

Course Syllabus
Comm 352 Producing Audio Fiction
Fall Semester 2017

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office hours:	M, T, TH	10-11AM

Course Description

This course examines advanced audio production techniques and aesthetics as applied to the creation of audio fiction. Specifically, this course looks at how particular techniques (producing effects and music, dialogue, and narrative structure) build mental images through words and sounds.

Course Objectives

- to develop a "critical ear" by understanding form, function and the aesthetics of audio fiction
- to understand and experience the processes of producing audio fiction
- to create "word pictures"

Textbooks

Crook, T. (1999). Radio Drama: Theory and Practice. New York: Routledge.

Hand, R.J. and Traynor, M. (2011). The Radio Drama Handbook: Audio Dram in Practice and Context. New York: Continuum.

Note: both books are on textbook purchase. Reading are assigned in class

Expectations

This course takes a fair amount of time outside of scheduled class time. You will also be working as a part of a group on a major project. Your failure to attend class or fully participate in assignments, affects not only your performance, but other members of the class as well. Your regular and full participation is expected.

All students are required to be available on the evening of December 8th and all day on December 9th.

Other Relevant Information:

-*I will be using email* to contact you as needed. I will be posting updates and other information to the news item area of the D2L site for this class on a regular basis. I expect that you monitor this class on a regular, if not daily, basis.

-*Supplies*. You need to have access to one of the following: a cloud account or an external hard drive or a large capacity (16GB) thumb drive or SD card with appropriate card reader device.

-*Dates due are deadlines*. Period.

-*Attendance is required*. If you have an excused absence for reason(s) consistent with the UWSP policy on attendance, you have the opportunity to make up missed points (if applicable--for that day) though an additional work to be determined.

-*Academic dishonesty*: Using material from another source (book, journal, internet site, a faculty member, another student, etc.) without proper acknowledgment is not acceptable. Period. The University has policies that govern academic dishonesty. You should be familiar with them. You will find a statement of my views on plagiarism appended to this course syllabus. If you violate these policies on any of your course work, you will receive a grade of **Fail** for that assignment/exam. You may also receive a grade of **Fail** for the class and be subject to University procedures on academic dishonesty.

-*Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*. UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to success, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Read more here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

-*Academic integrity* is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RIgthsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

-*Assistive Accommodations*. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>. If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the

Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here:

<http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

-FERPA Disclaimer. If this course requires posting of work online, it is viewable only by your classmates. None of the work submitted online will be shared publicly. Your academic records (grades, student IDs, personal identification information) will not be shared by the instructor of this course. Confidentiality of student work is imperative, so you should not share the work of your peers publicly without their permission. By participating in these assignments you are giving consent to sharing of your work with others in this class and you recognize there is a small risk of your work being shared online beyond the purposes of this course. If you elect to not participate in these online assignments due to confidentiality concerns, then an alternate assignment will be offered to you.

-Netiquette. Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

--The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Using humor is acceptable

Grading:

Final grades are determined by student performance in the following areas:

- 1) analysis of radio drama. During the semester, you will conduct analyses of audio fiction productions. There are several works on electronic reserve (see D2L). Each week in class, student are assigned a production to listen and evaluate. Two students are appointed to lead the

- class in a discussion of that assigned production and write a short production analysis essay to deposit in the DropBox. Each analysis (two total) is worth 15 points.
- 2) production exercises. There are three individual production assignments. The productions combined total 60 points.
 - a. the sound story 10 points
 - b. romance at the grocery store 20 points
 - c. overhead in a motel room 30 points
 - 3) final production. During the semester, you will write, produce, record, and participate in a live performance of several dramatic presentations. This is a group effort and is worth 45 points.
 - 4) final examination. The final exam will be course comprehensive and cover materials from lectures and from the readings. It will include multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer essay questions and is worth 40 points
 - 5) lab practical examination: This is worth 15 points

Point Totals

Production Analyses	2 @ 15:	30
Production Exercises	3	60
Lab Practical examination		15
Final Production		55
Final Examination		40
TOTAL:		200

Note: Students can earn up to an addition 10 points for classroom participation: discussion of production analyses, group participation, & class attendance.

