MUST 4350 – Studio Operations, Performance Direction, and Musicianship
Fall 2023
M/W: 11:00AM-11:50AM

Instructor: James Adams M.M.
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Office: GFA 133
Office Hours: TBA
Class Location: GFA 135

Prerequisite: MUST 3340 Commercial Recording and Composition
MUST 3350 Advanced Mixing and Mastering

Course Description:
Culminating from years of training, practice, and growth as musicians, producers, and engineers, this course empowers students with musicianship performance coaching techniques, score and chart reading practices, studio operations techniques, and studio musicianship training.

This practicum enables students to perform the role of a studio manager, performance coach, and studio musician by completing weekly assigned shifts, assignments, and projects in the SFA Recording Studio. Students will develop the skills necessary to work in a professional recording studio environment. Hands-on practical experience is gained through the execution of routine duties that are required to operate a commercial recording facility, such as scheduling recording sessions, interacting with clients/artist, and performing equipment inventories.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of studio set-up, operations, and equipment maintenance procedures.
2. Students will understand studio and recording scheduling.
3. Students will be able to design, set-up, and execute recording sessions.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of various studio musicianship concepts and practices through a variety of recording projects.
5. Students will demonstrate an advance understanding of creative performance concepts through a variety of assignments.
6. Student will demonstrate an ability to identify music keys, notes, and translate to artist via audible cues and/or visual charts.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to lead an ensemble through the recording processes, both technically and creatively, by coordinating and running the complete production of a song from concept to a complete record work.

SRT Concentration Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will demonstrate experience and expertise in music technology hardware and software for live sound reinforcement, recording, editing, mixing, producing, MIDI sequencing, and notation.
2. Students will demonstrate broad knowledge of the music industry.
3. Students will have developed and honed their skills as musicians and recording artists.
4. Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of various studio and live sound equipment operations.
5. Students will be prepared to pursue careers in the music industry and/or graduate studies in music and sound technology.

Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to hear, identify, and work conceptually with the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements of music, including sight-singing and analysis.
2. Students will develop and demonstrate comprehensive capabilities in rehearsing and preparing a high-level performance in ensembles.
3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in their applied area by completing projects, preparing performances, creating original content, and mastering skills as appropriate for their field.
4. Students will successfully complete both an academic and area of study capstone project. The academic project will demonstrate written language skills, citations, analysis, musical examples, and organization. The area of study capstone project will demonstrate the applied skills commensurate with the degree track requirements.
5. Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of music history and literature from the Western art tradition, with supporting related studies in non-western traditions, practices, and cultures.
6. Students will demonstrate functional keyboard proficiency including scales, techniques, basic accompanying, and sight reading.

Required Text and Materials:
- Pro Tools Latest Version.
- The Recording Engineer’s Handbook, Third Edition by Bobby Owsinski
- Studio Headphones with 1/8-1/4” adaptor if necessary

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly Shifts and Reports: You will work two – two hour studio shifts in the SRT studios each week; that is a total of 4 hours per week. You will run sessions for fellow students, maintain equipment, and complete weekly reports, after your shift, detailing the duties and jobs you performed. Weekly Reports are due, turned in digitally on Microsoft Teams, by 8PM Sunday every week. You must attend your shifts on-time and stay on duty for the entire duration of your shift. Attendance to your shift counts toward class attendance and will be strictly monitored.
2. **Calendar:** You will maintain a detailed calendar of your SRT activities, duties, as well as your other SOM activities.

3. **Work Catalog:** You will maintain a well-organized record of all recorded works and performed duties including dates, times, durations, and locations. You will be building a portfolio throughout the semester.

4. **Performance Coaching Evaluation:** you will be evaluated on your ability to successfully deploy a variety of studio coaching techniques.

5. **Advanced Session Set Up and Evaluations:** you will be required to build and deploy large session builds, artist mixes, talkbacks, and playbacks.

6. **Homework/Quizzes:** You will be given a variety of homework assignments and quizzes related to our class discussions and studio activities.

7. **Major Recording Production:** You will plan, coordinate, schedule, record, mix and fully produce a song from start to finish in the studio. You schedule rehearsals, coach performers, and creative direct the ensemble to achieve a high-level work

8. **Final:** You will be giving a large-scale session simulation, real if available, to fully plan, organize, schedule, "run," invoice, document and catalog. You will

**Grading Policy:**
Laté Assignments will not be accepted and thus receive a zero barring extenuating circumstances accepted by the university.

