Film 60 Sound for Motion Pictures  
syllabus  Spring 2004  Dan Olmsted (510) 655-4390

The class examines audio recording, editing and mixing, for film and video. Students use the department's recording gear and the editing facilities to complete a series of practice assignments, class film shoots and a final project. We will also discuss sound design, multitrack recording, time code synchronization and computer-based sound editing. In detail, we will cover:

I. The history of sound technology and technique since 1900. How sound has shaped the art of film.

II. Skills for recording sound in the field and on location.

III. Basic Training in analog & digital post production. 16mm transfer, track assembly and editing. Creation of layered sound tracks. Sound design using VHS equipment.

IV. Production Sound. Sync sound recording during a film shoot.

V. Sound design. Spotting a film for added sound, and the editing of dialog, music and effects tracks. Multitrack recording. Digital sound editing techniques.

VI. Mixing. Use of mag film dubbers and recorder, DAW workstation, the mixing console with its outboard gear, and double-system projection. Dynamics processing, equalization, reverb, etc.

A textbook, Film Sound Theory and Practice, and a class reader (from Copy Edge), provide material for discussions. Students are graded according to their attendance, participation, and completion of following work:

1. Basic Training 16mm & VHS editing assignments.
2. Midterm 'sound collage' project.
3. Final Project, short film or video.
4. 2 short papers (1-2 pages each)
5. Participation in group film shoots
6. Midterm and/or Final test

Previous film experience or interest in sound is helpful but not required. Expenses include the textbook and class reader ($50), and various sound and film supplies ($20-30).

Film 60 covers the whole process in enough depth for students to feel comfortable working on their own film
projects. And the class will examine how sound has influenced the art of cinema over the years.