



School of Communication, Cinematic and Creative Arts

COURSE OUTLINE

EDT 3005: SOUND AND VFX FOR FILM AND VIDEO

SECTION A

INSTRUCTOR: ALBERT JOSIAH

CREDIT: 3

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1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Basic sound recording, sound design and sound editing skills. NLE program skills, including how to unpack a multitrack recording into its constituent tracks; sound mixing and volume modulation; an understanding of the history of sync sound in cinema and editing is required.

Basic camera operation, directing and writing skills will be required for the project, as well as basic compositing and lighting skills, as well as lighting for green screen. Credit applies towards an undergraduate degree in Film Production.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- a) Provide practice in basic, practical sound recording skills.
- b) Use in class practical sessions to generate audio files with which to enhance their sound design skills.
- c) Understand how to lay tracks in a non-linear editing (NLE) program and perform a sound edit.
- d) Write a special effects sequence. Produce, shoot and apply special effects to create a sequence using the tools available to you within the limitations of your environment.
- e) Build students' confidence in attempting to create basic visual effects.

3. LINK TO UNIVERSITY POLICY

The course content for EDT 3005 is designed to provide film production students with a practical understanding of the production workflow of sound for Cinema and TV. It is part of working towards industry preparedness for career outcomes in the audiovisual production industry..

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- a) Outline the impact of the silent era of film on film grammar by analyzing the films of silent era filmmakers like Georges Méliès, Germaine Dulac and Dmitri Kirsanoff.

- b) Explain how sync sound technology currently works in Cinema Exhibition and Video Playback by giving examples of three key technological advances.
- c) Recognize the sound design techniques used in the screened films.
- d) Distinguish the role of good sound recording and sound design to the advancement of a narrative by analyzing the quality of sound accompanying the visuals in the film you watch and identifying what works and what does not work.
- e) Describe how these elements are organized on the timeline in your non linear editing software in order to prepare for a sound mix.
- e) List the 5 types of sound used to create immersive three dimensional sound
 - dialogue
 - foley
 - sound effects
 - ambient sound and room tone
 - score
- f) Identify how these elements are used to heighten dramatic tension. Consider the absence of score and its effect on the narrative.
- g) Visualise and plan a believable, executable visual effect sequence that you can do within the confines of your environment.
- h) Use various sentence patterns in English.

5. COURSE CONTENT

Week 1: The 'Silent Era' of Film and the History of the Technology of Sound and VFX in Cinema and TV

- a) Outline the impact of the silent era of film on film grammar by analyzing the films of silent era filmmakers like Georges Méliès, Germaine Dulac and Dmitri Kirsanoff.
- b) Recognize visual techniques and film grammar used in early poetic realism, realism and surrealism by analyzing the techniques in early silent era films like 'Nos Feratu' and 'Birth of A Nation' to advance the narrative.
- c) Summarize the history of sync sound from the Vitaphone to Dolby Stereo by listing some of the most important technological advances in sync sound between the 1920's and 1970's.
- d) Explain how sync sound technology currently works in Cinema Exhibition and Video Playback by giving examples of three key technological advances.

Week 2: Poetic Realism, Impressionism, Surrealism and their relation to VFX

- a) Outline the impact of Poetic Realism, Impressionism and Surrealism on current techniques and conventions of editing and visual effects by analyzing the film's early era film makers.
- b) Recognize visual techniques in poetic realism, impressionism and surrealism by analyzing early silent era films like Jean Vigo's 'L'Atalante' (1934) and Jean Renoir's 'La Grande Illusion' (1937) and Germaine Dulac's 'The Seashell and the Clergyman'

Week 3: Film Screening

- a) Watching the films made by their colleagues affords an opportunity for students to study at a very personal level the way that sound and VFX are used in films, and how that contributes to the narrative structure of the story.
- b) Define the difference between diegetic and non-diegetic sound, and recognize the use of diegetic and non-diegetic sound in the screened films.
- c) Distinguish the role of good sound recording and sound design to the advancement of a narrative by analyzing the quality of sound accompanying the visuals in the film you watch and identifying what works and what does not work.

Week 4: The sound in films: where does it come from?

