

POST 124 – SOUND DESIGN I
SYLLABUS – SPRING 2023 – v1a

Meeting Times: Thursdays 1:30 PM – 4:45 PM

- **Location:** CDM 922

Instructor: Jeff Kliment j.kliment@depaul.edu

- **Office Hours:** By appointment.
 - Note: **Please see me before booking a meeting on BlueStar.** Thanks.
- **Office Location:** CDM 430

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

This course is an introduction to sound editing and sound design. The course examines the place of sound in cinema, both artistic and technological. The course will cover the basics of sound, microphones, and analogue-to-digital conversion. Lectures, readings, and film clips will be used to illustrate the language of film sound, as practiced by film directors, sound designers, and editors. Students will learn to edit sound assignments with Pro Tools and current technologies. Prerequisites: None. This is a lecture/lab course.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of POST 124, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze a film in terms of its aesthetic and technical sound components.
2. Plan and create an original sound design for a short film.
3. Record original sound effects, backgrounds, and voice recordings.
4. Identify the roles and responsibilities of the sound designer on a professional film.
5. Navigate basic editing and mixing functions in a digital audio workstation.
6. Understand the basic physics of sound.

Recommended Readings

- Course readings, links, and related videos are available on D2L.

Materials

- A portable hard drive with **at least** 100GB free space - USB **3.0** (not 2.0), or Thunderbolt (preferably 7200 RPM) is recommended.

Assignments and Grading

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| • Project 1 – Listening Exercise | 15% |
| • Project 2 – Voice Editing | 15% |
| • Pro Tools Proficiency Exercise | 10% |
| • Project 3 – Aural Story | 20% |
| • Project 4 – Sound Design for Trailer | 20% |
| • Attendance/Participation | 20% |

Project/File Naming Conventions

YYMMDD-FirstInitialLastName-ProjectName (Example: 220915-JKliment-Project1). Incorrect naming will result in a 1-point reduction in the project grade.

SCA Studio Support

- DePaul has an information portal in D2L called **SCA Central** that looks like a course. If you have any SCA related questions, the information is likely available there.
- If you have any **technical issues** regarding hardware or software please email: scaavsupport@depaul.edu
- For questions pertaining to **CDM lab reservations** please email: scasoundstudio@cdm.depaul.edu

Attendance and Participation

- Attendance is one of the key indicators of student success; therefore everyone is expected to attend each class meeting and to remain for the entire period. Your contribution matters. By arriving punctually each week and actively participating in class activities you are helping yourself and your colleagues. Please stay focused and refrain from distracting others and/or using electronic devices for non-class activities.
- Occasionally something may come up that prevents you from coming to school, and of course you should stay home if you are not feeling well. In those cases, please send an email to let me know what's happening.
- The attendance/participation grade for this course will be calculated as follows:
 - Minus 2 points for each late arrival or early departure over 10 minutes.
 - Minus 5 points for each unexcused absence.
 - Not returning after a break will be counted as an unexcused absence.
 - **To be considered excused, an absence will generally require supporting documentation and/or notification from the Dean's Office.**
 - If you do not respond when called on during a virtual meeting (on Zoom or other platform) you will be considered absent for all or part of that meeting, at the instructor's discretion.

Late Work Policy

- Work can be turned in for full credit before 11:59 PM on the due date (excluding class presentations, see below).
- Score will be reduced by 10% for each day late, for the next three calendar days only.
- Late work after three calendar days will earn zero points.
- If a student presents supporting documentation for an excused absence, the assignment will be due by 11:59 PM on the day of their return. After that, the student will receive zero points.
- If a student discusses a personal issue with the instructor in advance, a new due date may be agreed upon at the instructor's discretion.
- Class presentations will be due at the scheduled time of the presentation.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	Excellent work, shows fine attention to detail
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Above average work, shows solid effort
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Satisfactory, meets expectations but needs refinement
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Below average work, does not meet all requirements
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	Work is unfinished and/or does not demonstrate understanding of objectives

COURSE CALENDAR

NOTE: This schedule is subject to change, with notification.

Class 1 – March 30

Introduction to the course, syllabus, and learning objectives

Fundamentals of film sound

- “The willing suspension of disbelief”
- The four elements of sound design for film
- Roles in film sound
- Workflow: pre-production, production, post-production

Macintosh computer systems

- Files, folders, storage, and data management

Listening, hearing, and the physics of sound

- Frequency and amplitude
- Sample rate and frequency response, bit depth and dynamic range

Introduction to Project 1 – Listening Exercise

- **Assignment: Project 1 – Due Class 2**
- Watch [“The History of Sound at the Movies”](#) on Filmmaker IQ
- Read [“Introduction to Audio”](#) on MediaCollege.com (five pages)

Class 2 – April 6

DUE TODAY: Project 1 – Papers uploaded to D2L

Discussion and review

Digital audio basics

Macintosh audio settings

Pro Tools operation

- Concept of a “session” in Pro Tools
- Playback engine and I/O setup
- Importing audio and video
- Types of tracks and their uses
- Edit, Mix and Transport windows – views and options
- Tools and preferences
- Edit modes – Slip, Shuffle, Spot, and Grid
- Waveforms, Zoom tools
- Grabber, Selector, and Trimmer tools
- Capturing/separating clips
- Using keyboard shortcuts
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- **Assignment: Project 2 – Voice Editing – Due Class 4**

