

MUS 1360 Digital Musicianship and Production

T | Period 9-10 (4:05 PM – 6:00 PM) MUB 147

R | Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM) MUB 147

Instructor: Yunmeng Su

Email: suyunmeng@ufl.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course introduces the essential skills needed to create music using digital tools. No prior experience is required. Students will learn how to operate music software, write and arrange musical ideas, prepare clean scores, and understand the basic acoustics and music theory that support effective composition. Through step-by-step instruction and hands-on projects, the course guides students from simple exercises to producing their own complete piece. By the end of the semester, students will be able to compose, notate, and mix original work with confidence in both the creative and technical aspects of music production.

Prerequisites

Music major or consent of the instructor.

Recommended Textbook

- Hosken, Dan. An Introduction to Music Technology. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Materials Required

- High-quality over-ear Headphones (No Bluetooth or speaker)
- 1/4-inch TRS male to 3.5mm TRS female adapter
- External hard drive or Google Drive for project backup

Materials Recommended

- MacOS personal computer with Logic Pro and Sibelius/Dorico
- MIDI keyboard (25-61 keys recommended)
- Audio Interface (e.g., Focusrite Scarlett 2i2, MOTU M2, or similar)

Grading

- 25% Assignments
- 15% Quizzes
- 20% Midterm
- 10% Attendance
- 15% Discussion & Participation
- 20% Final Project

Information

1. All essential hardware and software required for this course are available in the classroom. Students who do not have access to a macOS computer or the recommended peripherals may complete their coursework using the classroom workstations during scheduled class sessions or lab hours.
2. Late work cannot be accepted, as assignments build sequentially throughout the course. Please plan your schedule accordingly.
3. Regular attendance is expected. More than three absences may affect your final grade.
4. Course requirements and schedule may be adjusted to meet class needs.
5. Students must comply with the UF Software Copyright Policy.
6. All students are expected to follow the UF Student Honor Code.
7. UF Counselling and Wellness resources are available to all students.
8. Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office and present documentation to the instructor.
9. Course evaluations will be completed online through GatorEvals.
10. Communication with the instructor is welcome at any time.

Infectious Illness Policy: If you are sick, do not attend class; follow UF Health guidelines for medical evaluation.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Range
A	100–94%

A–	93–90%
B+	89–87%
B	86–83%
B–	82–80%
C+	79–77%
C	76–73%
C–	72–70%
D+	69–67%
D	66–63%
D–	62–60%
E	59–0%

Course Outline

Week 1 (1/13 – 1/15) Getting Started:

Course Introduction – syllabus walkthrough

Overview of Logic Pro & Basic Concepts, Track Types, Recording & Playback, and Basic Region Editing.

Assignment: Create a short 8-bar session with 2 tracks

Week 2 (1/20 – 1/22) Recording Fundamentals (Audio & MIDI):

Audio Recording Basics, MIDI Recording/Input, Playback Tools, Quantization Basics

Assignment: Create a 20-30 second demo

Quiz 1 (1/22)

Week 3 (1/27 – 1/29) Audio & MIDI Editing Fundamentals:

MIDI Editing Tools, Audio Region Editing, Comping Basics, Looping & Building Short Patterns

Assignment: Edit a provided Logic Project

Week 4 (2/3 – 2/5) Drum Writing & Groove Programming:

Kick/Snare/hi-hat programming, Groove, swing, velocity variation, Layering drum sounds

Assignment: Reproduce the drum track from the reference song.

Quiz 2 (2/5)

Week 5 (2/10 – 2/12) Bassline Writing:

Common bass patterns in pop/rock/lofi, Rhythm vs harmony interaction, Octave placement & shaping bass tone

Assignment: Complete the bassline for your reproduction project.

Week 6 (2/17 – 2/19) Harmony & Piano/Guitar Comping:

Writing chord progressions, Harmonic texture, Sustained chords, voicing for MIDI instruments, Using MIDI keyboard to input chords

Assignment: Reproduce the full harmonic layer.

Quiz 3 (2/19)

Week 7 (2/24 – 2/26) Midterm Week

Week 8 (3/3 – 3/5) Texture, Transitions & Automation:

Layers, Pads, Background instruments, risers, reverse effect, fills, Volume/pan/plugin automation

Assignment: Submit A-B structure with transitions and basic automation.

Week 9 (3/10 – 3/12) Score Preparation:

Sibelius basic, Score setup, input, articulations, engraving, exporting

Assignment: Submit a clean engraved score section.

Quiz 4 (3/12)

Week 10 (3/17 – 3/19) Spring Break (no class)

Week 11 (3/24 – 3/26) Editing, Cleanup & Session Organization:

MIDI editing, Timing/region cleanup, quantization, humanization

Assignment: Submit a fully organized pre-mix session.

Week 12 (3/31 – 4/2) Mixing I: Balance, EQ, Compression:

Gain levels, Panning, EQ, Compression

Assignment: Submit Mix Draft 1.

Week 13 (4/7 – 4/9) Mixing II: FX, Space & Polishing:

Reverb, delay, bus processing, Final polish, Export settings

Assignment: Submit the mix.

Quiz 5 (4/9)

Week 14 (4/14 – 4/16) Final Project Preparation & Presentations I

Week 15 (4/21) Final Project Presentations II

Course Components

- **Assignment:** Weekly assignments guide students through the step-by-step reproduction of a selected reference track. Each assignment focuses on a key production topic—such as drum programming, bass writing, harmonic layering, comping, texture building, or session cleanup. Students will submit incremental sections of their reproduction project and demonstrate technical proficiency in Logic Pro during lab hours.

- **Quizzes:** Short quizzes will be administered periodically to assess students' understanding of workflow, software tools, production terminology, and essential editing and mixing concepts. Quizzes emphasize practical knowledge and reinforce the skills used in weekly assignments.
 - **Mid-Term Exam:** The mid-term exam consists of a practical submission demonstrating core production skills developed in the first half of the course. Students will submit the foundational portion of their reproduction project—including completed drums, bass, harmonic layers, and comping—along with a properly organized Logic Pro session. The exam evaluates accuracy, timing, voicing, and technical execution.
 - **Final Project:** Students will complete an individual final project demonstrating the production techniques learned throughout the semester. The Final Project consists of two components:
 - A fully mixed and polished reproduction of the assigned reference track, developed progressively through weekly assignments.
 - A short original composition (30–45 seconds) applying skills such as drum programming, harmonic writing, texture building, and introductory mixing.
 - Students will also prepare a brief score excerpt (8–16 bars) for either the reproduction or the original composition, created using notation software introduced in class.
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