

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Creative Media  
with effect from Semester A 2017 /18**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Sound Design for Cinema

**Course Code:** SM3153

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** B3

**Proposed Area:**  
*(for GE courses only)*

Arts and Humanities  
 Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations  
 Science and Technology

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* SM2704 Creative Media Studio II

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This course aims to provide students with advanced knowledge in film sound and music aesthetics as applied to production processes and techniques for film sound track design. Upon completion of the course, students will have confidence in directing all agents of a sound and music team. Driven by the aesthetic needs of a film, students will learn how to plan, design and communicate with sound and music professionals. Hands on and real world experience will be provided to students, including site visits to leading Hong Kong film post-production houses.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Describe the role and function of sound and music for film.		✓		
2.	Analyse, enumerate and compare various film sound tracks by deconstructing their sound elements (dialogue, sound effects, soundscape, ambient/location sound and music).		✓		
3.	Diagnose and correct aesthetic and or technical issues relating to sound and or music for given film sound track projects.			✓	✓
4.	Apply post-production techniques to produce a final sound track synchronised to picture in stereo and various cinema and domestic surround formats.			✓	✓
5. <sup>^</sup>	Conduct extra research on the subject in relation to one's own experience as a self-reflective process.				✓
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

<sup>#</sup> Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

<sup>^</sup> Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

**3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)**  
*(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)*

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Tutorials	Experiment with sound and music placement for provided moving image footage.	✓						
Assignment	Critical listening to film sound tracks (with a global perspective) to form critiques and discussions on the sound and music content.		✓			✓		
Lecture/Tutorials	Examine provided projects, diagnose problems and experiment with different scenarios to achieve the prescribed filmmakers vision.			✓				
Assignment Tasks	Correct problematic soundtracks and produce final mastered soundtracks to the highest professional level for all distributed formats.				✓			

**4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)**  
*(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)*

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Individual presentation	✓						10%	
Soundtrack review and critique		✓			✓		15%	
Two mini-projects requiring written reports			✓				35%	
Final project	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		40%	
Examination: 0% (duration: _____, if applicable)								
* The weightings should add up to 100%.							100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Individual Presentation	This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative</li> <li>- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter</li> <li>- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition</li> <li>- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Fair organization, weak structure and composition</li> <li>- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Poor organization, structure and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- No organization, structure or/and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management</li> <li>– Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize</li> </ul>				
2. Soundtrack Review and Critique	This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> <li>– Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition</li> <li>– Precision in argument, well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand</li> <li>– Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition</li> <li>– Clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand</li> <li>– Fair organization with adequate structure and composition</li> <li>– Relevant points made to the subject matter in question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Weak content, limited use of resources</li> <li>– Poor organization, structure and composition</li> <li>– Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources</li> <li>– No organization, structure or/and composition</li> <li>– Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Fail to respond to other comments</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– defined and reasoned points of view</li> <li>– grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature</li> <li>– Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion</li> <li>– Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently</li> <li>– Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ability to respond to other statements and engage in class discussion</li> </ul>		
3. Mini Project	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lied in a student’s self initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Excellent grasp of research material, able to explain key concepts, assumptions and debates</li> <li>– Rigorous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Firm grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts and assumptions</li> <li>– Reasonable organization, balanced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts</li> <li>– Fair organization, weak structure, adequate content, fair ability to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts</li> <li>– Poor organization and structure, weak content, limited use of resources</li> <li>– Relevant points to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poor grasp of materials</li> <li>– No organization and structure, inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources</li> <li>– Irrelevant points to</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
	to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<p>organization, coherent structure, distinct thesis, properly argued with strong narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insightful interpretation of the subject matter with distinct themes and thesis</li> <li>- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize</li> <li>- Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and</li> </ul>	<p>structure, adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear ideas which keep to the point, clear-cut subject, ability to interpret opinions independently</li> <li>- Organized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic</li> </ul>	<p>integrate various resources based on demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevant points to the subject matter, fair ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>- Unorganized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic</li> </ul>	<p>the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient and/or unorganized bibliography</li> </ul>	<p>the subject matter, minimal ability to interpret opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irrelevant bibliography</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		analytical tools – Strong bibliography suggesting breadth and depth of coverage and informed insights				
4. Final Project	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.	– Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature – Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium – Work raises questions and	– Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium – Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration – Proper	– Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium – Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration – Adjustment of plans and strategies in	– Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium – Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration – Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment,	– No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium – Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration – Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment,



Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production – Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project – Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time,	adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions	response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available	etc) available	etc) available

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment				

**Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.**

### Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

*Film sound, film music, soundtrack, sound effects, automatic dialogue replacement, audio mastering, surround sound production.*

#### 2. Reading List

##### 2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Altman, R. (1992). <u>Sound theory, sound practice</u> . New York, Routledge.
2.	Beck, J. and T. Grajeda (2008). <u>Lowering the boom : critical studies in film sound</u> . Urbana, University of Illinois Press.
3.	Holman, T. (2010). <u>Sound for film and television</u> . Burlington, MA, Focal Press.
4.	Sergi, G. (2004). <u>The Dolby era : film sound in contemporary Hollywood</u> . Manchester, Manchester University Press.
5.	Alberding, C. W. (2000). <u>It's NOT not music! : ethnomusicology and film sound design</u> , University of California, Riverside, 2000.: iv, 64 leaves.
6.	Blake, L. (1984). <u>Film sound today : an anthology of articles from recording engineer/producer</u> . Hollywood, Reveille Press.
7.	Cogan, R. and P. Escot (1976). <u>Sonic design : the nature of sound and music</u> . Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall.
8.	LoBrutto, V. (1994). <u>Sound-on-film : interviews with creators of film sound</u> . Westport, Conn., Praeger.
9.	Losseff, N. and J. R. Doctor (2007). <u>Silence, music, silent music</u> . Aldershot, Hampshire, England ; Burlington, Vt., Ashgate.
10.	Sexton, J. (2007). <u>Music, sound and multimedia : from the live to the virtual</u> . Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
11.	Sonnenschein, D. (2001). <u>Sound design : the expressive power of music, voice, and sound effects in cinema</u> . Studio City, CA, Michael Wiese Productions.
12.	Weis, E. and J. Belton (1985). <u>Film sound : theory and practice</u> . New York, Columbia University Press.
13.	Whittington, W. (2007). <u>Sound design &amp; science fiction</u> . Austin, TX, University of Texas Press
14.	Film Sound <a href="http://www.FilmSound.org">http://www.FilmSound.org</a>

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Nil
2.	