

The University of Iowa
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Fall, 2022

Title of Course: Audio Production (JMC:3660:0001)

Course meeting time and place: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45am, W332 AJB

School of Journalism & Mass Communication (SJMC): <https://journalism.uiowa.edu/>

Course ICON site: To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](https://iowa.uiowa.edu/) <https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml> using your Hawk ID and password.

Course Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the add and drop deadlines, the “second-grade only” option (SGO), academic misconduct policies, and other undergraduate policies and procedures. Other UI colleges may have different policies.

Instructor

Name: Brian Ekdale (he/him), Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

Office location: E324 ABJ, <https://uiowa.zoom.us/my/bekdale>

Student drop-in hours: 11am-1pm Tuesdays; 1-2pm Thursdays; by appointment

Phone: 319-384-3605

E-mail: brian-ekdale@uiowa.edu

Immediate Supervisor: Associate Dean Christopher Cheatum, christopher-cheatum@uiowa.edu

SJMC DEO: Associate Professor Melissa Tully, E332 AJB, melissa-tully@uiowa.edu

Course Description

This course is designed to help you produce professional-quality audio stories. You will learn how to use high-end audio recorders and editing software as well as mobile apps to capture, trim, polish, and mix digital audio content. Throughout the semester, we will discuss current industry trends and preferred practices in audio storytelling, covering a broad landscape from news radio and podcasting to advertising and branded content. You will work individually and in groups to produce narratively compelling and technically sound audio stories.

Learning Outcomes

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified [learning outcomes](#) that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes.

This course contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you develop the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and create video content to be distributed across multiple media platforms and to communicate effectively with the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work. Achieving these outcomes means:

- You will demonstrate an ability to create and disseminate media messages in various forms.
- You will demonstrate an ability to gather factual story elements and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple distribution outlets.
- You will demonstrate an ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.
- You will demonstrate an ability to produce media that serve the needs and interests of diverse communities and reflect their voices and experiences.

In addition, it is critical that you continue to develop an understanding of the diversity of groups (including communities defined by gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation) and their experiences in a global society. By recognizing structural racism and inequalities that impact and affect marginalized communities and how our work perpetuates or challenges these systems, we can produce stronger, more impactful stories that effectively serve and communicate with people from different backgrounds and experiences. Achieving these outcomes means:

- You will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the role of media representations and stereotypes in shaping perceptions of people and groups, particularly marginalized or underrepresented groups.
- You will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in media professions and productions.
- You will demonstrate an ability to recognize how our personal experiences, biases and social positions influence our perspectives on the world.
- You will demonstrate an understanding of how structural inequalities operate in media systems and professions through the policies, practices and behaviors of individuals and institutions

Finally, in addition to the SJMC Learning Outcomes identified above, I have identified the following learning outcomes that students should obtain by the time they finish the semester:

- You will improve upon the narrative and technical skills in audio storytelling learned in Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling.
- You will demonstrate proficiency at planning, producing, and editing audio stories.
- You will produce audio stories using a variety of different styles and formats.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is dedicated to equity, anti-racism and social justice. A fuller statement of this commitment can be found [here](#). We strive to serve our students well in this regard, and consider diversity, equity, and inclusion as social resources that inform our learning environment. We train our students to achieve cultural competency across the diversity of groups that inhabit our global society. Among other things, this involves enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds and experiences. In our classes, we discuss these themes through the concepts of media representations, bias and resulting stereotypes, and the effects of discrimination and structural inequalities as they pertain to all aspects of the media, from foundational concepts to advanced professional and graduate training. In accord with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and the dictates of academic freedom, we support an open discussion of all relevant viewpoints, even those with which we disagree. We encourage conversation that is based on facts and documentation, and on a mutual respect for one another.

To this end, we will be listening to stories that capture and celebrate the life experiences of marginalized and vulnerable communities and will be engaging with a diversity of sources and topics in our reporting. If you have suggestions for me on how to make the course or my teaching more equitable, inclusive and anti-racist, please reach out to me. If you feel more comfortable doing so anonymously, please contact my immediate supervisor, Associate Dean Christopher Cheatum.

Texts/Audio

There is no required text for this course. You can find course readings and audio exemplars on ICON. If you are interested in developing your audio storytelling skills further, I highly recommend picking up a copy of *Sound Reporting* (2008) by Jonathan Kern.

