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Course Development: Advanced Audio Content Creation

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Abstract

The goal of this portfolio is to develop BRDC 391 Special Topics: Advanced Audio Content Creation into a permanent course that serves as an extension of BRDC 227 and supports advanced learning in audio production. The College of Journalism and Mass Communications has expressed a need for an advanced audio offering as interest in audio production has surged with the popularity of podcasting and audiobook production. The course centers around concept creation, hardware and software use, writing, vocal performance, and editing to create professional-level audio productions. This portfolio documents the development of Advanced Audio Content Creation and the student learning achieved in the course in Spring 2022 to help make the case for giving the course a permanent course number and a regular rotation in the curriculum as an elective.

Keywords

Audio, Radio, Course Development, Podcasting, Vocal Performance, Peer Review of Teaching

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Benchmark Memo 1

BRDC 391 Special Topics: Advanced Audio Content Creation is a brand new course offered for the first time as a special topics class in Spring 2022. The content is in high demand. Broadcasting and Sports Media majors want more audio-based electives, and cross-campus partners are asking for audio expertise regularly to keep up with the exploding audio-content market. In addition, our graduate programs have very few broadcasting elective offerings. This course is needed, and it is imperative that we offer it in the most thoughtful and designed way possible to ensure it is value-added from the beginning. In addition, the curriculum process requires new courses to be "tested" under the special topics designation to ensure quality in our permanent courses. My goal in developing this course through this portfolio process is to be as thorough and comprehensive as possible to help move it to the curriculum committee to make it a named and numbered permanent class. This portfolio will be a broad overview of the course and an analysis of learning in Spring 2022.

Course Overview:

Advanced Audio Content Creation is an advanced course that builds on skills learned in BRDC 227. BRDC 227 introduces students to the use of sound, audio production, writing, vocal performance, and audience measurement for electronic media applications. Advanced Audio Content Creation is designed to facilitate growth from 227 by building off of that course in audio theory, performance, and production. Students learn advanced skills in audio production including refined use of the voice, digital editing, use of sound effects, complex music editing, writing and audio content creation planning for a variety of audio platforms.

Students in this course will be in their third or fourth year and the majority will have taken BRDC 227. Since this course was listed as a Special Topics course, we cannot reinforce prerequisites, which means there may be majors from outside the College of Journalism and Mass Communications or students who have not yet taken BRCD 227.

That necessitates the availability of supplemental learning materials for those students who are not as experienced or did not retain information from previous courses.

Course Description:

Advanced Audio Content Creation is designed to facilitate growth in audio theory, performance, and production. Learn advanced skills in audio production including; refined use of the voice, digital editing, sound effects, complex music editing, writing, and audio content creation planning for a variety of audio platforms.

Course Structure:

Week 1	Syllabus and course overview, Studio review and pre-tests
Week 2	Voice and Software review and pre-tests
Week 3	Recurring KRNU project, PSAs
Week 4	Long-form radio project
Week 5	Field audio
Week 6	Promos
Week 7	Promos
Week 8	Producing for a Copywriter
Week 9	SPRING BREAK
Week 10	Long-form radio project drafts
Week 11	Short-form audio production
Week 12	Long-form radio project conferences
Week 13	Performance, studio and editing activities
Week 14	Long-form radio publishing and promotion
Week 15	Long-form radio publishing and promotion
Week 16	Performance, studio and editing post-tests

Course Goals:

Goals for this course include growth in the areas of vocal performance, audio editing and production skills and analysis of media content and distribution. After completing this course learners should be able to plan, write, voice, produce and distribute a wide variety of audio content. In addition, they should be able to properly use and manage industry-standard hardware and software. Finally, they should be able to evaluate the effectiveness of existing audio content and determine what kind of content they would like to continue making. The goals in this course are broad to allow for a variety of assessment tools, but all involve creating audio content. Students in this course will use a basic content creation process to execute different types of audio content that increase in difficulty throughout the course of the semester. The course is designed with real-world publishable projects to strengthen learners' marketability.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students who complete Advanced Audio Content Creation will be able to:

- Use effective vocal delivery techniques on publishable audio products
- Demonstrate advanced skills in audio editing
- Demonstrate proficiency in troubleshooting common audio hardware issues
- Understand and execute the content creation planning process for a variety of audio platforms
- Create professional-level short form and long-form audio projects

Connection to the Curriculum

Advanced Audio Content Creation builds on skills learned in BRDC 227. This course directly connects to BRDC 227, but tangentially connects to the Communication Design courses JOMC 131, 132, 133, and 134. In addition, concepts from required writing courses like JOUR 200B and BRDC 260 help students plan and execute finished productions for a variety of audio platforms.

Benchmark Memo 2

The course content for Advanced Audio Content Creation is meant to cover a variety of audio production situations that are present in today's media environment. People love stories and audio is such a unique medium for storytelling. The growth of podcasts and audiobooks is an offshoot of a few larger trends. First is the desire to access media at any time schedule as opposed to traditional radio appointment listening. Second, there has been a democratization of media creation because anyone can create media and bring ideas to life. Audio equipment, editing software, and hosting platforms are easy and inexpensive to the general public and there are a variety of tutorials available. Finally, podcasts, audiobooks, and traditional radio content all tell stories without images. They leave enough to the imagination that the brain can imagine the setting (theater of the mind) so people can hear great stories and personalize them, internalize them and make them uniquely their own. We have seen continued growth in podcasts, online radio platforms, audiobooks and audio-related social content, so a course like this will be both interesting to students and essential for their careers in broadcasting.

Teaching Methods

This course primarily relies on hands-on learning and projects. However, a certain amount of lecture is required to level set and explain specific concerns and execution strategies. The course uses lectures, activities and games, quizzes and low-point assessments, and projects to engage students and support learning. The lecture in this course is minimal and occurs once a week for between 20 and 30 minutes. In the lecture, I go over the week's concepts and skills using slides and visual aids that are also available on Canvas. There is an activity or game of some sort every week to allow students to use the skills covered in the lecture material in class and show proficiency before they take the skill and apply it to out-of-class work. Each week also has some sort of quiz, draft or low point assessment to measure retention and application of the skill. Finally, the bulk of the proficiency in the class is shown through project performance and completion.

Throughout the course, there are 6 audio production projects which become increasingly more difficult or complex and build on the skills they have learned.

Course Materials

This course does not have a textbook, chiefly because the course involves so much technology, no textbook is up-to-date enough. Therefore, I use supplemental materials like book chapters on the things that don't change (story structure, interviewing, information-gathering, etc.) and Canvas for equipment and software-specific information. Students use Canvas for quizzes, activities, and supplemental materials such as videos, diagrams, photos, and examples. This course requires the use of audio hardware such as Andersen Hall audio production studios, field equipment, and headphones. In addition, students use Adobe Audition software, voice tracking software, and access to Transistor as well as resources like Hootsuite, Tweetdeck, Canva, OneDrive, Teams, WordPress, and Google Suite.

