



Course Outline

2026-2027 Catalog

MUS 53 - Digital Music Production II

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU

Prerequisite: MUS 51

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 covers computer music production. The use of Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) in composition and post-production are covered with hands-on project based learning, theory and demonstrations. Students will compose original music using software instruments and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). Students will also study and complete audio post-production projects such as mixing a professional song, creating a radio commercial and creating a podcast.

Objectives

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

1. Compose digital music at an intermediate to professional level.
2. Apply advanced mixing techniques in DAWs.
3. Apply concepts of music theory to MIDI compositions and musical recordings.
4. Analyze elements of an audio production and apply learned techniques to a project.
5. Demonstrate proper etiquette and interpersonal skills while working on group projects.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic

Lecture

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Course overview, introduction to the workstations and file sharing system for completing assignments	1.00
Digital Audio Workstation review, including the latest version updates of software applications like Logic Pro, Pro Tools and Studio One	2.00
Advanced techniques in programming and editing MIDI	2.00
Advanced techniques in mixing digital audio in the DAW (Digital Audio Workstation)	2.00
DAW and Interface recording techniques for recording voice, guitar, and other acoustic instruments	3.00
Methods and platforms for music publishing, streaming and sales, including copyright and licensing	1.00
Advanced arranging tools and methods	2.00
How to set up an interface for recording audio	2.00
DAW tools and techniques for recording audio, including recording, punching in, creating take folders, and dealing with latency and monitoring	3.00
Composing and arranging with software instruments	2.00
Programming drums and synth pads	2.00
Recording MIDI keyboard parts and real or software bass	2.00
How to mix a song: apply balance and pan	3.00
How to mix a song: apply effects and automation	1.00
How to mix a song: master bus processing and bouncing the mix	2.00
Techniques in mastering audio	2.00
How to mix a song: applying EQ for clarity and fullness	2.00
Total Hours: 34.00	

Lab

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lab Hrs</u>
Setting up a MIDI composition project template	1.00
Programming drums and synth pads in the DAW	3.00
Recording MIDI keyboard parts and real or software bass	2.00
Editing and arranging a MIDI composition	4.00
Apply post-production mixing in the DAW, intermediate to advanced techniques	4.00

Topics	Lab Hrs
Mix a song:	8.00
a. Apply balance, pan and EQ	
b. Apply effects and automation	
c. Master bus setup	
d. Bouncing the mix	
Recording a radio commercial	6.00
Combine MIDI and audio recording techniques to create an original song in the DAW	4.00
Create a digital portfolio	4.00
Apply EQ for clarity and fullness	3.00
Apply compression to control dynamics	3.00
Apply effects for depth and creative sound design	4.00
Create a podcast episode	5.00
Total Hours:	51.00

Methods of Instruction

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

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Projects
- C. Practical Evaluations

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read the Mix Online article about vintage audio compressors and summarize the key differences between vintage and modern compressors. Submit a 500-word essay to the assignment.
2. Read an article on using reverb in a mix and create a 5-slide presentation sharing your findings for the class discussion.

Writing Assignments

1. Research an electronic music or film composer and write a 3-page essay or create a presentation on the topics outlined in the assignment, including background, major projects, gear and software used and awards. Submit the essay to the discussion created for this assignment.
2. Write 500-word essay describing the features of your DAW of choice, including signal flow, plugins and unique features, and share that essay with the class in the group discussion.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Download tracks provided by instructor and practice mixing. Share your results with the class by posting the mix bounce and screenshot of the mix window in the assignment.
2. Follow the step-by-step directions to create a hip-hop trap beat in a DAW. Submit the bounce of the song with a description of your process in the assignment. Comment on the production elements of one other student's project.

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 I. *Avid*, 2021. 978-1-943446-83-4.

Minimum Qualifications

Commercial Music
Music (Masters Required)

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