

# THEATRE SOUND DESIGN

## AET 339

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*"Sound is almost like a drug. It's so pure that when it goes in your ears, it instantly does something to you. And you can tell if that's working for you." – David Lynch*

**Fall 2018, WIN 1.138  
MW, 11:00AM-12:30PM**

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**Office Hours:** MW 10:00-11:00AM, WIN 2.154

### **Course Description:**

This course explores the process and tools used to conceptualize and implement a sound design for theatre productions. Topics include script analysis, music underscoring, atmospheric sounds, spot effects, sound maps, cue sheets, microphone and speaker placement, and cue-based playback software.

**Course Prerequisite(s):** AET 305 Foundations of Music Technology

### **Course Outcomes:**

*By the end of this course, students will:*

- Analyze scripts and present sound design concepts clearly and effectively.
- Create detailed paperwork to accurately explain the execution of a sound design for live performance.
- Incorporate sound editing, audio processing, and MIDI sequencing techniques in the realization of a sound design.
- Explore different approaches and tools for delivering a sound design for live performance.

**Text(s):** Instructor will provide reading materials via Canvas.

**Materials:** Over-the-ear headphones and an external hard drive.

## Course Schedule

*Subject to change at instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of changes in advance.*

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	8/29	Course introduction	ASSIGNMENT 1: Voice Grouping TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Intro + Ch. 1
2	9/03	No class – Labor Day Holiday	
	9/05	Voice Grouping, bipolar sound list and visual map	ASSIGNMENT 2: Sound Map TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 2
3	9/10	Manual props lecture w/Rebecca Switzer	ASSIGNMENT 3: Manual Props TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 3
	9/12	Sound map discussion	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 4
4	9/17	Manual props presentations	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 6
	9/19	Recording and audio editing	ASSIGNMENT 4: Original Sound Effects TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 10
5	9/24	Audio processing	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 5
	9/26	Original sound effects presentation	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 12
6	10/01	MIDI sequencing	ASSIGNMENT 5: Concept Composition
	10/03	Virtual instruments	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 13
7	10/08	Concept composition presentation	TUTORIAL: QLab
	10/10	QLab overview	PROJECT 1: Dracula Scene Sound Design
8	10/15-10/17	PROJECT 1: Build sound design	
9	10/22-10/24	PROJECT 1: Rehearse sound design	
10	10/29-10/31	PROJECT 1: Presentations	ASSIGNMENT 6: Script Analysis (new play)
11	11/05	PROJECT 1: Post-mortem, new play script discussion	TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 14
	11/07	Script Analysis discussion	TUTORIAL: LaunchPad
12	11/12-11/14	LaunchPad w/Ableton Live	PROJECT 2: New Play Sound Design TUTORIAL: Ableton Live Ch. 15
13	11/19-11/21	PROJECT 2: Build sound design	

14	11/26-11/28	PROJECT 2: Rehearse sound design	
15	12/03-12/05	PROJECT 2: Presentations	
16	12/10	PROJECT 2: Post-mortem	

### **Grading**

Assignments 25%

Guidelines, deadlines and submission folders will be on Canvas.

Online Tutorials 15%

Upload proof of tutorial completion via Canvas.

Projects 40%

Projects will have multiple deadlines for the completion of individual steps.

Show Attendance 20%

It is the policy of the Department of Theatre and Dance that our majors attend department season productions and that this attendance is a part of the coursework for our majors' classes. For the fall semester, you are required to attend the following performances: Matawan, Fall for Dance and The Merchant of Venice and complete a 1-page review (due 1 week after the show closes). Information on how majors may obtain discounted admission is available on the Department of Theatre and Dance wiki under the "Student Resources" tab.

<https://wikis.utexas.edu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=51841138&moved=true>

### **Late work**

Late submissions will receive a maximum grade value of 50%. December 10th is the last call for any late submissions from the semester (graded at 50% maximum value).

Grade	Cutoff
A	94%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	84%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	74%
C-	70%
D	65%
F	<65%

### **Attendance**

- Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class.
- Class attendance is a requirement and use of the full class period is expected.
- You will be allowed three sick, personal, physical or mental health days without grading consequences.
- Two instances of tardiness or early departure equal one absence.
- 15 minutes late to the start of class will constitute a tardy.
- At the end of each class, tardy students must make instructor aware of their attendance or they will be marked as absent.
- Leaving class before being dismissed by your professor will constitute an early departure.
- A class in which a student is tardy and departs early on the same day is considered an absence.
- A 4th absence will result in the lowering of your final grade by one letter grade.
- Absences, tardiness and/or early departures beyond this could result in course failure.
- If a serious medical or personal situation occurs affecting attendance, please discuss it with your professor.

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address:

[http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php)

### **Q Drop Policy**

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see:

<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop>

### **University Resources for Students**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific

arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact: Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone). <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/>

### **Counseling and Mental Health Center**

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support.

<http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

### **The Sanger Learning Center**

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

*Undergraduate Writing Center:* <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

*Libraries:* <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

*ITS:* <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

*Student Emergency Services:* <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

### **Important Safety Information**

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when

entering the building.

- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)