



# RTA 311

Production: Intermediate Audio  
Fall 2014

|                 |                    |                               |       |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------|
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| Lab Assistants: | Kevin Konarzewski  | kevkon@ryerson.ca             | x7525 |

Note: All instructors are available by appointment.

## About the Course

RTA 311 is a second year audio production theory course mixed with a hands-on production environment. Students will explore various techniques and theory for creating audio-based communication including music recording and audio for media such as film, television, and radio.

## Calendar Course Description

Building on the audio skills acquired in RTA 104, BDC 101 or BDC 191, this course continues to introduce students to various audio production practices. Through a series of guided workshops and assignments in a supervised laboratory, students will produce content for a variety of audio delivery systems. Students will develop their knowledge of audio production tools, and gain an understanding of the teamwork and interpersonal skills necessary to create successful audio and radio productions. (Formerly BDC 301).

Lecture + Lab: 6 hrs.

Prerequisites: BDC 191 or RTA 104

Course Weight: 2.00

## Objectives

The objectives of this course are:

1. To build on the creative and operational skills developed in the first year of the program;
2. To develop your ability to use and comprehend contemporary audio production skills by using the tools of the trade while gaining an in depth knowledge of the theory behind them;
3. To allow you to explore and develop a sense of the power and emotion of audio and music communication;
4. To reinforce industry expectations of creativity and communication effectiveness within time deadlines.
5. To work as a class team (shared learning) and in small project groups in both ambiguous and structured environments.

## Course Format

The class will meet each week for six hours. This time will be divided between a two-hour theory lecture and a four-hour lab.

**Note:** All lectures and labs are compulsory

## Facilities

Rotations will be held in various studios and teaching spaces within the RCC. The primary lab for Pro Tools teaching and practice will be RCC 229. This lab will be available for 24-hour drop-in time, excluding periods when there are classes scheduled for this lab. Other rotations will be held in the audio studios within the RCC and IMA facilities. These need to be booked through the Equipment Distribution Centre or IMA equipment cage.

**Note:** Due to constant demand, studio time may be scarce at certain times of the year. So, use your time wisely and plan to book ahead.

## What to Bring to Class

Please always bring your headphones to every lab class, as well as a USB2 key and/or portable drive. You will find purchasing a Firewire 800 drive to be a very useful investment.

## Blackboard ([my.ryerson.ca](http://my.ryerson.ca)):

BDC301 will utilize Ryerson's Blackboard system throughout the term. Blackboard will house all lecture notes used in the theory lecture. Students and instructors will engage in questions and debates within Blackboard's message boards. As well, we plan to host all of the equipment and software manuals for the tools used within this course.

Visit the "Equipment Distribution Centre" organization on Blackboard to find pertinent details about their services, hours, booking procedures and fine system. Also available here are general audio/video/digital media tutorials, equipment guides and studio guides.

## Tests

There is a quiz during the term. This quiz will focus on material studied within the theory and lab portions of the class. The quiz will be multiple choice.

In addition, there is a technical practical exam. During exam week, students will be tested at an appointed time.

## Deliverables

Students must complete the following projects (additional detail to follow on Blackboard):

1. **Drama/Comedy** (Group of 3)  
Make them howl with laughter or weep in sorrow with your own dramatic or comedic production. Use multiple actors, rich SFX, panning, processing, and razor sharp timing to drag your audience into a world of your creation.
2. **Audio for Video** (Group of 3)  
Your team will produce a video. More importantly, your team will create a video to add impact, drama, and polish to the production.
3. **Mixing** (Individual)  
Each student uses the same pre-recorded tracks, but every mix is different. Utilize the tools and techniques learned in the semester and make your mix stand out from the rest.
4. **Music Recording** (Group of 4)  
Find a solo musician or small band and record them. We're looking for quality, not quantity, so record only one song and make it shine. The project will require tracking, processing, mixing, and editing the final production.
5. **Student Journal** (Individual)  
Each student will submit a final journal or blog itemizing their total time required in the labs and studios to complete all assignments. Students will critically summarize their learning experience in both the theory and lab portions of the course.

## Participation

A participation mark worth 7.5% will be assessed by your instructor. It will be based on attendance, contribution to group work, effort, ability to follow instructions and meet deadlines, and attitude towards the course material, fellow students, and instructors. **You are expected to attend all lab classes and be there on time.** Missing classes will result in a lower participation mark, possibly of zero. Similarly, being late for class will also diminish your participation mark significantly. Students should discuss absences or lates with their professor as credit may be given in extenuating circumstances.

