SYLLABUS FOR STAGE SOUND (THEA 3385) - SPRING 2012
Jonathan Middents—Office Hours MWF 12-1, TTh 9-10, 1-2—203E Communications—(713) 743-2914—J.Middents@uh.edu

Objectives: Review and introduce a range of hardware and software available for designing and executing reproduced and reinforced sound for the stage; develop an artistic basis for designing sound; and develop practical skills in executing a sound design.

Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate professional expertise and artistic judgment.

Text: Sound and Music for the Theatre (3rd edition) by Deena Kaye and James Lebrecht. Much of the information about the technology is not in the text and will be presented in class.

At some point early in the semester read “Feedback” (pp. 179 - 258). Read it again at the end of the semester. Does it mean more now? Are there statements with which you agree or disagree? What seems to be your way of working?

1/18-23 INTRODUCTION: An historical perspective and introduction to the functions of sound in a production. What are the controllable qualities of sound? Reinforced vs. reproduced sound; the elements of the sound system. An introduction to live and mechanical effects. Read Chapters 1 and 2. Start Practicum 1 (construction and demonstration of live effect).

1/26 Introduction to digital mixing; the use of Audacity software. Start Practicum 2. (Recording & editing in Audacity)


2/15-20 Developing and researching the design concept. How to read the script for design and what to do then. Read Chapters 3 and 4. Start Practicum 4 (Sound plot for an assigned scene) & Practicum 5 (Sound plot for a show). Practicum 3 due 2/20.

2/22-27 Developing The Sound Plot. How to organize your concept to realize it. Background information on production organization. Read Chapters 5 & 6. Start Practicum 6 (Music Selection for a show).


4/2-4 Hardware setup; considerations in equipment selection and placement to achieve the artistic result you want. Practicum 7 due 4/4

4/9-11 Computer control programs: Introduction to QLab and SFX. Start Practicum 8 (Arranging and running cues in QLab)


FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS (4/30 and final exam day)

Policies: Students are reminded of the School of Theatre & Dance absence policy, the minimum major GPA policy, and the absence and grade appeal policies. These are available online in the School website, or I can provide hard copies upon request. For this class, the absence policy means that after two absences (for any reason), students will be penalized ½ letter grade for each additional absence up to a total of six. After that a student will fail the class. Three tardies equals an absence. Absences may be appealed, but students are reminded that all absences must be listed and justified (or not) when appealing absences.
Grading will be based upon a series of practicum projects and the completion of a final project. Late projects will be penalized 20%, and will not be accepted after the following class. NO PROJECTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE LAST SCHEDULED CLASS, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Practicum 1: Researching, constructing, and demonstrating a live effect (20 pts.)
Practicum 2: Recording & editing in Audacity (20 pts.)
Practicum 3: Multitracked cue-building and mechanization of execution in Audacity (25 pts.)
Practicum 4: Sound plot for an assigned scene (15 pts.)
Practicum 5: Sound plot for a show (30 pts.)
Practicum 6: Music Selection for a show (25 pts.)
Practicum 7: Digital manipulation and CD recording (30 pts.)
Practicum 8: Arranging and running cues in QLab (20 pts.)

Final project: design, execution, and demonstration of sound design for a show. This may be an actual production or an independent design demonstrated for the class during the final exam period. If it is an actual show, you may embellish the design to demonstrate your ideas for "God’s production" of the script in ideal (non-workshop) circumstances. The project will include:
- a typed conceptual/approach statement (20 pts)
- a sound plot (30 pts)
- initial cue sheets (30 pts)
- the finished playback materials (50 pts)
- in-theatre demonstration (20 pts)

Extra credit is available by arrangement with the instructor to students designing realized projects both large and small.

Grades will be earned according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

335 pts. Total; point cutoff: 311 301 291 278 268 258 244 234 224 211 201