

Music Production in Commercial Media

Course Number: MUS 4500 & 6502

Semester: Spring 2024

Credits: 3 **Class Periods:** 9, 10, and 11 **Time:** 4:05-7:05

Location: MUS 147 (Music Technology Lab)

(I) Principal Instructor: Chris Shelton, Ph.D. in Composition (in progress)

Email: shelton.d@ufl.edu

Website: <https://chrissheltonmusic.com>

Office Hours: by Appointment in the Lab or via Zoom

(II) Graduate Assistant: Derris Lee, B.A.

M.M. in Performance (in progress)

Email: dlee25@ufl.edu

[Official Website](#)

Office Hours: by Appointment

Course Description

This course is intended to cultivate industry-standard skills in the recording arts and sciences for creating music that facilitates entrepreneurs' commercial media and marketing platforms. Students will cultivate audio engineering, microphone placement, & production techniques to devise (1) original music and covers within various genres and (2) musical scores, foley FX, and voice-overs to support commercial media (i.e., albums, visual media, digital advertisements, and podcasts).

Course Pre-Requisites / Co-Requisites

The course is intended for graduate students in music. Non-music majors may enroll with permission of the instructor.

Course Objectives. Students will:

- Learn how to produce viable content for developing a portfolio utilizing peer-reviewed, industry-standard music technologies intended for professional-level home-studio projects, which has become the norm for interconnected global-music production practices. The technologies that will be taught are: (1) a digital audio workstation (i.e., Logic Pro X), (2) an interface (i.e., Focusrite), (3) microphones (directional and condenser microphones), (4) MIDI controllers, and (5) a mastering software (i.e., iZotope Ozone). The items listed are award-winning technologies and are preferred by many of the world's top music producers, audio engineers, and visual media composers whose productions are completed in a home-recording studio model.
- learn how to create MIDI-based jingles, compositions, and arrangements of covers within various styles of music using deep-sampled MIDI instrumental libraries and keyboard techniques.

- learn how to connect, assign, and manipulate transducers appropriate to the musical style and ensemble configuration during live engineered recordings (i.e., microphones, amplifiers, interfaces, external sound FX boards, and so forth).
- learn how to implement advanced production and audio engineering techniques (i.e., recording, mixing, editing, processing, sound design, and mastering) utilizing Logic Pro X and iZotope Ozone mastering software.
- learn how to produce, record, adapt, and synchronize live instrumental and vocal performances with MIDI-based instrumental performances for commercial media (i.e., visual media, music videos, digital advertisement, and podcast).
- learn to create jingles and compositions intended for marketing a product to target audiences within social media platforms.
- learn how to operate the functions & layout of a mixing board.

Using Canvas for the Course

A Canvas course site has been established for use in these courses. To access it, use a World Wide Web browser and open the following URL: <https://ufl.instructure.com/>. In Canvas, you can access video tutorials, information on assignments, access additional resources for learning provided by the instructor, engage in topical discussions with your peers, and submit your assignments.

Required Textbooks

Audio and Video Tutorials, Rubrics, and Selected Articles will be provided to reinforce learning.

Recommended Textbooks

1. Clark, Rick. *Mixing, Recording, and Producing Techniques of the Pros: Insights on Recording Audio for Music, Film, TV, and Games*. 2nd ed. Cengage Learning. 2010. ISBN: 1598638408
2. Ramone, Phil. *Making Records: The Scenes Behind the Music*. Hachette Books. 2007. ISBN: 0786868597
3. Massy, Sylvia. *Recording Unhinged: Creative and Unconventional Music Recording Techniques (Music Pro Guides)*. 1st ed. Hal Leonard. 2016. ISBN: 1495011275

Required Materials:

- (1) **External hard drive**
- (2) **Headphones with a cable (not bluetooth headphones)**
- (3) Google Drive Account

Course Delivery:

The course meets once per week. Class time will be dedicated to (1) reviewing the weekly discussions and homework assignments as a class, (2) lectures on the core knowledge of the week's topic to ensure timely

achievement of course objectives, and (3) applying the knowledge through group activities, content creation of products and communicative media, and role-playing interpersonal dialogue that simulates engagement in the music business. Students are encouraged to take notes and ask questions freely. While lectures and discussions emphasize identifying and understanding major course themes, group activities challenge students to synthesize this information and create appropriate projects that are relevant to music business, corporations, and the industry as a whole.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Jan 8th: Introductions, Syllabus Overview, Assignment Structure, DAW Overview (Logic), Lecture regarding Assignment 1 and expectations. Lecture on writing in the straight-ahead rock and blues styles. Historical examples, instrumentation, etc.