While there are two separate lab sections for the course, you are required attend the section you are assigned to. Attending the alternate section will only be allowed in special circumstances and requires instructor approval in advance.

# Schedule

## Week 1

Lab - September 3 & 8

### **Studio Tours & Overview**

Finlay, Kevin

*RCC 229*

### **Pro Tools Refresher**

Finlay, Kevin

*RCC 229*

Lecture - September 4

Course Outline, Introductions, What is Sound?

## Week 2

Lab - September 10 & 15

### **Demo: Pro Tools Advanced Routing**

Finlay, Kevin

*RCC 229*

### **Workshop: C24 Studio Operation**

Finlay

*RCC 346A*

### **Workshop: Multitrack Studio Operation**

Kevin

*RCC 342*

Lecture - September 11

Frequency & Spectrum

## Week 3

Lab - September 17 & 22

### **Microphones Demonstration & Pro Tools**

### **Automation, Playlists, & Grouping**

Finlay

*RCC 229*

### **Workshop: Live Radio Drama**

Kevin

*RCC 342*

Lecture - September 18

Amplitude

## Week 4

Lab - September 24 & 29

### **Processing in Pro Tools**

Finlay, Kevin

*RCC 229*

### **Musical Timelines & Editing**

Finlay, Kevin

*RCC 229*

Lecture - September 25

Time

## Week 5

Lab - October 1 & 6

### **Solo Artist Tracking**

Finlay

*RCC 342*

### **IMA302 Workshop**

Kevin

*IMA-302*

Lecture - October 2

Noise

## Week 6 & 7

Lab - October 8, 20, 22 & 27

### **Band Tracking Workshop**

Brian

*RCC 342*

### **Beats, Loops, & MIDI Workshop**

Kevin

*RCC 229*

Lecture - October 9

Microphones

Lecture - October 23

Quiz & Critical Feedback: Radio Drama Assignment

## Week 8

Lab - October 29 & November 3

### **Music Mixing Workshop**

Finlay

*RCC 229*

Lecture - October 30

Space

## Week 9

Lab - November 5 & 10

### **Field Recording Workshop**

Finlay, Kevin

*IMA-302*

Lecture - November 6

Speakers & Acoustics

## Week 10

Lab - November 12 & 17

Post Audio Workshop

Finlay, Kevin

*IMA-302, RCC 346A*

Lecture - November 13

Live Audio

## Week 11

Lab - November 19 & 24

### **In-Class Practical Test Preparation**

*RCC 348,346A*

### **Analog Mixing Console**

RCC 229

### **C24 Automation**

RCC 164

Lecture - November 20

Field Recording

## Week 12

Lab - November 26 & December 1

Listening Party!!!!

*RCC 229*

Lecture - November 27

What are we hearing?

## Assignments

### Pass/Fail Assignments

Pass/fail assignments are to be completed within scheduled lab time or on student's lab time. Failure to complete all pass/fail assignments will result in an overall pass/fail grade of ZERO.

### Evaluation

| Due       | Assignment              | Grade |
|-----------|-------------------------|-------|
| Week 5    | Radio Drama/Comedy      | 10%   |
| Week 9    | Quiz                    | 10%   |
| Week 10   | Music Recording         | 20%   |
| Week 11   | In-Class Practical Test | 10%   |
| Week 12   | Audio Video             | 20%   |
| 'Week 13' | Mixing (Individual)     | 10%   |
| 'Week 13' | Journal                 | 7.5%  |
|           | Participation           | 7.5%  |
|           | Pass/Fail Assignments   | 5%    |
|           | <b>Total</b>            | 100%  |

Note: Graded assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the theory lecture for the week specified.

## Grade interpretation for Audio Production Assignments

The following is a guide to help you interpret the letter grades you receive on your assignments. Please see the Ryerson Course Calendar for further information on conversion of percentages to letter grades and grade point averages.

**A+** (90-100) is not only flawless and ready for broadcast, but also exhibits extraordinary creativity. The production and script demonstrate a deep understanding of the goal(s) of the assignment and a mastery of the required skills. The production is of such quality that the listener would be very engaged for the duration and would consider the production memorable and outstanding.

**A** (85-89) is broadcast quality--flawless. It also exhibits a high degree of creativity, mastery of required skills, and is interesting and engaging to the listener.

