



Course Syllabus
FA 3710 – Vocal Tech for Theatre and Media
College of Science and Arts
Spring 2011

Instructor Information

Instructor: Patricia Helsel
Office: Walker 209A
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Office Hours: 2:00 – 4:00 TT, 1:00 – 3:00 MW

Course Identification

Course Number: FA 3710
Course Name: Vocal Tech for Theatre and Media
Course Location: Walker 210
Class Times: TT 9:35 – 11:50
Prerequisites: FA 2830 – Voice and Articulation

Course Description/Overview

Students will learn vocal approaches to specific types of speaking situations, including radio commercials, instructional videos, announcing, cartoons, and theatrical productions. Students will practice vocal projection for a large theatre/auditorium, as well as microphone technique for electronic media.

Course Learning Objectives

Students will learn a variety of vocal techniques and become familiar with electronic equipment and media software in the practical application of vocal performance useful for professional media and theatre venues. Students will work toward the creation of a voice portfolio to promote their talent and skill.

Teaching Methods

Lecture/demonstration and readings will prepare students to engage in exercises wherein they can practice the necessary techniques for various types of electronic media production and theatrical performance. Students will listen critically to, and view many examples of professional voiceovers, character work, and narration. Students will learn basic functions of recording equipment and software enabling them to record and produce their own sound files. Students will work with the Introduction to Practicum II and Creative Lab classes in production of a radio drama and animated video.

Requirements/Assignments

EXERCISES:

Recording/Editing
Action Sequence – Dynamics in heightened moments
Gaming Voices and Technology
Voice Mail
Movie Trailers

PROJECTS:

Radio Drama
Animated Film
Audio Book Narration
Radio Commercials

FINAL PROJECT:

Voice-over Demo

PARTICIPATION:

Students must participate each class period to master vocal skills. Full commitment to the exercises is essential. Exercises will be used inside and outside of class. Exercises in class are considered “class participation.” Studying the vocal technique of peers is a valuable way to learn about voice so participation in discussions during class provides the student with feedback other than the instructor’s. Students are assessed approximately every 4 weeks, and are assigned a grade based on attendance, commitment to exercises, contribution to discussion/criticism, punctuality, preparedness, and courtesy toward peers. One cannot participate if one is not present for class.

Course Resources

Course Website(s)

- Blackboard <<http://www.courses.mtu.edu>>

Required Course Text – No required text

Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following:

Exercises (5 x 50 points each)	250
Radio Drama	100
Animated Film	200
Audio Book Narration	200
Radio Commercials	200
Final Project	250
Total Points	1200

Late Assignments

The instructor does not accept late assignments.

Grading Scheme

Grading System

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade points/credit	Rating
A	94% & above	4.00	Excellent
AB	88% – 93%	3.50	Very good
B	83% – 87%	3.00	Good
BC	78% – 82%	2.50	Above average
C	73% – 77%	2.00	Average
CD	68% – 72%	1.50	Below average
D	60% - 67%	1.00	Inferior
F	59% and below	0.00	Failure
I	Incomplete; given only when a student is unable to complete a segment of the course because of circumstances beyond the student's control. A grade of incomplete may be given only when approved in writing by the department chair or school dean.		
X	Conditional, with no grade points per credit; given only when the student is at fault in failing to complete a minor segment of a course, but in the judgment of the instructor does not need to repeat the course. It must be made up within the next semester in residence or the grade becomes a failure (F). A (X) grade is computed into the grade point average as a (F) grade.		

Course Policies

SUBMITTED MATERIAL:

All material submitted for an assignment must be TYPED. Handwritten work will not be accepted. Plan ahead and start early to avoid delays caused by computer and printer problems. (Computer/printer failure is not an excuse for late or incomplete work.)

ATTENDANCE:

The student is responsible to provide the proper documentation for an excused absence. Documentation is to be provided upon the return to class. 3 or more absences is considered excessive and may result in the student being dropped from the class.

COURTESY:

Respect for everyone in the classroom is a must. Attentiveness to peers and instructor is expected. An atmosphere conducive to learning relies heavily on shared energy and enthusiasm by both students and instructor. Respect for everyone in the classroom is a must.