Week 2 Jan 15th: **NO CLASS (MLK Day)**

Week 3 Jan 22nd: ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE, Class presentations of Assignment 1. Lecture on Writing for drums/percussion (Derris Lee), Discussion about the Big Band and Swing styles. Historical examples, instrumentation, etc. (Dr. Ruiz)

Week 4 Jan 29^h: ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE, Class presentations of Assignment 2. Lecture on EDM/Club/House styles. Instrumentation, sampling, etc.

Week 5 Feb 5th: ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 3. Lecture on mixing and mastering in preparation for assignment 4.

Week 6 Feb 12th: Lab and lecture about various studio equipment that may be encountered. Possible “field trip” to the 2nd floor lab. Microphone discussion, etc.

Week 7 Feb 19th: ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE (two pieces), Class presentation of Assignment 4. Lecture and feedback. Lecture about the upcoming assignment 5. Discussion of recording recitals. Troubleshooting will be emphasized.

Week 8 Feb 26th: Lab and further discussion of assignment 5 along with remaining assignments. (Derris Lee)

Week 9 Mar 4th: ASSIGNMENT #5 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 5. Lecture and feedback. Lecture about composing for images especially imaginary images to prep. for Assignment 6

Week 10 Mar 11th: **NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

Week 11 Mar 18th: Lab and further discussion of remaining assignments.

Week 12 Mar 25th: ASSIGNMENT #6 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 6, Lecture regarding assignment 7. Lecture about 1960s music. Historical examples. How to approach writing in the various pop styles the 1960s had to offer.

Week 13 Apr 1st: ASSIGNMENT #7 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 7, Lecture about the upcoming assignment 8. Continued discussion of writing for a film scene with special emphasis on the mixing and mastering process and recreating the ambience for a film audio.

Week 14 Apr 8th: ASSIGNMENT #8 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 8, Lecture regarding assignment 9. Further discussion of the process of creating a single for distribution, taking into consideration limiters, loudness for various online stores, etc.

Week 15 Apr 15th: Lab and Q & A and prep for the producers’ showcase (April 10th, 7:20 Rm 101)

Week 16 Apr 22nd: ASSIGNMENT #9 DUE, Class presentation of Assignment 9

Timeline & Description of Assignments:

Weekly Online Discussion assignments located on Canvas will be turned in by Sunday at 11:59 pm. The purpose of the discussions is to (1) learn about and relate to your peers' perspectives based on their

experience and professional perspective, (2) refine your perspectives over time to help strengthen your personal enterprise, and (3) uncover opportunities for future collaborations between your peers as each of you have various types of expertise. The discussion **postings** should be clear, concise, and creative.

Homework Production Assignments/Projects will be located on Canvas under the 'Assignment' tab. Some homework assignments will be located within the slides of the module, and I will indicate which slides to refer to. Homework assignments can be turned in electronically anytime throughout the week, but no later than 11:59 pm on Fridays. Your homework is also to be turned in with a physical copy at the next class meeting for in-class discussion. Students will have a total of **9 Assignments** that reflect an understanding of the content taught and demonstrated by the instructor. The instructor will provide rubrics and video tutorials for each assignment, which will be located on Canvas under the 'Assignment' tab.

- NOTE: Students will be able to complete many of these assignments during the class period's lab time, as designated by the instructor. There will be class meetings fully dedicated to lab time in which the instructor will provide individual guidance and collaborative support for each student's assignments and encourages assignments to be co-produced with other students in the class if the student desires. In doing so, this will ensure students have ample time to complete the assignments and gain experience engaging in collaborative-productions, which is common practice in the music industry. Assignments will range between **30 seconds – 2 minutes of music**. Students are welcomed to expand the length of each assignment if they wish.

Producer's 1st Single will be due in the **3rd week** of the semester. The single will display students' ability to compose, recruit supporting musicians, perform and record stems, mix, edit, and master an original composition or an arrangement of a cover at an industry-standard. Students can choose any genre for their single and should contain a combination of MIDI-based instruments, vocals, and acoustic instruments within the piece of music.

