

# Course Syllabus Com 2041: Introduction to Audio Production

Syllabus

**COM 2041**

**Introduction to Audio Production**

**Fall 2023**

**Latest update = January 6th, 2023 1:00 pm.**

**(Original Version: 07/22/21 4:00 pm)**

Class meets: Tuesday 3:00 to 4:45 p.m. – Ryan Library room 220 (also known as the "Bresee Computer Lab"); Ryan Library main floor, north side.

Note: this syllabus is subject to change. Be sure to check the latest online version for the most up to date information.

The Final Exam is Thursday, May 4th from 4:30 to 7pm in the Bresee Computer Lab (where we normally hold our class). Confirmed 01/06/23.

Professor: Rick Moncauskas, M. Div., Fuller Theological Seminary. B.A. Psychology, Simpson College.

Office: RLC 206 (PointRadio Studio) Office Phone: 619-849-2910 (xt. 2910 from campus phones)

Office Hours: 12 noon to 4pm Monday thru **Thursday** (NOT Friday). (Please make an appointment with me. I'm often in and out of the office).

Email: [RickMoncauskas@pointloma.edu](mailto:RickMoncauskas@pointloma.edu) ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)

## **PLNU Mission**

### **To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

### Undergraduate Catalog Course Description:

*A basic course that provides students with skills in writing and production of audio content for radio (e.g., commercials, promotional announcements, PSAs, podcasts), TV and Film (multi-track recording, mixing and sound effects). Course deals with announcing, acoustics, and microphones. Required for media communication majors and other students desiring to work at Point Radio.*

This course will be taught with an eye (or ear) to understand the effects sound has on our experience of media (and life). And, conversely, how sound can be used to create/suggest effects within individuals encountering the media programming students will create/produce within the Media Communication major and when they work in media in the post-university world of work. An emphasis on an understanding of the pre-cognitive/non-rational/subtextual nature of sound will be a frequent topic of discussion. The course content should be useable by all students in relation to media consumption and construction, even if a career in this field is not contemplated.

### Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this semester, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate technical skills of digital audio recording and editing.
- Correctly and creatively write and produce a radio commercial; a program promotional announcement and a five to seven minute podcast.
- Evidence collaborative abilities by working in an audio production team and/or having a radio show partner.
- Demonstrate a beginning/developing appreciation for the psychological power of sound/audio to influence emotional involvement in radio/audio/media/film programming and to be able to identify many of the techniques used to create those emotional/psychological effects.
- Demonstrate a beginning understanding of the role of the “aesthetics of narrative” as a tool for encouraging audience involvement in radio/audio programming.

### Required Text:

Alten, S. R. (2012) First Edition. *Working with Audio*. Course Technology, Cengage Learning, Boston, Ma.

### Required Software:

Adobe "Audition". Link

= [https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html?sdid=1NZGDDHQ&mv=search&ef\\_id=Cj0KCQiAyJOBbDCARIsAJG2h5dIEBg6He-Rua4PESJXVKNPynGj-](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html?sdid=1NZGDDHQ&mv=search&ef_id=Cj0KCQiAyJOBbDCARIsAJG2h5dIEBg6He-Rua4PESJXVKNPynGj-)

[SAr2lhftoTzgh4sw2tT6YCtojQaAqRIEALw\\_wcB:G:s&s kwcid=AL!3085!3!474768586523!b!!g!!%2Bcreative%20%2Bsuite%20%2Bstudent Links to an external site.](https://rogueamoeba.com/fission/)(about \$20/month subscription)  
Rogue Amoeba's "Fission". Link = [https://rogueamoeba.com/fission/ Links to an external site.](https://rogueamoeba.com/fission/)About \$30 total.

