MUST 5370 Graduate Music Engineering
Spring 2024

Instructor: James Adams
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Office: GFNA, SRT Suite, Room 133
Office Hours: MW: 3-4PM, T/TH: 2-3PM, Friday by Appointment
Class Location: GFNA, SRT Suite, Room 135
Credit Hours: 3

Course Description:

Instructor Approval Needed

Physical Requirement: This course contains mild physical activity. If a student does not possess the ability to bend at the waist, safely step over secured cable runs and small objects, crouch, climb a ladder, safely lift a 5 pound object over their head, or safely lift upwards of 25 pounds from the floor to chest height, they will need to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 936-468-3004 so appropriate accommodations can be arranged.

This course explores advanced and experimental techniques involved in the creation and production of recorded music through hands-on activities, topics, and course work. Additionally, this course surveys historical techniques used to record, mix and master a variety of instrumentation, groups, and styles as well as technology infused live performance.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will demonstrate the ability to building well, organized workflows and sessions.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to produce professional quality recordings in various styles.
3. Students will demonstrate an advance level of understanding of music engineering.
4. Students will further develop their critical listening skills.
5. Students will demonstrate their understanding of advanced audio processing tools.
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of advanced mastering techniques.
7. Students will demonstrate a confident command of microphone techniques.

Program 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 and practices.
3. Students will have developed and honed their skills as musicians and recording artists.
4. Students will demonstrate an expert level of knowledge of various studio and production technologies.
5. Students will be prepared to pursue careers in the music industry and academia.

Required Text and Materials:

- The Recording Engineers Handbook
- Well-functioning Mac computer with ample storage.
- High-Speed Internet Connection
- Audio Interface – High Quality Audio Interface with capability of 96kHz/24bit support
- Avid Pro Tools (Latest Version) plus Avid Supplied Plug-In Bundle
- Adequate Headphones with 1/8 and 1/4 connections
- Izotope Music Production Suite
- Melodyne Assistant
- Key Card Access to SRT Facilities

Course Requirements:

1. **Listening Assignments**: You will be required to complete a one to two-page paper, written in a scholarly voice, on a variety of listening examples.
2. **Tracking and Mixing Assignments**: You will be required to mix an assigned music recording.
3. **Mastering Assignments**: You will be required to master a variety of music to various specifications.
4. **Midterm Project**: You will be assigned a tracking and mixing project to allow you to creatively demonstrate your understanding of course content.
5. **Final Project**: You will be required to record, mix, and master an approved work in the SRT studio utilizing learned techniques.
6. **Presentations**: You will be required to present your Midterm and Final Projects to the class.
7. **SRT Lab Time**: You will be required to sign up for 2 hours of SRT Studio time each week.

Grading Policy:

Late Assignments will not be accepted and thus receive a zero barring extenuating circumstances accepted by the university or if prior arrangements for work submission were made with your instructor.

Grade Weighting:
Listening and Homework Assignments: 10%
Tracking and Mixing Assignments 30%
Mastering Assignments: 30%
Midterm Project: 15%
Final Project: 15%

Grading Scale:
A: 90-100
B: 80-89
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 said, you are expected to practice at least 30 minutes every day in addition to the time you devote to course work.

*TTC = estimated “time to completion.”*

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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. With that being said, 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 a full letter. 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:
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 5370. 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/.

**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 of 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 the SRT Facilities. In addition to helping to not spread germs and illness, we will be working on shared computer systems, consoles, 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. Oral Fixations: if you are someone who has a habit of putting your fingers in your mouth and/or biting your nails, you will be required to control that behavior when in the SRT facilities. Putting your hands in your mouth and then touching high-contact-engagement surfaces is unsanitary and potentially damaging to sensitive equipment. If you are observed putting your fingers in your mouth, you will be politely asked to go wash your hands and to clean any equipment that you may have been using.

3. Good Hygiene: Unlike a large format lecture class, we work closely and actively together in our studio classes. 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.

4. Respect: You should know how to appropriately conduct yourself as a respectful and thoughtful adult. With that being said, 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).

5. No texting in class.

6. Respect the equipment: you are fortunate enough to work with some really special and expensive equipment – some of the best equipment in the world. Please handle this equipment with the utmost care. Never behave in a manner that may increase your likelihood dropping a microphone. Always be aware of yourself, surroundings, and others while handling the recording equipment.

SRT Studio/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.**

3. Only SRT students are allowed in the lab and studios. 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 Graduate Assistant.

4. Intoxication: do not arrive to class, lab, or studio under the influence of substances. Doing so is inappropriate. It endangers you and the university equipment. It is also against policy. Don’t come to class drunk or high.
5. 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.

6. Never load or install programs on the SRT workstations...EVER.

7. Always bring your own headphones to the lab and studio. You will do most of your lab work on headphones.

8. Back up your work on your SFA Provide OneDrive. Never expect your session to live on the SRT lab machines.

9. 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.

10. 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