

# MTEC 245 Introduction to MIDI Sequencing

## Course Syllabus Spring 2021

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### Course Goals

Introduction to MIDI Sequencing (MTEC 245) is an introductory course where students will learn to use MIDI sequencing software to compose, edit, and realize music compositions. By recording, editing, and processing MIDI, students will develop a familiarity with both the software and with the techniques used to create realistic musical content.

### Requirements, Exams and Grading Information

Student evaluation in MTEC 245 will consist of tests, practical lab assignments and assigned projects. The assignments include short exercises and term project.

In general, students will be given one week to complete and turn in exercises. Assignments turned in after the deadline will be marked late and penalized 10% for that day as well as 10% for each additional day or portion of a day that they are late. Allow for slow Internet connections and server upload time so that your files are completely uploaded before the deadline. The Final Project may not be submitted late. Final projects not turned in by the deadline will receive a grade of zero.

Quizzes will be administered throughout the semester from assigned Blackboard online module content, consisting of multiple choice/answer and true/false questions. Quizzes and tests must be taken during the scheduled times and cannot be made up at later dates.

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

### Required Software

[Apple Garage Band 10.3.4](#)

Because the technology classes normally taught in the lab will be taught online this fall, students will be required to download *Garage Band*, a free software for Apple computers that will be used in the class, for use on personal computers

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### Required Hardware

- Macintosh Computer capable of running GarageBand
- Reference headphones and/or studio monitors. The department **STRONGLY** recommends the [Sony MDR-7506](#) headphones or similar, as they are the standard headphone for all MTEC and MUIN courses. If you plan to take any other courses in these areas, you will need reference headphones. I also recommend these options if you can afford to invest a bit more:  
[Beyerdynamic DT 770 PRO 250 ohm Closed-back Studio Mixing Headphones](#)  
[Focal Spirit Professional Headphones](#)

### Suggested Hardware

We also suggest that if you don't own one already, that you consider acquiring a MIDI keyboard, which will likely make class assignments easier to complete and more fun. We understand that these software and hardware requirements can be costly and have worked with several manufacturers to provide educational and/or special pricing for Thornton students.

### Required Resources

- It's extremely important that you keep up with the weekly asynchronous video assignments before the next class session. If you haven't done so already, set up a free USC LinkedIn Learning account: <https://itservices.usc.edu/linkedin-learning/>
- [GarageBand Online Documentation](#)

### Blackboard:

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

### Communication

Please make it a daily habit to use/check your USC E-mail account. Any E-mails I send to the class will use that account. \*\*\*Please add “**MTEC 245**” in the subject header of all emails\*\*\* This will help me to organize all the emails that I receive and respond to you more quickly.

### 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 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.

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### Grading Summary

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Quizzes       | 30% |
| Lab Exercises | 40% |
| Final Project | 30% |

### Grading Scale:

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

### Schedule

Should the needs of the class so dictate, I reserve the right to change the course outline. You will be notified of any substantive schedule changes.

| Week | Topic   | Module Content  |
|------|---|---|
| 1    | Setup and System Configuration<br>DAW Basics<br>File Management<br>Intro to GarageBand<br>Layout and Navigation<br>Saving Projects and Bouncing | Video Playlist 01<br>Reading: Intro to MIDI                                 |
| 2    | Building Drum Elements<br>Sequencing with Apple Loops<br>Drummer Tracks<br>Meter/Tempo<br>Drum arrangement techniques                           | Video Playlist 02<br>Reading: Intro to MIDI<br>Assignment: Exercise 1       |
| 3    | MIDI Sequencing workflow<br>Bassline sequencing<br>Instrument Tracks<br>MIDI editing and editors  | Video Playlist 03<br><b>Quiz 1 – MIDI Basics</b><br>Assignment - Exercise 2 |

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|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 4 | Recording MIDI<br>Musical Typing Instrument<br>Keyboard controller setup<br>Scale and Time Quantize<br>Smart Controls | Video Playlist 04<br>Reading: Synthesizer Basics<br>Assignment - Exercise 3        |
| 5 | Basic Mixing techniques,<br>Effects processing<br>Recording and editing Automation<br>Recording Modulation            | Video Playlist 05<br>Reading: Synthesizer Basics<br>Assignment - Exercise 4        |
| 6 | Wrap Up Session<br>Additional Topics and Questions  | Video Playlist 06<br><b>Quiz 2 – Basic Synthesis</b><br>Final Project - Due week 7 |
| 7 | Final Project<br>(check Blackboard Assignments for<br>exact due date)   | <b>Final Project</b>   |

#### **Synchronous Session Recording Notice**

As required by USC, the synchronous sessions for this course will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously. This policy does not apply to individual lessons.

#### **Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment**

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Please do not share or otherwise distribute class materials, music scores or recordings produced by me or any students in the conduct of this course without expressed permission.

#### SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

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### **Zoom etiquette**

I expect you to demonstrate your presence and participation in class by your being on camera in all Zoom sessions. If you will be unable to keep your camera on during the synchronous Zoom session, please contact me prior to the class session to discuss.

### **USC technology rental program**

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program or other assistance. To apply, please [submit an application](#) on the Student Basic Needs portal.

### **USC Technology Support Links**

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

### **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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).