Final Compilation Portfolio will commence in the 8th week of class. Students will be provided with detailed instructions and advice for their customized portfolio of music productions for commercial media based on their aspiring vocation of interest within music business & entrepreneurship. The final compilation portfolio will be undertaken throughout the remainder of the semester with regular input from the instructor. The Portfolio Presentation will take place during the 16th week of the semester.

***** Additional Requirements for Graduate-Level Students Section (or Advanced Students)*****

Research Paper on Music Production in Commercial Media: Students will write a 1500-word essay (double spaced, 12 pt. font). Research one of your favorite music producer, audio engineer, studio session musician, or film composer, and find information about their manager. [Questions include: What is the manager's background? Can you establish why they became a musician, producer, or audio engineer in commercial media? Are there any skills that you can see that make them a great musician who specializes in commercial media? What artistic and technical skills do they possess that makes them unique from most musicians involved in commercial media? What success have they had with their commercial media?] This assignment will be graded as part of the 'Homework Set' and due during the 13th week of the semester.

Audio Discrimination Questionnaire will be due on Weeks 4, 8, 12, and 16. Students will complete an instructor-developed questionnaire that is accompanied with significant musical recordings from different eras and commercial media contexts. Students will be expected to (1) listen and analyze production and

audio engineering components of the musical selections, (2) answer each question pertaining to musical selections, and (3) supplement their answers with qualitative responses that provide reasons for their answers.

Producer’s 2nd Single will be due in the 16th week of the semester. The single will display students’ ability to compose, recruit supporting musicians, perform and record stems, mix, edit, and master an original composition or an arrangement of a cover at an industry-standard. Students can choose any genre for their single, however, it must a different genre from the producer’s 1st single assignment. The instrumentation and recording processes are at the discretion of the student.

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Homework Sets (20)	15%
Quizzes (4)	5%
Producer’s Single (2)	20%
Final Compilation Portfolio	30%
Research Project	10%
Weekly Online Discussions	5%
Audio Discrimination Questionnaires	10%
Class Participation	5%

Participation Rubric

Criteria	1	2	3	4
Preparation	<u>Unprepared</u> for class with assignments, homework, and required class materials (textbook, documenting materials).	<u>Partially prepared</u> for class with assignments, homework, and required class materials (textbook, documenting materials).	<u>Mostly prepared</u> for class with assignments, homework, and required class materials (textbook, documenting materials).	<u>Fully prepared</u> for class with assignments, homework, and required class materials (textbook, documenting materials).

Engagement	<u>Does not participate</u> in class discussions and collaborate with other students in group assignments. Does not complete assignments according to the rubrics provided and does not submit assignments on time. Exhibits a lack of interest in the activities.	<u>Some participation</u> in class discussions and collaborate with other students in group assignments. Does not complete assignments according to the rubrics provided but submit assignments on time. Has many lapses in participation, and has 4 or more incomplete or late assignments.	<u>Active participation</u> in class discussions and collaborate with other students in group assignments. Completes assignments according to the rubrics provided and submits assignments on time throughout the entire class. Has minimal lapses in participation, and has 3 incomplete or late assignments.	<u>Active participation</u> in class discussions and collaborate with other students in group assignments. Completes assignments according to the rubrics provided and submits assignments on time throughout the entire class.
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Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93.0 - 100.0	A	4.00
90.0 – 92.9	A-	3.67
87.0 – 89.9	B+	3.33
83.0 – 86.9	B	3.00
80.0 – 82.9	B-	2.67
77.0 – 79.9	C+	2.33
73.0 – 76.9	C	2.00
70.0 – 72.9	C-	1.67
67.0 – 69.9	D+	1.33
63.0 – 66.9	D	1.00
60.0 – 62.9	D-	0.67
0 – 59.9	E	0.00

Class attendance, Make-up Exams, and Attendance

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Grading Scale

Click here for [Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points.](#)

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/publicresults>

Technical Issues

To resolving technical issues, visit the helpdesk website or call 352-392-4357.

Cheating and Plagiarism

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

In-Class Recording Policy

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are **STRICTLY CONTROLLED**. The **ONLY** allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is **PROHIBITED**. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-3921575, or visit [U Matter, We Care](#) website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center](#) website.

University Police Department: Visit [UF Police Department](#) website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center](#) website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

[Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.