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Course Description

Non-Linear MIDI Sequencing is an in-depth course focusing on the principles and techniques of sequencing and performing musical compositions using Ableton Live Suite.

Course Objectives

MTEC 444 is a project-based collaborative exploration in which students will learn to sequence/record, arrange and mix musical compositions.

As part of the process, students will explore strategies for composing effective drum grooves, bass lines, and keyboard parts, as well as, how to apply effect processing including EQ, compression, side-chain, reverb and delay effects. Students will also learn to effectively layer and orchestrate drum and instrumental sounds to build effective musical arrangements.

Requirements, Assignments, Exams and Grading Information

Because of the importance of hands-on experience with this subject, weekly participation of all presented modules is the best method of understanding the concepts of these specialized topics and workflow.

Focusing on practical application and execution of the topics and guidance taught throughout the course, students are asked to collaborate on musical projects and present their work to the class. Weekly participation is essential to each student's progress, learning evaluation and final grade.

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/>

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 assessments must be taken during the scheduled times and cannot be made up at later dates.

Throughout the semester, questions regarding expectations, assignments, grades and/or anything unclear should be addressed immediately

Non-Linear MIDI Sequencing, MTEC 444

Course Syllabus Spring 2023

Required Software: Ableton Live 11 Suite

Ableton will offer complimentary full functioning free demos for the duration of the semester to students in classes where Live Suite is the primary DAW.

Download Trial Version:

<https://www.ableton.com/en/trial/>

If you need to extend your 90-day trial after it expires, log into your USC account and follow this link: [Ableton Student Offerings.pdf](#)

Ableton Live Suite Edu purchase: \$449 (\$74.83 for 6-months)

Weblink: <https://www.ableton.com/en/shop/education/>

Required Hardware:

You must have reference headphones or monitors. The department STRONGLY recommends the [Sony MDR-7506](#) headphones or similar. 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.

Additionally, I recommend these options:

[Beyerdynamic DT 770 PRO 250 ohm Closed-back Studio Mixing Headphones](#)

[Focal Spirit Professional headphones](#)

Helpful Resource - [Sweetwater's Headphone Buying Guide](#)

Suggested Hardware:

MIDI keyboard, USB microphone or audio interface, mic cable and microphone. Refer to Thornton-Music Technology Purchase Options document on Blackboard for EDU discounts.

Grading Summary

- Weekly Participation 25%
- Midterm Project 25%
- Quizzes 20%
- Final Project 30%

Additional Class Resources

[Shepard, Brian. *Refining Sound*. Oxford Press \(2013\).](#) (Recommended)

[Snoman, Rick. *Dance Music Manual* \(4th Edition\). Focal Press \(2019\).](#) (Recommended)

Attendance

This course is being offered in an in-person modality. Please be attentive to the class attendance policy found in this syllabus. Remote attendance will not be considered unless I am presented with a directive from the Office of Student Accessibility Services. However, if on any day you are ill or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, stay home. In that case, contact me to make up work or otherwise maintain continuity with the course.

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 444" in the subject header** of all emails that you send me*** This will help to organize all the emails that I receive and respond more quickly. In addition, all course materials and class grades will be posted on BlackBoard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>).

Schedule

Week 1 – **Getting started: Ableton Live 11 Suite**
Video Assignment 01

Week 2 – **Arrangement View Workflow**
Video Assignment 02
Quiz #1

Week 3 – **Working in Session View**
Video Assignment 03
Quiz #2

Week 4 – **Working with MIDI**
Video Assignment 04

Week 5 – **Working with Audio**
Video Assignment 05

Week 6 – **Arrangements**
Video Assignment 06
Midterm Projects (Due Week 8)

Week 7 – **Working with Plug-ins**
Video Assignment 07

Week 8 - **In class student Midterm presentations and feedback**

Week 9 – **Working with Racks**

Video Assignment 08

Final Project Discussion

Week 10 – **Live Mixer**

Video Assignment 09

Week 11 – **Mapping**

Video Assignment 10

Week 12 – **Automation**

Video Assignment 11

Week 12 – **File Management**

Video Assignment 12

Week 13 – Final Project work session

Week 14 – Final Project Presentations

Week 15 – Final Project Presentations (continued)

There will not be a final administered in class during Finals Week

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.

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).

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. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 - 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 - 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.