

MUSC-1901 “Sound Studies” Tulane University, Fall 2022

Matt Sakakeeny, Associate Professor of Music

Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-1:45pm, Dixon Hall rm201

Office hours: Thursdays 11:00am – 12:15pm in Dixon Hall room 202 or by appointment

Course Goals

Sound is one of the five senses and a primary way we relate to one another and to the world. Speech distinguishes humans from other animals; we locate ourselves in spaces through reverberation; we capture sound waves on vinyl or as binary codes; we feel sound in our bodies and vibrate sympathetically. In this introduction to the field of sound studies, we will take up familiar topics like voice and listening, music and technology, and unpack them through readings from leading scholars. We will listen intently to speech and song, silence and noise. And we will dive into case studies that focus on people and places in the United States.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

This course will provide a critical overview of sound studies in five principal ways: 1) reading and other assignments posted to Canvas; 2) reading comprehension quizzes; 3) take-home midterm exam; 4) final project: production of media.

Evaluation Procedures and Grading Criteria

Course readings, videos, listening assignments, and other materials are posted on Canvas. Class lectures will highlight critical concepts from the assigned readings and media, as well as introduce new case studies. Most weeks there will be a reading comprehension quiz through Canvas due on Friday at 5pm. For the midterm, students will have a typical take-home exam covering the themes of the class so far. For the final project, students will produce a podcast or YouTube video using “user-friendly” technologies and/or computer applications. (Alternate assignments, such as a music recording or soundtrack, can be proposed for consideration.)

• attendance	10%
• Quizzes	30%
• midterm	30%
• final project	30%

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. After three absences, students will have one point deducted off their final grade for every absence.

Presence in Class

We will be meeting in-person, without the option of attending virtually or recording classes over Zoom. We will also not be using electronic devices, including laptops and cellphones, except for a 5-minute “break” during each class. We are a small class and we will focus on creating a space for discussion and engagement in the short time we are together.

Required Textbook

There are no books that require purchase. All materials will be freely posted to Canvas.

ADA/Accessibility Statement

Tulane University is committed to offering classes that are accessible. If you anticipate or encounter disability-related barriers in a course, please contact the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility to establish reasonable accommodations. If approved by Goldman, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. I will never ask for medical documentation from you to support potential accommodation needs. **Goldman Center contact**

information: Email: goldman@tulane.edu; Phone (504) 862-8433; Website: accessibility.tulane.edu

Code of Academic Conduct

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Code of Student Conduct](#)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

Religious accommodation policy

Per Tulane's religious accommodation policy as stated at the bottom [Tulane's academic calendar](#), I will make every reasonable effort to ensure that students are able to observe religious holidays without jeopardizing their ability to fulfill their academic obligations. Excused absences do not relieve the student from the responsibility for any course work required during the period of absence. Students should notify me within the first two weeks of the semester about their intent to observe any holidays that fall on a class day or on the day of the final exam.

Course Sequence

1. Tuesday, August 23: Introductions

2. Thursday, August 25: Basics

Johnathan Sterne. "Hearing," in *Keywords in Sound*, pp.65-77.

Brian C.J. Moore. 2001. "[Hearing and Psychoacoustics](#)." *Oxford Dictionary of Music*.

WATCH: [FUNDAMENTALS OF ACOUSTICS](#) (ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, 1950, 10 MINUTES)

3. Tuesday, August 30: Music #1

Matt Sakakeeny. "Music," in *Keywords in Sound*, pp.112-124.

WATCH: [MUSIC](#) (BUZZFEED EXPLAINED, 2020, 20 MINUTES)

4. Thursday, Sept.1: Music #2: Is this Music?

David Toop. 1995. "Suggestive Pleasures" (11-15), "If You Find Earth Boring" (26-35), "Orientation" (40-45), "Networks" (58-67), and "Complexity" (138-140), in

Ocean of Sound: Ambient Sound and Radical Listening in the Age of Communication. London: Profile Books.

