
COM 162

Basic Radio Applications

Overview/Catalog Description

Covers the basic theories of field and studio audio production. Students will become familiar with the use of field and studio audio equipment and will learn the basics of audio pre- and post-production techniques.

Students will learn the basics of audio production, audio scriptwriting, and how audio production works in conjunction with other areas of a radio station.

Students will also receive instruction on the basic principles of the radio industry, including careers in radio, industry-standard editing techniques, vocal performance, and other professional radio topics.

Student Learning Outcomes

In this class you will...

- Familiarize yourself with audio production theory.
- Demonstrate the ability to use the audio production lab.
- Demonstrate the ability to use audio equipment in the field.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of audio post-production techniques.
- Gain a basic understanding of audio scriptwriting.
- Understand how audio production works in conjunction with other operations of a radio station.

Required Text

- Hausman, C., Messere, F., Benoit, P. & O'Donnell, L. (2016). *Modern radio production 10th edition*. Wadsworth: Boston.
- Access to a radio – You *will* be listening to radio while you're in this class!

Fall 2026

Lecture: Monday 10-11:50, Fell 280

Labs: Tue/Wed 10:00 – 11:50, Fell 002

Instructors: Steve Suess (Lecture, Tue. Lab)
Colleen Holden (Wed. Lab)

E-Mail: ssuess@ilstu.edu

Phone: (815) 483-4043

Steve Office Hours: 9-10 AM Mon-Fri, Fell 011

Colleen Office Hours:

Materials Needed

- Sound Silencing Headphones

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and/or cheating will result in an immediate zero on the assignment, and could result in university discipline.

Electronic Devices in Class

Electronic devices are not allowed in lecture or lab. Your grade will be penalized if you violate this policy.

Absence

Absences may be excused with prior consent of the instructor. If you have an emergency, please let the instructor know and provide documentation.

Assessing Late Work

Late work is **never** acceptable without prior consent of the instructor. Any assignment less than 24 hours late will be graded with a 50% automatic deduction. Any assignment turned in more than 24 hours late will be a zero.

Student Access and

Accommodations Services

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated periodically throughout the semester with the following assignments and tasks...

- **Exams** – Students will take both a written midterm and final exam. The exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, and short answer.
- **Lab Practical** – Students will take an oral final exam/lab practical demonstrating knowledge gained in the class.
- **Project 1: Lab Orientation** – Students will create a mock jock shift designed to introduce students to lab equipment and vocal performance.
- **Project 2: Editing** – Students will be introduced to basic linear editing techniques by editing down a large piece of audio.
- **Project 3: Commercial/PSA** – Students will use multitrack editing techniques to write and produce a dynamic commercial or PSA piece.
- **Final Project: Group Project** – In groups of 2-5, students will write and produce a longform audio project.
- **Radio Research Presentation** – Students, in groups, will research a local radio station and present their findings to the class.
- **Attendance/Participation** – Students will be graded on their ability to come to class prepared and ready to participate in discussion/activities.

Points Breakdown

Lab Orientation Project	100 pts
Dubbing/Editing Project	100 pts
Commercial/PSA Project	200 pts
Final Project	200 pts
Midterm Exam	50 pts
Final Exam	50 pts
Lab Practical	100 pts
Radio Research Presentation	100 pts
Participation/Attendance	100 pts

TOTAL	1,000 pts
--------------	------------------

Grading Scale

In this class you will be graded on the standard grading scale.

- 100% - 90% = A
- 89.99% - 80% = B
- 79.99% - 70% = C
- 69.99% - 60% = D
- 59.99% and below = F

*Note: "Rounding up" is at the discretion of the instructor.

Campus Safety and Security

Illinois State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for the University community. Please download the SafeRedbirds app, and note the information posted in each classroom about emergency shelters and evacuation assembly areas.

Classroom Behavior

In the classroom and elsewhere, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner consistent with Illinois State University's Code of Student Conduct.

Mental Health

If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed or are struggling with personal issues, do not hesitate to call or visit Student Counseling Services (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, (309) 438-3655.

If you are worried about a friend and don't know how to help, you can call SCS and ask to speak to a counselor. The Kognito simulation, available through SCS's webpage, can also help you learn how to assist your friend in connecting to services.