Course Activities

This course picks up where BRDC 227 leaves off, so course activities are designed to either test retention from previously learned material or to impart new information and skills. The course begins with a refresher lecture and pretest over three areas: audio studios, editing, and vocal performance. Toward the end of the semester, students participate in activities that act as a sort of post-test on that material. These assessments are not identical by design, the pretest is a simple quiz structure to allow students to focus on the question in a simple multiple-choice or true-false structure. The post-test activities require students to perform the skills associated with those terms or skills instead of simply defining or describing their use.

The course also has 6 required projects which all include elements of vocal performance, studio and equipment use, and editing.

Recurring KRNU project	Starting in week 5, students will contribute to KRNU 10 times. Students can choose between 2 weekly output options:
	● Produce a 30-minute weekly specialty show for KRNU/KRNU2
	● Voice Track a weekly 2-hour shift on KRNU
Long-from radio project	93 Counties is a podcast hosted by students and faculty at CoJMC. Each episode is a story from one of the 93 counties in Nebraska. Students in this course will each contribute one episode and can choose to work in pairs or individually.
PSA	Students will voice and produce a public service announcement
Promo	Students will create a themed concert promo
Produce for a Copywriter	Students will choose a script written in the promotional assignment from 260 and produce it
Short form production	Students will produce a suite of short-form pieces for a CoJMC property

Rationale for Teaching Methods

This course is designed to pick up where BRDC 227 left off, so I begin by assessing student retention from that course through a series of refresher lectures and pretest assessment of the studios, software and concepts, which serves as a pretest and ensures they have the tools and knowledge to do the project-based work in the course. This structure allows me to ensure everyone is on a level playing field before we move into

new material and project work. After the first two weeks, new material is organized by project. Material is taught, then immediately applied through an in-class graded activity, then student proficiency is demonstrated through a project. This project-based learning is rewarding but rigorous, so games accompany several modules for extra credit and fun. These methods are effective because I have designed the course to build over time, specifically assess growth and ensure that all lectures are connected to hands-on activities so students can immediately apply their learning, and connect it to projects to our various publishing channels (90.3 KRNU and Transistor).

Benchmark Memo 3

Initially, this course was listed as a special topics course and I was preparing to run it in Spring 2022. I planned instruction and both formal and informal assessment in the use of sound, audio production, writing, vocal performance, and audience measurement for electronic media applications. The course ran in Spring 2022 and the semester went well, but there were difficulties I did not anticipate. In this memo, I will discuss student learning and insights from the course.

Student learning in Spring 2022

Students were tasked with advanced audio work in this course. In order to complete assignments for this course, students need to be proficient in a number of areas including concept creation, hardware and software use, writing, vocal performance, and editing. Deficiencies in any of these areas can make a project unacceptable. For example, a poorly written script will not yield publishable work no matter how good the voice or editing is. Similarly, a student who has a great script and excellent vocal delivery cannot produce publishable work if they cannot use the technology to record and edit it. Therefore, this course uses a series of low-stakes activities to build each of these skills individually to feed into the larger-stakes projects which use all of the skills simultaneously to produce publishable work.

The course learning objectives for this course are

1. *Students who complete Advanced Audio Content Creation will be able to use effective vocal delivery techniques.*

2. *Students who complete Advanced Audio Content Creation will demonstrate advanced skills in audio production.*

3. *Students who complete Advanced Audio Content Creation will understand and execute the content creation planning process for a variety of audio platforms.*

There are six large projects that each incorporate all three of these objectives simultaneously. All require proficiency in all areas in order to be successful. The mean, median, low score, and high score on these six projects are detailed below:

KRNU shift (10 shifts total)

Description: Students can choose to voicetrack a shift on KRNU or create a weekly specialty show on KRNU/KRNU2

Mean	28.5
Median	29
Low Score	0
High Score	30

Score out of 30 points

PSA

Description: Students can choose to write, voice and produce a PSA for a local nonprofit organization or to voice and produce two pre-written PSAs for a national organization.

Mean	86.59
Median	91
Low Score	57
High Score	100

Score out of 100 points

Work with a copywriter

Description: Students work with an assigned copywriter from BRDC 260 to execute a script for a CoJMC property

Mean	85.75
Median	88.5
Low Score	59
High Score	98

Score out of 100 points

Long-from project: Podcast 93 Counties

Description: Students can work individually or in pairs to produce a 10-30 minute episode for the KRNU Studios podcast 93 Counties

Mean	91.3
Median	92
Low Score	67
High Score	98

Score out of 100 points

Promo

Description: Students will create a fantasy concert line-up and write, voice and produce a 60-second promo

Mean	91.75
Median	91.5
Low Score	84
High Score	99

Score out of 100 points

Imaging

Description: Students will write, voice and produce a 10-piece imaging suite for a KRNU property

Mean	93.31
Median	93.5
Low Score	82
High Score	100

Score out of 100 points

These scores show a big picture view of the class performance, the way students put together all of the components of audio content creation - from concept to production - to make publishable products. Students were very successful by these measurements. However, this data does not show the individual instruction, activities, and assessments students used to demonstrate proficiency in each area of the course - vocal performance, audio production (hardware, software, and editing), and content planning and management. Nor does it show draft points designed to provide feedback and revising so the final projects were high-quality. In the following sections, I will provide that data and context.

Student achievement at various levels

This course is intended to pick up where BRDC 227 left off. That assumed all students who passed 227 understood all of the material covered and retained it, which is unlikely. Therefore, I began this course by assessing retention from 227 in three areas by doing a quick in-class review or "refresher", followed by an online quiz. These refreshers spanned three class periods - the first over audio studios, the second over editing software, and the third over vocal performance. The refreshers were designed to go fast and have more information than could be retained if it was the student's first exposure to the material or they didn't have a clear understanding of it prior to the lecture. If students knew the material already, this refresher would bring that material back to "top of mind"

and they should score well on the assessment. If the students either had not been exposed to the information before the refresher or did not fully understand it when they were originally exposed, they would not score well on the assessment.

After the refresher lecture, students took the online assessment. Students who scored an 80% or above (8/10) would keep that grade in the grade book. Those who scored below an 80% would have that score removed and replaced with "excused" (so it did not hurt their grade). They were then assigned to complete a supplemental page of information including tutorials, photos, and text so they could better grasp the material at their own pace and tested again.

### Audio studios refresher/assessment results

- 12/16 students scored an 80% or above
    - Score average - 18.75/20
- The 4 students who scored below 80%, completed the supplemental material and tested again
    - Score average - 18.25/20

Editing/Software refresher/assessment results

- 8/16 students scored an 80% or above
    - Score average - 18.5/20
- The 8 students who scored below 80%, completed the supplemental material and tested again
    - Score average - 18.33/20

