

Please note that all course descriptions and curriculum detail herein are subject to change. Instructors may present course content in different sequence and/or otherwise vary course content and structure according to their wishes. Specific classes may or may not be taught on all campuses, and may be consolidated and/or eliminated due to demands of attendance, staffing, equipment, facilities, and/or space.

Sound Training Program

Objective: To train Connecticut residents in the basic duties and practices of the sound department.

Program Synopsis: The first week will involve an overview of how sound interacts with other departments, along with lectures and exercises to show what a sound department does during pre-production and production. It will also include an introduction to sound's responsibility to post production, and sound effects.

The second week will involve practical exercises in sound recording, where trainees will use sound equipment and record actors in different circumstances on set. After going through a selection of exercises, they will do similar exercises with grip, camera and electric equipment present, to simulate the equipment that will be present during an actual production.

The following lesson plan defines specific subjects to be covered in the training program and is required as a basis for instruction for each component. Within the described daily and weekly framework of the program, the grantee and/or hired instructor are encouraged to supplement the curriculum as they see fit.

Because all feature film positions and departments are not currently included in the training program, the use of guest speakers is encouraged as an enhancement to the lesson plan. Recommended guest speakers for the Sound Training Program include: Director, First Assistant Director, Director of Photography, and Accountant.

Required Text: Sound for Film and Television, Second Edition, by Tomlinson Holman, Focal Press, 2002.

Half-Day Introductory Lecture Sound Department

Sound in Film

- Job Categories within the Department
- Pre-production, Production, & Post-Production

- Lesson on Sound Acoustics
- Lesson on Sound Design
- Walkthrough of Sound Equipment
- The Politics of the Set
- Sound Exercises
- Instructor will Demonstrate Sound Mixing
- Boom Microphones & Ambient Sound
- Discussion of Dialogue, Background, Sound Effects
- Trainees will Listen to Recorded Sound for Acoustics and Quality

Week One, Day One

9:00 – 9:30am: Opening Remarks by Instructor

9:30 – 10:25am: Sound Theory

- Absorption
- Reflection
- Refraction
- Diffraction

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35 – 12:00pm: Three Problems of Sound

- Room Acoustics
 - How you achieve what you want to hear
- Background Noises
 - How you deal with them
 - How you eliminate them
- On-Set Communications
 - Director
 - Producer
 - Actors
 - Technicians
 - Grips
 - Electrics
 - Script Supervisor
 - Camera Operator/Director of Photography

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:00pm: Composition of Sound Unit

- Sound Mixer
- Boom Operator
- Cableperson (Utility)
- Property
 - Mention differences in narrative vs. documentary

2:00 – 5:00pm: Presentation of Sound Equipment

- Recorders
 - Nagra
 - Digital Recorder
- Wireless Rack Package
 - Receivers
 - Transmitters
- Microphones
 - Exterior
 - Interior
 - Lavalieres
 - Set microphones with wind cover
- Radio Microphones
- Fishpoles
- Acoustic Treatments (carpets)
- Furniture Pads (sound blankets)
- Power Requirements (batteries vs. AC vs. DC)

Homework: Chapter 1 in Sound for Film and Television

Week One, Day Two

9:00 – 10:25am: Four Types of Sounds in Film

- Dialogue
- Backgrounds
- Sound Effects
- Music
 - What they are
 - How they're recorded
- Exercise: Students will watch a clip from a film on mute, then figure out all the sounds the scene contains. They'll watch the scene after to see what actually was in it.

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35am – 12:00pm: Music and Playback

- Live Recording
- Pre-recorded Playback Recording
 - How to set it up
 - Problems to look out for

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 3:00pm: Script Breakdown, Part 1

- Class will read and break down a five page script that takes place on a boat
 - Trainees will note all problems for sound
 - Will discuss how to solve those problems
 - Instructor will offer suggestions

3:00 – 5:00pm: Script Breakdown, Part 2

- Class will read and break down a second five page script that involves four people in a car
 - Trainees will note all problems for sound
 - Will discuss how to solve those problems
 - Instructor will offer suggestions

Homework: Read Chapter 2 in Sound for Film and Television

Week One, Day Three

9:00 – 10:25am: Set Etiquette

- Go through members on set sound works with (explain their jobs, and how to deal with them)
 - Director
 - Producer
 - Actors
 - Technicians
 - Grips
 - Electrics
 - Script Supervisor
 - Camera Operator/Director of Photography
- Bookkeeping
 - Lunch breaks, overtime
 - Comparing to production times

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35am – 12:00pm: Unions

- Union Membership
 - What a union is
 - Life working in a union
 - Wages
 - Working conditions
- Paperwork
- Dues
- Collective Bargaining

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 3:00pm: Script Reading

- Class will read and break down a five page script that involves four rooms in a single house location (this script will be used for Day Four exercise)
 - Trainees will note all problems for sound
 - Will discuss how to solve those problems
 - Instructor will offer suggestions

