Creating Music and Sound For Film Video and Games
AET323

“There is no terror in the bang, just in the anticipation of it” – Alfred Hitchcock

Spring/2016
MRH 3.124
TTH, 2:00 – 3:15pm

Instructor: Jack W Stamps, DMA
Office: XXX-XXXX, jstamps@austin.utexas.edu, 210.849.534 (cell)

Office Hours: TBA
TA: NA

I. Rationale:

Creating Music and Sound for Film, Video and Games is a lecture/lab course designed to introduce students to concepts of music and sound for a variety of media with a primary focus on creating original music and/or sound tracks. Topics include music structures, production and editing, film and video synchronization, game audio and other sound for film related topics.

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Learn to use the digital audio workstation to create music and sound design for film
- Use higher procedures such as MIDI, sampling and synthesis to full effect for the assignments given
- Discern between types of musical score appropriate for different visual narratives
- Discern between types of sound design appropriate for different visual narratives
- Rationalize musical and sound design choices as they relate to your aesthetic preferences
- Migrate to any number of similar DAW setups to continue similar work beyond the class

III. Format and Procedures:

Assessment of each project will be undertaken on the basis of the objectives of each assignment plus a small component for originality and creativity. For the Final Project, students will be expected to find a film in progress (your friends, yours) for which you will create a music track and, if needed, additional creative sound design elements. **Music totaling 3-5 minutes minimum**, In the event that you do not have a project to work on, I will allow you to present an idea for extracting video from a preexisting film to score.

There will also be a weekly student presentation. The dates will be assigned at the start of the semester. Each student will bring in two DVD’s to demonstrate and describe what is in their opinion, a) a superb example of the role of music as a dramatic agent b) a superb example of the use of sound with NO music as a dramatic agent.
AET 323 Course Syllabus

**IV. Tentative Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>% Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to course and materials History of Film Music, Class Film Presentations <em>(on Tuesdays, 1st six weeks)</em></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A brief look at MIDI &amp; Digital Audio</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Working with Film in Logic; Study of ALIEN</td>
<td>Compose Music for ALIEN titles</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Introduction to the DAW (cont)</td>
<td>Work on ALIEN titles</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Digital Audio in Logic Pro, UT Sound Effects libraries</td>
<td>Simple sample-driven piece of music demonstrating automation, use of audio tacks – Clip: REQUIEM FOR A DREAM</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Logic: Automation, effects, samples, Loops</td>
<td>Simple sample-driven piece of music demonstrating automation, use of audio tacks – Clip: REQUIEM FOR A DREAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Commercial Music</td>
<td>Make a short instrumental music bed for CSpire commercial clip</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Commercial Music (cont)</td>
<td>Make a short instrumental music bed for CSpire commercial clip</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Minimalism in Film score.</td>
<td>Strategies for a short minimalist instrumental music bed for GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL clip</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Minimalism in Film score.</td>
<td>Strategies for a short minimalist instrumental music bed for GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL clip</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Student Choice: Chose between 4 posted clips</td>
<td>Compose Music for 1 of 4 given clips.</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>FIELD TRIP: <em>Tentative 5.1 Surround</em></td>
<td>Butler School of Music 5.1 surround sound demo</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>In-class work (lessons) on final projects</td>
<td>work on final project</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>In-class work (lessons) on final projects</td>
<td>work on final project</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>In-class work (lessons) on final projects</td>
<td>Mandatory attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Presentation of Final Projects/Portfolios</td>
<td>ALL class projects are due on a thumb drive or DVD-R (Portfolio)</td>
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<td>35</td>
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</table>
V. My Assumptions

I come to the teaching of this course with the assumption that you do not have any musical background. Thus, there is no pre-requisite in music theory or composition. The nature of the coursework is such that the student, with no musical skill, can find his/her voice through the aid of the digital audio workstation and copious examples of film score and sound design practices.

It has been my longstanding belief that, with the certain alignment of circumstances, creativity and artistic discernment can be taught. It has been my experience with the teaching of this course that students with little to no prior music experience stand to gain much knowledge from fellow classmates with some musical skill. More importantly, I have found the opposite to be true: that students with musical experience learn A LOT from the outside-the-box perspective brought by in the inexperienced. I will work hard to keep this dynamic alive throughout the term.

VI. Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation policy:
   (a) Expected classroom behavior (may want to develop this with the students, e.g., What guidelines are appropriate for behavior and participation in a large class? [See last page of this handout for a sample.]
   (b) Ground Rules for participation in discussions or activities
   (c) Civility statement and code of conduct

   Religious Holy Days
   By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

2. Course Readings/Materials:

   Optional texts:
   Childs, G. W. “Creating Music and Sound for Games” ($20)
   Karlin, Fred “On the Track” ($65) – Wonderful text.

   Supplies needed:
   One 8gb flash drive

3. Assignments, Assessment, and Evaluation

   Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is required. Absences of each student are recorded without exception from the official date of her/his enrollment. The counting of absences begins on the first day of a student’s enrollment in the course after classes begin.

   Both tardiness and early departure from class are forms of absenteeism. If you are more than 20 minutes late, this constitutes an absence. Lesser tardiness will affect your class participation grade for that day. Students are expected to be in class the entire class period and actively engaged in classroom activities at all times. Absences from the room in either body or spirit will negatively affect your grade.
4. Use of *Canvas* in class

In this class I use *Canvas*—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at [http://courses.utexas.edu](http://courses.utexas.edu)—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments.

VII. Grading Procedures: Grades will be based on:

Grades will be calculated as follows:

1. Studio Projects (4-5)                              50% total
2. Movie Presentation                                15%
3. Final Project                                     25%
4. Class Participation                               10%

IX. Academic Integrity

*University of Texas Honor Code*

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

X. Other University Notices and Policies

**Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

- All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at [http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564](http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564).

**Documented Disability Statement**

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. *(Note to Faculty: Details of a student’s disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student’s condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)*

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD’s website for more disability-related information: [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php)

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**
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If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

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