Vocal performance refresher/assessment results

- 15/16 students scored an 80% or above
    - Score average - 18.1/20
- The student who scored below 80%, completed the supplemental material and tested again
    - Score average - 18.2/20
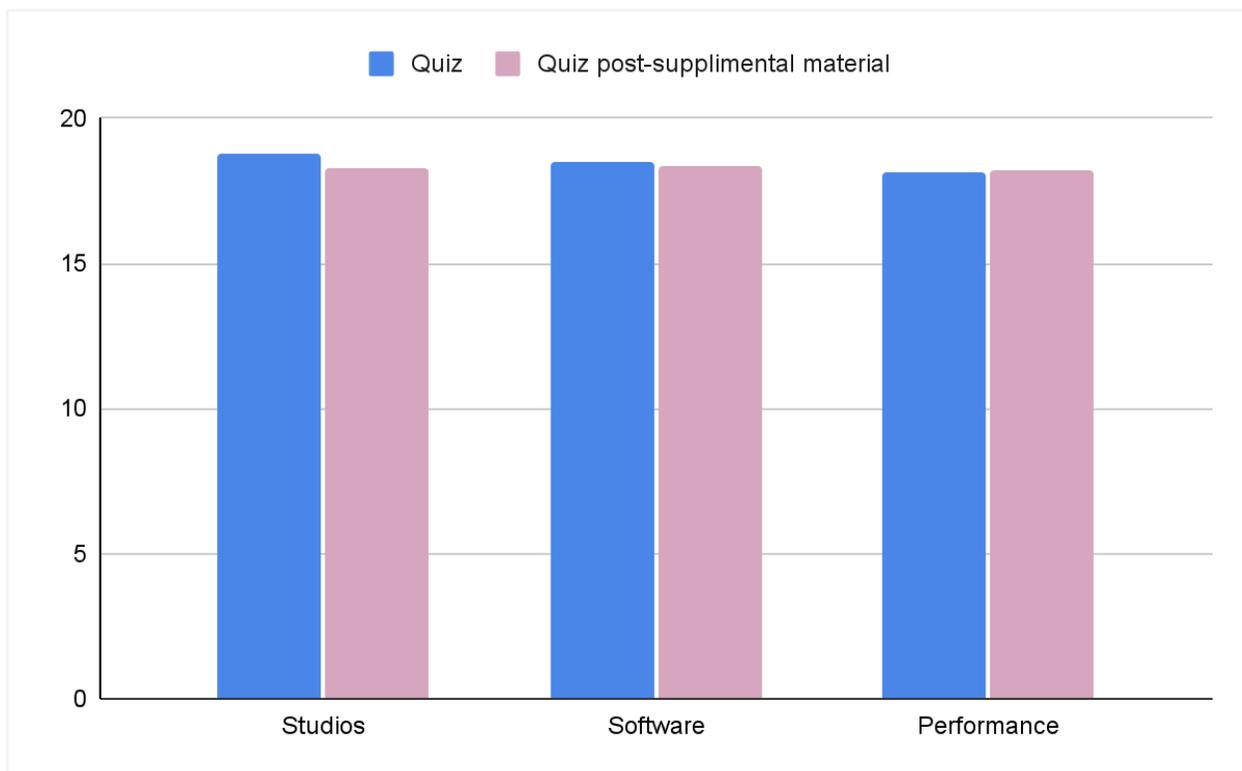
This data is significant because it exposes a gap in curriculum and a way to bridge that gap through supplemental learning. Students have a much more comprehensive understanding of vocal performance than the studios or editing software based on the results. Only half of the students could pass the editing/software assessment at 80% or above, even after completing BRDC 227. This could be attributed to a number of factors including lack of weight on editing in previous courses, lack of repetition, or just difficulty of skill. Importantly, students who had less background and did not succeed (80% or better) on the initial quizzes were able to use supplemental learning resources and show similar understanding to those who had prior exposure and understanding of the material.

I also assessed these skills using activities throughout the course to ensure the learning they demonstrated on the assessments in weeks 1 and 2 was retained. For example, between weeks 9-12 students participated in a relay game and cord wrapping challenge to show studio and editing proficiency, a "rip and read" and testimonial activity to show vocal performance proficiency. All students completed these activities with an 80% proficiency during these activities.

Skill development over time

In this course, I used one repeated assignment to gauge growth in vocal performance, editing, and publishing. This assignment was the KRNU shift project in which students chose to voicetrack a shift on KRNU or create a weekly specialty show on KRNU/KRNU2. Students were able to choose because both options have strengths and weaknesses, and while both options build skills in performance, editing and publishing, they vary in degrees to which they address each area. Voicetracking requires less editing but is more difficult to perform. Challenges of voicetracking include word and tone variation, show prep, more complex publishing, and working within the parameters of the radio station. Hosting a specialty show gives students creative control but requires more editing and post-production work.

Students were tasked with producing their shift/show for 10 weeks. At weeks 1, 5, and 10, I asked them to reflect on those shows/shifts.

KRNU Shift/show quantitative data

"Rate yourself on the following skills" on a scale of 1-5 (1=Poor, 5=Excellent) with a scale for audio information gathering, performance, editing, and publishing/logistics

	Shift/Show 1	Shift/Show 5	Shift/Show 10
Audio/Information gathering	4.1	4.2	4.5
Performance	3.2	3.8	4.2
Editing	3.9	4	4.3
Publishing/Logistics	3.8	4.7	4.3
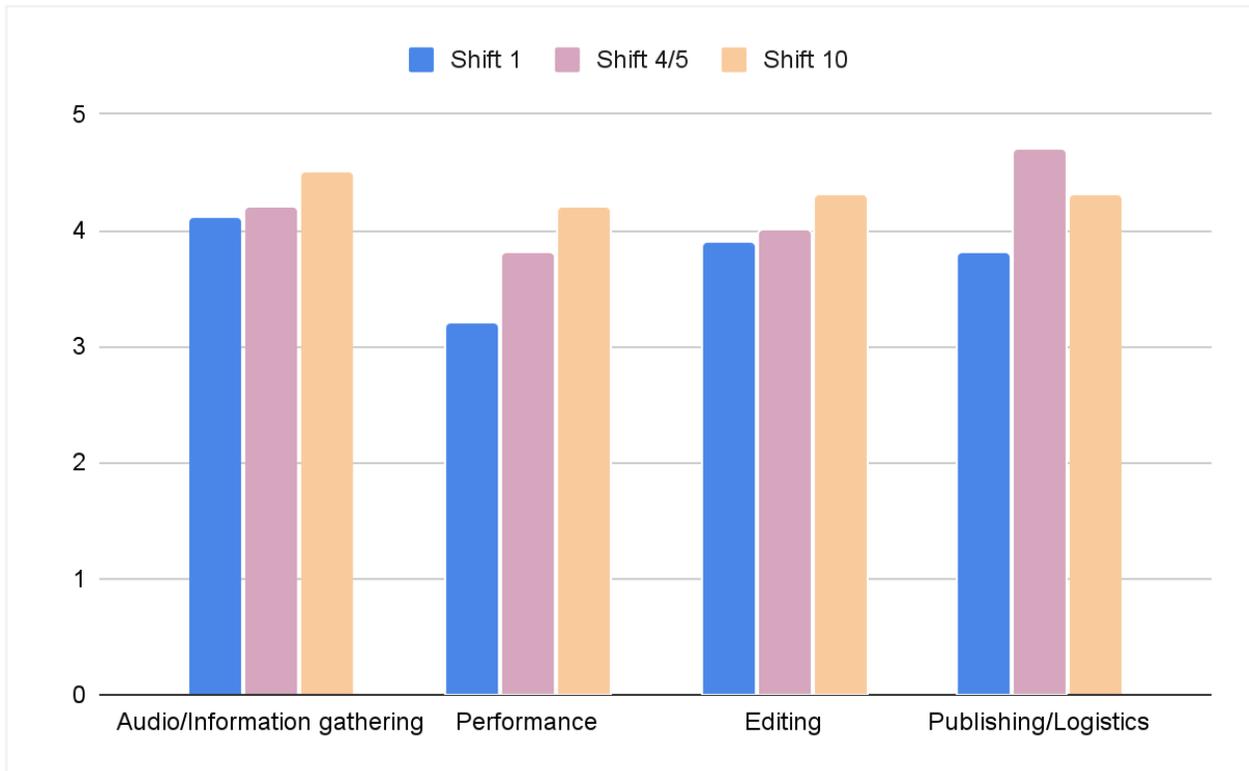
KRNU Shift/show qualitative data