Class 3 – April 13

Frequency response and equalization concepts

Using inserts and plug-ins

Editing basics

- Tracks and session management
- Trimming, fade in/out, crossfades
- Clip gain and volume automation
- Master fader and metering
- Bounce to disk
- Importance of backups and file management
- **Assignment: Project 2 – Voice Editing – Due Class 4 (next week)**
- **Watch [“The Science and Engineering of Sound”](#) on Filmmaker IQ**

Class 4 – April 20

DUE TODAY: Project 2 – Voice Editing

Review and discussion

Microphone types and polar patterns

Microphone usage in production and post-production

Cables, connectors and interfaces

Basic recording chain and signal flow

Metering (VU, dBFS), unity gain, and optimal signal level

- **Assignment: Project 3 – Aural Story – Proposal Due Class 5 (next week)**
- **Read [“How Microphones Work”](#) on MediaCollege.com (six pages)**
- **Read [“Audio Cables and Connectors”](#) on MediaCollege.com**

Class 5 – April 27

DUE TODAY: Project 3 – Aural Story Proposal – Upload to D2L

Voice editing with room tone

SFX searches and Soundly database

Pro Tools Proficiency Exercise (in class)

- **Assignment: Project 3 – Finished Aural Story Due Class 8**
- **Watch [“The Basics of Recording Audio for Digital Video”](#) on Filmmaker IQ**

Class 6 – May 4

- **Watch [“The Fundamentals of Sound in Post Production”](#) on Filmmaker IQ**
- **Watch [“Introduction to Foley and Sound Effects for Film”](#) on Filmmaker IQ**

Class 7 – May 11

Importing video files

Time code formats and session settings

Spotting to picture and cue sheets

Spot Mode and Grid Mode

“Diegetic” and “non-diegetic” sound
Session management and organization
Using sub-groups and busing
Auxiliary sends and returns
Dynamic range and audio compression concepts
Using the master track to monitor levels

- **Assignment: Project 3 – Finished Aural Story – Due Class 8 (next week)**

Class 8 – May 18

DUE TODAY: Project 3 – Aural Story

Playbacks and discussion

Achieving perspective using plug-ins
Gain structure
Balance of mix – metering, listening, and mixing levels
Review of digital audio and signal processing concepts:
a) Bit depth, dynamic range, and audio compression
b) Sample rate, frequency response, and equalization

- **Assignment: Project 4 – Trailer – Due Class 11**
- **Watch ["Introduction to Automated Dialogue Replacement"](#) on Filmmaker IQ**

Class 9 – May 25

Trimming sound effects and spotting to picture
Maintaining focus, using sound to emphasize action
Layering – adding depth and dimension
Building ambiances, setting the mood
Pre-mixing and building toward the final mix
Using plug-ins to add perspective – review

- **Assignment: Project 4 – Trailer – Due Class 11**

Class 10 – June 1

- **Assignment: Project 4 – Trailer – Due Class 11**
- Screening and critiques of work in progress

Class 11 – June 8

DUE TODAY: FINISHED TRAILERS – SCREENING IN CLASS

Presentations and discussion

Careers in film sound
Course wrap-up

DEPAUL AND CDM POLICIES

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Precautions

The health and safety of everyone at DePaul depend on the cooperation of all who come to campus. By taking care of yourself, you protect the entire community. DePaul's COVID-19 response plans are based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Chicago Department of Public Health and the university's medical advisor from AMITA Health.

Mandatory protocols must be followed by DePaul students, faculty and staff at all times on both campuses <https://resources.depaul.edu/coronavirus/guidance/health-safety-practices/Pages/default.aspx>.

Respect for Diversity and Inclusion at DePaul University as aligned with our Vincentian Values

At DePaul, our mission calls us to explore "what must be done" in order to respect the inherent dignity and identity of each human person. We value diversity because it is part of our history, our traditions and our future. We see diversity as an asset and a strength that adds to the richness of classroom learning. In my course, I strive to include diverse authors, perspectives and teaching pedagogies. I also encourage open dialogue and spaces for students to express their unique identities and perspectives. I am open to having difficult conversations and I will strive to create an inclusive classroom that values all perspectives. If at any time, the classroom experience does not live up to this expectation, please feel free to contact me via email or during office hours.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Please see <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. All students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy which prohibits cheating and other misconduct in student coursework. Publicly sharing or posting online any prior or current materials from this course (including exam questions or answers), is considered to be providing unauthorized assistance prohibited by the policy. Both students who share/post and students who access or use such materials are considered to be cheating under the Policy and will be subject to sanctions for violations of Academic Integrity.

More information can be found at <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>.

Posting work on online sites, such as Hero

All students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy which prohibits cheating and other misconduct in student coursework. Publicly sharing or posting online any prior or current materials from this course (including exam questions or answers), is considered to be providing unauthorized assistance prohibited by the policy. Both students who share/post and students who access or use such materials are considered to be cheating under the Policy and will be subject to sanctions for violations of Academic Integrity.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at:

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

Students with Disabilities

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus (773) 325-1677
- Email: csd@depaul.edu

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gregory Moorhead, Director of the Center, privately to discuss how he may assist in facilitating the accommodations to be used in a course. This is best done early in the term. The conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible. Please see <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx> for Services and Contact Information.