COURE CALENDAR:

The Course Calendar is subject to change. I strive to meet the needs of each class. Time allowances vary as a result of several factors, the most influential being class size and how many characters are required in any given scene.

Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules

COLLABORATION:

Some projects will require collaboration. Your performance will be graded both individually, and as a group. Turn in your own unique written work unless otherwise instructed.

PLAGIRISM/CHEATING:

Copying text directly from a book, magazine article, web site, etc. without crediting the author is plagiarism. Similarly, paraphrasing the same text is a form of plagiarism. Honesty is expected. In addition, cheating on tests or submitting a false excuse are not tolerated and are both grounds for disciplinary action.

University Policies

Academic regulations and procedures are governed by University policy. Academic dishonesty cases will be handled in accordance the University's policies.

If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see me as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements. The Affirmative Action Office has asked that you be made aware of the following:

Michigan Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or the Affirmative Action Office, at 487-3310

Academic Integrity:

http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html

Affirmative Action:

<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aao/>

Disability Services:

http://www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html#disability

Equal Opportunity Statement: <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/boc/policy/ch3/ch3p7.htm>

Course Schedule

Week 1

Jan 11 Tue Introduction/Syllabus/Breathing
13 Thu **Discuss Reading “The Business of Voice Over”**
Discuss Reading “The Seven Core Elements of an Effective Performance”

Week 2

18 Tue Recording Basics – Read “Developing Technique”
20 Thu **DUE: Editing Sample/Critique**

Week 3

25 Tue Action Sequence – The Art of Sustaining Heightened Moments
Discuss Reading: 1) “Pat Fraley’s Six Critical Elements of a Character Voice,” 2) “Characters”
DUE: Character Voice Worksheet
27 Thu Introduction to Radio Drama and Animation
DUE: Action/Sequence Sample/Critique

Week 4

Feb 01 Tue **Discuss Reading: “Multiples”/Discuss Reading: “Long-Form and Narrative Copy”**
(Begin Rehearsals for Radio Drama)
03 Thu Introduction to Audio Book Narration
Discuss Reading: “Billion \$ Read”

Week 5

8 Tue **Discuss Reading: “The Performance of Audio Books”**
Bring your own book copy
10 Thu **NO CLASS – WINTER CARNIVAL**

Week 6

15 Tue **Discuss Reading: “Layering Techniques” and “Tags, Donuts, and Promos”**
Exercises for Short Promos
17 Thu **Discuss Reading: “Announcer”**

Week 7

- 22 Tue Announcing Exercises
(Begin Recording Radio Drama)
Discuss Reading: “Spokesperson,” “Real-Person Spots”
24 Thu DUE: AUDIO BOOK RECORDING/CRITIQUE

Week 8

- Mar 01 Tue Discuss Reading: “Industrial Narrations”
Company Voice Mail
(Begin Recording Radio Drama)
Exercises for Industrial Films
03 Thu DUE: Company Voice Mail Sample/Critique

Last day to drop full semester courses with a grade of 'W'

- 08 Tue NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
10 Thu NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Week 9

- Mar 15 Tue Video Game Recording and Technique
(Begin Rehearsals for Animation)
Movie Trailers
17 Thu DUE: Video Game Sample/Critique

Week 10

- 22 Tue Discuss Reading: “Your Voice Over Demo”
24 Thu Final Project Assignment Instructions

Week 11

- 29 Tue DUE: Movie Trailer Sample/Critique
(Begin Recording Animation/Spot Fixes Radio Drama)
31 Thu Discuss Reading: “Your Demo is Done, Now What?”

Week 12

- Apr 05 Tue The Business of Voice-overs – Guest
DUE: COMMERCIALS/CRITIQUE
07 Thu Discuss Reading: “Auditions”

Week 13

- 12 Tue Auditions for Vocal Media

14 Thu Vocal Techniques for Theatre

Week 14

19 Tue Workshop Final Project
(Begin Spot Fixes Animation)

21 Thu **Workshop Final Project**

Tuesday, April 26: Due –

1. Animation Video
2. Voice-over Demo