

1-2014

JRNL 440.01: Advanced Audio

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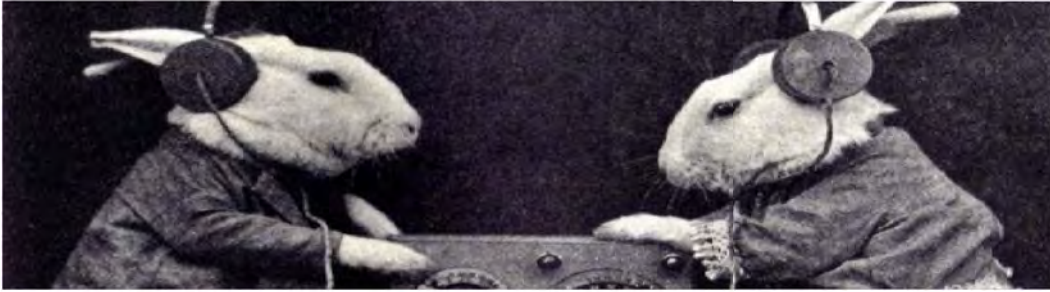
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advanced audio



JRNL440 • SPRING 2014 • MW • 12:40-2 p.m. • DAH 316

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Office hours: Friday 9-noon and by appointment

We're all of us just sitting here waiting for some sound that will help us figure out how to be.
--Jad Abumrad, host of Radiolab, at the Third Coast International Audio Festival, 2012

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Possibly, there has never been a more exciting, opportunistic time in the history of radio production than now. In this course, you'll begin to understand that through a crazy amount of listening to producers who are doing creative work. You'll hear from some of them as guests. And, more important, you'll become part of it by creating several high-quality, sound-rich, slightly unconventional stories. You'll put them out into the world via the Public Radio Exchange and you'll try like hell to get people, even some not related to you, to listen.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, successful students will:

- Produce several types of complex, air-worthy features that blend creativity and the rigors of good journalism.
- Plum the depths of audio storytelling via listening in and out of class, discussing in a seminar format and presenting/curating listening session for peers.
- Pitch professional organizations to try and place their pieces.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Students in good standing as Journalism majors must have passed Intermediate Audio or received permission from the instructor. Students are expected to know Adobe Audition editing software and how to gather quality audio.

ABOUT MOODLE/UM ONLINE

I will use it for this class. You should, too! Most reading and listening assignments will be posted on our class page. Your grades will also be there as you receive them.

TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

We'll be using "**Reality Radio: Telling True Stories in Sound**" by **John Biewen** as our text. It's at the university bookstore. Used copies are available from Amazon.com and other outlets. Other materials assigned by the instructor are also required reading. All are fodder for unannounced quizzes.

LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

We'll do a lot of listening and talking about what we hear during class, but you'll also need to listen to pieces outside of class and come prepared to talk about them. In addition, we'll rotate among us as directors/curators for in-class listening sessions. Parameters of those sessions will be defined in class.

PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS

This is a 400-level class, so expect to produce. The way you learn radio is to listen to a lot of radio and then do a lot of radio and experiment. You should always be working on at least one story for this class. Most of your assignments will be uploaded to an account you establish at PRX.org. The good ones will be linked to the university PRX account I manage. Your instructor will also work with you to find places to pitch your pieces. Every student should pitch at least one story to an established outlet (station/show/podcast).

For most assignments, you'll get one word to inspire, launch and/or theme a story. You can think of it literally or not, but you'll definitely need to think about it. The inspiration words will be given in class and posted to Moodle. They'll each be paired with a preferred type of radio story, so that you'll get experience with a mix of formats.

Creativity is rewarded. Deadlines must be met. For some stories, you'll have a separate script deadline in advance of mixing your piece. Mixes must be sent via email as an attached mp3 unless otherwise stated. After you get edits, *you'll get a new deadline to tweak your piece and upload it to PRX*. That means that once you file the mix to me, you're NOT done. You need to incorporate my edits before getting a final grade.

Deadlines listed here are tentative. Final deadlines will be announced in class.

° **Voxpop/Sound Portrait:** Short piece blending voices and sounds. No narration.

Length: 1 to 3 minutes

Working Deadline: Monday, Feb. 3, 10 a.m.

° **Acts and Tracks:** Traditional pubradio-type story with emphasis on writing, clean edits, great tape and a natural read on narration. Must have at least two sources. Will require you make and keep a voice-coaching appointment with me.

Length: Between 3 and 6 minutes

Working Script Deadline: Thursday, Feb. 13, 10 a.m.

Working Mix Deadline: Friday, Feb. 21, 10 a.m.

° **Two-Voicer:** Non-narrated story where smart editing of two sources propels the story forward. Must use and demonstrate knowledge of how music is used effectively.

Length: Between 5 and 10 minutes

Working Deadline: Thursday, March 20, 10 a.m.

° **Producer's Choice:** This is your chance to do the The Radio Story Inside You. It is not an excuse to half-ass it and turn in a two-minute vox. But it *is* your chance to pick the story, pick the format and swing for the fences. Will count as your final.

Length: A negotiation based on your idea

Working Pitch/Story Plan Deadline: Monday, March 24, 10 a.m.

Working Script Deadline: Thursday, April 23, 10 a.m.

Working Mix Deadline: Friday, May 2, 10 a.m.

GRADING

Production Assignments: 80 percent

Attendance, Participation, Quizzes: 20 percent

Grades will be based on a scale of 100 percent and will use the University of Montana's plus/minus system. Letter grades will not be used in this course, although the final grade (per requirement) will be given as a letter grade. The equivalents are as follows:

90 - 100 percent: A

80 - 89 percent: B

70 - 79 percent: C

60 - 69 percent: D

50 - 59 percent: F

UM's plus/minus system also makes the following distinctions:

A+: 97-100

A: 93-96

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 63-66
D-: 60-62
F: 59 or lower

EQUIPMENT

You may choose to purchase/use instructor-approved personal audio equipment. Professional-grade Marantz kits will be issued to you individually or as part of a two-person team (depending on size of class). You are responsible for damage or theft of equipment and for picking it up/returning it on time. You will be charged for damaged/lost equipment and will fill out a checkout form that acknowledges your understanding of that.

A note about headphones: Procure some good ones. Upgrade from earbuds.

ATTENDANCE

This is a small(ish), upper-division, seminar-type class. Your absence will be obvious. If you must miss class because you are really sick (with more than the sniffles) or you have an unmovable conflict, you must notify me at least an hour before class via email. Unexcused absences will be reflected in your final grade.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

- Students with disabilities and/or special needs should notify the instructor at his or her earliest convenience and contact Disabilities Services for Students, <http://www.umt.edu/dss/> or x2243.
- Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321. And, more on academic honesty, is available here: http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php
- PLAGIARIASM: Have pride in your work and banish the idea of turning in something written or recorded by someone else and presented as your own. Penalties range from failing this class to expulsion from school.
- CLASS WORK: You may not submit for this course any assignment that was, or will be concurrently, submitted for another class unless you receive prior approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an F for the assignment and could result in an F for the course. That said, you may and are encouraged to submit any work you do in this class for airing at any station, show or podcast.