

MUS 2708a (f2021): Creative Music Technology

MWF 2.30-3.20 in TC 204

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A “hands-on” survey of common musical uses for technology, and the concepts that guide those uses, from a musician’s or interested listener’s point-of-view. Prior experience making records, or working with music technology in any manner, is neither assumed nor required. Coursework will culminate in the creation of an original audio recording capable of being uploaded to spotify, apple music and other major music distributors.

Prerequisite(s). There are no prerequisites for this class.

Course Materials. All course materials will be distributed via owl, save: Jay Hodgson, *Understanding Records (2nd edition)*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2019.

Students will also need to pay for a monthly subscription to [soundtrap.com](https://www.soundtrap.com) and [splice.com](https://www.splice.com)

Students will also need to use a laptop connected to the internet via wifi for both in- and out-of class work in Music 2708a.

Evaluation. Sandbox Track (30%). Final Projects (70%)

Topics: Semester Outline

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
xxx xxx xxx	xxx xxx xxx	xxx xxx xxx
Wednesday 8 September	<i>Intro to Course</i>	Purchase course text
Friday 10 September	<i>Soundtrap & Splice</i>	Purchase Soundtrap and Splice subscriptions View “Getting Started In Soundtrap” & “The Studio” in https://www.soundtrap.com/home/creator/tutorials Check out: https://splice.com/explore Those VERY interested may wish to consider a Splice Skills account: https://splice.com/features/skills Play with Soundtrap and Splice.

UNIT ONE: SEQUENCING, SAMPLING, TRACKING

Over the course of this unit, and at their own pace, students should read *Understanding Records*, 2nd edition: Chapter One.

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 13 September	<i>Beatmaker & Beats</i>	View “Beatmaker” series in https://www.soundtrap.com/home/creator/tutorials Transcribe 7 “basic” beats
Wednesday 15 September	<i>Making Beats: Recreate transcribed beats</i>	Play with changing presets for the beats you’ve created Choose one or two good beats. Note the BPM and length. “Print” them.
Friday 17 September	<i>Presets. Sharing Projects.</i>	Choose partners (or write me and I’ll create partners) and collab on a project or two. View “Collaboration” series in https://www.soundtrap.com/home/creator/tutorials Continue playing.
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 20 September	<i>Instruments.</i>	View “Instruments” series in https://www.soundtrap.com/home/creator/tutorials
Wednesday 22 September	<i>Tracking Out: Building on Beats</i>	Choose a track or two from the group pile, and build out using synths and instruments. You should have pads, lead lines and counter(melody) lines. Play with different presets for the sounds you make.

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Friday 24 September	<i>A Short bit on “Tweaking” Synth Sounds</i>	<p>Continue working on your tracks.</p> <p>View “Audio” series in https://www.soundtrap.com/home/creator/tutorials</p> <p>Create a notebook of splice samples that work well together</p>

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 27 September	<i>Samples & Audio Collage</i>	<p>View “How To Make LoFi Beats in Soundtrap”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0Hh0OHOY6o</p> <p>Pick a track from the group you could add vocals to. Either record vocals or use vocal samples from splice</p> <p>View “2708 Audio Unit” Youtube Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su9_i1UOz9U&list=PLmaLIXDhBA3TCRI8lhpbw4cs8Lqr0uo&index=1</p>

Wednesday 29 September	<i>How computers hear. i/o, quantification, and so on.</i>	Recover from such a boring lecture
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Friday 1 October	<i>Continuation of How computers hear. Today, though, we get into some interesting considerations of WHAT computers hear.</i>	<p>Recover from having your minds blown by this lecture about the ontology of recorded sound!</p> <p>Work up a track so it is ready for mixing! This is your sandbox track. You will use this for the remaining semester and, as a continually evolving record of your course work, it is worth 30% of your final grade.</p> <p>Read UR, Chapter Two, up to “Signal Processing”</p>
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UNIT TWO: MIXING & SIGNAL PROCESSING

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 4 October	Anchor Points & the Soundbox	View “How to Mix a Song in Soundtrap”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NVVXMDWgT4 View “Basic Mixing Theory”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEorsfZe4vU
Wednesday 6 October	<i>The LCR approach</i> <i>Routing in Soundtrap</i>	Transcribe ten soundboxes Watch “Bussing” video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntGOfTfFUjE
Friday 8 October	<i>Panning & Levelling for image.</i>	Pan and level your sandbox track.
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 11 October	NO CLASS — THANKSGIVING	xxx xxx xxx
Wednesday 13 October	<i>Playing with Stems</i>	DL stems supplied on owl and do quick panning and levelling work on them
Friday 15 October	<i>Moment for Review</i>	Bring any outstanding questions you have to class. The learning curve is about to shoot sky high!
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 18 October	Equalization: General Overview	UR, Chap 2, from “Signal Processing” to “Dynamics” p.96 Optional: View https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YohhkNB7FOk
Wednesday 20 October	<i>Mixing: Filters, Parametric & Fixed Band EQs</i>	View: “Soundtrap Tutorial, Using Graphic & Parametric EQ”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgmEwoofag
Friday 22 October	“”	EQ your sandbox track Read UR Chap 2 “Dynamics” to “Distortion” p. 107

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 25 October	Compressors	View “Compressor in Soundtrap”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6wD1DqYiko
Wednesday 27 October	<i>Understanding the Compressor</i>	Compress your sandbox track
Friday 29 October	“”	
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 1 November	NO CLASS – READING WEEK	1. Read UR Chap 2, from “Distortion” to “Delay”
Wednesday 3 November	NO CLASS – READING WEEK	2. Get your sandbox mix to perfection so far
Friday 5 November	NO CLASS – READING WEEK	3. Consider what you’d like to do for your final project. Group work is permitted, and encouraged.
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 8 November	Reverb & Delay	Read Chap 2, from “Delay” to end of chapter
Wednesday 10 November	<i>Reverb & Delays in Soundtrap</i>	Add some reverbs and delays to your sandbox track
Friday 12 November	<i>“Bussing” & Lateral Processes</i>	Try to create a ducked delay and/or reverb line for your sandbox track
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 15 November	Modulation Processing	Add some chorus and/or flange to your sandbox track
Wednesday 17 November	<i>Final Project Q&A</i>	Read
Friday 19 November	<i>Mastering</i>	Read UR, Chapter 3
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 22 November	Quick & Dirty Mastering Line	Bounce your track and test it in different environments
Wednesday 24 November	“”	
Friday 26 November	<i>Final Course Summary</i>	Complete your sandbox track

DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 29 November	OPEN WORK TIME	Class workshopping
Wednesday 1 December	OPEN WORK TIME	Class workshopping
Friday 3 December	OPEN WORK TIME	Class workshopping
DAY	TOPIC	TO DO
Monday 6 December	OPEN WORK TIME	Class workshopping
Wednesday 8 December	LAST DAY OF CLASS	FINAL PROJECTS DUE

Course Notes

Grading scale: A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence: Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. *Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus.* Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. *Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.*

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office. For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Consideration for Missing Work: In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean's office, and the

accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Offences: Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered 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, as found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health & Wellness: Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. *Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.*

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar: <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Notes Specifically to Address Covid-19-related Issues for 2021 Only.

Contingency Plan: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will *not* change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

Recording of Online Activities: All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Online Etiquette: Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- “Arrive” to class on time
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting
- Be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, select the blue “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
- Kindly remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
- Self-identify when speaking.
- Kindly remember to select the “raise hand” function again to lower your hand, mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.