



AU Sound Practicum Syllabus

Fall 2009

Location: MPC TV Studio

Class Hours: Fridays, 9:50am – 12:35pm

8/28/09 – 9/25/09

Professor Greg Smith

Cell: 301.325.4521

Mailbox: SOC Main Office in MGC 300

Office Hours: By appointment.

Email: greg.email@verizon.net

Website: www.prosfromdoverproductions.com

NOTE: The contents of this syllabus are meant as a guide, and *only* as a guide. They detail the semester's requirements and materials and how they will be presented. The specifics of each class (ie, readings, assignments, etc.) may change from week to week. The instructor may deviate from this syllabus without prior notice at any time during the semester; although I will do my best to keep you up to date at the end of each class session.

If you are unclear for any reason about what's due or when, ask me in class or send me an email. If you send an email, *you must make contact with me*; simply sending an email doesn't excuse you from an assignment. Also, please note: you must use the email listed above; I have other email accounts, but am using this one exclusively for this class. If you send a note to an email address *other* than the one listed above, I won't see it and it does not count for this class.

Welcome to the Location Sound Practicum. We've only got five classes to learn the basics of location sound recording. We'll cram a lot into those classes, so please be on time and strive to attend every class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

We're going to learn about the following:

- The history of location sound recording.
- Proper preparation techniques for a location shoot.
- How to properly and safely transport your gear to and from the set.
- What to pack in your sound kit.

- Different microphone and recording techniques.
- The various types of mics and recorders.
- Recording on a budget.
- “Run and gun” recording.
- What post-production editors expect from you.
- How to properly listen and evaluate a location for recording sound.
- How to scout a sound location.
- The difference between Guide Track and Wild Track.
- Deal memos, contracts and billing.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class #1 On the Screen

Overview of location sound (PPT)

1. 51% of the film?
2. Purpose
3. How is it gathered?
4. How important is it (pix rules!)
5. Where does it go once it leaves the set, and why does it matter that we know this?
6. GT vs. WT

Clips: examples of sound on film:

1. Films which are sound-dominant “Castaway”
2. Raiders demo reel

Class #2 Guest Speaker

A professional in the industry will come in to class and chat about their experiences on and off set. TBA.

Class #3 Gear

What’s in the case? A breakdown of the contents of the sound kit:

- Make a list of them (PPT) and explain what it’s used for.
- Class time to go thru it piece by piece.

Class #4 Sound on Interior Sets

In-class lab on recording techniques for recording sound-on-set

Class #5 Sound on Exterior Sets

Out-of-class lab on recording techniques for recording in exterior locations.

Screen: Field Exercise #2

GRADING

This is a brief practicum, but you will be graded on your performance. I expect each of you to participate in a professional manner. If you're going to miss a class, please let me know in advance and have a good reason for it. You'll be graded on the following:

- Attendance; on-time arrival
- Class participation
- Attention and proficiency in class labs, exercises and lectures

HEALTH WARNING

The University is concerned about the H1N1 virus and a possible outbreak. If the University has to close due to an outbreak, the plan is for us to continue classes online. But for now, here are some thoughts from the SOC:

Expectations for Those Who Get Sick:

We've all heard about common sense strategies for avoiding the flu—social distancing, frequent hand washing, and covering coughs and sneezes with your sleeve. Just as important, you should know what to do if you get sick. The CDC recommends that if you experience flu-like symptoms, you should self-isolate until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Also, Notify your faculty members that you will not be in class because you are sick. Faculty will be flexible and prepared to help you make up the work when you return to class. Contact the Student Health Center for information and treatment options by calling 202-885-3380, e-mailing shcsuggestions@american.edu, or coming to the center to be evaluated. If you live in the residence halls, notify your RA, who can remind you of procedures for self-isolation. You may return to normal activities 24 hours after your fever has gone.