

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. John Stone, Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education

FROM: Barbara Penington, Chair BP
Communication Department

RE: Course Currency: SPEECH 520, Advanced Audio Techniques

DATE: September 12, 2008

We feel that SPEECH 520, Advanced Audio Techniques, should be kept in the bulletin of course offerings. Although it has not been taken at the graduate level for several years, we plan on expanding our graduate program, and graduate students in our Mass Communication emphasis might find this a good option. We have also recently submitted a Growth Agenda Proposal which identifies our graduate program as an area the College would like to expand. Specifically, the Growth Agenda would help fund a new branch of our Communication master's program which would focus on Multimedia. If this were to happen, Advanced Audio Techniques might become an even more popular graduate offering. In sum, we would like to have the opportunity to further explore how this course may be used as our graduate program continues to evolve.

**ADVANCED AUDIO TECHNIQUES
SPEECH 320/520
SPRING 2008**

COURSE MEETING TIMES: W 6:15-8:45 PM
INSTRUCTOR: Jeff Herriott
OFFICE: L 1202, CA2006
OFFICE HOURS: TBA, or by appointment
OFFICE PHONE: 472-1424 (L 1202)
EMAIL: herriotj@uww.edu
COURSE WEBSITE: can be found on your Desire 2 Learn account

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

- There are two student assistants – Anna Weisling and Nathan Honore - dedicated to maintaining the production studio space and providing support for students enrolled in audio courses. See them for assistance with projects and to check out gear. Their office hours and contact information will be posted.

- **Do not badger these student assistants.** Do not call them on weeknights after hours to check out equipment! Plan ahead. If there is a problem with the gear, email them or look for them during office hours and they may be able to help. They should not be contacted, though, because of your laziness or inability to plan ahead. If you recognize the need for assistance, contact them ahead of time so they can be present to help you as you work.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

- "An advanced level course that studies the utilization of multi-track digital systems in broadcast, recording and sound re-enforcement environments. Students critique and analyze existing works and produce related audio materials in various genres."

- Students will examine and gain experience with different facets of the recording and production process. This course will focus on a combination of critical listening, lecture, and direct experience with studio equipment to learn techniques for multi-track recording using a digital audio workstation. **This class will be very hands-on**, including a good deal of work with audio equipment.

- At the completion of this course, students should be able to:
 - **record and mix multi-track projects in a studio environment;**
 - **speak critically about recordings and other audio works;**
 - **record live productions either in multi-track or stereo;**
 - **produce professional-quality radio spots;**
 - **identify the appropriate sound equipment and techniques to utilize and apply in a given audio production situation.**

- Course prerequisite: Speech 239 or consent of instructor.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- All incidents of suspected academic misconduct will be dealt with according to UWS Chapter 14 (Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures). This document may be found on the web at <http://www.uww.edu/stdhdbk/uwsystem.html#14>

Note that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Your work must be your own. **If you cheat or plagiarize, you will be asked either to redo the assignment or reported to the Dean's office (and possibly much more extensive penalties).** In this course, this mostly refers to the use of samples or other audio examples for your audio spots and other recordings. You can sample all you want, but **always keep track of what you take and from where it came** – write this information down in your production log. If you have ANY QUESTIONS AT ALL about this, please ask me. This is extremely important.

COURSE TEXT AND OTHER SUPPLIES

- The following is the principal texts for this course, and it will be available through textbook rental.

- Huber, David Miles and Robert E. Runstein. Modern Recording Techniques. (5th Edition). Boston: Focal Press, 1997.

- The following textbook will be in the Pro-Tools Audio Suite, for you to reference while working on ProTools projects:

- Keane, John. The Musician's Guide to Pro Tools. New York: McGraw Hill, 2004.

- Students will also be responsible for purchasing their own recording media. I recommend that you immediately purchase a spindle of 50 blank CD-Rs, either 74 or 80 minutes in duration. You should also purchase a package of blank CD covers (you can use the paper sleeves, which are very cheap).

