Tues 7-10pm @ TC 200   Dr. Matthew T. Shelvock
(mattshelvock@gmail.com ; mshelvoc@uwo.ca)   Office Hours: By appointment, please email

Mus 2736b: Intro to Digital Audio Production

Winter 2023

Overview. An introduction to digital-audio production, focusing most explicitly on the LogicX workstation paradigm. Prior experience making records is neither assumed nor required. Coursework will culminate in the creation of a "shop-ready" demo. .

Course Materials. Students will require the following technology devices:

- 2 16+ GB USB drives (to store their work)
- Over ear headphones, (with either a 1/4'' jack or an adapter).

In addition to the above list of course materials, students will require the following text:

- Shelvock, M. (2020). *Cloud-Based Music Production*. Routledge/Focal Press
- Audio companion available at: https://static.routledge.com/9780815353195/Chapters_1-5_audio_examples.zip

Evaluation. Please see below:

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Due Date
Motion Media and Interactive Systems Sound Journal	Word Document	10%	1/17
Digital Audio Composition Assignment	.Wav or .Mp3 Audio	30%	2/16
Final Digital Audio Composition Assignment	.Wav or .Mp3 Audio	60%	4/6

COURSE PLAN*

1. Introduction to Digital Sound

- Lecture: Introduction to Digital Audio; Sound, Sound Design, Composition
- Lab: Digital Audio Exercise: DAW overview, Sourcing Sounds and Importing
- Reading: Video Interview with Dr. Shelvock and George Spanos — game composer and lead sound designer at Digital Extremes
- **Discuss Assignment 1 (due next Wednesday) Motion Media and Interactive Systems Sound Journal**

2. Hearing for Your Audience: Sound Art and Psychoacoustics

- Lecture — Sonic realism and psychophysiology
- W: Lab — Sourcing Sounds and Importing into a DAW
- *Readings — Cloud-Based Music Production: Chapter 4*
- **Assignment 1 Due: Motion Media and Interactive Systems Sound Journal**

3. Intro to Cloud Based Music Production

- Lecture — Producing with Cloud-Based Materials
- Lab — Cloud-based Approach to Samples, Synthesis, Editing, and Mixing
- *Readings: Cloud-based Music Production - Introduction (1-16); Chapter 1.1 (17-22)*

4. Sample Editing

- Lecture: Sample Editing and Sampling in Sound Design/Composition, Sampling in Digital Music
- Lab: Experiential Learning: Sampling Practice in Hip Hop
- *Readings: Cloud-based Music Production - Chapter 1.2 (23-35)*
- Sampling and Percussion

5. Synthesis

- Lecture: Introduction to Synthesizers
- Lab: Digital Synthesis
- *Readings: Cloud-based Music Production - Chapter 1.3 (36-46)*
- Web Resource — Free browser-based synthesizers available at: https://www.websynths.com/

6. **Mixing pt 1: Multi Track View, EQ, Compressor**

- Lecture: Mixing Techniques pt.1
- Lab: Mixing Practice pt.1
- *Readings: Cloud-based Music Production* - Chapter 3 — 3.1-3.4
    - <u>Video Interview</u> with Dr. Shelvock and game composer **Joshua Richardson** of Tiny Titan (50m)
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7. **READING WEEK**

8. **Mixing pt 2: Space (Delay, Reverb), Distortion**

- Lecture: Mixing Techniques: pt.2
- Lab: Mixing Practice pt.2
- *Readings: Cloud-based Music Production* - Chapter 3 — 3.4-3.7
    - <u>Video Interview</u> with Dr. Shelvock and **Emmet Hall** of Klei Videogames (50m)

9. **Creating Music, Designing Sound pt 1**

- Lecture: Drums, Bass, Sound FX
- Lab: Designing, Selecting, and Curating Sounds
- *Readings: Cloud Based Music Production - Chapter 2.1-2.3 (50-66), Chapter*

10. **Creating Music, Designing Sound pt 1**

- Lecture: Melodic Sounds and Atmospheric Textures
- Lab: Designing, Selecting, and Curating Sounds
- *Readings: Cloud Based Music Production - Chapter 2.4-2.5 (70-92)*

11. **Mastering Audio**

- Lecture: Mastering Overview
- Lab: Audio Mastering Exercise
- *Readings: <u>(Video) Mastering Audio using Adobe Audition</u>*

12. **Professional Avenues in Digital Audio and Music, Final Project Q&A**

- Lecture: Commercializing Digital Audio in the Music Industry: EDM and Hip Hop – Instructor perspective on managing Chillhop, bitbird (San Holo, bitbird), and creative partnerships with Square Enix/Final Fantasy, Apple, Marvel, and more
- Lab: Review of Key Concepts and Techniques, Q&A

13. Technical Review, Topic Review, Hand in Final Project

- Lecture: Review of Key Concepts and Techniques, Q&A
- Final project DUE Thurs April 6th

Lecture content and assigned readings are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

Description of Final Project

For their final projects, students will create a high quality "demo" recording of either (a) an original song/composition or (b) a cover. Students will submit (1) a digitally mastered recording of their work and (2) any related project files. .

As an option (not a requirement), students may include a "READ ME" text-based file, which includes VERY BRIEF NOTES on how the project was created. In this file, students may *note* (BUT NOT EXPLAIN) issues in their project which arise from a lack of access to certain tools or resources. For instance, a good example to include in this READ ME could be "I used a synth-based cello because I did not have access to a cellist." However, the point of this course is to build skills within the **computer/laptop/project music-making paradigm** which can be built upon in later modules, rather than to demonstrate the student's unique artistic voice as a producer. The opportunity for demonstrating your unique artistic vision occurs later in subsequent courses — in 4740Y and, to a lesser extent, 3738 and 3739 — when you have more than adequately demonstrated that you are competent to deliver professional productions.

In terms of grading, the session file and audio will be evaluated on how well they demonstrate "common practice" approaches to production. Outside of the Course Plan described above, no list of common practice production procedures will be provided to students, since this defeats the purpose of a cumulative evaluation project. Instead, students are encouraged to review (i) the course syllabus, (ii) their notes, (iii) the texts provided, (iv) and their own assignments to get a sense of what should go into this project. It is up to the student to determine which production techniques they will require, and it is unlikely that students will incorporate every technique discussed throughout the term. This will be covered in more detail during classroom hours.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THIS COURSE

i) **Course Prerequisites: One of Music 2700A/B, Music 2701A/B or Music 2702A/B.** Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may 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.

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

iii) **Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work (≥10%):** Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website for further details regarding requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

iv) **Academic Consideration for Missing Work (<10%):** In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade (ie. two or fewer assignments) due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

v) **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

vi) **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.**

vii) **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

viii) **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

ix) **Contingency Plan:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered 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 assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

x) **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.