WATCH: [BRIAN ENO, IMAGINARY LANDSCAPES](#) (1989, 40 MINUTES)

WATCH: [SPACE IS THE PLACE](#) (SUN RA, 1974, SHORT CLIPS)

QUIZ #1 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY SEPT. 2 @5PM

5. Tuesday, September 6, Soundscapes #1: Pristine Ecologies

Steven Feld. "Acoustemology," in *Keywords in Sound*, pp.12-21.

WATCH: [VOICES OF THE RAINFOREST](#) (STEVEN FELD, 2019, 1 HOUR)

6. Thursday, September 8, Soundscapes #2: Noise Pollution

WATCH: *THE SONIC SEA* (NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, 2017, 60 MINUTES)

QUIZ #2 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9 @5PM

7. Tuesday, September 13, Noise #1

David Novak. "Noise," in *Keywords in Sound*, pp.125-138.

WATCH: [CALLING THE NEW GODS: SENYAWA](#) (2013, 25 MINUTES)

8. Thursday, September 15, Noise #2: Slave Songs Heard as "Noise"

Jon Cruz. 1999. "Sound Barriers and Sound Management," in *Culture on the Margins: The Black Spiritual and the Rise of American Cultural Interpretation*, pp.43-66. Princeton University press.

QUIZ #3 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16 @5PM

9. Tuesday, September 20, Speech #1

David Samuels and Thomas Porcello. "Language," in *Keywords in Sound*, pp.87-98.

Adriana Cavarero. 2005. "Some Irresistible (and Somewhat Dangerous) Flute Playing" (68-78), "The Rhapsodic Voice, or, Ion's Specialty" (79-91), and "The Fate of the Sirens" (103-116), in *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

10. Thursday, September 22, Speech #2

Hortense Spillers. 1971. "Martin Luther King and the Style of the Black Sermon." *The Black Scholar* 3(1): 14-27.

WATCH: [KING: A FILMED RECORD](#) (1970, EXCERPT OF MARCH ON WASHINGTON)

QUIZ #4 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23 @5PM

11. Tuesday, September 27, Soundscapes, Music, and Noise in New Orleans

Matt Sakakeeny. 2013. "Chapter 1: Onward and Upward" [excerpts], in *Roll With It: Brass Bands in the Streets of New Orleans*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

12. Thursday, September 29, Mechanical Reproduction

Denning, Michael. 2015. "Phonographing the Vernacular: Remaking the World of Music" [excerpt], in *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Music Revolution*. New York: Verso.

WATCH: [RCA VICTOR PRESENTS: MAKING VINYL RECORDS - THE SOUND AND THE STORY](#) (1956, 25 MINUTES)

13. Tuesday, October 4, MIDTERM DUE

FALL BREAK THURSDAY OCTOBER 6

14. Tuesday, October 11, Voice in Cinema

Michel Chion. 1999. "The Acousmêtre," in *The Voice in Cinema*, pp. 17-29. New York: Columbia University Press.

"[Film Sound Terminology](#)" (scroll down to: Ambience, Diegetic/Nondiegetic Sound, Foley, Location Sound, Production Sound)

WATCH: [MAKING WAVES: THE ART OF CINEMATIC SOUND](#) (2019, 90 MINUTES)

15. Thursday, October 13, Radio + Podcasting

LISTEN: [A BOOK UNBOUND](#) (PHANTOM POWER PODCAST, 2019, 40 MINUTES)

LISTEN: [THE END OF THE WORLD HAS ALREADY HAPPENED](#) (BBC, 2020, 90 MINUTES)

QUIZ #5 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY OCTOBER 14 @5PM

16. Tuesday, October 18, The Electric Guitar

WATCH: [THE ELECTRIC GUITAR](#) (2020, 15 MINUTES, MUSIC INSTRUMENT MUSEUM DOCUMENTARY)

WATCH: *JIMI HENDRIX: HEAR MY TRAIN A COMIN* (PBS, 90 MINUTES)

17. Thursday, October 20, Live Sound

Steve Waksman. 2022. *Live Music in America: A History from Jenny Lind to Beyoncé* [excerpt on the Newport Folk Festival], pp.386-401. New York: Oxford University Press.