Shift/Show 1 - "What can you improve?" Most frequent answers:

- ○ Energy
- ○ Inflection
- ○ Fillers
- ○ Audio quality
- ○ Pronunciation
- ○ Repetition

Shift/Show 5 - Improvements so far" Most frequent answers:

- ○ Repetition
- ○ General performance

Shift/Show 5 - "In what areas can you still improve?" Most frequent answers:

- ○ Tone
- ○ Authenticity
- ○ Editing
- ○ Promotional strategy
- ○ Adding interest

Shift/Show 10 - "What was your biggest area of improvement this semester?" Most frequent answers:
- Performance
- Confidence
- Editing

It is important to note not only improvement in skills over time but the skills they are listing. At the beginning of the semester they were talking about vocal performance by individual components like "energy" and "inflection" but by the end, they were referring to "performance" as a whole which shows a synthesis of the concept.

The Unexpected

I overestimated the level of proficiency students in this course had for writing and storytelling which became a challenge on several assignments. For the PSA and promo assignments, I added in-class work time and peer script feedback after seeing the initial scripts. This helped support the scripting process and yielded publishable work. However, the 93 Counties script required more significant modifications because it was so much longer and required more storytelling and journalistic techniques. I budgeted for one script draft which included a peer review and instructor review and one audio draft. After grading the first script draft it became clear we would need more. I added a second script draft and peer review and individual script conferences for each episode. I also added an audio conference.

	93 Counties Script Draft 1	93 Counties script draft 2
Student 1	15	22
Student 2	21	24
Student 3	21	23
Student 4	21	24
Student 5	22	25

Student 6	29	29.5
Student 7	26	28
Student 8	22	25
Student 9	21.5	27
Student 10	15	22
Student 11	26	28
Student 12	22	20
Student 13	17	20
Student 14	29	29.5
Student 15	17	20
Student 16	23	29
Average out of 30 points	21.72	24.75
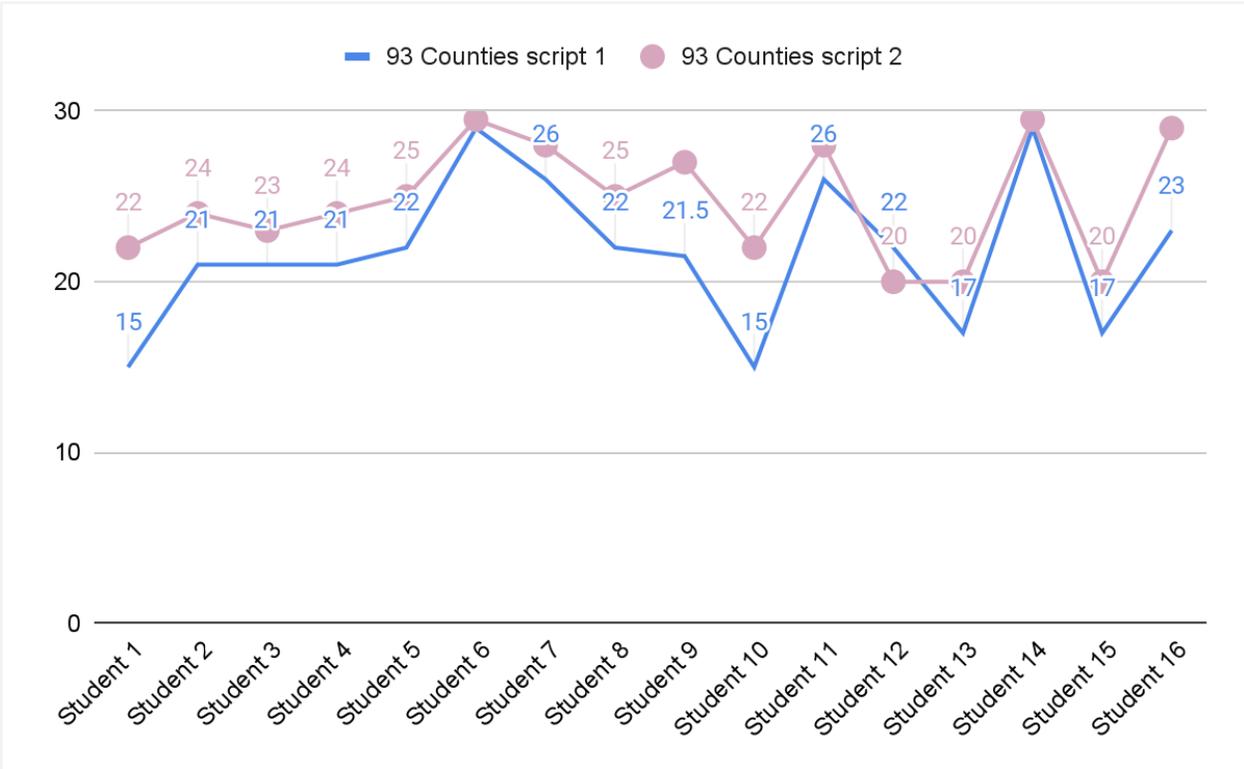
Students struggled with this assignment far more than I anticipated and the addition of drafts and conferences cut into time for other planned activities. Without this additional script draft, the final projects would have largely been unpublishable. I had to cut the foley activity entirely from the course to accommodate these changes.

Summary

The course yielded very high-quality audio work that showed professional-level content planning, vocal performance, editing, and publishing skills. The course structure and materials provided students with the support they needed to complete the work and ensure deadlines were met. The work produced in this course was more diverse in skillset, polished, and elevated than the work in BRDC 227, which is the intended function.

Future Plans for Course

When offering it again I will provide more activities and supplemental material to help with writing early on. I will also budget more time and one-on-one time toward 93 Counties scripts and cut back the KRNU show/shift assignment to 8 weeks to allow room for more drafts and script work. I plan to keep the structure and assignments the same but add more examples to each assignment and budget more time for brainstorming and concept creation. Finally, I will add additional scripting time and more opportunities for peer feedback.

The course has been approved for a permanent number by the curriculum committee and full faculty at the College of Journalism and Mass Communications is on its way to becoming a permanent course rotated every spring as an elective offering for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Lessons Learned from Program

While I have worked with curriculum design and course planning before, it was incredibly beneficial to build this course using the structure in this program. As a faculty member, I am guilty of skipping steps in course planning and going right to the "fun stuff" instead of thinking of the big picture and being strategic about what student learning and proficiency should look like. Furthermore, as a member of the curriculum committee, I see how many courses in our major sequences do not connect to one another and can feel a la carte to students. Through this process, I was able to design this course but also thought about how we as a college can approach our major sequences with more intentionality.