- Students may also want to purchase their own external hard drives, though this will be more expensive. You might instead want to get a 2 or 4 GB USB flash drive to store material on. Don't both getting a smaller drive, as you might as well just burn CDs instead.

- I recommend that all students get a subscription to Tape Op magazine. Simply go to <http://tapeop.com> and follow the procedure to get a free subscription.

- If you don't already own some, you should purchase a pair of decent studio headphones. These will be valuable to you for a long time.

FILE SAVING PROCEDURE

- Be sure to save your files to only three locations:

- CD-Rs;

- your external hard drive or USB drive

- your personal folder, which you must place into the **Students** folder on the various computers we will use.

- **BE WARNED:** ANY files found in any location other than a personal folder will be trashed. No effort will be made to see what these files might be or whom they might belong to. They will

simply be thrown away. Always be certain of where you save your files!

STUDIO TIME AND EQUIPMENT AVAILABILITY

- Students will be assigned two hours per week in the Production Studio or four hours per week in the Pro-Tools Audio Suite. Additional times can be negotiated as necessary. Times in the other studios are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please reserve rooms based on the work that you need to accomplish and use the most appropriate facility for each project. Be advised that many of your projects will be completed as two-person teams, and you will be able to combine your times when working on those assignments.
- If you sign out studio time, USE IT. You will have 10 minutes of leeway for studio time – if you are not in the studios 10 minutes after your time, you will lose the slot. Students who repeatedly fail to appear for time when signed out will lose their sign-out privileges.
- Recording of loud music can only be done from midnight to 7 AM. Isolated recording of quiet instruments or musical passages may be done with the recording studio/classroom or production studio is available (subject to noise constraints). You must get the instructor's approval to record music from midnight – 7 AM. Consult with the instructor if you are uncertain about your recording plans.
- Other equipment can be checked out for your use, including:
 - Microphones
 - Headphones and headphone amplifiers
 - DI boxes
 - DAT or minidisk recorders
 - Portable recording station.
- All gear will need to be checked out ahead of time and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. **Please be extremely careful with this equipment, as it is in many cases extraordinarily expensive and often quite fragile.** Part of the learning process in this class requires that you gain an understanding of this equipment. Towards this end, you will be required to READ THE INSTRUCTIONS for any piece of equipment that you check out. This will help you gain an understanding of the best ways in which to use this equipment as well as prevent you from using it improperly. Equipment can be checked out either from any of several people – the audio techs (Anna Weisling and Nate Honore), Jeff Herriott (your instructor), or Brian Lucas (Director of WSUW). See the posted schedules for check-out times. Do not call these people in the evening because you forgot to plan ahead!

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- Important #1 - All assignments are due on time at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be accepted with a 10% penalty per day late: 1 day late = 10% reduction; 3 days late = 30% reduction, etc. After 5 days late, you can turn in the project for up to half credit. Note that turning in something after class is considered 1 day late.
- Important #2- ALWAYS SAVE A COPY OF ALL OF YOUR WORK ON CD. You will be submitting all of it again at the end of the semester on a single CD (your sample reel).

• Important #3 - All CDs turned in to me must include a CD case (paper sleeve okay), and the assignments must be properly labeled. No home-made or junky CD cases! I will deduct 10 points from any assignment submitted with no CD case or a junky case.

1) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTIONS (3 @ 60 points = 180 points) (team project)
You will produce 3 spots that will air on WSUW. Since WSUW is non-commercial, these “spots” will either be public service announcements (PSAs) or promos for the radio station. Spots will be assigned by the WSUW program director and will be produced by one- or two-person teams. The teams will rotate for each project. Since these spots will air on a licensed radio station, content must conform to FCC rules and regulations as well as other technical and legal criteria. These spots will be graded as either Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). (S is the equivalent of 100%. U = 0%.) If you receive a U grade on your first spot, you will have a chance to fix it and receive a grade of S2 (worth 80%). All documentation on how the spots were recorded must be provided in your Production Book (see below for an explanation of the kinds of things to include in the Production Book).

