

## SYLLABUS

### Course Description

Radio technology permeates our culture—literally. Radio waves constantly surround us and even pass through us. So what is this strange technology that travels through the ether and allows us to randomly hear Mozart, Lil' Wayne or Kings of Leon? How does radio (read: those who control it) construct the cultures and genres of music that we find with the twist of a dial? What other information does radio carry, and who is listening? In the age of the internet, digital television and cell phone video, how is it that this original wireless medium is still important?

In this course students will learn about the development and history of radio from the controversial legacies of Marconi and Tesla to satellite and internet radio and the podcast. They will examine radio's influence on how we listen to music and receive/gather information. Students will read essays from a broad range of disciplines that examine, through discussion and writing, how radio content is formulated and disseminated. Students will also analyze and write about the local airwaves and their own histories and experiences with the medium.

Students will be expected to complete weekly reading and listening assignments (from materials handed out or accessed electronically) and be prepared to discuss these in class. Students will be expected to listen to various radio broadcasts and to analyze the content. Also they will write annotations based on weekly reading assignments as well as a paper describing/documenting their relationship to radio.

### Course Learning Goals:

1. Students will gain an understanding of radio's role as a carrier of cultural/political messages and meaning through reading and writing about radio as well as through listening across the dial and into the digital realm.
2. Students will begin to develop a critical vocabulary to describe how these messages are encoded in various kinds of broadcasts, and will examine who controls what is broadcast.
3. Students will further develop writing skills through multiple writing assignments spanning the personal essay, annotation of critical readings, and close analysis from listening.

### Required Text

There is no required text for this class. Students will access course material electronically. FYI—we will mainly be reading from *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, Michelle Hilmes and Lason Loviglio ed.; *Radio Territories*, Eric Granly Jensen and Brandon LaBelle ed. as well as a handful of other texts as directed by the instructor.

### Recommended Materials

A Radio and a notebook for in-class writing and for note-taking.

*The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr. \*Available free online at <http://bartleby.net/141/>.

*A Pocket Style Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.*, by Diana Hacker: [www.dianahacker.com/pocket](http://www.dianahacker.com/pocket)

### Assignments and Grading

There are no exams for this course. Your grade for this class will be based on in-class participation, and writing assignments. **We may also do some assignments in-class and in-class work cannot be made up!** For each week an assignment is late, your grade will be dropped by one full letter (A- becomes B-, B+ becomes C+, etc.). **I do not accept papers by email – if your assignment is late, it is late.** You may leave it in my inbox and I will pick it up before the next class. **Additionally, no papers will be accepted after our final class meeting. Also, all assignments that are to be handed in for grading must be word-processed, double spaced in 12-point type. Handwritten assignments (unless otherwise specified) will NOT be accepted.**

**Your grade will be based on the following criteria:**

Class Participation (including attendance)	25%
Personal Essay (2-3 pages)	15%
Listening Assignments (5% each x5 -- 1 page)	25%
Reading Annotations (5% each x7 – 1-2 pages)	35%

**Attendance**

Attendance is crucial. According to CCNY’s attendance policy, after two weeks’ worth of unexcused absences (for a class that meets once per week, that equals two absences) you can be asked to drop the class at the instructor’s discretion. I will treat twice as many late arrivals the same way – two late arrivals equals one full absence.

**Additional Questions or Concerns Not Covered in Class:**

I can be available to meet with students before or after class by appointment. The best way to reach me during the week is via email—I will normally respond within 24 hours. On the weekends you may expect a response on Monday.

**Classroom Protocol:**

I strongly discourage eating and drinking in class – please note that we will normally take a short break mid-class. Please consider this your time to refresh yourself.

Talking during class – Please be considerate of your fellow students. If you have a question or a comment, please raise your hand. I will address your concern.

Group work—We will occasionally divide into small groups or pairs to work together in forming our ideas about the topics at hand. You are encouraged to get to know your fellow students and to listen to one another.

Pluralism—A learning environment is one that has space for all points of view. We will make that space in our class, which means that we will sometimes agree to disagree.

**Policy on Academic Integrity:**

“Academic dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion...”—From the CUNY policy on academic integrity. Please see this link for the full policy concerning the matters of cheating and plagiarism:

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/upload/academicintegrity.pdf>

**SCHEDULE**  
(content and order subject to change)

<b>Thursday, Jan. 28</b> Syllabus Review/How Radio Works/History Write Personal Essay (memories, radio in your life today, radio and work)	<b>Thursday, March 25</b> Radio and Race Assignment: Giant Ear)))
<b>Thursday, February 4</b> History Continued Ken Burns Film — <i>Empire of the Air</i>	<b>Thursday, April 1</b> <b>NO CLASS – CUNY SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Thursday, February 11</b> Readings in Radio Culture	<b>Thursday, April 8</b> Radio and Gender
<b>Thursday, February 18</b> <b>NO CLASS – CCNY MONDAY SCHEDULE</b>	<b>Thursday, April 15</b> Broadcasting/Music
<b>Thursday, February 25</b> Readings in Radio Culture	<b>Thursday, April 22</b> Broadcasting/Public vs. Commercial
<b>Thursday, March 4</b> Readings in Radio Culture	<b>Thursday, April 29</b> Alternative and Pirate Radio
<b>Thursday, March 11</b> Readings in Radio Culture	<b>Thursday, May 6</b> Listening: The Public and the Private
<b>Thursday, March 18</b> Readings in Radio Culture	<b>Thursday, May 13</b> “Transmission Arts” Imaginary Landscape No. 4
	<b>Thursday May 20, FINAL CLASS MEETING</b>

**Other Important Dates:**

Thursday, February 18 – Last day to withdraw from class before “W” grade begins

Friday, February 19 – “W” grade begins for withdrawal from classes

Thursday, April 8 – Last day to withdraw to receive “W” grade

**Some Other Important CCNY Informational Links:**

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/> -- CCNY’s homepage and portal to all things CCNY (all links below accessible through this link.)

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/library/> -- Links to CUNY-wide library resources including library catalogs.

<https://pelican.admin.ccny.cuny.edu/wm/eml/login.html> -- CCNY’s email interface.

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/current/registrar/>-- Registrar’s homepage; includes links to academic calendars, transcripts, bills and other important student business.

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/current/registrar/calendar/Academic-Calendar-Spring-10.cfm> -- a direct link to the 2010 Spring semester academic calendar

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/prospective/cwe/> -- CWE home page

**AND FINALLY...**

To access course materials, assignments and various class related items visit my blog:

[www.jonnyfarrow.net](http://www.jonnyfarrow.net). Go under the header “Teaching” and find Wireless Music—SP10, or you may follow this direct link: [http://jonnyfarrow.net/?page\\_id=121](http://jonnyfarrow.net/?page_id=121).