

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

University of Montana Course Syllabi

Open Educational Resources (OER)

---

Spring 1-2016

### JRNL 440.01: Advanced Audio

Jule A. Banville

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [jule.banville@umontana.edu](mailto:jule.banville@umontana.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

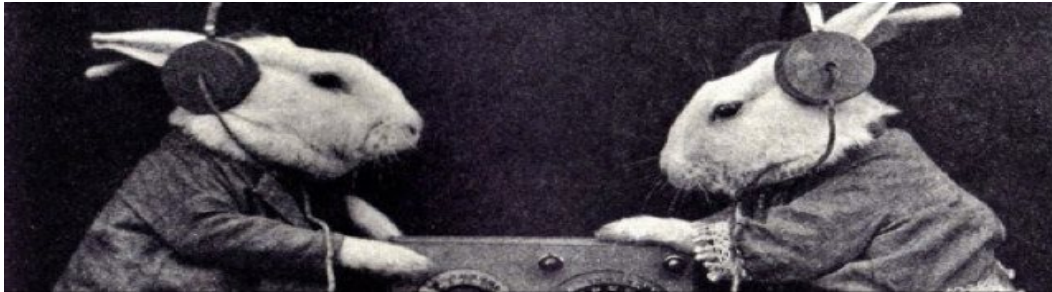
---

#### Recommended Citation

Banville, Jule A., "JRNL 440.01: Advanced Audio" (2016). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 3839.  
<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/3839>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Open Educational Resources (OER) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana Course Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

# advanced audio



JRNL 440 / SPRING 2016 / TT / 11:10-12:30 / DAH 114

Asst. Prof. Jule Banville (or just Jule)

Don Anderson Hall 427

(406) 243-2237

[jule.banville@umontana.edu](mailto:jule.banville@umontana.edu)

Office hours: Friday 2-4:30 and by appointment

*People are hungry for stories. It's part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another.*

–**Studs Terkel**, legendary interviewer and radio dude

## **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 thorough a crazy amount of doing radio – finding stories and people and facts, recording, writing, voicing, mixing. But you'll go beyond that this semester to really learn about this industry through listening, reading and smart discussions. By the end of this course, you'll have skills and context your peers who didn't dig in on audio will not have. But you'll have to work for it. This is not a class for people who are in it to dabble or fulfill a credit requirement. If you're here, in a 400-level audio class, I expect you're serious. And I will challenge you. I can make you better. But with a caveat: You should be prepared to either meet my high expectations or fail the course.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the semester, successful students will:

- Produce complex, air-worthy news and features that blend creativity and the rigors of good reporting.
- Meet all deadlines.
- Participate fully in collaborations. These include:
  - a multimedia project with Montana Public Radio, which will include professional editing by its news director.

- launching a podcast via montanareport.org, a new collaboration with the Intermediate Web Reporting class.
- working with and filing stories via the Public Radio Exchange, or PRX.org.
- Present and lead discussion on radio industry topics. Each student will lead class at least once this semester.
- Get better at editing tight, flawless audio mixes.
- Read, listen and research in advance of both student- and instructor-led discussions.
- Get that radio is probably the greatest medium, still, to tell stories and connect to other humans. Because it is.

### **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 use it ALL THE TIME for this class.* You will, too, or you will fall behind. Reading and listening assignments will be posted on our class page. It will also be where you'll find deadlines, class announcements and links to audio played in class. I'll also email you regularly on your university account through Moodle. We'll also use graded Moodle forums to further class discussion of listening assignments. Your grades will post there as you receive them. Be aware that you need to check Moodle by the end of the business day if you miss a class. *DO NOT EMAIL ME AND ASK WHAT YOU MISSED. I FREAKING HATE THAT.* Not checking Moodle will not suffice as an excuse for incomplete work.

### **OTHER THINGS I HATE**

- Coming late to class. Be here on time. It's not fair to anyone in the class, including me, if I need to repeat myself to get you up to speed.
- Not turning in your assignments and expecting to pass. You can't not do the work. In this class, I act as your editor. Practice now how to be a newsroom professional and figure out when and how to communicate with me if something drastic happens in your life and your reporting.
- Skipping classes. This is a small, 400-level seminar-style class. You need to be here for it to work. Repeated unexcused absences (more than two) will be reflected in your final grade. I promise.
- Checking your GD phone and social networking in class. You pay to be in my class. So BE in my class and quit clicking around on that thing when someone in the class, including me, has something to say. Also true when we are listening to stories in class. We need to be listening intelligently, not checking Instagram. Got it?

### **TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

We'll read "**Out on the Wire: The Storytelling Secrets of the New Masters of Radio**" by Jessica Abel. It's at the bookstore and available online. Other materials

assigned by the instructor are also required reading. All are fodder for unannounced quizzes.

### **LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS and MOODLE FORUMS**

In addition to reading about radio, you'll need to listen to it. At several points during the semester, I'll post listening assignments and ask you discuss it and post other examples in a Moodle forum. The forums will be graded on a participation scale: Did you do it by deadline and take it seriously? 100 percent. Did you blow it off entirely? Zero. Did you clearly half-ass it? 50 percent.

