

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code	DF2004 (DF8001)
Course Title	Sound in Media
Pre-requisites	NIL
No of AUs	3
Contact Hours	39 hours studio contact

Course Aims

In this introductory course you will examine sound and hearing in the media context. Theories of sound and hearing will be discussed and the role of sound in media investigated, as you examine historical, technical, cultural, social and material perspectives. Natural and man-made soundscapes and the impact of new technology on sound reproduction, noise reduction and sound dissemination will be examined through the lens of sound as a cultural artifact. You will gain hands-on experience in recording and editing sound for various media applications including sound for image, to facilitate an understanding of the aesthetics of sound in media.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Critically analyse and discuss the use of sound in media using multiple approaches.
2. Demonstrate critical listening skills in order to understand, analyse and discuss sound and its fundamental properties.
3. Discuss the history of sound recording and dissemination with an emphasis on its cultural impact.
4. Record and edit sound for use in relevant media applications.
5. Discuss techniques of the use of sound for narrative purposes and constructively critique your classmates work.

Course Content

In this course you will receive an overview of sound and its use in media. Theories of sound derived from sound studies will inform our discussions as we examine how sound is employed in time-based media. Hands-on projects will be used to investigate the material aspect of sound recording and dissemination. Critical listening skills will be developed and applied to the analysis of sound and its role in media.

What is sound?

Overview of the physics of sound and psychoacoustics. Frequency, amplitude, pitched and non-pitched sounds. Noise and types of noise. Listening to sound and developing a vocabulary to discuss it critically. Sound in cultural context.

Hearing and Listening

Listen modes and phenomenologies of sound. Why we heard what we hear, the politics of sound. Sound that is privileged, sound that is ignored.

Sound Recording and Dissemination

The history of sound recording from Edison to the present, from technical, cultural and material perspectives. The dissemination of sound recording from radio to the podcast, wax cylinders to mp3s. How to record and edit sound with a consideration of media aesthetics.

Sound and Image

The use of sound with image from sound installation to T.V to Film. Sound in narrative and soundscape. Synchronisation of sound and image, synchresis and sound/image relationships.

Class assignments

You will produce three creative projects that demonstrate an understanding of sound in media and recording techniques. There will be one class presentation and two quizzes based on lectures and reading. Classes will include mini-lectures, demonstrations, and activities that may be included in the assessment.

Assessment (includes both continuous and summative assessment)

Component	ILO Tested	Programme LO	Weighting	Team/ Individual
Continuous Assessment -Soundscape recording and analysis. -Radio/podcast Project -Sound and Image Project -Quizzes x2	1,2,4	N.A	10 15 15 20	Individual
Research Project: Research paper and presentation on a sound studies topic to be discussed with the instructor.	1,2,3,5	N.A	20	Individual
Continuous Assessment: Participation	5	N.A	20	Individual
Total			100%	

Reading and References

1. Alten, Stanley R., and Douglas Quin. *Audio in Media*. Wadsworth, 2014.
2. Altman, Rick. *Sound Theory, Sound Practice*. Focal Press, 2003.
3. Chion, Michel. *AUDIO-VISION: Sound on Screen*. COLUMBIA UNIV Press, 2019.
4. Ihde, Don. *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*. State University of New York Press, 2007.
5. Schafer, R. Murray. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Destiny Books, 2006.
6. Sterne, Jonathan. *The Sound Studies Reader*. Routledge, 2012.
7. Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Duke University Press 2003
8. Williams, R. *Television: Technology and cultural form*. Routledge. 2003

Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

(1) General

You are expected to complete all assigned readings, activities, assignments, attend all classes punctually and complete all scheduled assignments by due dates. You are expected to take responsibility to follow up with assignments and course related announcements. You are expected to participate in all project critiques, class discussions and activities.

(2) Punctuality

You are expected to be punctual for all classes. If you are more than 30 minutes late, you will be deemed as absent and will not be able to sign on the attendance register.

(3) Absenteeism

In-class activities make up a significant portion of your course grade. Absence from class without a valid reason will affect your participation grade. Valid reasons include falling sick supported by a medical certificate and participation in NTU's approved activities supported by an excuse letter from the relevant bodies. There will be no make-up opportunities for in-class activities.