- a) Identify all the elements required to make the sound in a film immersive.
- b) List the 5 types of sound used to create immersive three dimensional sound
 - a. dialogue
 - b. foley
 - c. sound effects
 - d. ambient sound and room tone
 - e. score
- c) identify how these elements are used to heighten dramatic tension.
Consider the absence of score and its effect on the narrative.
- d) Identify all the equipment required to make a field recording.
- e) Describe how these elements are organized on the timeline in your non linear editing software in order to prepare for a sound mix.

Week 5: Sound Recording and Design Practical Class Part I

- a) Understanding how to identify if a recording has been well done.
- b) Review the equipment required for sound recording
- c) Recognise the techniques used to process and compress sound

Week 6: Sound Recording and Design Practical Class Part II

- a) What is a polywav file?
- b) Opening a polywav file in your NLE.
- c) Recognise the techniques used to process and compress sound
- d) Recognize how to lay audio tracks on a timeline for an efficient sound edit
- e) Understanding the sound sources that go into sound design.

Week 7: Mid Semester Examination**Week 8: An Introduction to Visual Effects**

- a) Define what visual effects are
- b) Define how visual effects are used to enhance a films' narrative
- c) Classify visual effects into digital and practical effects
- d) Recognize how effectively merging visual and practical effects creates more immersive believable experiences.

Week 9: Project planning and Pre-production

- a) In class discussion: what constitutes believable in your context?
- b) In class discussion: what sequence could you plan and execute within the confines of your environment.
- c) Group Work: Create and plan your believable VFX sequence that can be executed within the constraints of your environment.
- d) Assignment: script the sequence that you envisioned in today's class as a group, enroll your group and upload your script.

Week 10: Preproduction, Casting and Planning

- a) Cast actors from within the student body.
- b) Find the locations.
- c) Finalize your script and shot list. If it's not on your shot list, it shouldn't be in your rushes.
- d) Book your equipment and seek permission for any outdoor scenes.

Week 11: Production week 1: Shoot your rushes

- a) Ensure that you have enough coverage. This should have been planned in your shot list
- b) Plan any sequences that require either specialist lighting or equipment, like a green screen
- c) Plan your time, and appoint an AD from within your group or amongst your classmates. Ensure each group member is assigned a clear role

Week 12: Production week 2: show your rushes for review

- a) Prepare your rushes for review. Lay them on a timeline end to end without any editing in the order they should appear on your shot list.
- b) Ensure that the sound is synced if you recorded sound separately.

Week 13: Edit and Finalize your Visual Effects Sequence

- a) Edit together your sequence, applying effects that will render your sequence believable.
- b) Ensure that the sound is synced if you recorded sound separately. Lay any additional sound effects that will 'sell' your effects.

Week 14: Final Delivery of Project

END OF SEMESTER

COURSE TEXTS

FURTHER READING

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Lecture, presentations, class discussion, library research, assignments and class exercises, including guided in class practicals, group exercises and presentations. You will be expected to assemble your projects in whichever non linear editing program you have access to and you are comfortable using. Utilize any online resources that you feel will help you realize your vision, but ensure where this includes either audio or visual assets you have written proof from the author granting you the right to use that asset.

KEY INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Plagiarism and cheating are considered to be acts of misconduct as per the university's academic code of conduct and ethics. (See student handbook) Any student who commits plagiarism or cheats in the examination will be subject to sanctions up to and including dismissal from the university.

ABSENTEEISM

Students are expected to attend all classes. Upon being absent from seven classes in a three-unit course (excused or unexcused), the instructor will give a student an 'F' grade for the course. If you have to be absent, please contact your instructor in advance but this will not change the Policy on Class Attendance.

MAKE-UP EXAMS

Make-up exams will not be given. However, special exams shall be given for valid reasons, such as, illness and bereavement provided that the affected student produces proof of this. This will be as per the University Policy.

GROUP WORK

In groups, you will be assigned activities to research on, and then be able to present the research output in class. You will teach your classmates. Take this very seriously as you will be awarded marks for the same.

COURSE EVALUATION

Guided Practicals, Class exercises, and assignments **40%**

Mid-Semester examination **20%**

Final project **30%**

Attendance and participation **10%**

Total **100%**

GRADING

70 – 100% Credit

0 – 69% No credit