



Course Outline

2026-2027 Catalog

MUS 51 - Digital Music Production I

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 34.00 Contact hours/68.00 Out of class hours/102.00 Total hours/2.00 Unit(s)

Lab: 51.00 Contact hours/0.00 Out of class hours/51.00 Total hours/1.00 Unit(s)

Total: 85.00 Contact hours/68.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

Course Description: This course is an introduction to digital music production beginning with computer system operation and file management techniques. Students will apply practical concepts of modern music composition like programming drums, recording MIDI instruments, arranging and mixing, as well as post-production techniques including compression, equalization, reverb and other audio post effects.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Apply modern mixing techniques in digital audio.
2. Use standard project and file management techniques (including cloud-based platforms).
3. Implement techniques to manage software and sound libraries.
4. Apply modern music composition techniques in digital audio workstations (DAW).
5. Navigate computer operating systems.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic

Lecture

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Navigating and using computer operating systems on Mac and PC	2.00
File structure strategies for musical projects	1.00
Setting up and using a computer recording interface	1.00
Introduction and concepts of the Digital Audio Workstation	1.00
Customizing Digital Audio Workstations preferences and audio settings	1.00
Working with loops in the Digital Audio Workstation and creating an arrangement	2.00
Create a mix using balance, pan and plugins	2.00
Recording software instruments using MIDI programming	3.00
Editing and arranging MIDI compositions	2.00
Mixing with Plugins: EQ	4.00
Mixing with Plugins: Compression	2.00
Mixing with Plugins: Effects	4.00
Apply automation to tracks and effects	1.00
Finishing the mix: bounce and deliver digital file	2.00
Composition using software instruments, loops and samples	3.00
Mixing a composition using plugins and digital processing	3.00

Total Hours: 34.00

Lab

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lab Hrs</u>
Add loops to a project and create an arrangement	6.00
Balance, pan, and create a basic mix	5.00
Recording software instruments with MIDI	6.00
Editing and arranging MIDI recordings	4.00
Apply pan, balance and gain staging techniques to a mix project	4.00
Apply compression, eq, reverb and effects	6.00
Apply automation and Master Bus setup	4.00
Composition and mix project	6.00
Record, edit and mix a podcast	4.00

Topics**Lab Hrs**

Compose, record, arrange and mix a final song

6.00

Total Hours: 51.00**Methods of Instruction**

- A. Collaborative Group Work
- B. Discussion
- C. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- D. Instructor Demonstrations
- E. Lecture
- F. Multimedia Presentations
- G. Reading Assignments

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Projects
- C. Homework
- D. Lab Projects
- E. Class Discussion

Examples of Assignments**Reading Assignments**

1. Read an article on features and uses of reverb and share your findings in the discussion assignment.
2. Read an article on getting balance in a mix and create a Google Slides presentation with 5 slides sharing your findings for the class discussion.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a 500-word review of a recording interface, discussing the features and uses in the canvas discussion created for this assignment.
2. Write a 500-word essay describing the features of your DAW of choice, and share that essay with the class in the group discussion.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Research a major electronic music composer or mixer. Study the methods and software used in these compositions, and create a multimedia presentation of what you learned.
2. Schedule an interview with someone in the music field, and record a podcast interview. Share with the class.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Nahmani, D. (2021). Logic Pro X 10.5 - Apple Pro Training Series: Professional Music Production. *Pearson*, 1st. 9780137460243.

Frank D. Cook. (2021). Pro Tools Fundamentals. *Avid*, 2020/2021. 978-1-943446-83-4.

Other Learning Materials

Journal, handouts, and online resources for music application software and related articles

Minimum Qualifications

Commercial Music
Music (Masters Required)

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