SAMP III: Studio Production

MUS 247
Syllabus
Portland State University School of Music
Credits: 3
Pre-Requisites : MUS 246
Instructor: Anwyn Willette
Office: 243 D
e-mail: willette@pdx.edu
Location: LH326F Computer Lab

Catalogue Description:

Studio Production puts to use the concepts covered in the first two courses in the PSU Sound Arts and Music Production program at the service of "record production," i.e. the process of recording and producing song-length musical products. Utilizing a series of increasingly complex assignments, students will work through the music production process from inception to distribution. The course includes an examination of the commercial music production business.

Organization:

The ten-week course is organized into weekly modules each of which addresses a particular production arena. The structure is loosely based on the chronology of this type of project, from inception and setup to completion and distribution. Each weekly module may contain classroom instruction in a particular topic, reading in a text or other research, a production project tailored to that subject, a quiz, and/or personal exploration outside the classroom. An overarching term project ties the subject matter together; the course ends with a student presentation of term work.

Objectives:

- To review and expand on concepts covered in MUS 245 and 246
- To bring students to an advanced level of productions skills
- To add special focus on mixing, mastering, and distribution processes
- To introduce project management skills and resources
- To expose students to the music production business

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will have
- Reviewed and expanded sequencing skills in DAW (software)
- Experienced intermediate recording projects and setups

- Studied and utilized digital audio
- Combined MIDI and digital audio in complete production projects
- Increased mixing and mastering understanding & skills
- Explored advanced file sharing and distribution practices
- Managed a large project successfully

Topics:

- Acoustics
- Electronics and microphones
- Digital audio recording
- Digital audio editing
- Audio overdubbing
- MIDI sequencing and notation
- Use of software instruments
- Mixing
- Mastering
- Archiving & distribution
- The commercial music production business

Text:

Understanding and Crafting the Mix, 3rd edition by William Moylan
ISBN: 9780415842815 (paperback)

Understanding and Crafting the Mix, 3rd edition provides the framework to identify, evaluate, and shape your recordings with clear and systematic methods. Featuring numerous exercises, this third edition allows you to develop critical listening and analytical skills to gain greater control over the quality of your recordings.   Sample production sequences and descriptions of the recording engineer's role as composer, conductor, and performer provide you with a clear view of the entire recording process.

Available at the PSU bookstore. Purchase: $48.95; Rental $36.71

Weekly Outline:

Week 1:   Orientation

Students review acoustic concepts, microphones & audio interface.

- o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

- o *EQ Ear Training 1. Low, Mid, Highs*

- o *Project: Set-up Ear Training Model*

- o *Reading: UtM: Chapter 1. The Elements of Sound and Audio Recording, Chapter 2. The Aesthetic and Artistic Elements of Sound in Audio Recording and Chapter 3. The Musical Message and the Listener*

- o *Ear Training 1 Quiz: Low, Mid, Highs*

- o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 1, 2 and 3; course syllabus and deadline*

- • *Project: Audio Editing Guidelines: Radio Commercial*

Week 2:   Digital Audio Production

Students review, digital audio concepts, digital audio editing, audio formats, project sharing

- o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

- o *EQ Ear Training2: Low: Deep-Bass, Low-Bass, Mid-Bass, Upper-Bass*

- o *Reading: UtM Chapter 4. Listening and Evaluating Sound for the Aspiring Audio Professional, Chapter 5. Fundamental Listening Skill*

- o *EQ Ear Training 2 Quiz: Low: Deep-Bass, Low-Bass, Mid-Bass, Upper-Bass*

- o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 4 and 5*

- • *Project: Radio Commercial Due*

Week 3:   Advanced MIDI Sequencing 1

Students review MIDI sequencing

o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

o *EQ Ear Training 3. Mid: Low-Mid, Mid-Mid, Upper-Mid*

o *Project: Sequencing recording, editing*

o *Reading:* Chapter 6. A System for Evaluating Sound, Chapter 7. Evaluating Pitch in Audio and Music Recordings