**Grade Weighting:**
Work Catalog: 10%
Homework: 20%
Recording: 20%
Performance: 15%
Operation Proficiency: 10%
Final: 25%

**Grading Scale:**
A: 90-100
B: 80-89
C: 70-79
D: 60-69
F: 59 & Below

**Weekly Schedule (Subject to change at the discretion of instructor):**
*Per SFA policy, you are expected to spend at least 6 hours per week, outside of class time, practicing and working on assignments for this course. There will be weeks throughout the semester in which you will need to put slightly more time into your projects for this course. As SRT coursework in the SOM are a hybrid of artistic and technological studies, you will not only be working on projects and assignments but also regularly practicing. With that being that, you are expected to practice at least 30 minutes every day in addition to the time you devote to course work.*
Week 1
- SRT Recording Studio Policies, Syllabus Review, Semester Scheduling
- M/W Schedule

Week 2
- Studio Maintenance
- Console Operations Review – Studio Equipment Homework

Week 3
- Studio Schedules Go Live!
- Session Builds, Artist Mix, and Talkback
- Information Backup and Retrieval: Onedrive, iCloud, Google, etc.
  - Backups are EVERYTHING! – Session and Backup Quiz

Week 4
- Score and Chart Reading – Chart/Score Mock-Up Assignment
- Metronomes in the studio
  - Counting, divisions, monitoring
- Headphone Sends

Week 5
- Vocal Coaching
- Realtime vocal processing
- Live group tracking setup – Studio Musician Quiz

Week 6
- Set, Listen, Review: identifying position changes, artifacts, and potentialities

Week 7
- Semester Project Reviews and Planning
- Session Musician Practices

Week 8
- Midterm Evaluations: Chart Reading, Coaching, and Operations

Week 9
- Tracking Practices
- Recording Project Check-In

Week 10
- Studio Health: You and equipment
  - Final Project Discussions and Planning

Week 11
- Lighting: it makes a big difference
  - Monitoring health and safe practices

Week 12
- Experimental and Advanced Studio Techniques

Week 13
Thanksgiving Break - No Classes

Week 14
- Large Session Management Review

Week 15
- Project Presentations

Week 16
- Final

Course Evaluations:
Your participation in the evaluations of this course are very important and helpful to this class, program, and the university. Near the conclusion of each semester, students in the College of Fine Arts electronically evaluate courses taken with the college. The evaluation is used for a variety of important purposes including:

1. Course and program improvement, planning and accreditation;
2. Instruction evaluation purposes; and
3. Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, and retention.

As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. Please know that the College of Fine Arts is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your participation is crucial.

The course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all rating and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

Attendance Policy:
Class will begin promptly and on time. Role will be taken at the beginning of class.

Due to the nature of this course, and the SRT field of study, attendance to class, sessions, and labs are crucial to your learning and are thus required. Experience, class interaction, and hands-on activities are just as important to your training and understanding of concepts as is the academic study components of the program. You are expected to arrive to class, lab times, and scheduled meetings, prepared and on time. If you arrive more than 5 minutes late without a valid, University approved excuse, or you did not make prior arrangements with your instructor, you will be marked absent. Additionally, sleeping in class is not acceptable. If you are found to be sleeping in class, you will be marked absent and ask to leave. If you arrive to class and proceed to go to sleep, it is not considered that you attended the class.

You are allotted 2 unexcused absences. Upon receiving a third unexcused absence your grade will be reduced by a letter grade. Upon receiving a fourth unexcused absence, your grade will be reduced by another full letter grade in addition to the previous reduction received for the third absence. Please note that university policy states that upon your fifth absence, you will automatically receive an “F” grade for the course. Further information about absences can be found at the following university resource:

**Lab Time:**
Hands on experience and practice are crucial to your learning and development in music technology and the recording arts. The SRT area has dedicated lab and studio facilities equipped with professional and industry standard technologies that you will very likely not have access to at home. To further your learning and growth, you must continually practice, experiment, and work with these special technologies. In support of this: all SRT majors enrolled in MUST 2310-4350 are required to attend lab hours for at least two hours per week. Lab hours will be logged and tracked for each student. A lab schedule will be posted on the SRT lab door by the second week of classes. Lab time requirements do not take effect until the 3rd week of the semester.

Should you fail to meet the required lab times more than twice, aka two weeks, each following lab miss will result in you receiving an unexcused absence in your 3-credit hour SRT course. You will always have assignments, projects, and needed practice with the various technologies in our facilities. Naturally, should you have a situation arise that will prevent you from participating in lab times and activities, please contact your instructor.