Appendices

BRDC 327: Advanced Audio Content Creation

Instructor Information

Kaci Richter
Email: krichter5@unl.edu
Office: ANDN 218
Lab Hours: (In communication design lab downstairs)
Monday: 11:30am-1:30pm; Thursday: 9:30am-10:30am; or by appointment

Course Description

Advanced Audio Content Creation is designed to facilitate growth in audio theory, performance and production. Learn advanced skills in audio production including refined use of the voice, digital editing, use of sound effects, complex music editing, writing and audio content creation planning for a variety of audio platforms.

Course learning objectives:
Students who complete Advanced Audio Content Creation will be able to:
- Use effective vocal delivery techniques on publishable audio products
- Demonstrate advanced skills in audio editing
- Demonstrate proficiency in troubleshooting common audio hardware issues
- Understand and execute the content creation planning process for a variety of audio platforms
- Create professional-level short form and long-form audio projects

Course pre-requisites: None
Required course materials: Canvas, Adobe Audition, Headphones, SD Card (for field recording)

Course Format
The class will meet synchronously, both Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30-4:45 in ANDN 310.

Textbook
There is no required text for this course.

Assignments

Engagement and Participation – 15%
This category contains activities, quizzes and attendance

Projects – 85%
This category contains all projects for the course

- Recurring long-form radio project – Starting in week 5, students will contribute to KRNU 10 times. Students can choose between 2 weekly output options:
    - Produce a 30-minute weekly specialty show for KRNU/KRNU2 and other owned social media channels
    - Voicetrack a weekly 2-hour shift on KRNU
- 93 Counties - 93 Counties is a weekly show hosted by students at the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Each episode is a story from one of the 93 counties in Nebraska, rural and urban, from the panhandle to the Missouri River. Students can choose to produce an episode in pairs or individually.
- PSA – Students will voice and produce a public service announcement
- Concert Promo – Students will create a themed concert lineup and write, voice, and produce a :60 promo for the event.
- Produce for a Copywriter - Students will choose a script written in the promotional assignment from 260 and produce it
- Short form production – Students will produce a suite of short-form pieces for KRNU, KRNU 2 or KRNU Sports.

Course Policies and Procedures

Attendance policy

You need to attend class. We will be doing activities worth points and you will not be able to make those up. You will be marked absent if you miss class. The only exceptions in alignment with university policy are:
- Religious holidays - we will honor all religious holidays
- Athletes and other school-sponsored events with proper documentation

However, we do NOT want you in the classroom if you are sick or under quarantine. If you have COVID or another contagious illness, accommodations will be made for you to

complete your assignments and attend class. **Contact me before class to make arrangements.**

Students locked out of the building due to missing a required saliva test via the Safer Community app will NOT be excused/allowed to make up missed work.

Course Expectations

Since this is a special topics course, students come from a variety of majors, backgrounds, and levels of experience. However, this is an advanced course. If you have not completed beginning courses, you WILL need to work harder to catch up and complete the required work.

Expectations of students

Everyone needs to come prepared and complete work on time. I expect publishable-quality work that can be posted and aired. Work that does not meet that standard will be graded accordingly. You may be asked to fix and resubmit assignments that do not meet that standard.

Expectations of me

You can expect me to come to class excited to teach and ready to help. I have supplemental videos available on Canvas and will post all slides after class, so if you are confused about a particular lesson or need a review you will have those resources. I will give you in-class time to start assignments every week. You can also expect grades back quickly - within 7 days – but typically faster.

Late Work

Due dates are important in this class and students must turn in assignments on time to receive credit. Each assignment has a due date and students who turn in work by the deadline will be eligible for 100% of the possible points.

> *Late assignments will be accepted for an additional 24 hours with a 10% penalty, after which the assignment is locked and can no longer be submitted for credit.*

If a student feels they have extenuating circumstances and cannot make the deadline, they need to contact the instructor prior to the due date to communicate those issues. Only extreme and unforeseen circumstances will be considered eligible for an extension

past the 24-hour late window. Work schedules, other classwork and time management issues are not unforeseen circumstances.

Communication

Please use the Teams site for fast responses. Email gets really difficult to track. I will respond to emails, it is just a more cumbersome process and not as quick.

COVID Policies

You must properly wear a mask while in the classroom at this time.
If you are vaccinated (including the booster), please make sure to fill out the university form if you haven't already. University is requiring random COVID testing for all students - you need to download the Safer Community App to schedule. This testing is not voluntary. Failure to keep your Safer Community App up-to-date will not be an excused or accommodated absence. You need to be responsible for keeping it up to date.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event that the university cancels in-person classes and implements instructional continuity plans, you will be notified by email and Canvas announcement. If there is inclement weather (for example, a snow day) we will NOT meet in person or on Zoom. In-class activities will be moved to another day. Any major assignment deadlines will remain in place. More detailed instructions will be contained in the email at the time of the announcement.

See the full [UNL Instructional Continuity Plan](#) for more details.

Grading

97-100 A+ | 94-96 A | 90-93 A–
87-89 B+ | 84-86 B | 80-83 B–
77-79 C+ | 74-76 C | 70-73 C–
67-69 D+ | 64-66 D | 60-63 D-

59 and below F

Schedule

WEEK 1	Syllabus and course overview Studio review
WEEK 2	Voice review Software review
WEEK 3	Discuss recurring long-form radio project assignment, choose an option, sign up for times. Discuss PSA assignment Activity and work on PSA assignment and long-form radio project
WEEK 4	Discuss 93 counties, choose a county Prep for long-form radio project and prep for 93 counties pitch
WEEK 5	93 Counties pitches Field audio and conferencing demo
WEEK 6	Discuss Concert Promo assignment Activity
WEEK 7	Concert Promo Critiques Activity
WEEK 8	Discuss Producing for a Copywriter assignment and get copy from 260 Activity and Producing for a Copywriter assignment
WEEK 9 – Spring Break	No class – no shifts/shows
WEEK 10	93 Counties draft due. In-class peer-review Activity
WEEK 11	Discuss short-form production assignment Activity
WEEK 12	93 Counties audio due. In-class peer-review Activity
WEEK 13	Discuss Extra Credit Project Activity
WEEK 14	93 Counties assignment due Activity
WEEK 15	93 Counties posting and promotion Activity

WEEK 16	Activity
	Activity
WEEK 17	No final exam

Technology Requirements

Use of Andersen Hall audio studios, checkout room equipment and Adobe Audition is required for this course. You will also need headphones and an SD card of your own, the checkout room sells SD cards but does not check SD cards out to students.

- To get help with Canvas problems, click 'Help' from the left side menu in Canvas. Help is available 24/7 via phone (1-877-244-8884) or chat.
- To get help with other technological problems, contact the UNL Huskertech Help Center by phone (402-472-3970) or email (support@nebraska.edu)

Additional Syllabus Policies

It is important that you familiarize yourself with all UNL and CoJMC educational policies. Please go to https://canvas.unl.edu/courses/81519 and read all of the pages to ensure that you have up-to-date information about university policies. This information is considered part of this syllabus even if the text does not appear within this document.