o *EQ Ear Training 3 Quiz. Mid: Low-Mid, Mid-Mid, Upper-Mid*

o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 6 and 7*

Project 2: Three minute composition: Guidelines

Week 4:   Advanced MIDI Sequencing 2

Students learn advanced MIDI sequencing processes, combining MIDI with audio in a project, automation and virtual instrument issues, notation

o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

o *EQ Ear Training 4. High: Presence- Range, High End, Extreme High*

o *Project: Advanced sequencing*

o *Reading:* Chapter 8. Evaluating Loudness in Audio and Music Recordings, Chapter 9. Evaluating Sound Quality

o *EQ Ear Training 4 Quiz. High: Presence- Range, High End, Extreme High*

o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 8 and 9*

Project 2: Three minute composition: Due

Week 5:   Advanced Recording

Students work with advanced recording techniques

o   *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

o   *Compression Ear Training*

o   *Reading:* Chapter 10. Evaluating the Spatial Elements of Two Channel Sound, Chapter 12. Complete Evaluations and Understanding Observations

o   *Project: Session Recording*

o   *Compression Ear Training Quiz*

o   *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 10 and 12*

Project 3: Multitrack recording

Final Project Guidelines

Week 6:   Mixing 1

Students examine basic mixing concepts, focus on setup

o   *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

o   *Project: Mixing*

o   *Reading:* Chapter 13. The Roles of the Recordist and the Aesthetics of Recording Production, Chapter 14. The Sounds of Recordings: Shaping Musical Ideas and Musical Expression

o   *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 13 and 14*

Final Project Check In: Song Form Plot Graph

Week 7:   Mixing 2

Students explore advanced mixing concepts

o   *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

o   *Project: Mixing completion, bouncing*

- o *Reading:* Chapter 15. Preproduction and Preliminary Stages: Embracing Reality and Defining the Materials of the Project, Chapter 16. Recording and Tracking: Capturing and Shaping the Performance

- o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapters 15 and 16*

Final Project Check In: Construction Completion

Week 8:   Mastering

   Students are introduced to mastering and finishing concepts

- o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

- o *Project: Mastering a finished mix*

- o *Reading:* Chapter 17. Crafting the Mix, and Finalizing the Production

- o *Reading Quiz: UtM: chapter 17*

Final Project Check In: Mixing Chart and Graphs

Week 9:   Archiving & Distribution

   Students archive and distribute term work

- o *Resources: D2L Tutorial Videos and supplemental Reading*

- o *Project: Archive and share term work*

- o *Quiz: None*

Final Project Check In: Final Mixing

Week 10:   Presentation

   In class, students present their work with mixing charts and critical analysis.

ATTENDANCE, CLASSROOM, and GRADING POLICIES

Attendance is required at every class and contributes to the participation component. Tardiness is not acceptable since it shows a lack of consideration and is disruptive. Please be considerate and be on time.

Being Present. <u>The most important time is now.</u> Be present during lecture and lab times. Surfing the net, answering e-mails, talking to your neighbor, being disruptive during class is rude and not acceptable.

<u>Assignments are only accepted at the time they are due</u>. If you have a documented, excused absence an assignment may be turned in at the very next class meeting or earlier. Assignments and compositions are evaluated on <u>both objective and creative merit.</u>
Letter grades will be given according to the following scale, with the upper three points in each range earning a "+" and the lower three points earning a "-":

A	-	90 – 100%
B	-	80 – 89%
C	-	70 – 79%
D	-	60 – 69%
F	-	59% or below

Assignment(s)

Weekly targeted projects
Individual term project
In-class presentation of term work

Exam(s)

Weekly quizzes

Calculation of course grade

In-class projects: 40%
Term project: 20%
Quizzes: 40%

Students will be responsible for coordinating recording sessions for their Term Project outside of class.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is critical to maintaining fair, knowledge-based learning at Portland State University. Academic misconduct in any form is a serious violation: it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of our academic community, degrades the value of a degree and puts at risk those who may eventually depend upon our students' knowledge and integrity.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, https://www.pdx.edu/drc.