Music 2695A - Introduction to Electroacoustic Music
Department of Music Research and Composition
Don Wright Faculty of Music
Western University
Fall 2016

Course Calendar Description

A practical introduction to electroacoustic music composition, including digital hardware and software. Students will study appropriate concepts, terminology, and repertoire, and will compose original music in the electroacoustic medium.

Prerequisite(s):
Music 1650A/B – Studies in Music Theory II, or permission of the department

Extra Information: 3 hours, 0.5 course

Please note that prerequisites are no longer automatically checked prior to course registration. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that he or she has the specified prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Music 2695a/b fulfills one of two prerequisites required for admission into Music 3695 Electroacoustic Music Composition, the advanced full-year course; the other required course for admission into Music 3695 is Music 2629 - Composition I.

Meetings
- Tuesday 10:30-11:30 NCB-120* (IMC in North Campus Building)
- Friday 10:30-12:30 NCB-120* (IMC in North Campus Building)

*class may be conducted in the CEARP Studio, located in TC344b. If class is going to be conducted in this alternate location, advance prior notice will be given to students one lecture before the date, and an email will be sent out to all students informing them of the location change.

Instructor
Dr. Jason Stanford – jstanfo@uwo.ca TC 334
Office Hours: TBD by class schedule survey
Also by individual appointment

Computer Support
IMC Technician: Mr. Brent Rodger imctch@uwo.ca x87850

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course students will not only be able to discuss, in detail, technical and technological notions related to the use of technology in music applications, but they will also have gained transferable skills in the application of specific technologies through the creation of original electro-acoustic music compositions.

Dr. Jason Stanford
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**Course Activities**

The activities of the course will include active reduced listening, discussion, and analysis of repertoire and recordings, presentation and discussion of student works-in-progress, small compositional etudes, quizzes, two written/aural tests, a final composition, and the (potential) presentation of the composition in concert**.

**Presentation/performance of a composition in the Electroacoustic Music Concert in December 2015 is a privilege that must be earned; suitable compositions for presentation will possess a high standard of technical polish and aesthetic interest.**

Attendance is mandatory (10% of final grade) and will ensure adequate student progress in this course. Students are required to sign an attendance sheet for the Tuesday 1-hour lecture and Friday 2-hour session each week.

A written/listening test will be given in Week 5 of the semester; another written/listening test will be given in Week 10 of the semester. **You may be quizzed or tested on anything I say in class.** Students will be tested on key historical, theoretical, and technological concepts, and each listening portion of each test may require students to identify compositions by: composer, title of composition, date of composition, and any number of unique, novel, or interesting features of the composition.

All work is to be completed outside of class time within the Interdisciplinary Media Centre (IMC) Computer lab or the CEARP Studio. Students are permitted to sign-up/drop-in to use computers within either space on a weekly basis, during regularly scheduled unsupervised free times. The key to success in this course is **regular work,** if you invest the time, you will understand key concepts and be able to effectively apply these concepts to your own work.

Assignments may be given verbally, or in writing during lectures, and may include quizzes on terminology/comprehension. Some assignments may include a library and/or web research component. Some assignments require students to demonstrate skill and facility in the use of specific hardware and/or software. **Please do not underestimate the time required to master hardware and software concepts to the point of being able to wield these resources creatively. Progress comes from regular work, from signing-up and utilizing your available time in the IMC and CEARP. Believe me when I say that you cannot cram in order to demonstrate creative or technical facility through hardware/software.**

**Course Materials and Resources**

**Textbooks**

There is no textbook for this course, rather, any readings will be drawn from a variety of different resources, and will be available on course reserve in the Music Library in the Music2695B course binder, sent to students via email, and/or made available online.
Notebooks
There will be a lot of hand-outs for this class, and to keep these hand-outs together, please utilize a 3-ring binder.

