

**Course THTR-499 and Audio Drama Production**

**Units: 2.0**

**Fall 2019—Mondays 6:00-8:50pm**

**IMPORTANT:**

Courses must meet for a minimum of one 50-minute session per unit per week over a 15-week semester. Standard fall and spring sessions (001) require a final summative experience during the University scheduled final exam day and time. (Please refer to the [Contact Hours Reference](#) guide.)

**Location: MCC108**

**Instructor:**

**Office:** Virtual Office, Skype: Kc.Wayland

**Office Hours:** Mondays 9-10 AM by appointment only.

**Contact Info:** [cwayland@usc.edu](mailto:cwayland@usc.edu) (Turnaround time 0-48 hours).

**Course Description**

Explore the art and craft of writing, directing, editing, and sound designing audio-only dramas in this ever-expanding medium.

**Learning Objectives**

Our intention is to explore the art and technology behind creating audio-only narrative stories. Over the duration of the course, short stories will be written, cast, directed, recorded, edited, and sound-designed by the class. We will be focusing on areas of writing using words to tell rather than show, using all four dimensions of aural editing, creating emotion through foley, and production management of voice-only recording sessions. Students will also learn how to operate a recording studio, along with the audio capture equipment and post production software.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Course will feature heavy usage of the audio editing software Pro Tools, but will include instruction on how to utilize the technology.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

“Bombs Always Beep” – Ebook and Print version on [www.bombsalwaysbeep.com](http://www.bombsalwaysbeep.com) and also on Apple Books and Amazon Kindle.

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Projects turned in are graded under this general rubric:

**LEVEL A:** Project was turned in on time, following all given instructions and in the proper location, if an audio project all the audio files necessary to tell the narrative is present and without technical error or additional noise. If written audio projects, they are cohesive, and complete and to the length specified.

**LEVEL B:** Project was turned in mostly on time, following instructions to some extent and in the proper location, if an audio project most of the audio files necessary to tell the narrative is present and without technical error or additional noise. If written audio projects, they follow some structure, and complete and to the length specified.

**LEVEL C:** Project was not turned in complete and on time, following instructions to some extent and in the proper location, if an audio project only some of the audio files necessary to tell the narrative are present and could have technical errors and/or additional noise. Written projects are incohesive, and not to specified length.

**LEVEL D:** Project is incomplete, no instructions were followed, if an audio project only some of the audio files necessary to tell the narrative are present has technical errors and/or additional noise. Written projects have completely made up their own rules and created something not close to what was intended.

**LEVEL F:** Nothing was turned in.

### Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
AD Review	150	15%
Ex1 Storytelling Sound	100	10%
Ex2 Monologue	100	10%
Ex3 Writing For Audio	100	10%
Ex4 The Conversation	100	10%
Ex5 The Audio Drama	150	15%
Midterm	50	5%
Final	100	10%
Class Participation	150	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>1</b>

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	940-1000
A-	900-939
B+	870-899
B	840-869
B-	800-839
C+	770-799
C	740-769
C-	700-739
D+	680-699
D	600-679
D-	580-599
F	579 and below

### Assignment Rubrics

There are 1000 points possible for each student for the class.

#### Class Participation: 150 Points

These are mostly free points. Show up for class and be involved in the training and discussions, and receive the full amount. Missing class automatically removes twenty points. Non-participation in class activities or contributing distractions such as using cell-phones and laptops during inopportune times will be grounds for removal of points; varying to the degree of the offense.

**AD Review: 150 Points**

Each student in the class will give a very brief (approximately 5 minutes) presentation at the start of class reviewing an already published audio drama. These reviews will occur throughout the semester, and will focus on a different production each time. There will be an online sign-up sheet on the google drive space or blackboard. The format for these reviews is simple, and flexible. The presentation must contain short clip selections totaling 1-2 minutes long, which is not included in the five minute presentation. The student will present an analysis of the material focusing on various aspects such as writing and editing, and any unique instances of using audio to tell the story.

**Exercise 1: Storytelling with Sound (Production) 100 Points**

Sounds tell you information, assembled correctly it can tell you a story. For example, the sounds of someone drinking and then getting into a car, driving and crashing, tells the story of an inebriated driver getting into an accident. By assembling the individual SFX pieces into one cohesive timeline and story, the audience should be able to perceive what is trying to be communicated.

**Exercise 2: Recording the voice, the monologue (Production) 100 Points**

Voices are the most important aspect of audio recording. In order to understand everything that's going on, the audience must be able to hear and comprehend what is being said. The focus of this exercise is around the content and diction of the scene.

**Exercise 3: Writing for Audio – The Distinct Voice and Transitions – (Writing) 100 Points**

Writing for characters is all about finding their voice and connecting it to the page. The more distinctly you hear the words, the clearer it will be. Pick familiar voices at first, ones that are familiar that might fit the criteria and write a scene that transitions between 3 locations using auditory devices.