Technology

You are required to own a 320-GB or larger external hard drive (for editing audio projects) and over-the-ear studio headphones. The rest of the equipment used in this course is available for checkout. You will have

access to an audio kit that you can check out for the duration of the semester. You will need to check out the equipment and keep it safe for the duration of the semester. We will also use audio editing software that is available in all SJMC labs and Student Center as well as the SJMC podcast studio. You are welcome to use your own equipment/software, but we will only provide technical support and training for the equipment/software used in this course. If you need help with hardware/software furnished by SJMC, please reference our [help site](#).

Academic Honesty and Misconduct

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#). Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to [these procedures](#). Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the [Graduate College Manual](#).

Storytelling and Academic Misconduct

When creating stories and writing papers, academic misconduct occurs when you (intentionally or unintentionally) present someone else's work as your own. According to the University of Iowa Academic Policies, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Using direct quotations without quotation marks and/or without crediting the source
- Paraphrasing information and ideas from sources without crediting the source
- Fabricating quotations or sources
- Submitting video footage, images, or sounds created by someone else as your own work or without proper attribution

Students are responsible for understanding this policy. If you have questions, please ask me for clarification.

Professionalism and Participation

The success of any course depends on the professionalism and participation of its students. To that end, you will be graded on your attendance, preparedness, contribution, and cooperation:

- Attendance means showing up. Simply put, you should be in class on time for the full time. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class (e.g. documented illness, family emergency, religious holiday, etc.) and want your absence excused, you must let Brian know via email about your absence prior to the start of the class period you are missing.
- Preparedness means doing the necessary work prior to the start of class. You should engage with the assigned readings/exemplars before class and come prepared to discuss and ask questions.
- Contribution means sharing your ideas. Each of you offers a unique perspective based on your beliefs, upbringing, and areas of expertise. When you share your thoughts, opinions, and ideas, it provides an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow.
- Cooperation means working well with others during group exercises and class discussions. If working with partner(s) on a class exercise, you must prove yourself to be dependable. Also, our class should be a place where everyone feels comfortable sharing their views, even if those views are uncommon or unpopular. At the same time, you must always be aware of how your words and actions affect those around you. Intolerance, antagonism, and demagoguery have no place in the healthy exchange of ideas.

Late Policy

Each assignment will have a specific due date/time. Work submitted after the assigned due date/time will be considered late. Late work will be marked down 10% for each 24-hour period after the original due date. Assignments turned in more than 5 days after the due date will be awarded no points.

Student Complaints

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor, and finally with the instructor's immediate supervisor, Associate Dean Christopher Cheatum.

Undergraduate students should contact [CLAS Undergraduate Programs](#) for support when the matter is not resolved at the previous level.

Drop Deadline for this Course

You may drop an individual course before the deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the [drop deadline for this course](#) here. When you drop a course, a "W" will appear on your transcript. The mark of "W" is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the [Registrar's website](#). Undergraduate students can find policies on dropping and withdrawing [here](#).

Grading System and the Use of +/-

In this class, assignments will be graded not just on the finished product but on commitment to the process. This means you'll be graded on your Personal Story, but also on your participation in in-class workshops, the first draft of your script, your peer critique of others' scripts, and your final digital story. All assignments will have detailed rubrics that explain what is expected and the standards by which assignments will be assessed.

Final grades will be awarded based on the following ranges:

A	B	C	D	F
A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F < 59
A 93-97	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Course Assessment

Final course grades will be assessed based on your performance in the following activities (400 points total):

Audio Checklist (40 points)

You will apply the technical skills discussed during the Digital Audio Principles unit by completing a checklist of production tasks.

Principles Exam (20 points)

This graded exam will cover readings, exemplars, and class instruction the Digital Audio Principles unit. The exam will be timed as well as open book, open note.

Interview Story (50 points)

You will conduct an in-depth interview with an expert, celebrity, or human-interest source and edit it down to a shorter audio interview story.

Theme Music (20 points)

You will create original music segments in GarageBand to use in your audio stories.

Discussion Story (50 points)

You will work with one or more partners to create a discussion-based audio story on a topic of interest.

Sponsor Message (20 points)

You will record pre-roll, mid-roll, and post-roll ads based on a provided script.

Daily News (75 points)

You will work with one or more partners to create a daily news podcast episode about a timely topic relevant to your local community.

Vox Pop (25 points)

You will record “on-the-street” interviews with members of your local community on a topic of interest, ensuring you incorporate a diversity of voices.

Final Project (100 points)

You will design an audio-based show and product multiple episodes of that show.

Date and Time of the Final Exam

While this class will not have a final exam, we will be meeting during finals week to listen to highlights of the Final Project assignment. The final examination date and time will be announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes and it will be announced on the course ICON site once it is known. **Do not plan your end of the semester travel plans until the final exam schedule is made public. It is your responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam.** According to Registrar's final exam policy, students **have a maximum of two weeks after the announced final exam schedule** to request a change if an exam conflict exists or if a student has more than two exams in one day (see the [policy](#) here).