NOTE: You will receive a grade of “U” if for any reason your spot cannot be aired – audible glitch, poor sound quality, bad performance, etc.

2) AUDIO QUIZZES (80 points)
The quizzes will include questions on audio applications, equipment, and principles, drawing both from lectures and reading assignments. There will be several (2-5) quizzes throughout the semester, and the lowest grade will be dropped. All of the quizzes will be of the “pop” variety, so be prepared and familiar with the readings and information learned throughout the course.

3) MICROPHONE TECHNIQUES/ IN-CLASS RECORDING (100 points) (team project)
Teams of three or four will lead the class in demonstrations of recording techniques for different instrumental applications. These demonstrations will require groups to record actual audio examples of instruments during class. More specific instructions will be provided during the semester as the actual projects begin to take shape.

4) CRITICAL LISTENING (2 @ 25 points = 50 points) (individual or team project)
You will be given recordings to listen to and analyze, using techniques discussed and demonstrated in class. You may listen and discuss these with a partner but your work must be your own. These will be typed-up and included in your Production Book.

5) MIXDOWN PROJECT (150 points) (individual project)
You will be given a multi-track recording in ProTools that you will have to mix down to CD, ready for mastering. For this project, you will use any combination of outboard gear including compressors, equalizers, effects processors, etc., along with the digital mixing desk to complete the project. All documentation must be provided in your Production Book (see below for an explanation of the kinds of things to include in the Production Book).

6) MULTI-TRACK RECORDINGS (2 @ 150 = 300 points) (team project)
Two-person teams will produce two professional-quality multi-track recordings of two different music styles. These recordings will then be mixed down to CD ready for mastering using the

techniques learned from the mixdown project. All documentation must be provided in your Production Book (see below for an explanation of the kinds of things to include in the Production Book).

7) PRODUCTION BOOK AND SAMPLE REEL (100 points)

Your Production Book will act as your comprehensive journal for all things audio, and will contain all the relevant production information for each project you perform in class: this will include talent, type of recoding medium, mics used, time budget, financial budget, track assignments, mixdown diagrams, problems you encountered and how they were solved, your own opinion of the project and what you would do differently or better. This book can be a combination of hand-written and typed. The hand-written part would be notes that you write down while working, while the typed portion will be the comments you write afterwards. **MAKE SURE TO DO THIS WHILE WORKING ON AND IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EVERY PROJECT.** The purpose of the book is to allow you to record your thoughts as they occur to you and to demonstrate the importance of organization while recording, etc. Your Production Book should also include your written Critical Listening Assignments, along with any other comments you want to include on audio-related subjects. **IMPORTANT:** For your team projects, you must write your own notes in your own production book. Certain elements, such as mixdown diagrams, financial budget, track assignments, mics lists, etc. should be virtually identical for both you and your various partners, but you must in all cases complete your own work.

You will also submit a sample CD with some of your best work on it.

8) COURSE PARTICIPATION AND ENTHUSIASM (40 points)

- Total Points = 1000

- Grading scale –

 - 900+ = A;

 - 800-899 = B;

 - 700-799 = C;

 - 600-699 = D;

 - below 600 = F

- NOTE: Graduate students have different expectations, as outlined below.

- PLEASE SAVE ALL GRADED MATERIALS IN CASE OF A DISPUTE OVER GRADING AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Expectations for graduate students will be different as follows:

- 1) CONTENT – Graduate students will explore content in greater depth by completing two additional commercial spots, the topic and approach to be decided on in conjunction with the instructor. (60 points each)

- 2) INTENSITY – Projects completed by graduate students will be evaluated more strictly. A greater understanding of the applications is expected, and students will be evaluated accordingly.

