Instructor: Dr. Ben Morris
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Phone: 973-722-0460
Office: McKibben 401
Office Hours: By appointment. Please email me.
Department: School of Music
Class meeting time and place: MWF 11-11:50 in Composition Lab (McKibben 468)

Prerequisite: C or better in either MUST 2320 or two semesters of MUTC 1219

Course Description
This course combines the history of film music in general with an introduction to practical approaches used by modern film composers. Students will gain an understanding of the role of music in a film, observing various approaches to how music is used in a film, and examining how music interacts with other elements in the soundtrack (dialogue, sound effects). They will also undertake a series of basic assignments in scoring short film scenes using digital audio workstation software, virtual sound libraries, and live players.

Program Learning Outcomes
The PLOs for a bachelor or music degree at SFA are:

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.

Film music addresses PLOs #1, #3, and #5.
Student Learning Outcomes
1. Students will create original music for various film clips demonstrating command of melody, harmony, rhythm, and dramatic function. (PLO#1 and PLO#3)
2. Students will demonstrate contextual understanding of important films and trends in film scoring through answers on online discussion assignments and in-person class discussion. (PLO #5)

Required Text and Materials
- Davis, Richard: Complete Guide to Film Scoring: The Art and Business of Writing Music for Movies and TV
- A subscription to HBOMax ($9.99 a month), Netflix, Hulu, and/or Amazon Prime for film viewing. Some film rentals may require additional purchase.
- Students must also have access to a DAW and pay for a subscription to the Musio library from Cinesamples (https://www.musio.com/pricing/). You can use any DAW that supports video playback. Recommended DAWs include: Logic, ProTools, Cubase, or Reaper.
- Notation Software: Sibelius, Finale, Dorico, or MuseScore 4
- RECOMMENDED: A solid-state portable drive (at least 500 GB) to store sample libraries
- RECOMMENDED: A MIDI keyboard/controller with touch sensitivity and a mod wheel.

Grading and Assignments
6 Scoring Projects — 60%
1. Project 1: Cinematic Track Using Leitmotif (in DAW) — 10%
2. Project 2: Piano and Strings/Drama Assignment — 10%
3. Project 3: MIDI Orchestration Assignment — 10%
4. Project 4: Action Assignment — 10%
5. Project 5: Scoring Under Dialogue/Comedy — 10%
6. Project 6: Period/Genre Piece of Your Choice (Fantasy, Horror, Western, Sci-Fi) — 10%
8 D2L Discussion Assignments, Film Reactions, and Readings DUE Monday each week — 20%
Class Participation — 10%
Final Test — 10%

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>% Scale</th>
<th>Performance Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 59</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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Credit Hour Justification
This course meets in person MWF, 11-11:50 for 15 regular weeks during the semester. Students are required to score 6 projects, read articles, answer discussion questions, and watch a film a week (aside from weeks when projects are due). These activities average (including class time) at a minimum 10 hours of work each week to prepare for and fully participate in this course.
### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Composition and Technology</th>
<th>Write/Read/Watch/Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 (1/19)</td>
<td>Syllabus overview</td>
<td>What is film music? Film music and storytelling terminology</td>
<td>Discussion Post #1 due 1/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (1/22-1/26)</td>
<td>Antecedents, Early film scores</td>
<td>Film music genres, styles, moods, and functions, storytelling terminology cont’d.</td>
<td>Discussion Post #2 due 1/29&lt;br&gt;Davis Ch 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (1/29-2/2)</td>
<td>MIDI/Audio review, Composing in a DAW</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project #1 DUE Friday 2/2 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 (2/5-2/9)</td>
<td>The Golden Age of Hollywood</td>
<td>Spotting Sessions: Hit points, timecode, musical choices</td>
<td>Discussion Post #3 due 2/12&lt;br&gt;Davis Ch 3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 (2/12-2/16)</td>
<td>1950s-1970s</td>
<td>Syncing: tempo, time signatures, and click tracks</td>
<td>Discussion Post #4 due 2/19&lt;br&gt;Davis Ch 5, Alex Ross article</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 (2/19-2/23)</td>
<td>Sound Libraries and Virtual Orchestration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project #2 DUE Friday 2/23 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 (2/26-3/1)</td>
<td>1975-1990s</td>
<td>Recording film music, Home studio setups</td>
<td>Discussion Post #5 due 3/4&lt;br&gt;Davis Ch 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 (3/4-3/8)</td>
<td>Orchestration and Notation, The Scoring Stage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project #3 DUE Wednesday 3/6 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 (3/11-3/15)</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>10 (3/18-3/22)</td>
<td>Streaming (2010-present)</td>
<td>Mixing and mastering, Dubbing, Deliverables</td>
<td>Project #4 DUE Friday 3/22 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 (3/25-3/27)</td>
<td>Guest speaker (date TBD)</td>
<td>Music editing, Music supervisors, Cue sheets, Royalties, Music rights, Publishing, and Copyright NO CLASS FRIDAY 3/29</td>
<td>Discussion Post #7 due 4/1&lt;br&gt;IndieWire Article</td>
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<td>12 (4/1-4/5)</td>
<td>Modern filmmakers and composers</td>
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<td>13 (4/8-4/12)</td>
<td>Guest speakers (date TBD)</td>
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<td>Project #5 DUE Friday 4/12 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 (4/15-4/19)</td>
<td>Guest speakers (date TBD)</td>
<td>Business of film scoring, making a reel, agents, finding work. Types of gigs and roles in the industry. Payment</td>
<td>Discussion Post #8 due 4/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 (4/22-4/26)</td>
<td>Guest speakers (date TBD) and short final test</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project #6 DUE Monday 4/29 (be prepared to share and critique in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 (4/29-5/3)</td>
<td><strong>FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
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Each Friday, we will share our film scoring projects and offer constructive feedback to each other or watch film clips and analyze them together.
With the exception of officially excused absences, late work is not accepted. If you know you will be absent, please do the work ahead of time.

**Attendance Policy**
Subsequent unexcused absences after a first unexcused absence will drop your overall semester grade by 2 points.

**Academic Integrity (4.1)**
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) 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 your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf).

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, 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. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).
Students with Disabilities
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, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) 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/.

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 Service
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Health and Wellness Hub (corner of E. College and Raguet)
936.468.201

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

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343S
National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1.800.273.TALK (8255) Crisis Text
Line: Text HELLO to 741-741