Checkout Room Information

All CoJMC majors and students enrolled in classes in the college can check out equipment from the CoJMC Checkout Room.

Location and Hours:
Room 41, Andersen Hall
email: cojunl.tech@gmail.com
text message: (402) 413-9960
Monday to Friday - 8-9:30 a.m. | 10:30-12 p.m. | 1-2:30 p.m. | 3:30-5 p.m.
The checkout room is closed on all UNL observed holidays and breaks.

Check-out Information
Students can visit the checkout room during regular business hours to check out equipment. Face coverings are required for service. Do not share equipment during checkout.

When using the zoom room, students must use video to present their NCard. Equipment will be placed in a locker, and the access code will be emailed to your HUSKERS email address.

Checkout Room Policy

Use of the checkout room constitutes agreement with the checkout room policy. To review the policy, go to https://canvas.unl.edu/courses/51236/pages/checkout-room-rules

Equipment Available

For more information on equipment available from the checkout room visit, https://go.unl.edu/cojmctech.

Supplemental Material - Vocal Performance and Audio Gathering

This page and associated quiz are for students assigned to complete the "Supplemental Material - Vocal Performance and Audio Gathering" assignment. Read over this information, watch the videos and take the quiz.

Let's get started!

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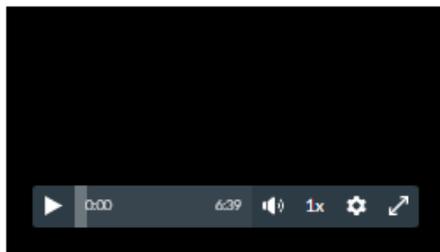
Your Voice

- Volume - The loudness or softness of audio. It is also called amplitude and is measured in decibels or dB
- Projection - The distance a sound carries
- Breath support - The way we engage abdominal muscles (including the sides and lower back) during exhalation that stabilizes our airflow and supports our ability to make sounds
- Mic placement - The mic should be 4-6 inches away from your mouth slightly off-center
- Script placement - If possible, hold your script up in front of your eyes
- Sibilance - A hissing quality of sound, or the hissing sound itself - typically heard on "S" sounds
- Plosives - Stop sounds where air in the lungs is blocked from coming out through the mouth - often "p" or "t" sounds
- Vocal patterns - A pitch pattern announcers fall into, often a repetitive sing-song, up or down at the ends of all sentences
- Pacing -According to the internet archive site referenced in class, the average speaking rate for television broadcasters is 150wpm

Vocal Fillers

- Useful/helpful:
  - Cushioning - Fillers can hedge tough messaging
  - Transitioning - Fillers (so) can help move from point A to B and establish connections
  - Interjecting - "So" and "Well" can signal you want to chime in
  - Strategic placeholders - Hanging a filler at the end of a thought helps others know you are not finished
- Not helpful/Distracting
  - Crutch fillers - The filler you fall back on, often aren't aware of
  - Frequent usage - 5 times in :60
  - Hedging - Using "just" or "I think" can signal lack of confidence/preparation
  - The sound of anxiety
- Fixing fillers
  - Identify when your disfluency worsens
  - Be mindful when you speak
  - Slow down
  - Go in prepared and use notes when appropriate
  - An audience can't listen and process as quickly as you can speak, they need white space
  - Pause instead of filling the space
  - Consider why/when you are using them

- Pay attention to when they get worse better
  - Do you use them more when interviewing? Reading? Presenting in front of people?

Microphone types

- Dynamic - Widely used in the field because they are rugged, less sensitive, and do not require external power
- Condenser - Widely used in studios and personal electronics. Rely on external power of some kind, are sensitive and when used properly, give good quality audio. Less rugged than dynamic and are best mounted in a studio or housed inside a piece of equipment to protect them

MIC RANKED FROM BEST TO WORST

1. Studio microphone: In a sound-controlled space, mounted, high quality. **You are required to use studio mics in this class**

2. USB microphone: Has various pick up patterns to choose from, portable, easy to position

3. Headset/headphone mic: You probably have one, can't choose pick up pattern

4. Internal phone mic: Lower quality, no pick up pattern option but convenient. Easy to position

5. Internal computer mic: No pick up pattern option and difficult to correctly position

Pick up patterns

The microphone type simply describes its construction. The microphone's pick up pattern is the area where the mic "picks up" or detects audio. Different pickup patterns work for different situations.

Think about the pick up pattern like the beam of light from a flashlight. Some flashlights have a wide beam and it softly lights up the whole room (like a big camping flashlight). Others have a thin but very bright beam like a small twist-on flashlight. The same principle applies to mic pickup patterns.

- Cardioid - heart-shaped pick up pattern, most common type for voice work
- Bidirectional - two circles (figure of eight) pick up pattern used for interviews
- Omnidirectional - picks up in all directions, the pattern on most gaming/headphone mics
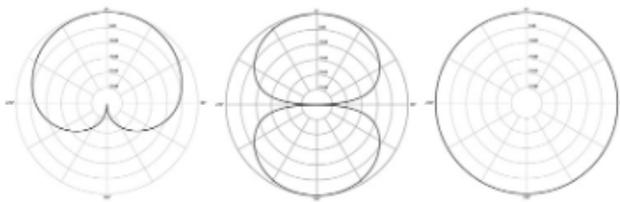
Getting additional audio
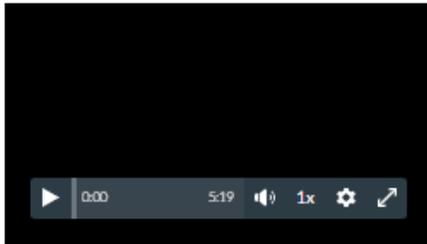
You will need sound effects (SFX), music beds, clips and voice to make audio productions. Some of these you will make yourself, others you can get from collaborators, Adobe stock or YouTube.

Copyright and media theft

You cannot take something that doesn't belong to you/you didn't create and pass it off as your own. If you use someone else's work as a starting point, you need substantially modify it so the new work is truly an original product. Keep in mind, if there is ANY copyrighted material present, platforms like YouTube or Facebook may not post it whether you think it is original enough or not.

Fair use

"Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses—such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research—as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use." SOURCE

Using copyrighted material is tricky. Fair use looks at four general categories and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

- Purpose and character of the use
- Nature of the copyrighted work
- Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole
- Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work
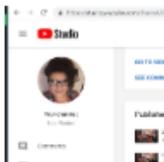
Royalty-free music beds

You can get royalty-free music beds from a variety of sources. Search for them on YouTube or in the Creator studio, you will find an audio library on the left side of the screen where you can download music.

If you have a URL instead of a download, use a YouTube to mp3 converter.

Audio watermarks

An audio watermark is an identifier, usually just a word or sound, embedded in an file. It works like a photo watermark and makes it more difficult for someone other than the original artist to use the work. The watermaker identifies ownership/copyright and is hard to remove. Listen to your royalty-free music to make sure there aren't any watermarks!