- 3) SELF-DIRECTION – Students will engage in self-directed learning by giving a 30-

minute presentation on a journal article related to audio (to be decided upon in conjunction with the instructor). (100 points)

- Total Points for Graduate Students = 1220, grading scale adjusted accordingly to maintain same percentage scale.

ATTENDANCE

- Attendance is important to this class, but I will not take attendance. Attendance figures directly into your class participation and quiz grades, and indirectly into everything else.

ONE IMPORTANT EXCEPTION: All students must attend the mic techniques presentations by their fellow students. Failure to attend these sessions without a good excuse (documented illness, other unavoidable situation) will result in a 50-point penalty in your overall course grade (5% of your final grade).

SCHEDULE

- Important #1 - There are several class events that take place slightly outside of the regularly scheduled class time. You are expected to attend all of these sessions, so please plan ahead. See the general schedule below for details and check our D2L page for updates.
- Important #2 - This class will be very dynamic and flexible. If we have the opportunity to bring in a recording artist or guest speaker, we will do so. Likewise, if talent currently scheduled for a specific date becomes unavailable, we will have to shift to accommodate them. **As a result, the schedule will be in a constant state of flux.** IF YOU MISS A CLASS, make sure to check the D2L to see what you have missed. I also ask for your patience and understanding regarding these outside performers who provide their time and talent for our benefit.

General schedule

PART 1:

Jan 23-Feb 6: ProTools, Commercial Productions, Critical Listening.

Huber chapters 1-4, 16.

Keane chapters 1-5 (book will be in studio)

During this segment, you will need to quickly gain skills using ProTools. Be diligent, as this segment forms the basis of our work in the course.

PART 2:

OUTSIDE CLASS TIME – these mic technique sessions will likely run LONG, possibly as late as 10 PM. All students are expected to stay through these sessions, excepting pre-explained scenarios (work, club meetings, intramural sports, etc.)

Feb 13: MICROPHONE TECHNIQUES/ IN-CLASS RECORDING groups 1 and 2

Feb 20: No Class - work week (finishing WSUW promos).

Feb 27: MICROPHONE TECHNIQUES/ IN-CLASS RECORDING groups 3 and 4

Mar 5: MICROPHONE TECHNIQUES/ IN-CLASS RECORDING group 5

Huber chapters 5-6.

During this segment, you will gain an understanding of the various microphones in our mic locker while learning techniques for recording various instruments. Make sure you read the book chapters BEFORE the first microphone techniques presentation on February 13

(no matter what group you're in).

PART 3:

Mar 12-Apr 16: More with ProTools, File Editing with Peak, Mixing, Effects Processors.

Huber chapters 10-12, 15.

Keane chapters 6-13

During this segment, you will solidify your knowledge of ProTools, learn some basic editing techniques in Peak and ProTools, and start to understand how to use effects (reverb, delay, compression) effectively. This segment will culminate in the completion of the mixdown project.

PART 4:

Remainder of the semester: Complete final recording projects.

During this segment, you will synthesize skills learned during the course of the semester to record and mix your final projects.

Major due dates:

Feb 6: First round of WSUW commercial spots due.

Feb 27: The rest of the WSUW commercial spots due.

Microphone Techniques/In-class recordings: Feb 13, Feb 27, and Mar 5 (subject to change depending on availability of performing talent)

Mixdown project due: Apr 16.

Final exam period – Final projects, Production Book, and Sample Reel due. We will meet and listen to final projects during our scheduled final exam period.

SPECIAL NEEDS

• If any student requires special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate, please let me know. I will do my best to maintain the confidentiality of any information you share with me.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

• The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding Special Accommodations, Misconduct, Religious Beliefs Accommodation, Discrimination and Absence for University Sponsored Events. For details please refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Timetables; the "Rights and Responsibilities" section of the Undergraduate Bulletin; the Academic Requirements and Policies and the Facilities and Services sections of the Graduate Bulletin; and the "Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures" [UWS Chapter 14]; and the "Student Non-academic Disciplinary Procedures" [UWS Chapter 17]).

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