

Sound Design – Fall Semester 2013 v2 (revised 9.25.13)

TA248A

Instructor: Chuck Hatcher

M/W 2:55 to 3:45pm

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Hillside 222

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This course will provide the student with an overview of the work of a sound designer in the theatre today. It will include a discussion of script analysis from the sound designer's perspective, terminology, methodology, a bit of software and a look at theater production from the sound tech table. The class will focus on design for drama with a brief look at system design.

Through discussion, class demonstrations and the preparation/presentation of design projects the student will enhance his/her ability to use sound as a supporting element in theatrical production and to recognize and critique sound in theatrical production.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

- Effectively and specifically discuss sound design as an aspect of theatrical production using the correct terminology.
- Define and demonstrate an ability to utilize the basic types of sound cues to support a dramatic production.
- Demonstrate an introductory level of skill in operation of wave editing software and playback software.
- Analyze a one-act play, develop a concept for a sound design and produce effective sound cues for a paper production.
- Listen to and critique sound cues presented by classmates in a clear, professional mannerr.
- Effectively present preliminary sound cues and explain the supporting design concept.

Activities and Approach

As a course in design, the work of this class will focus on developing, presenting and responding to projects. Sound design involves communication and in order to evaluate the successful communication, there must be feedback. Therefore, your participation as an audience is as important as your participation as a presenter.

The intention for the course is to provide an introduction to a complex subject with both objective and subjective aspects. Design is a creative process and judgment of a creative nature is often subjective. The instructor will make every effort to fairly critique all projects but it is understood that this determination involves a subjective component. Students are encouraged to speak with the instructor if at any time he/she feels unfairly treated during a critique. Problems raised early can be solved. Those ignored until after the course ends, cannot.

Course Materials

Given the highly technical nature of modern sound design the student must have access to a computer, a USB jump drive or a CD burner and the Internet. There is no textbook for the course. The instructor will provide the scripts in PDF format. In accordance with copyright restrictions, the scripts must be deleted and no copy retained at the conclusion of the course. Two software programs must be downloaded for this course, Reaper and Q Lab. Reaper is both Mac and Windows but Q Lab is not. To complete one of the projects access to a Mac is necessary. Instructions for the download and basic use of the software will be provided in class. If you do not have access to a computer or to a Mac for the required project, please contact me during the first week of class.

Session Outline (subject to change)

August 26	Introduction to the course: The Syllabus -goals, objectives & grading.
August 28	Review of the Basics of Visual Design
September 2	Labor Day – No Class
September 4	Theatrical Design and Production: How Sound Fits Assign Project 1: Sound and Emotion-due September 23
September 9	The Human Hearing System and Psychoacoustics
September 11	Psychoacoustics, continued
September 16	Design Software, Reaper, part 1
September 18	Reaper, part 2 – Assign Play for Discussion, Title TBD
September 23	Present Project 1
September 25	Present Project 1 Assign Project 2: Sound and Image-due October 7
September 30	Psychoacoustics
October 2	Types and Styles of Sound Cues
October 7	Present Project 2
October 9	Present Project 2
October 14	No Class Fall Break
October 16	Top of Show/End of Show – Establishing The World of the Play Assign Project 3: Sound and Text-due November 4

October 21	Sound Effects Selection and Editing
October 23	Script Analysis & The Design Concept - <i>Boy Meets Girl</i>
October 28	Present Project 3: Sound and Text
October 30	Present Project 3: Sound and Text
November 4	Developing The Design – Paperwork
November 6	The Musical – A Whole New World
November 11	The Design Project – Script TBA Assign Project 4-Design a Play - due December 9
November 13	Script Discussion
November 18	TBA
November 20	Prelim Cues and Cue List
November 25	Playback Software: Q Lab TBD
November 27	Playback Software: Q Lab TBD
December 2	TBA
December 4	TBA
December 9	Present Project 4 (Class: 3:05 to 3:55pm)
December 11	Present Project 4

There will be no class meeting during Exam Week assigned time. A possible final meeting will be discussed in class.

Grading:	Projects 1, 2, 3	=	25 points each (75 total)
	Project 4	=	75 points
	Participation	=	50 points
	Total	=	200 points

A = 188 to 200pts (94% to 100%)	A/B = 178 to 187pts (89% to 93%)
B = 164 to 177pts (82% to 88%)	B/C = 154 to 163pts (77% to 81%)
C = 140 to 153pts (70% to 76%)	C/D = 130 to 139pts (65% to 69%)
D = 116 to 129pts (58% to 64%)	F = 0 to 115pts (0-59%)

The course grade will be based on points scored in the above listed categories. Project scores will be a combination of the effectiveness of the cue(s) produced, the written design

statement and the in class presentation. Creative design projects, by their nature, contain a large subjective element. The grade will include a response to the difficult to define but essential artistic qualities of the work.

Attendance & Participation

Attendance/Participation points will be based on your presence in class as well as your active participation in class discussions and critiques. If your goal is an A in this course, you must share your thoughts, ideas and reactions during discussions.

Two absences will be allowed. Each additional missed class will deduct 10 points from the Attendance/Participation score.

Students with Disabilities

Saint Mary's University is committed to assuring that students with documented disabilities have access to equal educational opportunities. To be certain that reasonable accommodations can be made for students with disabilities, each student must identify himself/herself in a timely manner, preferably at the beginning of a term. Students eligible to receive accommodations should contact Karen Hemker, Disability Services Coordinator. Karen's contact information is khemker@smumn.edu. Karen is located in the Center for Student Success.

Academic Dishonesty

Please refer to the student handbook regarding Academic Dishonesty Policy and Penalties.

The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio, located in room HC 17, offers free individualized instruction in all aspects of writing. Its aim is to facilitate the use of academic writing as a tool for learning, communication, self-expression, and critical thinking. While writing tutors are prepared to assist students at all stages of the writing process, they will not proofread or "correct" a student's writing.

Disclaimer

Theatre explores the full range of the human experience. As per the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, you will be challenged to explore the full repertoire of theatre through projects and discussion. Some of the assigned plays and class discussions will cover sensitive, adult material that may at first be uncomfortable for you. It is not the intention of this course or the instructor to change anyone's worldview. Students are encouraged to share any and all opinions they may have regarding all topics discussed. Remember it is your class. The old adage remains true "the more you put in, the more you get out."