WATCH: *LONG STRANGE TRIP*, [EP.IV: WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?](#) (AMAZON, 2017, 40 MINUTES)

QUIZ #6 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY OCTOBER 21 @5PM

18. Tuesday, October 25, Studio #1

WATCH: [TOM DOWD & THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC](#) (2004, 90 MINUTES)

WATCH: *THE BEATLES' GET BACK* (2021, EXCERPTS)

19. Thursday, October 27, Studio #2

Michael E. Veal. 2007. "Jus' Like a Volcano in Yuh Head!" (108-123) and "Tracking the 'Living African Heartbeat' (140-143, 150-159), in *Dub: Soundscapes and Shattered Songs in Jamaican Reggae*. Wesleyan University Press.

WATCH: *DEEP ROOTS MUSIC*, EXCERPT ON [KING TUBBY](#) (1983, BBC, 5 MINUTES)

QUIZ #7 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY OCTOBER 28 @5PM

20. Tuesday, November 1, Final Project Prep

21. Thursday, November 3, Synthesis

Roshanak Kheshti. 2020. "Chapters 1-3," in *33 1/3: Switched-on Bach*, pp. 1-41. New York: Bloomsbury.

CLASS VISIT: ROSHANAK KHESHTI (UC BERKELEY)

QUIZ #8 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4 @5PM

22. Tuesday, November 8, Capitalism #1

Mark Fisher. 2009. "It's Easier to Imagine the End of the World than the End of Capitalism," in *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*, pp. 1-11. Washington: O Books.

WATCH: [CHILDREN OF MEN](#) (2006, 1 HOUR 50 MINUTES)

NO CLASS THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10

24. Tuesday, November 15, Capitalism #2

WATCH: [GHOSTS OF MARK FISHER: HAUNTOLOGY, LOST FUTURES, AND DEPRESSION](#) (2021, 20 MINUTES, EPOCH PHILOSOPHY)

Matt Bluemink. 2021. [Anti-Hauntology](#): Mark Fisher, SOPHIE, and the Music of the Future. BlueLabyrinths.com

25. Thursday, November 17, Podcast story prep [ZOOM]

QUIZ #9 DUE ONLINE FRIDAY NOVEMBER 11 @5PM

26. Tuesday, November 29, Production #2: Rhythm Machines

Dan Charnas. 2022. "CH2: Wrong" and "CH:8 Dilla Time," in *Dilla Time*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux.

WATCH: [HOW J DILLA HUMANIZED HIS MPC3000](#) (2017, 10 MINUTES, VOX "EARWORM")

27. Thursday, December 1, Production #1: Writing Hits

John Seabrook. 2012. [The Song Machine: The Hitmakers Behind Rihanna](#). *New Yorker*

Agnès Gayraud. 2019. "Poetics of the Hook," in *Dialectic of Pop*, pp.263-272. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

28. Tuesday, December 6, Music Streaming

Martin Scherzinger. 2019. "Toward a History of Digital Music," in *The Cambridge Companion to Music in Digital Culture*, pp. 41-57 [SKIP intro pp. 33-41].
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

28. Thursday, December 8, TBD

Monday December 12 @5:00PM: FINAL PROJECT DUE [next page]

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With thanks to my colleagues [Nil Basdurak](#) (University of Toronto), Alex Chávez (Notre Dame), [Jennifer Fraser](#) (Oberlin College), and Jessica Hajek (Our Lady of the Lake University) for sharing their podcast assignments, from which I’ve copied liberally here.

Final Project: Sonic Time Capsule

Your final project is to create a podcast. The podcast will be based on your own sound recordings that you’ll edit into a finished story of 5 to 10 minutes. You will develop your own narrative and ideas for the piece over the course of the semester as you gather your sounds and your thoughts about them. The main stipulation is that the story relate to the current moment we are living in together and serve as a sonic “time capsule” for the future.