In addition, you will find that a notebook will come in handy to jot down important points from lectures, as well as to keep a record of your own technical and creative experiments. Notebooks work best when entries are clearly dated.

A class notebook is an important learning tool, since it will contain:
- Salient points about techniques, methods, musical works, and other concepts presented and discussed during lectures
- Your own proposals and/or objectives – the purpose of your work session in the IMC or CEARP: what concepts you wish to explore or what goals you wish to attain during each studio session
- observations, thoughts, considerations, hypotheses, conclusions
- results of experimentation: what ideas worked, what ideas did not work, what outcomes were achieved
- new proposals/objectives/hypotheses to test based upon new evidence
- what to try or explore during the next session
- An activity journal of your technical and creative will aid students in troubleshooting and debugging techniques, you will be able to look back and see your charted progress over the course of the semester

Listening List
The entire listening list for the course will be available in the Music Library on course reserve as uncompressed .WAV audio files on a USB stick (PLEASE do not erase the contents of this stick by dragging-and-dropping files onto your computer, rather copy- and- paste the content). The list will also be available on a DATA DVD.

Hardware and software manuals in PDF format are most often located on the manufacturer’s website, or available as HELP files/tutorial files within the programs themselves.

Storage Media
Unexpected hardware/software failures can and do occur without warning – regular backup of data is mandatory. The University will not be responsible for damaged or lost data. Typical requirements per student may include a selection of the following: USB memory stick (USB3 large capacity – 16-32GB are inexpensive to purchase), and/or SD Cards.
Optional Materials

Software
Most of the practical and creative work of this course is completed using either: the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) Avid Pro Tools, or in the object-oriented programming environment Max/MSP by Cycling’74. You are not required to purchase either title for the course, as both are available for use in the IMC lab and CEARP.

Avid Pro Tools 12 is available for purchase directly from Avid as either a yearly subscription for $99 US, or a monthly subscription for $9.99 US/month.

Max/MSP is available for purchase at deeply discounted academic pricing ($250 US for the bundle) or you can purchase a 12-month student license for only $59 US, or $9.99 US/month.
https://auth.cycling74.com/purchase#educational

Reference Monitoring
An accurate listening environment equals accurate aural outcomes when recording and composing with digital audio. The IMC does not have any speakers connected to the iMac workstations, so all monitoring of work must be done with headphones.

It is strongly suggested that students bring their own headphones to the IMC for individual work. Headphones should have a 1/8” connector and 1/8” to 1/4” adapter. Any pair of headphones will suffice, earbuds will not cut it.

If you are interested in purchasing a professional-quality pair of studio reference headphones, please see the attached headphone handout.

CEARP Studio B is equipped with five Mackie Hr824 studio reference monitors (loudspeakers) arranged in a 5.0 surround configuration.

Requirements, Dates, and Evaluation

Compositions will be graded 50/50 on technical and creative merits.

Term Composition (and possible concert presentation) 30%
Compositional Etudes 30%
Written/aural quizzes, other written assignments, studies, worksheets, if any 10%
Written/aural test 1 10%
Written/aural test 2 10%
Attendance 10%

Consultation with the Instructor during the process of composition is a requirement. The Instructor must see sufficient work-in-progress especially as deadlines of the term and concert approach. Students can utilize regular office hours, and additional times are available upon request, subject to the availability of the Instructor.

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Electroacoustic Music Concert
Students are required to participate in the setup and sound check for the Electroacoustic Music Concert in December 2015. Students are also required to participate in the striking and moving of gear to CEARP after the concert in the afternoon. Setup and dress rehearsal will commence at 9am on the day of the concert in Paul Davenport Theatre.

Late Submission Policy
Late written work, Max/MSP patches, and Pro Tools sessions, will only be accepted under the circumstances listed below.

Compositions will only be accepted after the due dates under extenuating circumstances, including documented medical or compassionate grounds, or if accommodation has been requested and received prior to the due date. Unfortunately, a Term Composition that is submitted late cannot be included on the Electroacoustic Music Concert, the student will lose a very important practical learning opportunity, and as a result, a lower grade.