#### Course Requirements:

- All assignments (= 55% of your grade) must be uploaded to Canvas by the dates and times as indicated in Canvas. Audio projects must be correctly exported in MP3 format from Audition (or Fission) for uploading to Canvas. Assignments must be proofed in "Fission" (or equivalent PC program like OcenAudio) before uploading to Canvas. Assignments that are late or submitted in any other manner or format than MP3 will not be accepted and **will receive zero points**. (Note: this is the OFFICIAL policy of this professor and this course.)
- In an online production environment, students will need to record and edit audio remotely on either their cell phone or laptop computers. The software for audio editing is Adobe Audition (it is part of the Adobe "Creative Suite.").
- All students must use Adobe Audition to complete assignments in this class. Demonstrating competency in this program is part of your grade. Using other equipment or software is unacceptable and puts the quality of your productions and, thus, your grade at risk. (You must use Fission on the Mac, or a comparable PC program, to proof your projects before you turn them in. This is required.)
- Students are expected to complete assigned readings by the dates they are due and to be prepared to discuss and/or present on those topics in our regular face-to-face class meeting time. Reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Many assignments will be due the following Tuesday afternoon, before class, the week after the assignments are given in Canvas. Exceptions to this general rule will be brought to your attention.
- Production projects may be played during class for discussion. Comments directed toward the producer should be constructive and given in a courteous manner.
- Projects are to be completed by the individual student unless indicated otherwise. Grades for projects that require teamwork will be given to the entire team and team members may be asked to grade the contribution of other members of their production team.
- All written documents are to be created and edited in Microsoft Word (do not submit documents in Apple "pages" or any other word processing format. Do not submit written documents as .pdf files. This is the Adobe "Acrobat" format.) All written documents must be submitted with the MS (= Microsoft)

.docx extension. If you do not submit "Word.docx" files for your written assignments you will lose points on the assignment.

- You may use Google Slides (or PowerPoint) for any "teaching presentations."
- Formatting your "file names" (when you turn in a word.docx or .mp3 file, for example). File names for your projects must include: 1) your last name as part of the file name; 2) a short version of the assignment name and 3) a version number for your file (ie. Usually something like this "moncauskasAuditionCompetencyV01.mp3).
- You MUST use the forms that I provide when I provide them. They will be located in the week's assignment list. Do not write up an assignment without the use of the form provided. You will lose points if you do and you will be told to submit the proper document as well.
- Students must take both exams at the days and times listed in the syllabus.
- It is the expectation of the school that students will do (roughly) two to three hours of homework for every "credit hour" of class. As this is a two-unit course, **you are expected to put in between four and six hours of homework for this class per week.** Having said that, the amount of homework will vary by week. Some weeks there might not be much. The next week might be more than average. There should be an "average" of four to six hours of homework, for this class, per week.
- All audio editing will be done on computers using Adobe Audition & Rogue Amoeba Fission. If you need assistance editing a project, come to the Radio or TV Studios between 6 pm and 9 pm Monday thru Thursday. There will be radio, or TV, station staff who can assist you with your editing project.
- Three editing workstations, mics and headsets are available for your use in the PointRadio Studio. Because audio workstations may be shared with other classes, plan ahead and schedule production and editing time early. Editing stations are only available at posted days and times that coincide with the days and times the TV studio is open (normally: Monday thru Thursday 12 pm to 10:30 pm. The studios are closed Friday, Saturday, Sunday and school holidays.). Other possible times are limited to when the library is open. There is no access to the PointRadio and TV Studios when the library is closed. The inability to secure equipment or editing time due to lack of planning is not an excuse for not completing an assignment. Portable digital audio recorders are also available for check-out from the TV studio across the hall.

### PointRadio Participation:

- All students in this course will participate in a weekly commitment to the operation of Point Radio. That is, you will have a radio show (usually with a partner). You are expected to start on time, end on time and follow the format specifications for PointRadio (formerly known as KPLR). All "broadcasts" are to be: 1) recorded, 2) trimmed, 3) "normalized" and 4) uploaded with clear identification for credit. You are expected to create/participate in 10 weekly "broadcasts" for minimum credit (maintenance of your course grade). If you

complete fewer than 10, your final grade will be reduced depending on the number of programs produced & uploaded. More programs produced and uploaded may give you additional point value to your final grade.