Canvas

This course will use Canvas for the gradebook function and project submission. Notes and presentations will not be posted online. It is imperative that you come to class for these materials.

Proctortrack

This course will not use "Proctortrack," nor will any course you ever take with me listed as the instructor. I value your privacy and strongly feel Proctortrack technology violates students' rights to privacy.

Student Technology Support

All students are encouraged to take the Introduction to Technology Online Orientation, found here: IllinoisState.edu/Quickstart.

Additionally, technology support can be found at Help.IllinoisState.edu/Technology, which includes hundreds of help articles on everything involving ISU technology, online chat, and phone support at (309) 438-HELP (4357). Walk-up support and computer repair & purchases are available from TechZone located on the first floor of the Bone Student Center as well as TechZone.IllinoisState.edu.

Adobe Creative Suite will be available to all students in this class. I will provide students details on how to redeem their license when the university makes that information available.

Get the Most Out of Your Education

There are many ways to learn about media, this class and your textbook included; however, the easiest ways to learn media are to consume it and create it. You have so many opportunities at your fingertips.

Consuming media is something that all of us already do every day, but we may not be doing it consciously. Next time you're driving in your car, *critically* listen to the radio station you have on. Next time you are watching your favorite show, sporting event, or movie, pay attention to the camera shots, the lighting, the cuts between scenes, and other aesthetics. When you watch *SportsCenter* or CNN in the morning, pay attention to the order that the stories are presented, the elements to each story (video, graphics, audio, etc.), and what the anchors are doing. One of the best ways to learn how to make and produce media is to observe professional work with a keener eye than the general public.

The other way to learn how to do media is to learn by experience and creation. Get involved. There are plenty opportunities, even for freshman, to get involved with **WZND**, **Student Television Workshop**, and **The Vidette**. As an instructor, I'd be more than happy to point you in the right direction and get you in contact with the leaders of those organizations. On top of the three faculty-advised media organizations on campus, there are other media/content creation student organizations. You also have an unprecedented number of options available to you thanks to the Internet by starting a podcast, YouTube channel, blog, etc. The most important thing to remember when using these personal media-creation tools is to use the concepts and techniques you learn in class. Utilizing what you learn in ISU media courses in your own personal projects will help them look, sound, and read more professional.

Most importantly, as a Mass Media major, **it's absolutely necessary to do something outside the classroom if you want to get a job after graduation**. Even if you want to work behind the scenes, try to find experiences to compliment your career plans (sales or marketing at WZND or the Vidette, for example). **Students who do nothing outside the classroom in this major do not get jobs. You absolutely must practice your craft before you graduate.**

Tentative Schedule

Week 1 Aug 17-21	Introduction to Lecture Introduction to Lab
Week 2 Aug 24-28	Chapter 1 Radio History and Intro Lab Procedures
Week 3 Aug 31 – Sept 4	Chapters 2, 3, and 8 Audio Consoles Intro to Project 1
Week 4 Sept 7-11	No Lecture (Labor Day) Practice Project 1
Week 5 Sept 14-18	Chapters 4, 6, and 9 Recording and Editing Project 1 Due Project 2 Intro
Week 6 Sept 21-25	Radio Careers Studio Work for Project 2
Week 7 Sept 28 – Oct 2	Chapter 12 Production Elements Project 2 Due Intro Project 3
Week 8 Oct 5-9	Midterm Exam Scripting Brainstorm
Week 9 Oct 12-16	Editing Techniques Project 3 Scripts Due
Week 10 Oct 19-23	Chapters 5 and 7 Speakers, Mics, & Studios Commercial Editing Practice
Week 11 Oct 26-30	RADIO STATION RESEARCH PROJECTS (NO CLASS)
Week 12 Nov 2-6	Chapters 11 and 16 Radio Programming Project 3 Due/Intro 4
Week 13 Nov 11-15	Chapter 13 and 14 Remote Production Presentations (in lab)
Week 14 Nov 18-22	Chapter 5 Audio Physics Open Lab
Week 15 Nov 25-29	NO CLASS FALL/THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week 16 Dec 2-6	Review for Finals Lab Practicals Final Projects Due
Dec 9-13	Final Exams