Calendar of Course Assignments and Exams

Below is the preliminary course schedule for the semester. Due to the nature of the course topic, this schedule is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class and posted on ICON.

Detailed assignment sheets will be provided for all assignments. All readings and exemplars will be posted on ICON.

Part 1: Digital Audio Principles

Tuesday, 8/23 – Introductions

- Resource: NPR. [A Glossary of Audio Production Terms](#)

Thursday, 8/25 – Studio Production

- Read: Norman J. Medoff and Edward J. Fink. (2012). *Portable Video*. Chapter 9: Audio (pp. 233–255)
- Listen: *Vox Conversations*. (May 5, 2022). “[The Moral Dangers of Dirty Work](#)”
- Assigned: Audio Checklist (1–4)

Tuesday, 8/30 – Field Production

- Read: Jonathan Kern. (2008). *Sound Reporting*. Chapter 5: Field Producing (pp. 73–91)
- Listen: *New York Times First Person*. (July 14, 2022). “[His Ship Finally Came In, but Should He Be on It](#)”
- Assigned: Audio Checklist (5–8)

Thursday, 9/1 – Audio Editing / Podcast Studio

- See ICON for Audition training materials
- Assigned: Audio Checklist (9–12)

Tuesday, 9/6 – Audio Mixing

- Read: Timothy A. Dittmar. (2012). *Audio Engineering 101*. Chapter 3: EQ Points of Interest (pp. 27–36)
- Listen: *ReplyAll*. (March 5, 2020). “[The Case of the Missing Hit](#)”
- Assigned: Audio Checklist (13–16)

Thursday, 9/8 – Sound Design

- Read: Jessica Abel. (2015). *Out on the Wire*. Chapter 4: Sound (pp. 147–165)
- Listen: *Snap Judgement*. (July 15, 2021). “[This is Not a Drill](#)”
- Assigned: Audio Checklist (17–20)

Tuesday, 9/13 – Audio Checklist Workshop

Thursday, 9/15 – Audio Checklist Workshop

- Due: Principles Exam

Friday, 9/16 by 8 p.m.

- Due: Audio Checklist due

Part 2: Sources and Interview Stories

Tuesday, 9/20 – Conducting and Recording Interviews

- Read: Jessica Abel and Ira Glass. (1999). *Radio: An Illustrated Guide*. The Art of the Interview (pp. 10–14); Eric Nuzum (2020). *Make Noise*, Chapter 4: Asking Questions (pp. 73–91)
- Listen: *Code Switch*. (July 15, 2020) “[What’s in a ‘Karen?’](#)”
- Assigned: Interview Story

Thursday, 9/22 – Interview Story Pitch Meetings

- See ICON for Audacity training materials
- Due: Interview Story Pitch
- Assigned: Theme Music

Tuesday, 9/27 – Theme Music Workshop

Thursday, 9/29 – Theme Music Workshop

- Due: Theme Music

Tuesday, 10/4 – Interview Story Workshop

Thursday, 10/6 – Interview Story Workshop

Friday, 10/7 by 8 p.m.

- Due: Interview Story

Part 3: Discussion-Based Stories

Tuesday, 10/11 – Conversational Audio

- Read: Jonathan Kern. (2008). *Sound Reporting*. Chapter 3: Writing for Broadcast (pp. 25–38); BuzzSprout (January 13, 2020). “[How to Write a Podcast Script](#)”
- Listen: *Mom and Dad Are Fighting*. (September 15, 2022). “[The Smoking Conundrum](#)”
- Assigned: Discussion Story

Thursday, 10/13 – Writing and Reading Ad Copy / Discussion Story Workshop

- Read: Alyssa Myers (2020). [From the Host’s Lips to the Audience’s Ears: The Power of the Host-Read Podcast Ad](#). *Morning Consult*
- Assigned: Sponsor Message

Tuesday, 10/18 – Discussion Story Pitch Meetings

- Due: Discussion Story Pitch

Thursday, 10/20 – Sponsor Message / Discussion Story Workshop

- Due: Sponsor Message

Tuesday, 10/25 – Discussion Story Workshop

Thursday, 10/27 – Discussion Story Workshop

Friday, 10/28 by 8 p.m.