Here is the overall concept: You are making history by participating in the experiment of holding in-person classes on a college campus during a global pandemic. Your task is to document and analyze one aspect of this experience through a simple narrative device: the listener is a child of the future – your child, or any child – and you are introducing them to your topic of choice. Imagine making this child a time capsule that will reveal what it was like to navigate your life as a student on a campus during an unprecedented crisis. You can gather sound from your classes, your living quarters, your “diary” of personal thoughts, your outings into the world of COVID, and your conversations or interviews with others, whether in-person or on the phone. Your story can be fun or difficult, serious or lighthearted, whatever you make meaning from. But ultimately your podcast has to be “about” something; a single aspect of this moment that binds the piece together and creates a through-line for you to “show” and “tell” this imagined listener. [Please ask me asap if you would much prefer to make a YouTube video rather than podcast.]

Recording and Sound Gathering

As we learned with your soundscapes assignment, the microphone and recording function on most smart phones is sufficient to capture audio for your podcast. You can use the “Voice Memos” app on your iPhone or an app like “Recorder,” “Voice Recorder,” or “Notes” on an Android phone, or “OneNote” on a Windows phone.

We covered the ins and outs of making a podcast in class #11 so you have those readings to refer back to. Here are some of the sound clips you may need to gather before you begin the mixing process (* = required):

1. *Recordings of any “diary” observations and eventually your narration
2. *Recordings of an interview or conversation between two people (in-person or on phone with app like [Rev](#) or over speakerphone.)
3. *Field recordings of relevant sounds (like the soundscape assignment)
4. Soundbites of examples you want to include. (You can [convert](#) YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TiKTok videos to .mp3 audio files.)
5. Music or sound effects (you can purchase .mp3 files or use free libraries like [Bensound](#), [Freesound](#), [FMA](#), and [Purple Planet](#).)

Please note that I am NOT asking you to endanger yourselves by going out into public in order to document sounds. Be safe, be smart.

After you are done making your recording, make sure you save it to your device. Then, make sure you email, text, or upload the file to the cloud from your phone so you can access it on your computer.

There are many online tutorials for learning basic audio techniques of recording, editing and mixing. Start [here](#) then look [here](#) for more info on mixing.

Editing, Mixing, and Sharing

As you gather materials, you should take notes of key moments or passages, because your assignment is to assemble the most relevant parts into a cohesive story that is between 5 and 10 minutes long. You will be leaving out a lot of material in your ultimate quest to create a time capsule that makes sense to a child of the future.

A podcast includes a beginning, middle, and end to produce a complete listening experience. You should map out a “story board” connecting the best parts into a sequence (this can be a personal journey, a more clinical or news-like report, a plot-driven tale, or something more experimental). This is a good time to snag anything that’s missing and/or script a narration.

Then you will use an audio editor to stitch everything together into a seamless whole, including any “incidental” music or sound effects. We will have an in-class workshop on the basics of sound editing. I will demonstrate using [Audacity](#) which is a freely available audio editing software for both MAC and PC users. Tulane also offers students [Adobe Audition](#) for free, and you can use this or any other software you are already familiar with (i.e. GarageBand, Logic, Reaper, etc.). If you have not yet used any audio editing software, please do not panic. The required level of proficiency in terms of using the software will be low for this class.

Here are some tips when it comes time to create your completed Podcast audio file:

- Don't leave [audio mixing](#) until the last minute. Mixing is time-consuming, especially if you're using new software or editing down long recordings.
- Take the mixing process step by step. Prioritize things you need to do to make your podcast sound the best it can.
 - For example, you may need to cut your sound down to just the clips you need, get them in order, and/or adjust their volume levels so they're not too loud or too soft in a listener's ears.

You should export the final version as an .mp3 or other audio file and upload it to the Discussions page on Canvas. Include a letter of one or two paragraphs explaining your time capsule to the child you are making it for. You will also be sharing it with your fellow students in class (unless you request permission to keep your story private.)