**A-** (80-84) is nearly perfect...an 'A' with minor production or scripting flaw(s).

**B** range (70-79): Productions in the B range have met all the requirements of the assignment in a competent manner, but have one or more production or scripting flaws\*. Some productions in the B range may be extraordinarily creative and engaging but exhibit production flaws. Others may be technically perfect but exhibit scripting flaws.

**C** range (60-69) is for productions that have significant production and/or scripting problems.

**D** range (50-59) is for productions with major problem(s) and/or did not follow the requirements for the assignment and/or did not meet the timing requirements.

**F** may be assigned when a production fails to meet satisfactory technical and/or scripting requirements, and/or does not follow the requirements for the assignment. An F will be assigned in the case of scripts that contravene any CRTC regulations (e.g. contains offensive or libelous material). An F may be assigned in the case of a production that runs longer than the maximum time. An F may be assigned in the case of an assignment that cannot be played back (i.e. the student did not preview the final copy before handing in and there is a problem with the tape or CD that prevents it from being played back).

**Production flaws** may include problems with mix (relative levels of sound elements), recording (distortion, popping p's, improper mic technique, poorly recorded material, etc.), editing (words or music cut off or otherwise improperly edited), pacing, flow, placement of sound, overall levels, etc.

**Scripting flaws** may include scripts which do not address the target audience, scripts that insult the audience, scripts that are not written in broadcast style, a message that is unclear, wordiness, improper word usage, etc. Scripting flaws may also include a script that is not interesting or engaging, a script that is intended to be funny but isn't, or a script that is intended to be dramatic or serious but instead comes off as farcical or cheesy.

## Appendix (General information for all RTA students)

### Student Codes of Conduct

All students are required to adhere to all relevant University policies, such as the Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct (<http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/senate/policies/pol61.pdf>) and the Student Code of Academic Conduct (<http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/senate/policies/pol60.pdf>).

### The Ryerson University Undergraduate Course Calendar

This is your resource for all information relating to academics, including curriculum, course descriptions, significant dates (including last date to drop a course without academic penalty), academic standings, The Student Code of Academic & Non-Academic Conduct, etc. The Ryerson University Undergraduate Course Calendar is available online at <http://www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/calendars/>.

### RTA Website

At [www.ryersonrta.com](http://www.ryersonrta.com) you will find information about the curriculum, course outlines, scholarships, student groups, staff & faculty, studios & facilities, etc.

### Blackboard Course Website

Blackboard is an online course tool which may include an online discussion board, course documents such as the syllabus and lecture notes, announcements, an area where your grades are posted, etc. If your professor has set up a Blackboard site for this course, you'll find it at <http://my.ryerson.ca>.

### RTA Online

RTA Online is an Organization on Blackboard that contains templates for storyboards, production paperwork, etc., as well as online tutorials for software and equipment used in classes and labs. Find it under 'Organizations' on your [my.ryerson.ca](http://my.ryerson.ca) homepage.

### Ryerson Email Account

The RTA School of Media will often send you important information by email (e.g. scholarship information, reminders of important dates, notification of meetings and/or events, internship opportunities and job postings, etc.). Correspondence from RTA and from your professors will be sent ONLY to your Ryerson email account. It is your obligation to ensure that you activate your account and check it regularly, or have it forwarded to an account you check regularly. Please use only your Ryerson account for sending emails to staff & faculty. See below for accessing your Ryerson email account.



## Activating Your Ryerson Online Identity

To access many of Ryerson's online resources, you must first activate your Ryerson online identity by completing a series of web forms available via <http://www.ryerson.ca/accounts/>. During the activation process, you will obtain a username and create your initial password. Once activated, your Ryerson online identity provides you with access to:

- Google Apps
- Ryerson email
- The Central Computer Labs including the Library and KHW71
- The my.ryerson portal and learning system
- RAMSS (via <https://my.ryerson.ca>)
- Other servers and applications needed

## Notice to Students with Disabilities:

Students with any disability (e.g. learning, medical, physical, sensory), illness, or condition that requires academic adaptations should discuss the situation with the professor and/or contact the Access Centre (<http://www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre>).

