Salt Lake Community College – Fine Arts Department

MUSC 2540 –Sampling, Synthesis & Sound Design

Syllabus

Spring Semester 2025 – ██ ███████████████ Instructor: Instructor Name. Phone: Instructor Phone E-mail: Instructor Email

Course Description

An in-depth overview of sound production and sound design for recorded and live musical performance from acoustic and electric instruments to analog and digital synthesis and sampling.

Course Content

Advanced Musical Synthesis, Sampling & Sound Design is an exploration of the creation and manipulation of sounds produced by electronic instruments (synthesizers/samplers – including software-based versions of these instruments), electronic signal processing devices, and computers. 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 underlying principles of analog/digital synthesis and sampling and be able to identify the type and purpose of common electronic instruments, sound modules, software and signal processing devices.

- Students will understand how to use 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 analog and digitally controlled electronic and computer-based (software) instruments that reflects an understanding basic and advanced principles of sound creation and manipulation via electronic means.

- 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.

Textbooks/Materials

The Art of Sampling: The Sampling Tradition of Hip Hop/Rap Music and Copyright Law

Superchamp Books 2015 ISBN-13 : 978-0974970417

Creative Synthesizer Technique

Mel Bay 2020 ISBN-13 : 978-1513465036

Welsh's Synthesizer Cookbook

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

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 on time. You MUST submit some 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 extra time to complete your work. ALL work must be submitted via Canvas.

NO hard copy will be accepted for any assignments.

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 a portion of your grade will be based on your participation in classroom discussion. Participation is more than simply being present in the room, however. In order to score well on the participation portion of your grade, you need to be actively engaged in classroom discussion during lectures - speaking up, asking and answering questions, and sharing your insights on the subject with your classmates. (This does not mean carrying on your own conversations with other classmates separate from the class discussion.)

As the end of the semester approaches, your participation points will be based on 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 at least once a week and to give constructive comments about your classmates' work each class period. 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. There is also the possibility of a public presentation of these projects in a recital setting. More information will be forthcoming.

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.

The General Education ePortfolio Statement [if applicable]
http://facultyeportfolioresource.weebly.com/

This course fulfills the [category] requirement for the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning. General Education courses teach basic skills as well as broaden a student's knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Education is much more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information   in meaningful ways in order to enrich one's life.
While the subject of each course is important and useful, we become truly educated through making connections of such varied information with the different methods of organizing human experience that are practiced by different disciplines. Therefore, this course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to   develop broader perspectives and deeper understandings of your community and the   world, as well as challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its   inhabitants.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures in case of an emergency.

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