Grading Rubric (adapted from Jessica Hajek)

	A	B	C	D or F
Flow	1. Podcast makes productive use of time to maintain listener interest. 2. Podcast includes a clear beginning, middle and end to produce a complete listening experience.	1. Podcast maintains interest of its listener for at least 50% of the time. 2. Podcast missing one component: beginning, middle, or end.	1. Podcast maintains interest of its listener less than 50% of the time. 2. Podcast missing two components: beginning, middle, or end.	1. Podcast makes no attempt to catch the interest of the listener. 3. Podcast contains no clear structure marking a beginning, middle, or end.
Mixing	1. Podcast demonstrates skillful use of sound, including spoken word, music, sound effects and/or environmental noise to create a compelling listening experience.	1. Podcast demonstrates an acceptable use of sound, including spoken word, music, sound effects, and/or environmental noise to create a sufficient listening experience.	1. Podcast has several flat uses of sound, including spoken word, music, sound effects, and/or environmental noise, creating a difficult listening experience.	1. Podcast shows no signs of mixing or audio editing.
Execution	1. Each individual Podcast segment is no less than 5 minutes and no more than 10 minutes in length. 2. Podcast includes a title and an introductory letter.	1. An individual Podcast segment is between 5 and 10 minutes in length. 2. Podcast has a title and an introductory letter, but they are incomplete.	1. An individual Podcast segment is between 10 and 10:30 minutes in length. 2. Podcast is missing either a title or an introductory letter.	1. An individual Podcast segment is under 5 or over 10 minutes in length. 2. Podcast is missing a title and an introductory letter.
Content	1. Podcast effectively uses conversations, storytelling and/or interviewing to entertain and/or inform listeners. 2. Podcast content relates to the "COVID time capsule" assignment.	1. Podcast uses conversations, storytelling and/or interviewing but does not effectively entertain and/or inform listeners. 2. Podcast content does not directly relate to the "COVID time capsule" assignment.	1. Conversations, storytelling and/or interviewing are used for less than 50% of Podcast content. 2. Podcast content mentions some aspect(s) of the "COVID time capsule" assignment.	1. Use of conversation, storytelling and/or interviewing is missing from Podcast (e.g., only recorded sound effects). 2. Podcast is unrelated to the "COVID time capsule" assignment.

Title IX

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at allin.tulane.edu. Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either "Confidential" or "Private" as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure in a Care Connection to the Office of Case Management

and Victim Support Services to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. The Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration is also notified of these disclosures. You choose whether or not you want to meet with these offices. You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at tulane.edu/concerns.

Confidential	Private
<p><i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one's self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277 ▪ The Line (24/7) (504) 264-6074 ▪ Student Health Center (504) 865-5611 ▪ Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9544 	<p><i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management & Victim Support Services (504) 314-2160 or srss@tulane.edu ▪ Tulane University Police (TUPD) Uptown (504) 865-5911 Downtown – (504) 988-5611 ▪ Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration (504) 865-5611 or titleix@tulane.edu ▪ Student Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7) (504) 920-9900

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS: TU ALERT	SEVERE WEATHER
<p>In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff via email, text, and/or phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university.</p> <p>Check your contact information annually in Google Maps Online to confirm its accuracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirens ▪ Seek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is given ▪ Do not use elevators ▪ Do not attempt to travel outside if weather is severe <p>Monitor the Tulane Emergency website (tulane.edu/emergency/) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event</p>
ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER	EVERBRIDGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RUN – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible ▪ HIDE – go into the nearest room that is locked, turn out the lights, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT ▪ FIGHT – do not attempt this option, except as a last resort ▪ For more information or to schedule a training, visit emergencyprep.tulane.edu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Download the Everbridge app from the App Store or Google Play store ▪ The Report feature allows you to silently and discreetly communicate with TUPD dispatchers ▪ The SOS button allows you to notify TUPD if you need help ▪ The Safe Corridor button serves as a virtual escort and allows you to send check-in notifications to TUPD

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