- Students have the sole responsibility for their commitments to the campus radio station and will face significant penalties when those obligations are not met. On-air shifts must be covered even if the person cannot be there due to illness or extenuating circumstances. You must provide me with documentation for missing an air shift due to illness or emergency.
- The student MAY switch duties with another person in the class. However, this must be arranged a minimum of 48 hours in advance and the PointRadio "Station Manager" (not the Professor) must be notified of the change prior to the person's air shift or other responsibility.
- News personnel carry the same responsibilities as on-air personalities. Contact the Station Manager before noon if you cannot participate in your air shift due to illness or emergency situation.
- Failure to cover air shifts without a documented excuse will result in a penalty of 10% off the student's final course grade for each occurrence.
- In addition to on-air work, students in this class will be asked to assist with PointRadio events. Failure to follow through on these commitments will result in a deduction of PointRadio participation points.

#### Attendance:

- Attendance will be taken in all class sessions. As noted in the university catalog, students who miss 10% of class sessions (that means 1.5 sessions) will be reported to the Vice Provost of Academic Administration. Missing 20% of class sessions (that means 3 sessions for Com2075) will result in the student being de-enrolled from this course. This rule will be strictly enforced.
- Lessons are cumulative. That is, what you do **next week** will build upon what you learned to do **this week**. Missing class sessions will cause the student to do more work than simply attending the class sessions. (Remember missing ONE session of 2075 is like missing a whole week of another class. We only meet once a week.)
- The communication industry is time sensitive. Professionals in this business succeed or fail depending on their ability to meet deadlines and follow through on commitments. Now is an excellent time to develop good habits. With this in mind, students are expected to be on time to class. Entering the session after class has started is disruptive to other students and to the continuity of the session. Attendance is taken promptly at the time class is scheduled to begin. If you are not present when I take attendance, you will be counted as late or absent. Students who are chronically late may be asked to withdraw from the class. In this business being "on-time" means you are "late."
- Attendance in class means that you are fully attending to the course (ie. don't multitask). Students, who choose to read/watch other things on the internet, use their cell phone, text, engage in irrelevant and disruptive conversations,

study for their next class, etc... will be asked to put their “extra-curricular” activities away or they may be singled out by the professor for disruptive/distracting behavior. There are no exceptions to this policy. Laptops and cell phone use are part of being in the online environment, but “multitasking” is myth. It is really “task-switching”, and every time you switch between “tasks” you lose your place in the discussion or you will miss necessary context for completing your tasks. You will slow down the class and misunderstand your assignments. If violations of this policy are repeated, the professor will take appropriate action to keep the class sessions on track.

- In the event that you miss class, you will be expected to get notes, handouts, and assignments from someone in class. (Your radio partner, if you have one, would be an excellent candidate.) **Do NOT ask the Professor for notes.** You are responsible for missed material and should try to make a friend or two in this class that you can count on.
- It is the student’s responsibility to maintain his or her class schedule. Should the need arise to drop this course (personal emergencies, poor performance, etc.), the student has the responsibility to follow through (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university), not the instructor. Simply ceasing to attend this course or failing to follow through to arrange for a change of registration (drop/add) may result in a grade of F on the official transcript.

### Technology Policy

Students should only be using their laptop computers for class activities. If you are found to be doing activities unrelated to class on your laptop appropriate action will be called for (see above). Unless you are asked to use your cell phone for a class assignment, put cell phones face down, out of reach, with the sound “off” for the entire class session. Making personal audio or video recordings of class sessions are not allowed (except as directed by the instructor). Students may not mass distribute course content in any form without permission of the instructor.

-

### PLNU Zoom Etiquette for Students (if necessary):

- For each class session, you should do your best to **have open both Zoom and Canvas**. Most classes will use both online platforms during your class sessions.
- Have a **plan for taking notes** (ideas: paper and pencil, digital notepad, Word/Pages doc). We may post recordings of our Zoom class sessions on Canvas, but you should also try to capture your thoughts and questions in the moment.
- Try to log online to our class meeting from a **quiet, distraction-free environment**. We have little time together; let’s try to maximize it!
- **Avoid multitasking**. You’ll retain the discussion better if you refrain from replying to emails or text messages during the class meeting.

