

MUS 3739a

Dr. J. A. Hodgson; jhodgs5@uwo.ca

DIGITAL MIXING AND MASTERING

Prerequisites

MUS 2736. Unless you have either the requisites for this course (MUS 2736) or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete MUS 3739a: Digital Mixing and Mastering will be capable of mixing and delivering professional mixes and masters in any genre for all standard duplication. This said, we focus most explicitly on Western popular musics in this course, and the techniques and aesthetic values current in the genre. This outcome will be achieved through practice, and students should expect to spend 3-5 hours of time per week outside of class in TC 200 working on assignments.

Course Materials

Multitrack session files for assignments and course work will be supplied to students on a weekly basis through owl. There are no other required course materials for this class, as students are encouraged, though not required, to invest their book budget for this class in a functional pair of reference headphones they can use for their mixing and mastering work in this class and beyond. Audio-Technica ATH-M20x Professional Headphones will suffice, for instance, and are currently available on [amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca/Audio-Technica-AUD-ATHM20X-Professional-Headphones/dp/B00HVLUR18/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3I0W950IGLKJT&keywords=Audiotechnica&qid=1692539916&srefix=audiotechnica%2Caps%2C124&sr=8-1) for \$65 CAD. (https://www.amazon.ca/Audio-Technica-AUD-ATHM20X-Professional-Headphones/dp/B00HVLUR18/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3I0W950IGLKJT&keywords=Audiotechnica&qid=1692539916&srefix=audiotechnica%2Caps%2C124&sr=8-1)

Evaluation

Weekly Assignments (20%) are assigned and collected on an ongoing basis throughout the semester.

Midterm project (20%). Due Wednesday 25 October by 7pm in class. More information will be provided in class.

Final Project (60%). Due Wednesday 8 December by 7pm in class. More information will be provided in class.

Grading Scale

A+ = 90-100%, A = 80-89%, B = 70-79%, C = 60-69%, D = 50-59%, F = 0-49%.

Office Hours

I am available for consultation outside class by appointment. Please contact me to arrange a time for a Zoom session. I prefer not to conduct course business by email, and I do not answer questions about course content by email. On the rare occasion that a student misses a lecture for legitimate and medically documented reasons, I will provide assistance with course material, but please be advised that I do not give private summaries of lectures. Students should rely on their peers to gather, and understand, material from classes they miss. See me only to clarify what you and your peers cannot grasp independently

Topics Covered In Class: Course Schedule

Unit One: Introduction to Mixing
13-20 September

13 September

- Introduction to the Course Concept and Facilities
- Calibrating the Listening Environment & Calibrating the Ears
- Creating & Using Reference Tracks

20 September

- What Is A Mix?
- Topping & Tailing
- Routing & Gain Staging
- Setting Your Anchor Points
- Blanket Filtering
- Balancing: Horizon & Depth
- Archiving: Best Practices

Unit Two: Mixing
27 September - 25 October

27 September

- Dynamics Processing
- Editing: Flex Pitch and Time

4 October

- Equalization
- Dynamic EQ
- Expansion v Gating

11 October

- Delay/Reverb
- Lateral Dynamics Processing

18 October

- Stereo Bus considerations
- Taking Notes & The Brief
- Sending the Reference file

25 October

Midterm Projects Due

- Mastering: Formats, Loudness, Self-Noise, History, Collapse, AI

1 November

Fall Reading Week

Unit Three: Mastering

8 November - 8 December

8 November

- Preparing a Mix for Master
- Receiving a Mix for Master
- Evaluating a Mix for Master
- Approaches to Mastering
- Metering & Other Nonsense

15 November

- Dynamics Processing
- Equalization
- Midfield Considerations

22 November

- Widening a Mix/Adding Depth
- MidSide for Mastering
- Delivering For, Taking, & Receiving, Notes
- Loudness Normalization

29 November

Workshop for Final Projects (optional)

6 December

Final Projects Due at 7pm in class

Additional Statements

Academic Consideration for Student Absence and Missed Work ($\geq 10\%$)

Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website for further details regarding requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence and Missed Work ($< 10\%$)

In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade (ie. two or fewer assignments) due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

Academic Offences

Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green “I Need Help Now” button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

<http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

CONTINGENCY PLAN

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

EXAMINATIONS & ATTENDANCE

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