**Personal Electronic Devices:**

Cellphones, tablets, and personal electronic communication devices are to be turned off or set to silent while in class. You are here because you wish to pursue studies and/or a career in Sound Recording Technology, the Music Industry, etc. A ringing cellphone can ruin a recording session, distract an artist, interrupt a meeting or disrupt a learning environment. You must learn to be aware of the audible status of your devices. Should you be an individual who continually disrupts class because your device(s) beep, ringing, or otherwise distract this learning environment, you will lose participation points and if the offenses continue, you will be asked to leave the class and will have to meet with the director of the SRT program before being allowed back into class.

**Obtaining Help:**

If you ever have questions regarding course content, assignments, test, etc., or feel that you require some additional help, please contact me immediately. Please make note of my office hours. If for some reason you are unable to attend my office hours, see me before or after class, or send me an email, to schedule an appointment. My line of communication is always open to you and I urge you to communicate any issues you may be having that may hinder your progress in this class, program, or university.

**Email and Correspondence:**

Any email correspondences regarding this course, homework, meetings, advisement, etc., should be sent from your SFASU email account. Additionally, the subject title should begin with
MUST 4350. If you have a sensitive matter to discuss with me, please make arrangements to meet with me in person. Although I will make every effort to answer your emails as soon as possible, you should never expect an immediate response to your email. If you ever have an emergency, sensitive topic that needs immediate attention, or a time sensitive matter to be address, call my or the school of music office.

**Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Policy 6.1 and 6.6**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 936-468-3004 as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Student Academic Dishonesty: Policy 4.1**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or;
- helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or,
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

**Penalties for Academic Dishonesty**

Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.
**Student Appeals**

A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (6.3).

**Withheld Grades: Policy 5.5**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA. Information regarding the iCare program is found at [https://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp](https://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp) or call the office at 936-468-2703.

**Classroom Policies:**

Our field of study, Sound Recording Technology, is a special field of study and we are fortunate to have such a program here at SFASU. We get to work and learn with specialized, and sometimes very, fragile and expensive equipment. Thus, the SRT program and associated classes have some specialized classroom rules that you may not be accustomed to in other university classes.

1. Wash your hands before entering class. In addition to helping to not spread germs and illness, we will be working on shared computer systems, mixers, and other equipment. Much of the equipment is hard to thoroughly clean and oil build up from your hands can also degrade the equipment. Washing your hands before class is a win-win for everyone and the university’s equipment.

2. Good Hygiene: Unlike a large format lecture class, where your professor is far away from you and only a few students may be in close proximity to you, we will all be working close together. At times, you and I will be side by side learning about materials, components, tools, and techniques used in SRT. For your health and the sake of your colleagues and me, please practice good hygiene.
3. Respect: You should know how to appropriately conduct yourself as a respectful and thoughtful adult. With that being stated, demonstrating disrespect toward your colleagues, your instructor, equipment, or this institution will not be tolerated.
   a. Special note: if you ever have hopes of working in the music industry, you will need to know how to get alone with all sorts of people(s).
4. No texting in class.
5. Respect the equipment: you will be fortunate enough to work with some really special and expensive equipment. Please handle this equipment with the utmost care. Never drop a microphone. Always be aware of yourself, surroundings, and others while handling the recording equipment.

SRT Lab Policies:

1. **No SRT Equipment is ever allowed to be removed from the SRT facilities without the presence of an SRT facility member or Graduate Teaching Assistant.**
2. **You are never allowed to borrow SRT equipment for off-campus gigs, events, or projects without the presences of the Director of SRT.**
3. Only SRT students are allowed in the lab. School of music students are welcome if permission has been given by the director of the SRT program. Non-school of music students are never allowed in the lab without special permission, arrangement, or the presence of an SRT faculty member or Grad Assistant.
4. Adhere to your schedule times. Show up on time and leave on time. Our space is limited and we must be courteous to one another. Additionally, this is great practice for the real world or sharing studio and artistic spaces.
5. Never load or install programs on the SRT workstations...EVER.
6. Always bring your own headphones to the lab. You will do most of your lab work on headphones however, if no one else is in the lab, you are welcome to use the loudspeakers.
7. Back up your work on your personal thumb, or external, drive. Never expect your session to live on the SRT lab machines.
8. Safety! Never touch exposed wires! Some of our equipment is high powered and if it becomes damaged and unnoticed, exposed wires can pose a hazard to you and others. Report any exposed power wires to your instructor immediately. Do not attempt to deal with it yourself. Safety! Your hearing is extremely important. Do not listen to music or recordings at high levels for extended periods of time.
9. If you are in the lab to log in your lab experience hours, you cannot be working on other class work. This is not a study hall. It is a space filled with advanced audio technologies for you to work with, explore, and create.

Mental Health and Wellness

SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.
On-campus Resources:

SFA Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Rusk Building, 3rd Floor
936.468.2401

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services, Room 202
936.468.1041

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741