Grading Scale:

Point Totals:

95%+	=	A	190-200
94%	=	A-	188-289
93%	=	B+	186-187
87%-92%	=	B	174-185
86%	=	B-	172-173
85%	=	C+	179-171
77%-84%	=	C	154-169
76%	=	C-	152-153
75%	=	D+	150-151
71%-74%	=	D	142-149
0%-70%	=	F	0-141

Studio Time

Students are expected to complete work outside of scheduled class time. The facilities are available through a reservation system. Students are allowed to sign up for no more than a three (3) hour block of time during any given day. Please refer to the How To Reserve CAC 126 guide posted in D2L. Please note: Adobe Audition is the software used for the production work in this class. It is available in CAC 126 and in computer labs across the campus.

Recording Equipment

The Division of Communication has several hand-held field production recorders available for check out through the Help Desk in the library (basement). Check out procedures and policies will be discussed in class. The manual for the recorders is posted in D2L.

In addition, there are other recording units and field production kits available for check out, which are managed by Professor Tolstedt. Check out procedures and policies, as well as how to use them will be discussed in class.

Course Schedule

Please note: unless otherwise indicated, Monday class sessions will meet in CAC 315 and Wednesday class sessions will meet in either CAC 315 or CAC 126.

Week 1:

Wednesday, September 6th: Course Introduction

Week 2:

Monday, September 11th: Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Wednesday, September 13th:

Week 3:

Monday, September 18st: Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Wednesday, September 20th.

The Sound Story Due

Week 4:

Monday, September 25th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, September 27th:

Week 5:

Monday, October 2nd:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, October 4th:

Romance at the Grocery Store Due

Week 6:

Monday, October 7th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, October 9th:

Week 7:

Monday, October 16th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, October 18th:

Overheard in a Motel Room Due

Week 8:

Monday, October 23rd:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, October 25th:

Week 9:

Monday, October 30th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, November 1st:

Week 10:

Monday, November 6th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, November 8th:

Week 11:

Monday, November 13th:

Sound Basics:

Adobe Audition:

Audio Theater Form and Function:

Lecture and Student Presentations

Wednesday, November 15th:

Wednesday, December 13th: Lab Practical Exam: Time TBA

Final Exam: Monday, December 18 @12:30PM

Assignments

1) Production Analyses

Your goal in this production analysis is to examine the relationship between the various production elements of the radio drama: narrative structure, scene transitions, sound effects, music, music effects, and dialogue.

There are several audio dramas located on eReserve, which you access through D2L. For each analysis, you will listen to one of the programs (YOUR CHOICE MUST BE APPROVED BY PROFESSOR TOLSTEDT) and write a short analysis paper of 3-5 typewritten pages AND present to the class in a discussion format.

Some specific things that need to be included:

- a synopsis of the drama (plots, themes, scenes, characters)
- explain how transitions are made between scenes/narrative elements
- explain how the narrative structure is carried
- describe the music and explain how the music is used (including program intro, outro, and everything in between)
- detail the effects used and explain how they are produced, used (their function) and, specifically, how they relate to the narrative

2) Production Exercises

All production work is to be submitted to D2L as an MP3

The 1st project is called "The Sound Story."

Your goal is to create a "story" of a place using only sound. Each student will be given a location to record sounds. Using the portable equipment, you are to gather "wild" sound at that location and then using Adobe Audition, you are to shape those sounds into a story of that place that is between 60 and 90 seconds. No script is necessary, although you must submit a one-page, typewritten explanation of how you completed this assignment: what sounds you used, the decisions you made to select sounds, the post-production manipulation of the sound, etc.

