DRAM 2620
Sound Design
DRAM 2620-001, Monday and Wednesday, 10-11:15, Culbreth, Room B010
DRAM 2620-002, Tuesday and Thursday, 11-12:15, Culbreth, Room B010
COREQUISITE: DRAM 2630 (Required for Drama Majors, others optional)
Instructed by Michael Rasbury

OFFICE:
Michael Rasbury, Room 208B, Culbreth Theatre
Appointments can be scheduled by phone at (434) 982-4542 or by email at
mr2xk@virginia.edu. I check email daily.

COURSE GOAL:
We will explore Sound Design for Theatre and Media through discussion, critical listening, demonstration of music and sound, and creative application of digital sound editing for media. Techniques investigated include editing pre-recorded music, creating realistic sound environments, representing visual art with sound, three-dimensional sound, and sound creation for video and theatre.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
DRAM 2620 is an introductory course designed to stimulate understanding of both the aesthetic and technical aspects of sound and sound design. Students will be introduced to the properties of sound, sound-reproducing equipment, and a series of exercises designed to reveal the process of Sound Design for the Theatre, using the computer as a primary tool for creating and editing sound. Students will be responsible for completing multiple sound designs. Each assignment will be unique; some will involve recreating actual realistic environments and others will involve a more abstract approach. Although several class periods are reserved for lecture, most scheduled class periods are reserved for completion of the designs. Source material for each exercise will be provided, but students may also record sounds.

REQUIREMENTS:
Notebook (for classroom notes)
Full Size Stereo Headphones with 1/4" adapter (for monitoring)
Here are some examples:
http://www.sweetwater.com/c412--Headphones and
http://www.musiciansfriend.com/headphones

Students will be responsible for all work regardless of computer failures. A backup is recommended at the end of each class. Various backup methods may be considered including Home Directory Service, USB Flash Drive, etc. There is an available USB port underneath the left side of the computer's keyboard.

All files should be saved in the "Student" volume located each computer's desktop. All computers in this space utilize "DeepFreeze," software that will restore machines back to their original settings upon restart, despite changes made by users. The only volume that is not erased and restored on these computers is the "Student" volume.

To gain access to B010 outside of class time, you must enter the code into the lockbox on the door. The key must remain in the lock box at all times. The box must be reset by reentering the code in order to put the key back into the lockbox. The door must remain shut at all times. You many not enter during other scheduled classes in BO010. Do not share the code.

COURSE CALENDAR AND GRADING:
There will be no midterm or final exam. There will be multiple projects and each project will be worth 100 points. Individual project grades will be determined by the attached rubrics; grading charts outlining all assessment criteria

100-90= A, 89-80= B, 79-70= C, 69-60= D, and below 60= F

Design Statements
Before starting each project, a design statement must be submitted to me via email as a ".doc," or ".rtf" file (see attached calendar for due dates). The file name for the statement should be "lastnamefirstname_p#". A design statement is a declaration of purpose and plan for construction of an idea. The design statement should include the designer's goal, a proposed plan for accomplishing the goal, and a list of potential sounds and content.

A collection of high quality, digital recordings is available as source media stored at the "Sound Effects" server alias on each desktop. Students may also use:
http://www.freesound.org/, Free Sound Effects
http://www.earthrecordings.org Michael Rasbury's website
Any other freely available sounds from websites or other media

Upon completing a project, submit two versions. First, export or "bounce" your mix to the .mp3 format in stereo. Name the file "lastnamefirstname.mp3" and email it to mr2xk@virginia.edu by 8 AM on the due date. Secondly, upload your entire project folder and all its contents to my drop box using the "Sound Design Dropbox" alias on the desktop.

I occasionally post selected projects on my University of Virginia Sound Design website. If you have any objections to this, please notify me.

Project 1, 15% of Final Grade
Simple Music Editing and Exporting, Students will edit music and/or audio by rearranging the parts of the original piece(s). Grading will be determined by the following rubric:
http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p1_musicediting.pdf

> *Design Statement Due September 10 (section 1), September 6 (section 2)*
> *Work Time- Three Class Periods*
> *Present in Class on September 19, September 18*

Project 2, 30% of Final Grade
Creating Realistic Environments, *Students will use source material suggest a particular realistic environment.* Grading will be determined by the following rubric:
http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p2_realism.pdf

> *Design Statement Due September 17, September 13*
> *Work Time- Seven Class Periods*
> *Present in Class on October 24, October 23*

Project 3, 30% of Final Grade
Creating Abstract Environments, Students will use MIDI sequences and audio collage to create a sound design representative of another work of visual art. The results of this project will be presented using surround sound. Grading will be determined by the following rubric:
http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p3_metaphor.pdf

> *Design Statement Due on October 24, October 23*
> *Work Time- Four Class Periods*
> *Present in Class on November 12, November 8*

Project 4, 25% of Final Grade

> *Design Statement Due November 12, November 8*
> *Work Time- Seven Class Periods*
> *Present on December 4, December 6*

Option 1 (Suggested for Drama Majors and Minors)
Sound Design for a Script, Students will create sound design elements for a section of a script. A design statement and cue list must be submitted for approval before embarking on this option. The project may be completed using any software available in the lab. Final playback of the project must utilize QLab as a means for executing the design. Grading will be determined by the following rubric:
http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p4_script.pdf

Option 2
Designing Sound for Video, Students will provide stereo or surround audio score for a ten-minute or less film or video. A design statement and proposed video clip must be submitted for approval before embarking on this option. Grading will be determined by the following rubric:

http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p4_video.pdf

Option 3
Make Your Own Project (requires permission,) *Students may suggest a unique project that synthesizes techniques and aspects from the previous projects.*
Grading will be determined by the following rubric:
http://people.virginia.edu/~mr2xk/classes/dram2620/dram2620rubrics/sounddesignrubric_p4_originalmusic.pdf

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
You should make every effort to be present at each class period. No unexcused absences are permitted. Please notify me before the absence and provide an official written notification after the absence to count as an excused absence. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of your final grade percentage by three (3) percentage points per absence.

IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE:
September 11, Last Day for Adding New Courses, Last Day to Elect the AU (Audit) Option, and Last Day to Change to or from "Credit/No Credit" Option.
September 12, Last Day to Drop a Class.
October 23, Last Day to Withdraw from a Course.

Students needing special accommodations are encouraged to discuss the need with the professor as soon as possible.

The syllabus and/or each rubric is subject to change at any time, without prior notice, and it is the responsibility of the student to keep informed of changes, new material, or missed content.