Introduction and Purposes

Enrollment in Popular Music Performance 120 class is open to all proficient instrumentalists and vocalists not majoring in the Popular Music Performance degree program.

The goal of the class is to develop ensemble and communication skills through the performance and interpretation of popular music in specific genres and styles. The format of the class will be a masterclass environment in which students will receive coaching and feedback on their performances by the instructor or guest artists.

The focus of the course will be on practical elements such as:
- defining the role of the instruments and musicians found in classic genres and styles
- tone production at a professional level, modeling exemplary stage and studio performances from professionals, and the creation of parts and thematic lines appropriate to specific genres from recordings and/or charts.

Other topics to be addressed include: dynamics, stage volume, time/tempos, tuning/pitch, stage presence, balance among instruments, listening, eye contact, and conducting a proper and efficient sound check. An additional emphasis will be placed on communication skills, ensemble direction, chart writing and managing group dynamics within a popular music ensemble.

Upon successful completion of the class, students will be expected to:

- perform repertoire assigned over the course of the semester at a professional level, identify and discuss the use of dynamics and balance among instruments in an ensemble, effectively communicate directions to ensemble members acting as Music Director, identify and discuss elements of professional performance technique and stagecraft, and evaluate the effectiveness of various performance techniques in a variety of environments.

- The writing and reading/interpretation of “charts” will be an acquired skill set, students will be responsible for the charting of some songs performed during the semester. This will aid in the learning of song form and consistent performance of repertoire.
Course Requirements and Grades

Required Materials:

All instrumentalists are required to bring their personal instruments to class. Guitarists are required to have a TUNER, some signal processing rig a.k.a. effects pedals and or a pedal board, as needed to achieve the desired tones of the repertoire being played, sharing is ok. Drums and keyboards are provided in the classroom.

Assignments and Grading

40% of grade: In class performances – All students will regularly perform assigned repertoire in class for feedback from the instructor. Instructor may assign students to assume the role as Music Director during rehearsals and performances for specific tunes. Evaluation will be based upon preparation, quality of work and ability to receive and put into practice directions from the instructor. NOTE: It is expected that if you are listening to other student performances, you are actively participating in the class by providing feedback as instructor sees fit. Your active listening and participation while your fellow students are performing will be part of your grade.

Also: Students are required to organize, schedule and participate in rehearsals as needed outside of class. Consistent Attendance is required for a satisfactory grade in this course.

30% of grade: Successful demonstration of skills in a mid-term performance, open to the public.

30% of grade: Final Exam - Student bands will perform a designated final performance showcase, demonstrating their knowledge and memorization of repertoire studied during semester and concepts studied in class. A written exam may, though unlikely, may be a part of the final grade.

Rehearsals

Rehearsal spaces are available throughout the week. For policy and procedures please consult the Office of Operations, review the MPPM Handbook for details.

Equipment
All equipment becomes the responsibility of the person who reserves the rehearsal time. Review MPPM Handbook for equipment checkout procedures. It is everybody’s responsibility to make sure that all equipment is secured and is handled properly.

Midterm, Final and Performance Dates are yet to be determined

Week 7 or 8  Mid-term showcase performance (CTV136A)
Week 14  Final showcase performance (Ground Zero)

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.