Instructor: Cam McKittrick

Email: cmckitr@uwaterloo.ca or c.mckittrick@icloud.com

Video conferencing is also welcome by appointment.

Class meetings: Tuesdays 4-5:20pm in Grebel 1302.

Please note: Due to numbers, our first meeting will be at the same time synchronously and remote via Bongo. After our first meeting we will break the class into groups for lab work on Tuesdays, the remainder of material and meetings will be asynchronous and online.

Course Description

This course will be a hands-on introduction to the core concepts of music technology. You will learn about audio editing, digital signal processing, and MIDI, and will integrate these skills in the creation of original pieces of music. Repertoire review will provide historical and aesthetic context for your own work.

Method

Music 275 will take place this fall with in-person meetings and asynchronously:

- Learning materials are provided for each week on our course site that you can access at any time. The provided materials are for personal use only.
- Written, video, and audio documents are provided on a week-by-week basis. It will be easiest to use “quicktime” to view recorded video instruction so Windows users may have to go here.

Materials

- Access to a personal computer on which you are able to install software.
- Reasonably good headphones
- A license for Ableton Live Intro (available at ableton.com) If you have not used the software before, there is a significant trial period for the advanced version.
Topics to be covered

Starters:
Listening
“What is sound?” – acoustic and psychoacoustic topics
“What is digital sound?” – important things to know about digital sound

Context:
Creating music on the computer: How did we get here?
The repertoire and aesthetic of electronic music

Recording:
Mixers, microphones, and how to use them
Getting sound into the computer

Audio Editing:
Digital Audio Applications overview and practical use
Reading a wave-form
Cutting, pasting, and moving things around
Cross-fading
Managing files

Digital Signal Processing:
Effects – basic categories: what they are, and what they do
‘Transparent’ and ‘Artistic’ use of effects
Envelope automation
Signal path

MIDI:
What it is, and how it works
Recording a keyboard performance onto the computer & playing it back
Editing MIDI data: quantization, cutting, pasting, etc...
Automation in MIDI
Software synthesizers and the history of sound synthesis

Sequencing:
Getting audio and MIDI coordinated
Thinking in tempo: loops, rhythm, et al...

Music notation software (introduction only)

Mixing & Mastering:
Using volume and EQ to mix a session
Getting a piece ready for different media
Looking forward:
Alternative performance interfaces for digital music

Course Evaluation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Item</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lab Assignments</td>
<td>6 at 8% each (best 5 count)</td>
<td>Demonstrate basic skills in digital audio (listening, recording, analyzing, editing, processing, mixing, etc.) and knowledge of common software examples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working together</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Remote, collaborative music production assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repertoire Review</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>A short, written review of a piece from the course listening list.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Project</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>A project of your own design, crafted to demonstrate mastery of applicable course topics married to your individual pursuits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A project of your own design, crafted to demonstrate mastery of applicable course topics married to your individual pursuits.</td>
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Details concerning the assignments and projects will be available from the WATERLOO LEARN course site in written form.

Policies

**Academic Integrity**: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline**: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm)

**Grievance**: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4,
**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - **Student Appeals**, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm) Academic Integrity website (Arts): [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html) Academic Integrity Office (UW): [http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.