- Due: Discussion Story

Part 4: Daily News

Tuesday, 11/1 – Daily News and Deadline Reporting

- Read: Jonathan Kern. (2008). *Sound Reporting*. Chapter 10: Newscasting (pp. 171–194); [Daily News Podcasts: Building New Habits in the Shadow of Coronavirus](#) (Introduction and Key Findings)
- Listen: *UpFirst* and *Here First* daily for duration of Daily News module
- Assigned: Daily News

Thursday, 11/3 – Voice of the People / Discussion Story Workshop

- Read: Mark Easton (January 21, 2019). [Why Vox Pops Are Important](#). *BBC News*.
- Listen: Bridget Read (2010). [One True Love?](#) KPCC.
- Assigned: Vox Pop

Tuesday, 11/8 – Vox Pop / Daily News Workshop

- Due: Daily News Pitch

Thursday, 11/10 – Vox Pop / Daily News Workshop

- Due: Vox Pop

Monday, 11/14–Friday, 11/18

- Due: Daily News episodes (one per day)

Tuesday, 11/15 – Introducing the Final Project

- Assigned: Final Project

Thursday, 11/17 – Final Project Meetings

- Due: Final Project Pitch

FALL BREAK (11/21–11/25)

Part 5: Final Project

Tuesday, 11/29 – Final Pitch Revisions and Workshop

Thursday, 12/1 – Final Project Workshop

Tuesday, 12/6 – Final Project Workshop

Thursday, 12/8 – Final Project Workshop

Final Project due Finals Week (time/day TBD)

Additional College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Course Policies

Attendance and Absences

University regulations require that students be allowed to make up examinations which have been missed due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances. Students with mandatory religious obligations or UI authorized activities must discuss their absences with me as soon as possible. Religious obligations must be communicated within the first three weeks of classes.

In this course, every student receives two “grace” absences. Each additional unexcused absence will result in an automatic 5-point deduction from your Participation grade. For example, 3 unexcused absences from discussion section will result in a maximum Participation grade of 20/25.

Exam Policies

Communication: UI Email

Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community. Also, although I make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours, I do have other commitments (e.g., meetings, research, family, sleep, etc.) that may keep me from immediately responding to your emails. I am happy to offer feedback and answer specific questions over email, but I will not answer a barrage of questions or review full drafts of assignments over email. If your email would take me more than 5 minutes to answer, I will advise you to visit my drop-in hours or schedule an appointment.

Course Conduct:

In this course, we practice active learning, which means you will learn by continually practicing the skills we’ll develop in class. Active learning requires a supportive learning environment and engaged students who come ready to give focused attention and participate in all class activities. We will often use class time to practice skills, offer feedback, or revise work. To be successful in accomplishing course objectives, you will need to come to class ready to learn and participate, and to give your full attention to class lessons, discussions, and activities. Using class time for anything other than the work of this course will get in the way of your learning and that of your fellow students. Please do NOT use cell phones, tablets, or laptops during class, unless you’re using them for a course project.

Where to Get Help

School of Journalism and Mass Communication Resources

- [Journalism Student Center](#): on the third floor of Adler, find our internship coordinator, academic advisor, and peer mentors here
- School of Journalism and Mass Communication social media: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#)
- [School of Journalism and Mass Communication labs](#): rooms and hours for our multimedia labs

Help with Classes and Careers

- [Center for Inclusive Academic Excellence](#): Support for historically marginalized and/or first-generation students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- [Writing Center](#): make in-person or online appointments for writing help
- [Tutor Iowa](#): Resources for all kinds of academic support
- [Career Center](#): help with jobs, internships, and other career services
- [Student Disability Services](#): help with course accommodations for students with disabilities

Health Support and Advocacy

- [University Counseling Service](#): mental health counseling support
- [CommUnity Crisis Services](#): free, nonjudgmental emotional support to anyone who needs it via phone, chat or text
- [Student Health](#): Provides medical care to all University of Iowa students
- [Rape Victim Advocacy Program](#): Free, confidential care for people affected by sexual violence
- [Domestic Violence Intervention Program](#): Free services for people affected by domestic violence and dating violence

Basic Needs and Financial Support

- [Financial Aid Offices](#): support and information on loans and other financial support
- [Student Life Emergency Fund](#): support for students in a financial emergency
- [UI Food Pantry](#): free food for any student, staff, or faculty member at Iowa who needs it
- [Being Not Rich at Iowa](#): crowd-sourced resource guide by University of Iowa Student Government

University Policies

[Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Basic Needs and Support for Students](#)

[Classroom Expectations](#)

[Exam Make-up Owing to Absence](#)

[Free Speech and Expression](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Military Service Obligations](#)

[Non-discrimination](#)

[Religious Holy Days](#)

[Sexual Harassment/Misconduct and Supportive Measures](#)

[Sharing of Class Recordings](#)