

# **“Sounds of Brands / Brands of Sounds”**

*ADV 499-30: Special Topics:  
Sound Branding*

# “Sounds of Brands / Brands of Sounds”

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**Overview:** Students will learn about the role of sound in media. They will gain critical faculties to evaluate sound. They will produce projects that will help them develop creative skills to employ sound.

**Grading:** Grades will be based 70% on project assignments and 30% on class participation (discussion, preparedness, exercises, attendance).

**Out-of-class Expectations:** There will be weekly assignments, a mix of projects, exercises, readings, and viewings. In all, approximately nine hours of work will be assigned outside of class each week.

**Basics:** No books, hardware, or special supplies required, presuming you (1) own or have access to a computer and (2) have a small recording device. You will be required occasionally to rent a video, watch a TV show, see a movie, or visit a museum or other location.

## Part 1/3: Listening to Media

### **Week 1: Listening**

Overview: This week serves as an introduction to the course and to the cultures, theories, and practices that it explores.

### **Week 2: A Brief History of Sound**

Overview: We'll trace overlapping paths through the history of sound, beginning with the human conception of sound, and then exploring the developing role of sound in modern media.

## **Week 3: The Score**

Overview: Music and sound in film and television, its purposes, and what we can learn from its history of development.

## Part 2/3: Sounds of Brands

### **Week 4: The Jingle**

Overview: History of that corniest and, yet, most essential aspect of brand sound: the song that depicts a product and/or brand.

### **Week 5: Product Design**

Overview: How sounds are part of products, from the self-evident (alarm clocks, start-up sounds on computers) to the less so (electric cars, motorcycle engines, food).

## **Week 6: The Recording Session**

Overview: We'll visit a recording studio and learn about how professional sound is recorded, who the decision-makers are in a production, the many steps that go into the recording process, and the kinds of decisions that are made during a recording.

## **Week 7: Retail Space**

Overview: How music is an essential part of the construction of retail environments, from shopping to restaurants.

## **Part 2/3: Sounds of Brands** *(Continued)*

### **Week 8: Tools**

Overview: An introduction to tools that anyone can use to do basic sound production.

### **Week 9: The Public Voice**

Overview: We'll look at the human voice as a sonic element (in contrast to it being simply an execution of copywriting).

### **Week 10: The Explicit and the Implicit**

Overview: We'll look back at the various threads we've explored thus



far, and discern two key types of branded sound: the explicit reference and the implicit reference.

## **Part 3/3: Brands of Sounds**

### **Week 11: Iconography**

Overview: What sound looks like, how it is depicted visually.

### **Week 12: Social Networks**

Overview: How music functions in online social networks.

### **Week 13: Digital Retail**

Overview: How music is sold online.

### **Week 14: Equipment**

Overview: How music equipment is sold.

# **Week 15: Selling an Album, Selling a Band**

Overview: Why is music PR so broken?