

Salt Lake Community College – Fine Arts Department

MUSC 1520 – Intro to MIDI/Electronic Music Composition

Syllabus

Fall '24 • MW 1:00 PM –2:20 PM • Room [REDACTED] • Instructor: Instructor Name

Phone/text : Instructor Phone

E-mail : Instructor Email

Course Description

Introduction to using electronic music technology, including synthesis & sampling; digital communication between electronic musical devices (MIDI); basic principles of music composition & performance for electronic instruments and computer-based arranging.

Course Content

Electronic Music Composition is an introduction to MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) and composing/arranging music produced on electronic instruments (synthesizers/samplers – including software-based versions of these instruments) and computers. While students will learn the basics of using Cubase as a MIDI sequencer/digital audio processor, the focus of the class will be learning the principles of MIDI and electronic instruments that are independent of any one application. Students will be encouraged to use models from professionally produced songs as guides for comparison in producing their own songs. Some of the important aspects of the business of music will also be discussed.

Course Objectives

- Students will understand the basic underlying principles of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), synthesis and sampling and be able to identify the type and purpose of common MIDI-capable sound modules, software and controllers.
- Students will understand how to use MIDI-based technology, including sequencing applications and electronic and software-based instruments to produce desired sounds and music.
- Students will be able to compose and produce an original piece of music using digitally controlled electronic and computer-based (software) instruments that reflects an understanding basic principles of sound musical composition including musical structure/form, proper orchestration technique as it applies to electronic instruments, and musical expression and phrasing.
- Students will be able to discuss works by others using specific, appropriate terminology that reflects an understanding of the aims of each work and focuses on the effectiveness of the work in achieving those goals.

Textbook

Creative Sequencing Techniques for Music Production, 2nd edition, Andrea Pejrolo, Focal Press: 2011. ISBN: 978-0-240-52216-6. Companion website: www.CreativeSequencingTechniques.com (automatically forwards to <http://booksite.focalpress.com/companion/9780240522166/>)

Required Supplies

Portable storage device such as a flash drive that will allow you to save your work (separate from the lab's computer hard drives). Please note that audio files specifically can take up a large amount of space, so you should choose a storage option that will allow you to save large amounts of data if necessary. Optional: You may use a home MIDI studio for your final project and some of the assignments. Access to a separate MIDI studio is not required, as class time combined with open lab hours should be enough for you to complete any work required for the class.

Grading

Students must earn a C grade or higher to advance to MUSC 2540 Sampling, Synthesis & Sound Design.

93-100% = A 90-92% = A- 87-89% = B+ 83-86% = B 80-82% = B-

77-79% = C+ 73-76% = C 70-72% = C- 67-69% = D+ 63-66% = D

60-62% = D- 59% or less=E

Your current grade along with the scores of all graded assignments and tests are available in SLCC's Canvas system.

Assignments & Quizzes

Most of the assignments in class will simply be graded based on if they are completed correctly and submitted on time. You MUST submit some completed assignment content by the assignment due date/time or you will receive a grade of zero. As long as some work is submitted by the due/date time you are allowed up to two weeks to complete your work. 25% of your grade will be deducted for late work.

ALL quizzes are open book, and are due before the beginning of the specified class period. Any quizzes not completed by the due date/time will receive a grade of zero. As each quiz will be reviewed during the specified class section, extensions for submitting quizzes are not possible.

Participation

Attendance is mandatory. There is no way to make up for instruction, activities and discussion which will occur in class, and your participation in classroom discussions will be considered should you need some fudge points to raise your final grade for the class.

Participation points are part of the grading rubric when presenting your works- in-progress before the class and participating actively in the discussion of others' songs. You will be required to present your in-progress project in class, and to give constructive comments about your classmates' work.

In discussing the work of others, keep your comments specific and constructive. Find positive things to say about the song, and when giving suggestions for improvement, do not make general negative statements about the song which are not helpful. Instead, *give specific suggestions on how the song can more effectively accomplish the composer's intentions*. Presenting music before the class can be a very difficult thing, so while it is important to give valuable constructive criticism, it is also important that students are sensitive to the feelings of the person presenting his/her work.

Final Polished Project

During the time scheduled for our final exam, students will present one recorded original composition for electronic instruments.

Requirements for the final project: 1) Your song must be a complete song. 2) You must use the capabilities of electronic instruments in some way as an essential element of your song. In other words, you should not write a piece of music for string quartet and then simply use MIDI to record it. There must be an element that is essential to the character or structure of the piece that can only be performed on an electronic instrument. This, by the way, does not mean that you simply write a synthesizer part over the top of what you really want to write or that you give the part you had envisioned for French horn to a sound that has a timbre that cannot be produced by acoustic instruments. You are encouraged, from the very beginning of the semester, to consider the strengths and capabilities that are unique to electronic instruments and to make these an essential part of the core of your idea for your project.

Extra Credit

You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit to make up for points lost on assignments and quizzes. Check out the Files area in Canvas for currently available extra credit opportunities and instructions.

The student is expected to follow the SLCC Student Code of Conduct found at:

http://www.slcc.edu/policies/docs/Student_Code_of_Conduct.pdf

ADA Statement <http://www.slcc.edu/drc/faculty/index.aspx>

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring accommodations or services under ADA, should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of these accommodations and services for the college. Please contact the DRC at the Student Center, Suite 244, Redwood Campus, 4600 So. Redwood Rd, 84123. Phone: (801) 957-4659, TTY: 957-4646, Fax: 957- 4947 or by drc@slcc.edu.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures in case of an emergency:

<http://www.slcc.edu/emergency-prepare/emergency-procedures.aspx>