sound Effects
- Dialogue Editing
- Worldizing Sound
- Copyright Free Sound Effects & Found Sound
- Students will work in groups to complete an in-class Audioplay assignment

Homework:

- Finish Audioplay Project (Due Next Week)
- READ "Phantom Audio Vision" by Michel Chion, "Sound Edit and Creative Sound" by Dancyger (Due Next Week)

Week 10 - March 20 - Sound for Film I

- Listen/Critique Audioplay Project
- Assign Film Tone Project (Due APR 10)
- Film Sound: Pre Production through post
- Elements of a Soundtrack

Homework:

- Choose film scene for Film Tone Project
- "Stretching Sound to Help the Mind See" by Walter Murch

Week 11 - March 27 - Sound for Film II
- Assign Final Project (Due APR 24)
- Field Recording vs. Foley
- In class Foley Exercise
Homework:
- Finish In Class Foley Exercise

Week 12 - April 3 - Mixing & Mastering
- Assign Final Exam (Due APR 17)
- Mixing: Techniques and aesthetics
- Mastering

- Formats and Media
- Bussing, Compression, etc.

Homework:
- Finish Film Tone Project (Due NEXT WEEK)

Week 13 - April 10 - Mixing and Mastering

- Listen/Critique Film Tone Project
- Discuss final proposals with students

Homework:
- Finish Final Project Rough Cut (Due APR 17)

Week 14 - April 17

- Turn in Final Exam
- Listen/Critique Final Project Rough Cuts

Homework:

- Finish Final Project Fine Cut (Due NEXT WEEK)

Week 15 - April 24

- Evaluations
- Final Project Fine Cuts

Homework:

- Have a great winter break!

GRADE BREAKDOWN
60%Production Assignments
10% Midterm
20% Final
5% Sound Diary
5% Attendance & Participation (includes readings & SAKAI participation)

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

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.

POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

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 Wednesday 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

MANDATED REPORTER

As a faculty member at Loyola University Chicago I am committed to supporting students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Therefore, if a student chooses to confide in me regarding an issue of gender-based misconduct, I am obligated to inform Loyola's Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Deputy Coordinator will assist you in connecting with all possible resources for support and reporting both on and off campus.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY CENTER (SAC)

If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the SAC as soon as possible. Formal arrangements must be made through the office before course adjustments can be made. Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SAC website:
https://luc.edu/sac/sacstudents/.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Treat the class like a job
- Show up on time

- Come to class prepared
- Pay attention
- Do the work
- Stay for the entire class period
- Be fully engaged in class
- Pay attention and take good notes
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Be resourceful
- Take the initiative to learn and succeed
- Communicate
- Make no excuses
- Don't wait until the last minute to do the assignment.

Syllabus is subject to change and students will be updated and informed of any change immediately.