### **STUDENT-LED DISCUSSIONS**

Each of you will introduce and lead at least one class discussion on topics chosen by me and picked according to your personal interest. You will be graded on your ability to engage your fellow students for at least 30 minutes. Prezy graphics are optional; preparation is not. You'll need to research and do your homework on your topic so that you can inform and educate each other. Topics will be announced and assigned in class following the turmoil of the first week.

### **PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS**

This is a 400-level class, so expect to produce. You should always be working on at least one story for this class.

We'll work more collaboratively in this class than we did in intermediate audio. You'll perform scripts with tape cuts in class to get live feedback from me and from your peers prior to voicing and mixing pieces.

All scripts will need a final edit from me prior to you voicing and mixing a piece. If you push your deadline beyond that being possible, you will fail the assignment.

New and different from Intermediate Audio: ***YOUR SCRIPTS WILL COUNT AS 50 PERCENT OF YOUR GRADE.*** I'll grade your script – narrated or not -- and then your mix, which includes your delivery, volume levels and all other aspects of how your story sounds. I'll average the two for your final assignment grade.

Also different: All production assignments ***must include a photograph***, either taken by you or contributed by a source with permission to publish.

Mixes must be sent via email as an attached mp3.

After you address my edits on your mixes and have a final piece, we'll utilize the Public Radio Exchange to help push it to listeners. You're encouraged to establish a free account for your work at PRX.org, as well as Soundcloud.com. The best of your stories will be uploaded and linked to the university PRX account I manage and may get aired on the podcast I host and edit, "Last Best Stories." At least one of your stories will be edited by and considered for air by the news director at Montana Public Radio.

Production assignments, in order:

- ***Music Feature***

This story is broad in interpretation and designed to be fun and to get you back into thinking audio. It must be about music or musicians. It must incorporate recorded music *directly related* to the subject of the story. Pitching me and getting approval is required. Length will depend on the story and will be finalized during the pitching process.
- ***MTPR News Feature***

This will be a story where the goal is to do the best, newsworthy piece you can for consideration by Montana Public Radio. It will be scripted, multisourced, timely, pitched. Length for consideration by MTPR is 3:30 to 4 minutes. Other requirements will be discussed in class. You can work in teams of two on this piece, although it's not required. Multiple, graded deadlines will be set after the semester begins. These include:

  - Pitch deadline: You'll pre-report to the point of having a clear idea and named sources.
  - First reporting deadline: You'll demonstrate in class clear progress on nailing down the story.
  - Live Edit: You'll "perform" your script, reading into and out of tape cuts, and get immediate feedback from the lead editor on this project, Eric Whitney from MTPR.
  - Mix deadline: You'll turn in a mixed piece. I will edit that mix and you'll incorporate my edits before sending to MTPR.
- ***Podcast Project***

You'll research how to launch a podcast and then go do that, using [montanareport.org](http://montanareport.org) as your landing page. This is a new collaboration with the Intermediate Web Reporting class, which will be working to better understand how audio works on the web. For our purposes, we'll agree on a topical focus for the semester with that class and its instructor (Lee Banville) and then, as a class, we will decide what our show should sound like, its frequency, elements, etc. You'll do this by being informed and discussing what works and doesn't work with existing podcasts and by following your own interests within the chosen topic. You will all play more than one role, e.g. you might host one episode and be the editor on the next, etc. It'll be a work in progress, but one that will teach you a valued skill you can take into the workplace post-graduation.
- ***Instructor's Choice***

The last story of the semester will depend on how our podcast project goes. We will either continue to feed the podcast and/or we will spin off into something a bit different. I call it instructor's choice because I'll work with

you individually to make sure this story is unlike any you've personally completed before this point as a means to expand your skills and experience.

**All deadlines: TBA. They will be announced in class and posted to Moodle.**

### **GRADING**

Pitching, Pre-Reporting and Production Assignments: 80 percent  
Student-led Discussion(s): 10 percent  
Moodle Forums and Quizzes: 5 percent  
Attendance and Participation: 5 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 availability). 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.

A note about batteries: We don't provide them. Procure a crap ton of them.

### **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. More than two unexcused absences will result in an F for the attendance portion of your final grade.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES**

- The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, contact your instructor during the first week of the semester so that proper accommodations can be provided. Please contact [Disability Services for Students](#) if you have questions, or call Disability Services for Students (DSS) for voice/text 406.243.2243. You may also fax the Lommasson Center 154 for more information 406.243.5330.
- 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 <http://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](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php)
- *PLAGIARIASM and ETHICS*: Have pride in your work and banish the idea of turning in something written or recorded by someone else and presented as your own. Also note: Coaching someone to read a prepared script or misrepresenting someone as a legitimate source when that person is acting as a stage actor would be against the standards and practices of journalism and will not be tolerated. Penalties range from failing this class to expulsion from school.
- *CLASS WORK*: You may not submit for this course any assignment or variation on an assignment that was, or will be concurrently, submitted for another class unless you receive prior, documented approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an F for the course. That said, you may and are encouraged to submit any work you do in this class for any outside outlet.