**Instructor:**

**Prerequisite Classes:** **MTEC 446A Computer Assisted Recording and Editing**

**Equipment (Must have to take class)**

Stereo Headphones with ¼ inch jack (or ¼ inch adapter)

Mac compatible USB drive with at least 20GB of free space.

**Textbooks (Optional):**

Mixing Secrets for the Small Studio by Mike Senior

The Mixing Engineer's Handbook by Bobby Owsinski

Mixing Audio 2e 2nd Edition by Roey Izhaki

Mixing and Mastering in the Box: The Guide to Making Great Mixes and Final Masters on Your Computer by Steve Savage

**Other resources:** <http://www.soundonsound.com/>

<https://blackboard.usc.edu> (Lynda.com)

<http://mixonline.com/>  
<http://www.recordingmag.com/>

Alan Parson’s the *Art And Science of Sound Recording* DVDs

**Course Description**

With the guidance of an experienced audio engineer, students will learn the fundamental principles and techniques needed to fuse multiple audio elements into a clear comprehensive final product. By the end of this class, students should be able to deliver professional sounding stereo audio files, that can be used on TV, radio, film and the internet. The course will examine various creative and technical issues used in modern music production, including level control, frequency content, stereo imaging, and spatial depth. Lessons will include equalization and dynamic level adjustment of stereo content to make it competitive, balancing audio tracks, panning, dynamics (compressors, limiters, expanders, and gates), enhancers, delays and reverb.

**Requirements, Exams and Grading Information**

Student evaluation in this class will consist of a variety of work. In class and take home exercises stressing concepts will be assigned in class, and must be turned in one week later. Projects will consist of audio assignments and in class demonstrations of concepts discussed. Concise instructions for all exercises will be available at a later date.

Attendance is mandatory and will count towards your final grade, as part of class and lab participation. Because of the importance of hands-on experience with this subject, participation in all classes and labs 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 two 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 \_\_\_\_ 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.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.  Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards*<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>.  Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.  See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.  You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.  This is important for the safety whole USC community.  Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.  *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing.  Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.  Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.  *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html>provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.  If an officially  declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Blackboard:**

Course materials, assignments, documentation and grades will be posted on Blackboard at **https://blackboard.usc.edu/**.

**Communication:**

Please make it a habit to use/check your USC E-mail account. Any E-mails sent to the class will only use your USC E-mail account.

**Grading: Update with projects**

1. Exercises 30%
2. Mastering Project 15%
3. Mixing Projects 15%
4. Final Project 30%
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 1 **10-Jan** ***Elements of Sound and Audio Recording***

Introductions

Functions of the server for this class

Backing up your work

*Levels, Frequencies, Phase Coherency*

*Mastering for CD, MP3, iTunes (MFIT), and HD*

Week 2 **17-Jan** ***Understanding the Sound: Monitoring***

*The Room, The speakers, Headphones, Controls*

Exercise – Reference Tracks

Week 3**24-JanAspects of a good mix**

*Levels, Panning, Frequencies, Interest*

*Metering: Peak, RMS, Loudness*

Exercise: Take Home Listening Examples

Week 4 **31-Jan** ***Mastering – Basics***

*Identifying Basic Problems, Signal flow, Gain staging*

*Inserts and plug-ins*

Exercise: Picking the best source audio

Week 5 **7-Feb** ***Limiting, Compression, Enhancing a stereo Mix***

*Level Matching, Apparent Level, Stereo Compression,   
 Distortion, Clipping, Saturation*

Exercise: In class and Take Home: Level Matching Songs

Week 6 **14-Feb** ***Equalizing Stereo Mix***

*Tone Matching, Filter types, EQ Types, Frequency Ranges and Affect*

Exercises – 3 Song Mastering Project

Week 7 **21-Feb** **Mastering Project**

Week 8 **28-Feb** **Mastering Project Evaluations**

Week 9 **7-Mar** ***Rough mix***

*Organizing the mix*

*Track Layout and Naming*

*Color coding*

*Finding the important tracks*

*Identifying problems: Levels, EQ, Phase*

Exercise – Basic Levels

Week 10 **21-Mar** ***Controlling Level***

*Automation*

*Compression*

*Limiting*

*Sub mixing*

Exercise: Routing and Levels?

Week 11 **28-Mar** **Panning and *Controlling Frequencies***

***EQ***

***Filtering***

***Enhancement***

***Highs***

***Bass***

***Sub Bass***

***Psycho-acoustic Bass***

Exercise: Panning and EQing the Mix

Reading: *4.2 Panning*

*4.3 Processing: EQ*

Week 12 **4-Apr** ***Adding Space To The Mix***

***Routing Time Effects***

***Delays: Timing, Feedback, Control***

***Reverb: Types, Timing, Control***

Exercises: Using Delays and Reverb

Week 13 **11-Apr** ***Making The Mix Interesting***

*Final Automation*

*Final Listen*

*Fix or wreck*

Exercise: Automation

Week 14 **18-Apr** ***Printing Mixes***

***Different versions***

***Vocal up/down***

***TV Track***

***A cappella***

***Instrumental***

***More about Backing Up***

Exercise: Printing Different Versions

Week 15 **25-Apr** ***Final Mix and Mastering Project Review and help***

Week 16 **TBA** ***Final Mix and Mastering Project Review and help***