**Exercise 4: The Conversation (Production) 100 Points**

Dialogue is often what sets apart Oscar winners from box-office flops. Focusing on one event and time, one conversation on one page between two characters is written, captured and produced into a cohesive narrative.

**Exercise 5 (Group): The Audio Drama 150 Points**

This is the big one. Most of the class we will be working towards this one final project. Grading will be based on overall production quality, overall paperwork tracking and organization, deadline completions, audio session organization and copyright observance.

**Midterm: 50 Points Final Exam: 100 Points**

The midterm and final exam will include various aspects of the course throughout the semester consisting of audio technical knowledge, production information, information from the book and lectures.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Assets for projects will be provided through the class's Google Drive folder and/or network drive location. You will submit completed projects to the class's Google Drive folder as well in the designated assignment folders. Make sure to submit your assignment in a folder with your name as the title!

Late projects will be accepted with a 15% grade reduction per week. Projects that are late by three weeks or more will still be accepted up to the date/time of the final exam with a flat-rate 50% reduction.

Extensions will only be granted if the request is made at least three full calendar days prior to the due date of a project, and will require dated documentation.

Not following the directions on a project's assignment sheet will result in an automatic 15% grade reduction.

## Grading Timeline

Grading and Feedback on assignments is estimated at 2 weeks.

## Attendance Policy

Roll is taken at the beginning of class. Students not present at the time of roll (including tardies) will be counted as absent. Absences can be excused with dated documentation the following class. Unexcused absences result in 20 points being reduced from the final grade total.

## Software Policy

In the ever changing production world, Google Drive has become an important tool to learn for coordination. Google Drive will be used by this course to download and turn in materials. Access will be set up during the first class.

## Laptop Policy

I get it, handwritten notes are awful. We live in a modern age where we can take notes and have them everywhere if we need them. What I don't want to see happen is people not paying attention because they're on their computers doing something else. If you're working on the class, great. If you're not, then it won't continue.

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

We keep to a pretty tight schedule. Some days we might get out early, some days not. I expect you to be in class for the entire duration of the session. If you leave for part of the class unexcused, it's counted as an absence.

(Please refer to the [Contact Hours Reference](#) guide.)

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b> Aug 26	Class Intro / LEC: Storytelling through Sound	<b>BAB – Intro, 1, 1.1, 1.2</b>	
<b>Week 2</b> Sep 2	<b>Labor Day – NO CLASS</b>	<b>BAB – 9, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4</b>	
<b>Week 3</b> Sep 9	LEC: Sound Theory Microphones, Recording Equipment.	<b>BAB – 10, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 - Pro Tools Tutorial Set 1 - lynda.com</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 4</b> Sep 16	LEC: Pro Tools Operation <b>Pro Tools Workshop Day</b>	<b>Pro Tools Tutorial Set 2 - lynda.com</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 5</b> Sep 23	<b>Pro Tools Workshop Day</b>	<b>BAB - 10.5, 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, 10.9</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 6</b> Sep 30	<b>Listening EX 1.</b> LEC: Directing and Recording	<b>EX 2. The Monologue BAB – 8, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5</b>	EX 1. Storytelling through Sound AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 7</b> Oct 7	<b>EX 2. Workshop Day Midterm</b>	<b>BAB – 10.11, 10.12, 10.13</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 8</b> Oct 14	<b>EX 2. Workshop and</b> LEC: Pro Tools Noise Redux/ Cleanup	<b>BAB – 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, Chapter 2 All</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 9</b> Oct 21	<b>Listening EX 2.</b> LEC: Writing For Audio	<b>EX 3. Writing for Audio BAB – Chapter 3</b>	EX 2. The Monologue AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 10</b> Oct 28	<b>EX 3. Reading</b>	<b>EX 4. The Conversation</b>	EX 3. Writing for Audio

		<b>BAB – Chapter 4</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 11</b> Nov 4	<b>EX 4. Reading</b> <b>EX 5. Audio Drama</b> <b>Pitches</b>	<b>EX 5. Script A/B</b> <b>BAB – 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4,</b> <b>5.5, 5.6</b>	Ex 4. The Conversation <b>EX 5. Pitches</b> AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 12</b> Nov 11	<b>EX 5. A/B Script Draft 1</b>	<b>EX 5. Casting</b> <b>BAB – Chapter 6, 7</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 13</b> Nov 18	<b>EX 5. Recording</b>	<b>EX 5. Editing</b>	AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 14</b> Nov 25	<b>EX 5. Workshop</b>		AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>Week 15</b> Dec 2	<b>EX 5. Workshop</b>		AD Analysis (1 Student)
<b>FINAL</b>	<b>Audio Drama Production</b> <b>Final</b>		Date: For the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at <a href="http://classes.usc.edu">classes.usc.edu</a> .

### EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMMITMENTS AND ISPS

Should you choose to participate in any extra-curricular project, such as an Independent Student Production, the SDA administration and faculty will not make allowances or exceptions for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, home work that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

### Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

#### Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

#### Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

#### Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

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#### Support Systems:

*Student Counseling Services (SCS)* – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.*

Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)