## Written Assignments:

All written assignments are expected to be properly formatted and cited using **MLA style** (unless otherwise indicated by your professor). Guides and references for using MLA style can be found through the Ryerson University Library as well as the Writing Centre. See <http://writingcentre.blog.ryerson.ca/files/2012/05/MLA.pdf>

## Fact-Based Media Assignments

For assignments or projects in which real people and/or real events are to be featured (e.g. news stories, features, documentaries, interviews, etc.), students are expected to adhere to the highest standard of truth in reporting: all information included should be checked for accuracy and any guests/interviews/sound clips/etc. used must be real. Fabricating interviews or information, or using actors/friends to pose as someone they are not, etc. for the sake of an assignment are serious transgressions of media ethics and will not be tolerated.

## English as a Second Language:

Ryerson University offers support to students who may require improvement in their overall English language communication skills. Please visit English Language Support at [www.ryerson.ca/student-services/els/](http://www.ryerson.ca/student-services/els/)

## Accommodation of Student Religious Observance:

At the start of the term, students who have religious observance obligations which will lead to absences from campus or academic activities during the semester should download the "Student Declaration of Religious Observance" form from <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf>. Present a copy of the form to the professor **within the first two weeks of classes**. The professor and student will then consult to reach an agreement on a reasonable means to address the situation.

## Learning Success

Learning Success (<http://www.ryerson.ca/learningsuccess>) helps students make the transition to university learning, develop sound learning strategies through tutoring options and course-based study groups, and achieve their academic potential by providing services in both traditional and virtual learning environments. Learning Success offers free workshops for students such as: Note-taking, Managing Tasks and Time, Ways of Learning, Critical Reading, Test Preparation and Test Anxiety, etc.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the University as “claiming the words, ideas, artistry, drawings, images or data of another person as if they were your own.” (Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2). According to the Code, plagiarism includes:

- i. copying another person’s work (including information found on the Internet and unpublished materials) without appropriate referencing;
- ii. presenting someone else’s work, opinions or theories as if they are your own;
- iii. presenting another’s substantial compositional changes to an assignment as your own;
- iv. working collaboratively without permission of the instructor on an assignment, and then submitting it as if it was created solely by you; or
- v. submitting the same work, for credit, in two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructor(s). (Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2.)

Usually one associates plagiarism with written works but it can include any work such as photographs/artwork, Internet materials, video, audio, and digital media. **The University penalties for plagiarism can be severe, ranging from getting zero on the assignment up to, in cases of prior academic dishonesty, suspension or expulsion.** Please note that you may be required to submit some or all of your written assignments to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with the instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Useful links to help you understand and avoid plagiarism:

- Ryerson’s Academic Integrity web site: <http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity/>
- Student Code of Academic Conduct policy: <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf>

## Cheating:

Cheating is defined by Ryerson University as:

- i. using materials or aids not expressly allowed by the instructor in an examination or test;
- ii. copying another person's answer(s) to an examination or test question; copying another person's answers to individually assigned projects;
- iii. consulting with another person or unauthorized materials outside of an examination room during the examination period (e.g. discussing an exam or consulting materials during an emergency evacuation or when permitted to use a washroom);
- iv. improperly submitting an answer to a test or examination question completed, in whole or part, outside the examination room unless specifically permitted by the examination format;
- v. resubmitting altered test or examination work after it has already been evaluated;
- vi. presenting falsified or fabricated material, including research results; or
- vii. improperly obtaining, through deceit, theft, bribery, collusion or otherwise, access to examination paper(s) or set of questions, or other confidential information.

(Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2)

**The University penalties for cheating can be severe, ranging from getting zero on the assignment or test up to, in cases of prior academic dishonesty, suspension or expulsion.**

## Use of Laptops, Cell Phones, and Other Mobile Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Students are advised that because various learning & teaching activities may be enhanced or diminished by use of mobile devices, it is up to each professor to determine when & how such devices can or should be used by students during any given class.

Students may not take pictures, video recordings, or sound recordings in class without express permission from the professor.

## RTA Policy on Offensive Materials

RTA School of Media desires to foster an environment that promotes and embraces the principles of freedom of expression, academic inquiry, and creativity. Within this context we all have a responsibility to respect the rights and freedoms of others, including the right to study and work in an environment which is free of offensive materials.

The term offensive may be used to refer to material that:

- is overtly sexual, and/or
- contains profanity, and/or
- perpetuates stereotypes (e.g. racial, gender, sexual, religious, etc.), and/or
- depicts violence, and/or
- denigrates members of marginalized groups based on various factors such as sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, gender, disability, etc.

Should you not be sure if your content is offensive, please follow up with your instructor before proceeding with your project. Please review the full policy which can be found in the RTA Student Handbook on our website:

[www.ryersonrta.com](http://www.ryersonrta.com)