Notes
1.) Absence from tests will only be excused if satisfactory medical documentation is provided, or the equivalent for non-medical or compassionate grounds, is submitted to the Faculty of Music Academic Counseling Office, Talbot College (TC210).
2.) Please see assignment handout for policies on late submission and accommodation, and refer to the University’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm
3.) Students are expected to complete all assignments and projects independently. The submission of work with which you have received assistance from someone else (other than the course instructor) is an example of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
4.) Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Studio and Technical Support Policies and Procedures
Only students enrolled in Music 2695a/b are permitted to be in the IMC (or CEARP), no other individuals are to be permitted access to the IMC (or CEARP) with you. Students must be respectful and considerate of their fellow colleagues by leaving the studio/lab in a clean and usable condition for the next user, and report any hardware/software technical problems immediately.

***Absolutely*** no food or liquids are allowed in CEARP.
Technology
Please turn off all mobile devices during lectures. Laptops or tablets are only permitted if they are being used as study aids, and if prior accommodation for their use has been requested and granted.

Interdisciplinary Media Centre (IMC) Policies
Please familiarize yourself with the policies and guidelines regarding working in the IMC NCB-120D computer lab. For further information consult the website: http://www.imc.uwo.ca/index.html

If TC344B is employed for the purposes of this course on an individual basis, students must log-in and log-out every time they use the studio. Students can access room TC344B during times they have signed up for, or any other time the studio is unoccupied, 24/7 subject to change. Spontaneous unscheduled use of the studio is permitted on a first-come-first-served basis.

The logbook has space for user comments related to the technical operations of the lab. If equipment fails, please:

1) enter general information about the malfunction into the log book
2) report the malfunction by immediately emailing the instructor

While equipment is in service, it is usually unavailable for use, during which time students are expected to pursue related kinds of artistic investigation and experimentation in the studio.

Safety Information
If a small fire starts in the vicinity of TC344B and is no larger than a basketball, turn off the two switches that power the equipment; you may attempt to extinguish the fire with the fire extinguisher or by smothering it. If the fire is not limited to a small area, or if you are unfamiliar or unsure how to use a fire extinguisher, or if you have failed in your attempt to extinguish a small fire, you should get out and stay out. Never enter a room if you suspect a fire inside. Upon detection of smoke and/or fire, follow the R-A-C-E plan:

   Rescue/Remove person(s) from the immediate fire scene/room
   Alert personnel by activating the nearest fire alarm pull station and call 9-1-1
   Confine fire and smoke by closing all doors in the area
   Extinguish a small fire by using portable fire extinguisher or use to escape larger fire

Evacuate the building immediately and, once outside, report to your supervisor, Building Emergency Team, or Emergency Personnel.

The local First-Aid Station (for minor injuries) is located in the Music Library.
Important Dates

MUS 2695A (September-December 2016)

September 5      Labour Day.
September 8      Fall/Winter Term classes begin
September 15     Deadline to apply for relief against a final grade in a Summer Day course.
September 16     Last day for late registration.

                      Last day to add a full course, a first-term half course, a first-term full course, or a full-year half course on campus and Distance Studies.

October 10       Thanksgiving Holiday. (University is Closed)
October 15       Deadline to apply for relief against a final grade in a Spring/Summer Distance Studies course.

October 27-28    Fall Study Break (no classes – IMC Lab is open)
November 5       Last day to drop a first-term half course or a first-term full course (2016-17 Fall/Winter Term) without academic penalty.
November 30      Last day to drop a full course and full-year half course [on campus day and evening and Distance Studies] without academic penalty.
December 7       Fall/Winter Term classes end.
December 8-9     Study Days.
December 10-21   Mid-year examination period.
December 22      First term ends for all Faculties except Dentistry, Education, Law and Medicine.