Speakers
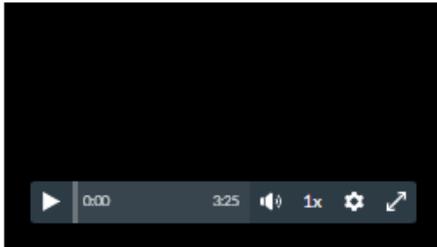
Speakers convert electrical energy into mechanical energy. They take an electrical signal and convert it to sound waves so you can hear it. You have speakers all over your house.

- Phone
- Computer
- Bluetooth speaker/soundbars
- Car
- Wired speakers
- Headphones
- Smart home devices

Don't forget - adjusting the volume on your speakers has no impact on the source audio. Saying it "sounded right in my headphones" is not an excuse for undermodulated/overmodulated audio. Record in flat (-3dB) and LOOK AT THE WAV when editing.

- Wired speakers
- Headphones
- Smart home devices

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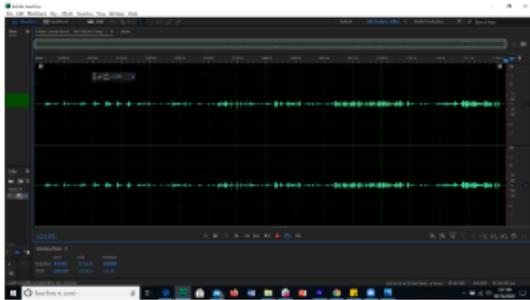
UNDERMODULATED (too quiet)

This audio can be turned up, but the background noise will also increase. This MAY be fixable but will require noise reduction and lose some of the dynamics of the read.
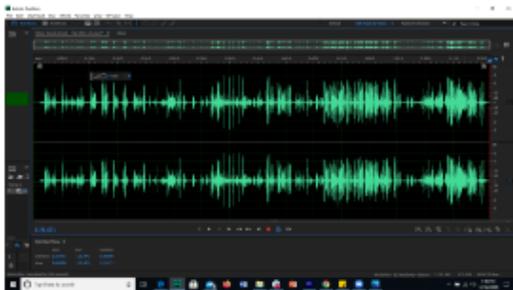
FLAT (recorded with peaks at -3dB. Perfect)

This audio will have minimal background noise and require no intervention.

OVERMODULATED (too loud)

This audio will have crackles and even if you turn it down, it will sound bad. This is unfixable.

_____

Now - Complete the QUIZ Supplemental Material - Vocal Performance and Audio Gathering

Question 1   2 pts

True or false - An omnidirectional pickup pattern picks up in two directions. It is best suited for interviews.

○ True

○ False

Question 2   2 pts

According to the video, which of the following factors determine whether using someone else's material (audio, video, photo, text....any art you didn't create) is fair use? Check all that apply.

☐ Whether or not the original artist could show financial damages from your use of the work

☐ If you posted your final piece on social media and the platform didn't flag it

☐ If you used it for satire, news or educational purposes

☐ The way you use the material and how much of the final product is original

☐ Whether or not you made money from the work you produced with it

☐ The amount of the material you use

☐ If a client requested you use it.

☐ If you are a big fan of the original work

Question 3   2 pts

How far should the mic be from your mouth when you record?

☐ 1-3 inches

☐ 4-6 inches

☐ 6-12 inches

☐ 5-7 inches

KRNU Voicetracking Info/Tutorial

Voicetracking at KRNU

Voicetracking is the process of recording your breaks directly into the log so your breaks will automatically play with the other elements on the station. Voicetracking means you can be "on-air" to the listener, without actually being physically present in the studio at that time. It is convenient for talent, allowing you to have the kind of flexibility in your schedule that isn't possible when you are doing a live shift. Voicetracking is common in radio, many (if not most) of the talent you hear on the radio at night or on the weekend is actually voicetracked.

There are downsides to voicetracking in the radio industry, chiefly that stations typically only pay the voicetracker for the number of hours it took to record their shift, instead of the length of the shift itself. Often that amounts to around an hour of work for a four-hour shift. Even so, voicetracking is a way to allow talent to be home for holidays, vacations, and overnights without sacrificing the on-air experience for listeners.

You must be approved for a voicetrack shift by KRNU staff and have a scheduled shift on KRNU.

Voicetracks can be recorded in ANDN 248 AND 249

Before you voicetrack

Show prep is particularly important when voicetracking because you will not have songs playing in real-time to give you a chance to look up bands/songs. **You will need to have all of your show prep ready BEFORE you arrive to track your shift.**

Show prep is information you can use in your breaks. On KRNU this is often news, music/band information or information about UNL events.

Break Specifics

Each hour you must:

- Track at least 5 breaks
    - One break into each stop set
    - One break in every cluster of 3 songs
    - If you do not have 5 breaks by following those two rules, you can add an additional break between any other songs.
- **DO NOT TRACK INTO OR OUT OF IMAGING/LEGAL IDS**
- All breaks must begin and end with "90.3 KRNU"

- **DO NOT TRACK INTO OR OUT OF IMAGING/LEGAL IDS**
- All breaks must begin and end with "90.3 KRNU"
- All breaks must back sell the song you just played and either front sell the next song (if you are talking into a song) or tease the song coming up after the break (if you are talking into a stop set)
- You must say your first and last name at least once each hour
- You must say the positioning statement " Lincoln's new music alternative" at least once each hour
- You must give band/song information at least twice each hour
- You must give information about an on-campus event each hour
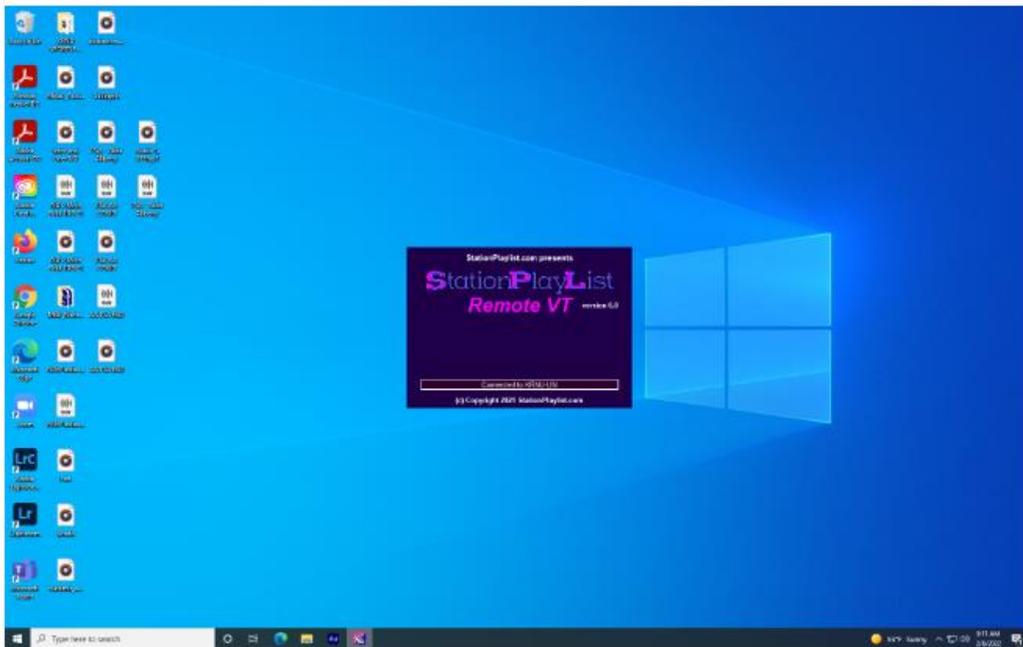
Voicetracking Tutorial
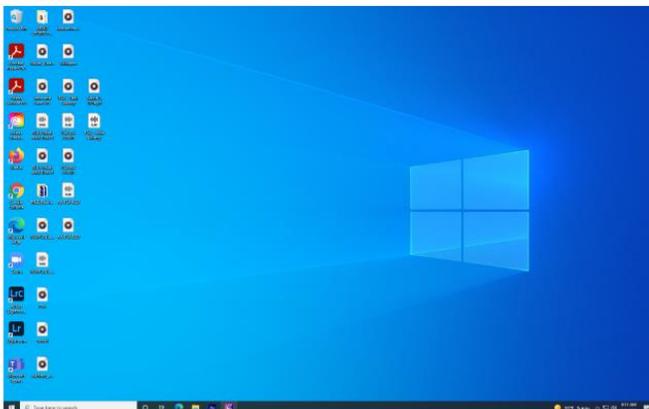
Log in to the computer with the universal log in