Academic Integrity

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU's shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the [academic integrity website](#) for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

Planned Weekly Schedule*

*Subject to adjustment by instructor according to the teaching situation, students' progress, public holidays and unforeseeable circumstances. A revised schedule will be issued to students at the start of the semester.

Week	Topic	Course LO	Readings/ Activities
1	What is Sound? Overview of sound, its physical properties. Describing sound, developing a vocabulary. Sound in context, sound as noise.	1,2	Lecture: What is sound? In-class discussion: What do we understand about sound. Developing a vocabulary. Assigned Reading
2	Sound and Hearing Modes of hearing and phenomenologies of sound. What is hearing and what is listening? Hearing	1,2,	Lecture: Sound and Hearing In-class discussion: Discuss reading homework. Listening mode exercise. Assigned Reading

	loss and mediated ways of listening.		
3	<p>Sound as a cultural artifact</p> <p>Natural versus man made sound. The politics of sound and noise. Sound in social context, sound as a signifier.</p>	1,2	<p>Lecture: Sound as a cultural product</p> <p>In-class discussion: Discuss reading homework.</p> <p>Assigned Recording project.</p>
4	<p>The Soundscape</p> <p>The soundscape and acoustic ecology. Natural and urban soundscapes as cultural heritage. What can soundscapes tell us about society? How have soundscapes changed and continue to change. Soundscapes in Singapore.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Lecture: The Soundscape</p> <p>In-class discussion: Discuss reading homework. Present recording project from week 3 and discuss.</p> <p>In-class exercise: Simple recording techniques for soundscapes.</p> <p>Assigned Project 1: Soundscapes: recording and analysis.</p>
5	<p>Sound Recording</p> <p>History of sound recording. From wax cylinders to digital recording. Microphones and sound reproduction. Recording the voice. The quest of fidelity.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Lecture: Sound Recording</p> <p>Demonstration: Microphone choice, their uses and implications</p> <p>Assigned Reading</p>
6	<p>Sound Recording Continued</p> <p>Cultural impact of sound recording. Introduction to sound and image, the rise of the talkies. Music concrète and the beginnings of sampling, sound editing.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Lecture: Sound Recording</p> <p>In-class discussion: Discuss reading homework.</p> <p>In-class exercise/Demonstration: Introduction to sound editing and manipulation.</p> <p>Assigned Reading</p> <p>Assigned Project 2: radio/pod cast recording and editing.</p>
7	<p>Sound and Space</p> <p>Sound recording and commercialisation. Sound dissemination, Radio, T.V. and beyond. Podcasts the new radio? Mode of address.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Lecture: Sound Dissemination</p> <p>In-class exercise/Demonstration: How sound is disseminated.</p> <p>Assigned Reading.</p>
8	<p>Cultural Politics of Sound</p> <p>Radio as information, propaganda and entertainment.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>Lecture: Sound and Politics</p> <p>Who decides what is listened to? The politics of sound. Modes of representation.</p> <p>In-class discussion/Exercise: Based on reading.</p>

			Choose topic for research project.
9	Portable Sound Transistor radio, Walkman, iPod. Headphones and listening, music/sound all the time.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Lecture: Sound on the Move In-class discussion/Exercise: Based on reading. The moving soundtrack. Assigned Reading
10	Sound and Image Sound and film. Synchronising sound and image. The resistance to sound in cinema and its effect on “silent” film Cinema sound and the voice. Sound and narrative.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Lecture: Sound and Film Historical and social perspectives on film sound. In-Class discussion/Exercise/Demonstration Editing sound to image.
11	Sound and Image and Technology Sound and narrative continued, Dolby and noise reduction. Multichannel sound reproduction and the quest for fidelity and immersion.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Lecture/Demonstration: Dolby and noise reduction, multichannel sound formats Assigned Project: Sound and Image
12	Student Presentations Students will present their research projects.	1, 2, 5	Each student will present their research project.
13	Sound In VR Sound in virtual systems and the future of sound in media.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Lecture: Sound in VR, ambisonics and binaural. Student Presentations: Present sound and image project.