



Instructor: Professor Josh Kun

Office: ASC 305

Office Hours: Thursdays 9-12 or appointment

Contact Info: jkun@usc.edu

klanger@usc.edu [Kenny Langer for all appointments]

I. Course Description

This intensive doctoral seminar is designed for students interested in the critical study of sound and music within a broad multi-method frame of Communication. It takes as its foundation the belief that listening is a methodology of critical practice and aims to introduce students to key topics in the study of sound and music as forms and fields of communication. Readings and discussions will range across communication, media, psychology, technology, art, sound studies, cultural history, critical race theory, feminism, queer theory, and more. The Spring 2020 version of this seminar will focus specifically on recent publications across these areas. While weekly bibliographies of broader, historical area coverage will be built into our work, the readings are deliberately pulled from the bounty of new work that has been coming out over the past several years. Beyond the readings and discussions, students will be responsible for keeping a sound diary, leading a site-specific field recording study, and creating a final paper/project.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

Students will learn key themes, topics, methods, and fields in audio, sonic, and musical analysis, and will learn how to center sonic thinking in a communications and media approach to society. They will learn the skill of critical listening as a methodological practice and will experiment with basic field recording, soundscape, and sound editing techniques. Students will also keep a sound diary which will help them re-tune their critical inquiry toward environmental sound, speech, noise, and music.

III. Course Notes

This will be run as a reading-focused seminar and students are responsible for both keeping up with weekly assignments and participating actively in seminar conversation. There will be no formal lectures in this seminar, but instead collective weekly participation and dialogue. Seminar meetings will typically be a mix of discussion and group listening exercises. Each week, one or two students—in consultation with the Professor-- will be in charge of helping to lead discussion by providing scholarly context/background for the week's readings. We will begin each seminar by placing some of the topics and terms in context, and by outlining the "keywords" and issues of the week's readings.

IV. Description and Assessment of Assignments

-*Sound Diary*: students must maintain an ongoing sound diary in which they document, index, and meditate on the sounds they hear in their daily lives; these will be checked and evaluated before each seminar meeting

-*Local Soundscape Study*: a trial field recording project focused on a local area in Los Angeles in which students use recorded sounds to study urban space.

-*Final Project*: This can be a research paper or a sound-based media project. Topics must be inspired by course materials and discussions but are at the discretion of each student to customize toward their research agendas.

V. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Sound Diary		25
Soundscape Project		20
Final Project		40
Participation		15
TOTAL		100%

b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

In a doctoral seminar, the expectation is excellence, hard work, intellectual generosity, and original thinking. Students will be graded on their assignments based on argument, evidence, theoretical sophistication, and original rigorous research.

d. Grading Timeline

Diaries will be commented on weekly and assignments will be graded within 2 weeks of their due date.

VI. Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will all have due dates that must be adhered to. They can be submitted via email to the Professor. Extensions will only be granted in case of emergency and extreme issues.

VIII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Lawrence Kramer, *The Hum of the World: A Philosophy of Listening*

Damon Krukowski, *Ways of Hearing*

Gary Tomlinson, *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity*

Gavin Steingo and Jim Sykes (eds), *Remapping Sound Studies*

Jonathan Sterne, *Mp3: The Meaning of a Format*

Maria Eriksson et al (Eds) *Spotify Teardown: Inside the Black Box of Music Streaming*

William Cheng, *Loving Music Till It Hurts*

Nate Sloan & Charlie Harding, *Switched on Pop: How Popular Music Works, and Why It Matters*

Nina Eidsheim, *The Race of Sound: Listening, Timbre, and Vocality in African American Music*

Ashon Crawley, *Blackpentacostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility*

Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (eds), *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*

Alex Chavez, *Sounds of Crossing: Music, Migration, and the Aural Poetics of Huapango Arribeño*

Alan Licht, *Sound Art Revisited*

Holly Rogers, *Sounding the Gallery: Video and the Rise of Art-Music*

Tina Campt, *Listening to Images*

Kate Lacey, *Listening Publics: The Politics and Experience of Listening in the Media Age*

IX. Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

X. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/13/20 – 5/1/20)

Friday, January 31: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, January 31: Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, February 4: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, February 28: Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, February 28: Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Friday, April 3: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

XI. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Dates: 1/13-1/17	Course introduction	N/A	N/A
Week 2 Dates: 1/20-1/24	Listening I	Kramer (1-56, 60-64, 86-92, 112-120, 185-202); Krukowski (eps 1, 2, 3, 6)	[MLK Day: Monday, January 20]
Week 3 Dates: 1/27-1/31	Soundscape Assignment	No readings/No class meeting	Due next class for in-class discussion
Week 4 Dates: 2/3-2/7	Human Music	Tomlinson (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7)	Sound Diary
Week 5 Dates: 2/10-2/14	Sound Studies	Steingo/Sykes (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11)	Sound Diary
Week 6 Dates: 2/17-2/21	Platforms/Formats	Sterne (Preface, 3-6); Eriksson (Chapters 2-4)	[President's Day: Monday, February 17]
Week 7 Dates: 2/24-2/28	Loving Music	Cheng (Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, Postlude)	Sound Diary
Week 8 Dates: 3/2-3/6	Loving Pop	Sloane & Harding (read all)	Sound Diary
Week 9 Dates: 3/9-3/13	Race and Sound	Eidsheim (Chapters 1, 2, 4) Crawley (Introduction, 1, 2)	Sound Diary
Spring Break Dates: 3/16-3/20	No Classes		
Week 10 Dates: 3/23-3/27	Sonic Empires	Radano & Olaniyan (Intro, 1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 15)	Sound Diary
Week 11 Dates: 3/30-4/3	Sonic Borders	Chavez (all)	Sound Diary
Week 12 Dates: 4/6-4/10	Sound Art	Licht (all)	Sound Diary
Week 13 Dates: 4/13-4/17	Sound & Visual Art	Rogers (Intro, 1, 2, 4); Campt (Intro, 1, 2, coda)	Sound Diary
Week 14 Dates: 4/20-4/24	Listening II	Lacey (all)	Sound Diary
Week 15 Dates: 4/27-5/1	Final project discussions	No readings	

STUDY DAYS Dates: 5/2-5/5			No final examinations may be scheduled on Study Days.
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Dates: 5/6-5/13	TBD		

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

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. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

b. Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct,

intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscsa.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]

<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal

classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.