The 2nd project is called "Romance at the Grocery Store."

Each student is to write, record and perform (using the field production kit or in CAC 126) a comedy bit on the theme "romance at the grocery store." The production will run between 90 seconds and 3 minutes, have at least 3 voices

and 1 effect. If you choose to produce this live, you can add music in post-production. A script is required.

The 3rd project is called “Overheard in a Hotel Room.”

Your goal is to create (script and produce) the following scene: it is late at night. After driving cross-country for 27 straight hours, you have just checked into a motel for the night. The motel may best be described as “seedy.” Just as your head hits the pillow, a “conversation” can be heard in the next room. And because of the paper-thin walls, you are able to hear everything.

Your production of this scene must be between 3 and 5 minutes in length. Your production must include at least one music selection and at least three sound effects. A script, in proper format is required. This assignment must be produced for post-production.

3) Radio Commercial Analysis

Your task is listen to local (either central-Wisconsin or your home town) radio. Find and record a commercial that uses music, effects, and voice in a dramatic, fiction format. Write a 2-3 page analysis of the production.

4) Final Production

Working as a group, we will adapt and produce and perform live in front of an audience. This can be an adaptation of something already done in class or a newly authored piece. This is your chance to produce something “special.” It is something that you can be proud to include on your demo tape. We will work on this over the semester. The production should be error free and have a professional sound. You will need to find talent to read, musician(s) to perform any diegetic or transitional music, and foley artists. Scripts, in proper format, are required.

Plagiarism

A major problem facing both professors and students is the practice of plagiarism, which is defined as “the deliberate or accidental use of ideas, research, or words of another person without fully attributing them to their original sources.” As a student in this course, it is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. A student who plagiarizes work in my class will receive a failing grade for that assignment, possibly for the course and may be subject to additional academic misconduct sanctions.

The following paragraph offers advice on paraphrasing, a major aspect of plagiarism: Clearly attribute ideas that you have paraphrased to their authors, both directly in your text and by providing reference citations. Do not try to paraphrase by changing just a few of the author’s words (that’s plagiarizing): paraphrasing involves substantial change in the order of words and ideas, usually to condense them. Paraphrasing, in other words, involves putting someone else’s thoughts into your own words, not just rearranging the words and ideas or combining, but shortening, someone else’s sentences. To avoid unintentionally writing a plagiaristic paraphrase, carefully mark the notes that you take on your references where you use exact, or nearly exact, words of the source.

The following guidelines are offered as additional hints on what plagiarism is:

--Every paper or report submitted for credit is accepted as the student’s own work. It may not, therefore, have been composed, wholly or partially, by another person.

--The wording of a student’s paper is taken as his or her own. Thus he or she may not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper or another student’s paper or notebook, or any other written or printed source (including speeches, WWW sites, news reports, etc.). Direct quotes or ideas from outside sources may be used, but they must be properly cited. Thus, do not simply change a few words within a sentence from a source, put it in your paper, and drop a footnote by it without using quotation marks. Doing so represents the sentence as your own, when it is not, and this is plagiarism!

--As a student, you may incorporate in your paper ideas that have arisen from discussion or lectures when you incorporated these ideas into your own thinking. However, be careful to either cite properly the source of the ideas or cite other sources that reinforce the ideas you are using.

--You may, as a part of the good writing process, give your work to someone else for suggestions. However, having someone else totally correct and revise your work constitutes that person’s work, not your own, and thus constitutes plagiarism.

--You may of course submit a paper to be typed by another person, provided that typist has not sought to change the wording, ideas, organization, or any significant aspect of the paper in any way. If you submit such a paper, be sure to proofread carefully.

--No paper may be submitted for credit that has been or is being used to fulfill the requirements of another course, in whatever department, unless permission to coordinate work has been granted by both professors.

--Students in my courses are expected to utilize the APA stylebook, which provides guidelines for proper citation.