
SUBJECT DESCRIPTION**50153 Audio Production**

Course Name:	Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Media Arts and Production)
Level:	200
Number of Credit Points:	8
Prerequisites:	None
Grading:	Graded

HANDBOOK DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the basic concepts and production procedures involved in professional audio across a range of media. Students work in digital formats, focusing on idea development, composition, experimentation, and questions of aesthetics, poetics and politics. Conceptual and technical skills include listening, location recording, recording voices, interviewing, editing and mixing.

CONTRIBUTION TO GRADUATE PROFILE

Students who successfully complete this subject will

- develop the ability to be able to take up industrial and artisan roles in the media arts and production industries of radio broadcasting; the convergent media industry; independent media and audio arts.
- develop the professional skills to work as sound artists, independent producers and directors or in a specialist role as part of a creative team
- have the ability to work professionally using a combination of technical, critical and creative skills.
- have a conceptual and practical production experience of different forms, approaches, styles and genres in their audio production.
- develop skills in problem solving, communication and teamwork necessary for the collaborative nature of media production work
- be adaptable, flexible and innovative as they cope with and contribute to continuous change within existing professional industries
- be self-reliant as well as being able to collaborate on media arts projects throughout all stages of conception, project development, production, postproduction and presentation
- be able to present to a portfolio, showreel or samples of creative work.
- be prepared for advanced professional skill development or further postgraduate level study
- have the ability to engage in constructive criticism and analysis of media production work

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this subject students are expected to have developed:

- a) skills that will be useful for industrial and artisan roles in the media arts and production industries of radio broadcasting; the convergent media industry; independent media and audio arts; online environments and services, education and community sectors and the entertainment industries
- b) specialist audio production skills to an intermediate creative and technical level
- c) skills of self reliance and problem solving to an advanced level
- d) skills in collaboration, communication and teamwork necessary for the collaborative nature of media production work in the audio/sound area

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Lectures and workshops/workgroups meetings; flexible delivery mode.
- Practical workshops and activities held in class.
- Short exercises.
- Project such as radiophonic feature/mini-documentary or audio installation; produced in groups of 2-3 people

CONTENT

At the completion of this subject, students are expected to be able to:

- a) listen critically to sound across a range of media, industries and contexts
- b) conceptualise and develop treatments/proposals, and design audio for non-sync applications
- c) work in audio production teams
- d) have a high level of aesthetic and technical problem-solving skills
- e) have a high level of technical competence in recording, editing and mixing audio

ASSESSMENT

Assessment item 1: Recording the Interview

Objectives: a, b

Value: 10%

Due: Week 4

Task: Record an interview of 3 minutes on the subject of an affect

Assessment criteria:

1. Recording Quality – microphone technique, levels, and clarity of sound
2. Interviewing technique – effective and thoughtful engagement with interviewee and material
3. Conceptualisation – ability to analyse ideas and research
4. Professional approach to timing and deadlines

Assessment item 2: Editing Sound Exercise

Objectives: a, b, c, d

Value: 15%

Due: Week 5

Task: Two edits of the recording from Assignment 1, edited in two different ways, to a maximum length of one minute for each edit. You will edit the same source in two different ways, using only one track on Protools for this and using no effects or music. For example, one edit may be fast paced and cut up and the other more ‘narrative’.. This assignment may be discussed and conceptualised in groups but carried out individually. Students should be prepared to discuss in class the conceptual thinking behind their choice of editing styles.

Assessment criteria:

1. Ability to extend creative boundaries as evidenced in submitted edits
2. Ability to record and to edit in a range of styles with high production values
3. Demonstrated conceptual thinking about choice of editing style and additional sound as evidenced in work submitted

Assessment Item 3: Layering Sound

Objectives: a, b, c, d

Value: 25%

Due: Week 6

Task: Mix several sounds together to make one single sound, which constructs an affect, ie a feeling or emotion. You may work with the affect you used in a previous exercise or a new one. Do not use music or spoken word, though you may work with vocal sounds.

Assessment criteria:

1. Effective (technical) layering of multiple sounds
2. Ability to conceptualize ways in which to evoke of an emotional response in listener through sound only
3. Demonstrated conceptual and aesthetic thinking about choice of elements and layering style to evoke an emotional response in listener through sound only
4. Ability to extend creative boundaries as evidenced in submitted mix

Assessment item 4: A Major Piece of Work, such as a Feature/Mini-Documentary

Objectives: a, b, c, d

Value: 50%

Due: Week 14

Task: A major piece of work, such as a Feature/Mini-documentary, comprising pre-recorded piece of no more than 5 minutes duration must be completed and handed in. Work in groups of 2-3.

This may be in one of the more formal, traditional radio modes (documentary, drama, magazine, etc) or may challenge the accepted radio formats with something quite different. It should include all elements of sound design - music, voice, sound, and 'silence' - and have a central theme or idea.

Assessment criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to conceptualise and develop a treatment
- Demonstrated ability to plan its production
- Demonstrated ability to produce a feature, in groups
- Demonstrated ability to work successfully to deadlines.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Attendance is particularly important in this subject because it is based on a collaborative approach which involves essential workshopping of student work and interchange of ideas. Students who attend fewer than ten classes are advised that their final work will not be assessed and that they are likely to fail the subject.

In order to pass, each student must satisfactorily complete all of the tasks set out above.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

- Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1994.
David Miles Huber, *Modern Recording Techniques (5th Edition)*, Butterworth-Heinemann, London, 2001.
Douglas Kahn, *Noise/Water/Meat : A History of Voice, Sound and Aurality in The Arts*, MIT Press, 1999.
R. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (Philadelphia: University of Penn. Press, 1977).
Robert McLeish, *The Technique of Radio Production, A Manual for Broadcasters*, Focal Press, London, 1988.
Stanley R Alten, *Audio In Media*, Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 1981.
Donald McWhinnie, *The Art of Radio*, London, Faber&Faber.
David Toop, *Ocean of Sound (5th edition)*, Consortium, 2001.
Essays in Sound, Volumes 1-4, Sydney.

Periodicals:

- Sound On Sound*
Mix
Audio Technology