

Syllabus: MTEC 479, Audio Mastering

Instructor:

Andrew Garver: (213) 821-1605

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Mailbox: TMC 118

Office: TMC107 {or MUS 103}

Office Hours: By appointment

Text: There is no official textbook for this course. Tests and quizzes will be on the material presented in class and posted on Blackboard. These books are optional:

- The Mastering Engineer's Handbook: The Audio Mastering Handbook by Bobby Owsinski (Paperback - Dec 26, 2007)
- Mastering Audio, Second Edition: The art and the science by Bob Katz (Paperback - Oct 17, 2007)

Other resources: <http://www.soundonsound.com/>
<http://mixonline.com/>
<http://www.recordingmag.com/>

Course Description:

Audio Mastering is a survey of the final creative step in audio production before it is delivered to manufacturing. This course will cover the fundamental concepts behind building a mastering suite, critical listening, frequency and dynamics adjustment, sequencing, and delivery.

Requirements, Exams and Grading Information:

Student evaluation in 479 will consist of a variety of work. In class listening assignments and quizzes will be held in class each week. There are no make-up quizzes, but at the end of the semester there will be a bonus quiz that will replace the your lowest quiz grade.

Tests will contain mostly short answer and essay questions, along with a practical hands-on component. The midterms will cover the topics discussed prior to the test. Only the final exam will be cumulative. Tests must be taken during the scheduled times and cannot be made up at a later date.

Attendance is mandatory and will count towards your final grade, as part of class participation. Because of the importance of hands-on experience with this subject, participation in all classes is the only method of understanding the concepts of this topic. Attendance will be taken at each class, and each absence will be noted. After three absences, your grade will be lowered one-half grade for each additional absence. There is no distinction in this class between "excused" and "unexcused" absences—all will be counted. In the event of a serious situation such as illness that causes you to miss more than three classes in a row, you should contact Professor Garver as soon as possible.

Throughout the semester, questions about your grades should be addressed immediately. Do not wait until the semester has ended to resolve a grading issue.

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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, http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html.

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 (scampus.usc.edu), the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. 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/>.

Blackboard:

Course materials, documentation and grades will be posted on Blackboard at <https://blackboard.usc.edu/>. All e-mail correspondence regarding the class will be sent to USC accounts only, so please check yours regularly!

Grading:

1. EQ Exercises	30%
2. Listening Assignments	15%
3. Projects	20%
4. Final Exam	25%
5. Class Participation	10%

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GRADING SCALE

100 - 94	A
93 - 90	A-
89 - 87	B+
86 - 83	B
82 - 80	B-
79 - 77	C+
76 - 73	C
72 - 70	C-
69 - 67	D+
66 - 64	D
63 - 60	D-
Below 60	F

Class Schedule:

Week	Date	Topic
1	24-Aug	Introduction
2	31-Aug	Critical Listening
3	7-Sep	Room Design and Monitoring
4	14-Sep	Audio Metering
5	21-Sep	Equipment and signal flow
6	28-Sep	Limiting
7	5-Oct	Equalizing for stereo content
8	12-Oct	Compression
9	19-Oct	Projects
10	26-Oct	Sequencing
11	2-Nov	Mastering for CD
12	9-Nov	Mastering for the internet
13	16-Nov	Mastering for Vinyl
14	23-Nov	T-Day No Class
15	30-Nov	Projects
16	7-Dec	Final Exam 7 pm