Click the voicetracking software button at the bottom of the screen (pinned to the taskbar)

Log in to the computer with the universal log in

Click the voicetracking software button at the bottom of the screen (pinned to the taskbar)
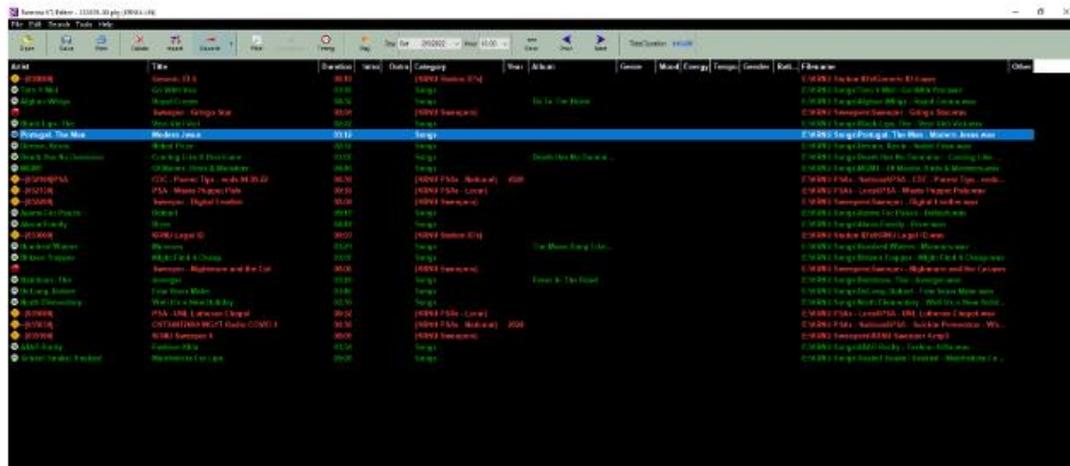
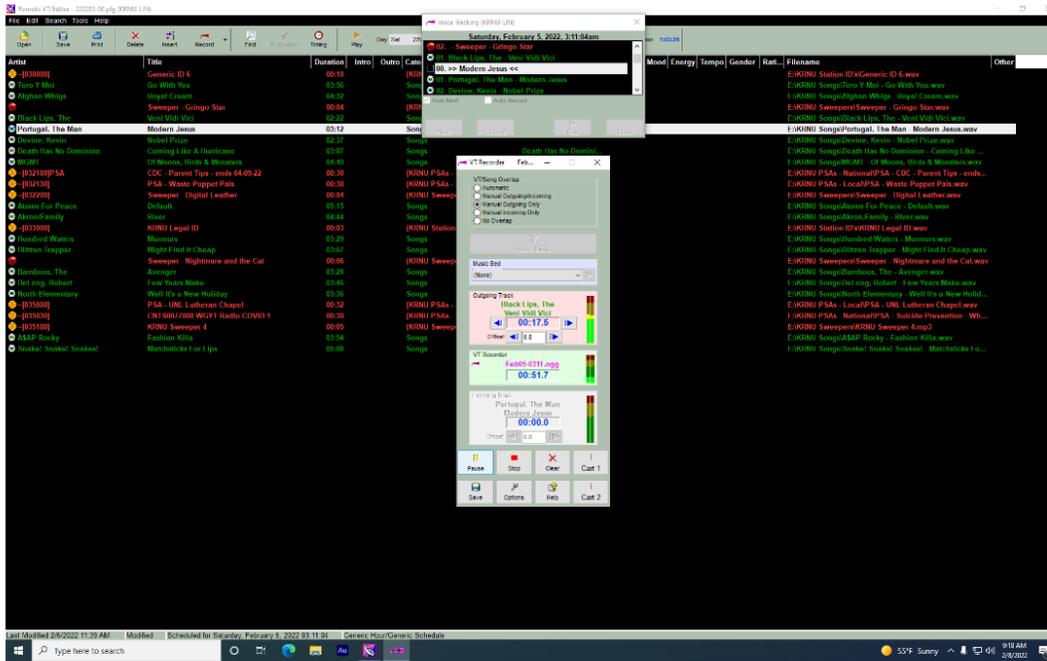Here you will see the logs loaded, choose the most recent

At the top of the screen you can choose the day and time you want to track.

Remember this is when your tracks will AIR, not when you are recording them.

Click the song you want your track to come before - tracks will appear ABOVE that song in the log

Then click "Record" at the top of the screen

Use the default setting "manual outgoing only"

Use the default setting "manual outgoing only"

Click "start outgoing" to start the voicetrack

Click "start recording" when you are ready to start talking

Click "stop recording" when you are done

Click "preview" to make sure it sounds good

Click "save"

KRNU Shift

You've already rated students with this rubric. Any major changes could affect their assessment results.

Criteria	Ratings		Pts
Properly submitted and labeled	5 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	5 pts
Format Elements Station ID in and out, reintroducing guests	5 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	5 pts
Delivery Free from (or minimal if live) stumbles, inflection, rate, energy, diction, breath support	5 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	5 pts
Content appropriate topic/prep, concise, no awkward transitions, suits TA	10 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	10 pts
Creativity Does it feel uniquely "you" and authentic? Is it engaging and entertaining?	5 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	5 pts
		Total Points: 30	

AUDIO RELAY RULES

- Your team has a lists of tasks that must be completed in order - the audio is already loaded into the software

- Each person gets 1 minute, then rotate to the next person in line - I will call "switch"

- You can choose your initial order, but after that no switching and no subs

- You can talk in line, but no talking between the person coming out of the studio and the person going in

- You must have me check a completed item before you can move on

- Everyone gets 100% but the fastest team gets +5

RELAY INSTRUCTIONS

- Edit profanity – Jurassic 5

- Make Coronavirus spot exactly 15 seconds without modifying the pitch

- Perform a noise reduction process on the Red Cross clip

- Properly wrap a cord