3:00 – 5:00pm: Packing Up the Truck

- Loadin/Loadout of sound equipment
 - Go through all pieces
- Exercise: Trainees will pack up the camera/sound truck with all necessary sound items
 - Packing each piece in the correct space
 - Using organization and safety procedures
 - Coordinating camera, video and script supervisor – the “truck family”
 - Class will learn how to get the jump on where to shoot
 - Sound person will ‘eavesdrop’ on Director and DP
 - Once location is picked, sound will get best space near where shooting is
 - Finish day with truck packed, ready for next day

Homework: Read Chapter 3 in Sound for Film and Television

Week One, Day Four

9:00am – 5:00pm: Day-Long Exercise

- Trainees will arrive at house location for beginning of day
- In addition to instructor, others will be present for mock scene:
 - Two actors will be present
- Trainees will offload equipment from truck
- While unloading, sound mixer will ‘eavesdrop’ with Director and DP to find out where first shooting location will be
- Once location is determined, sound equipment will be sent into house, in the most convenient spot for sound department

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

- Once in, one group of students will set up equipment and prepare to record sound for the scene

- Rehearse with actors to see what the scene will be like (simple scenes, little movement)
- Will not actually record; this exercise is to practice preparing for a scene, and familiarizing oneself with equipment
- Once the first group has successfully set up equipment and gotten to the point of being ready to record, they will break the equipment down
 - Once broken down, the next group of trainees will go in and set the equipment up, and so on until all trainees have done it
 - Important point here: Doing nothing at an appropriate time is a good thing, but losing concentration is a bad thing
- Once first room is complete, instructor will move into the second of the four rooms, and the process will begin again
- Lunch after second room is complete
- After lunch, third and fourth rooms will be completed
- After fourth room is complete, trainees will pack all equipment back on the truck, and that will end the day

Week One, Day Five

9:00 – 10:25am: Post Production Guest Speaker (a post-production professional)

- Workflow
 - Sound must be responsible to post
 - Make sure what they're asking for is possible
 - Computer systems
 - Frame rates, bit rates, etc.

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35am – 12:00pm: Sound Effects

- What they are
 - Foley
 - Practical effects
- Microphone placement for effects
- Microphone type

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm: Practical Exercise in Effects

- Instructor will give out a list of sound effects they will go out and record – car sounds, foley sounds, etc.
- Trainees will go out with equipment, and record those sounds
- After recording, trainees will return and play sounds back for class to listen
 - Instructor will give feedback on recording
 - Instructor will give suggestions on how to record better

Homework: Read Chapter 3 in Sound for Film and Television

Week Two, Day One

9:00am – 12:30pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record an actor reading something dramatic from a book (audiobook recording)
 - Will require one actor
 - Will record with a stationary microphone
 - Will record with a moving microphone
 - Exposure to spontaneity
 - Exposure to head movements
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:30 – 1:30pm: Lunch

1:30 – 5:00pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two people talking over each other in normal conversation
 - Will require two actors
 - One actor on screen, one actor off screen
 - Talk about miking one or both actors
 - Work with one boom operator, then two boom operators
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

Week Two, Day Two

9:00am – 12:30pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two actors speaking and moving in a room
- Introduce radio microphones
- What sounds natural, and what sounds too natural?
- Options when nothing sounds good
 - Second boom picks actor up in second room they move in
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:30 – 1:30pm: Lunch

1:30 – 5:00pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two people entering a room with grocery bags, who walk in, put the bags down, and start to prepare a meal (using pots and pans), all while talking
 - Will deal with bag noise (paper and plastic)
 - Will set up flames on stove
 - Will deal with sounds of pots and pans
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

Week Two, Day Three

9:00am – 12:30pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two actors in a car, driving on its own power, and the people are talking
- Will require two actors, and one car driver
- Where do the mixer and boom operator position themselves in the car?
- How do you factor in outside?
 - Wind
 - Weather
- Do you put microphones on the actor?
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:30 – 1:30pm: Lunch

1:30 – 5:00pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two people talking as they walk down a street, around a corner, and onto a busy street
 - Dealing with background noise
 - How to cover actors in wide shots?
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

Week Two, Day Four

9:00am – 12:30pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two people talking over each other in normal conversation, same as on Week Two, Day One. This time, however, there will be camera, grip and electrical equipment present, to simulate the on-set environment sound crews will face.
 - Will require two actors
 - One actor on screen, one actor off screen
 - Talk about miking one or both actors
 - Work with one boom operator, then two boom operators
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:30 – 1:30pm: Lunch

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Week Two, Day Five

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- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm: Practical Exercise

- Each member of class will set equipment up and record two people talking as they walk down a street, around a corner, and onto a busy street, same as on Week Two, Day Three. This time, however, there will be camera, grip and electrical equipment present, to simulate the on-set environment sound crews will face.
 - Dealing with background noise
 - How to cover actors in wide shots?
- Recordings will be played back
- Equipment will be broken down after recording