- Keep your **audio on mute** until you want to speak. We must work together to limit background noise wherever possible.
- When you are speaking, let others know that you are finished by saying something like, “That’s all,” or “I’m done,” or “Thank you,” so that everyone knows you have finished your comments.
- If possible, enable your **video** so that we can see you and connect with you. There are times when you may need to disable video (for instance, in order to minimize the activity on your internet connection or if there is a lot of activity going on in the background of your video). If you are able to turn on your video, please limit the distractions and treat this Zoom meeting in the same way you would if you were sitting in class. Eating, talking to others off screen, playing with pets, etc. can be very distracting.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Your professor and classmates can also see BEHIND you. Make sure that there is nothing in the background (traffic, other people, a pile of laundry) that may distract from the class. While it is not necessarily the best choice to attend class from your messy bedroom, it may be the only place you can find peace and quiet away from roommates or family members. If that is the case, you can employ a Virtual Background to hide what you don't want to be seen.
- Many of you are probably used to the **chat feature** on Zoom. However, here is a little primer: On the bottom of the Zoom window, click on “Participants” and “Chat.” Two pop-up windows will open on the right side of your screen.
  - When you want to speak, use the “Raise Hand” feature (on the bottom left of the Participants window). Be sure to unmute yourself to talk.
  - If for some reason the professor does not see your hand raised, please feel free to unmute your mic to interrupt.
  - Use the Chatbox to make a point or ask a question. Remember that Chat is public, and may be recorded, and archived.
- Finally, with regard to your **appearance on Zoom**, remember that even though you may be alone at home, your professor and classmates can SEE you! While attending class in your pajama bottoms is a tempting option, you'll want to make sure that you are presenting yourself in a professional manner. Put on a clean shirt. Brush your teeth. Wash your face.

### Notice to Students with Accommodations

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with challenges may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Equal Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files



documentation, the Equal Access Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of the student. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

### Academic Dishonesty

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations." Essentially, if you turn in work that was done by someone else, without giving credit to the original person, it is plagiarism and is punishable by an automatic failing grade in this class (see PLNU's Academic Policies for more details). It is also possible to be expelled from PLNU if the student is found to be in the habit of dishonesty.

### FERPA Policy

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by distributing all grades and papers individually. Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See Policy Statements in the undergrad student catalog.

### Changes to Syllabus:

The instructor reserves the right to make amendments, additions or deletions to this syllabus during the semester. It is each student's responsibility to stay current and be aware of any changes. The online syllabus will be the most current. If substantial changes are made to the syllabus you will be notified.

### Official Means of Communication:

The official means of communication at Point Loma Nazarene University is the "university email". Your communications MAY be informally done using texting or other methods, but those are not official. If you must communicate with the professor concerning class attendance, grading, projects, policies or any other serious school business topic, you must do it by email. Other methods are NOT official. You should



expect replies to officially submitted email in one business day, except over school holidays and Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

### Grading

Grades are based on the percentage system listed below. This enables students to keep track of their total score and to estimate their grade at any point in the semester. Look in the "Grades" section of Canvas to see your current grade status.

Assignments (relative points as listed)	55%
Participation & Attendance	15%
Reading quizzes	10%
Exams (Mid-term & Final)	20%

Total	100%
-------	------

### **FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#)[Links to an external site.](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

### **COPYRIGHT POLICY**

1) Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

2) All projects (or portions of projects) produced with PLNU owned equipment is/are owned by the University and may not be "shared" (ie. "uploaded") without permission.

**Final Exam: Refer to Canvas Class Schedule for date, time and location of the test (also, see the top of this document.)**

NOTE: Please make sure your vacation travel plans accommodate your final exam schedule. All students must attend the final class session to pass this course. **There are no exceptions.**

