San Jose State University/School of Music and Dance

Music 170A, Fundamentals of Audio Production,

Section 01, Fall 2015

Contact Information

Instructor: Tom Langan

Office Location: Music Building Room 124

Email: Thomas.langan@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Monday 6PM - 7PM

Class Days/Time: Monday 7PM – 9:45PM

Prerequisites: MUSIC 1A and MUSIC 1B

Classroom: Music Building Room 124/213

Course Fees: Music Use Fee Required

Course Description

Beginning techniques in studio sound and music recording: terminology, tape editing, overdubbing, microphone technique and production techniques.

Prerequisite: MUSIC 1A and MUSIC 1B

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

Through fundamentals of sound recording, students can begin to obtain a working knowledge of the tools and creative processes in the sonic arts of the electronic medium. Methods of audio recording are essential to all electronic communications media, and are the focus of one of the largest commercial arts in-
industries. Rather than use pre-recorded materials as the basis for sound construction, all sound in this course will be developed in the studio. As a part of the School of Music, the recording courses emphasize the creative side recording technology and development of critical hearing skills. Student presentation and discussion play a large role in the development of audio recording techniques.

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Music 170A seeks to develop an understanding of the Recording Arts as a craft and having a set of practices and skills separate from the objectives needed for a specific production, event, or recording session.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand basic studio operations and standard types of recording studio layouts
- Have command of common microphone techniques for varied practices
- Understand synchronization and latency issues in current computer-based projects
- Understand line-level recording techniques and practices
- Produce digital recordings within integrated software systems.
- Assemble media for contemporary arts projects including: original loop construction, sample construction, mixing techniques with fundamental modifiers, and organization of sound construction materials
- Understand MIDI application basics as used in the recording process

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbook**

Texts for this class are the manuals for operation of equipment in the Studio and Lab.

**Course Goals and Learning Objectives**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. All class members must have an email address, regular access to the web, and be able to download and/or listen to class materials every week.

If you do not have access to a computer with web access at your home or residence, computers may be accessed throughout the King Library, and in the computer labs, Sweeney Hall 431 and 433.

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS/GRADES**

170A recording is a fully studio-based class. Grades are based upon both aesthetic considerations in projects, exams (given as materials are covered), and
demonstrated knowledge of the tools. In addition to attending lectures, written
and studio assignments will be required as particular topics are encountered.
This work will be assigned in class, with due dates determined at that time.
Completed assignments will often constitute a large part of the graded material.
Students will be expected to complete assignments as they are given, take a
written mid-term, and complete a final project, which will serve as the basis for
the final.

TIME REQUIREMENTS.
As a studio course, all work is completely dependent upon substantial time
spent in the studio. All class members will be expected to select a regular time
for studio practice in addition to attending class meetings. Participation in
group recording projects will be expected during the semester, so it will be im-
perative for class members to work together to find session times. It will also
be necessary to carefully arrange your recording projects with the instructor
and with performers so that there will be NO conflicts with work, classes, or
other obligations. Cancelled sessions cannot be made up. This is a time inten-
sive course. Please make sure you can devote the time necessary to complete
substantial work.

Grading Policy

Completion of assignments (30%), tests (30%), and individual/group project (30%) will
result in a grade of “C” or better. Grades of “B” or “A” are earned by a qualitative evalua-
tion of the projects in terms of analysis, intent and execution. It is the responsibility of
each student to make his or her preparation and studio participation known. 10% of this
grade is earned through class participation.

Classroom Protocol

MATERIALS.
Class members are responsible for backing up and preserving their work.
Bring in a flash drive or portable hard drive to every session for back-up pur-
poses.

STUDIO USE.
The recording studio will be open during regular departmental hours, and some
time on weekends. Please check with departmental signs for this semester’s
hours. Late evening sessions are possible by arrangement. With a PAID Music
Use Fee card, your name on file for enrollment in the class, and a studio card
(signed), you will be assigned an entrance code for your practice time. Acous-
tic recording sessions are best scheduled in late evenings or after normal uni-
versity hours.

YOU MUST UPDATE YOUR STUDIO LOG EVERY TIME YOU USE THE
STUDIO.
Reports of improper facility treatment, poor clean-up, doors left open, or use of the studio at unauthorized times will be cause for expulsion from the facilities and/or from the class.

Lecture Topics will include:
• Fundamentals of acoustics as they relate to practical recording situations.
• Basic studio operations: discussion of standard types of recording studio layouts.
• Use of the mixing console for multi-level functions
• Multi-track recording formats and procedures.
• Fundamentals of monitoring and listening for the recording engineer.
• Human interaction in a studio environment.
• Digital editing as a creative tool for composition and contemporary sound production.
• Microphone - through-the-air recording principles.
• Line-level recording practices.
• Aspects of production organization for the engineer.
• The construction of a small studio.
• MIDI application basics as used in the recording process.
• The Audio Engineer’s approach to location recording and live sound events.

SPECIAL NOTES
- Regular studio sign-up times may be altered BY THE INSTRUCTOR from time to time for special projects/sessions in the studio, or due to repairs. Make-up times will be assigned if possible.
- A Music Use Fee must be paid for enrollment in this class.
- Your instructor insists upon a high level of courtesy, cooperation and participation between all class members in a shared studio environment.

University Policies
Dropping and Adding
Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material
University Policy S12-7, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course.
• “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

• “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

**Academic integrity**

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. You are required to be honest in all your academic course work.

Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

**Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at http://www.sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

In 2013, the Disability Resource Center changed its name to be known as the Accessible Education Center, to incorporate a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities. The new name change reflects the broad scope of attention and support to SJSU students with disabilities and the University’s continued advocacy and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus.
Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center at http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/ located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, fol-
low the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Face-
book. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

**SJSU Counseling Services**

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling.
### Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>08/24/15</td>
<td>Class expectations, review, and studio organization. survey, scheduling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Signal Path</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>08/31/15</td>
<td>Acoustics, Digital Recording, Lab review – in small groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>09/07/15</td>
<td><strong>Labor Day - No class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>09/14/15</td>
<td>The Mixing Board, Getting up and running in the studio</td>
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<td>1st assignment examples due</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>09/21/15</td>
<td>Introduction to Logic, Layout - navigation</td>
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<td><em>Sound Construction Due</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>09/28/15</td>
<td>Logic: production from a human organizational perspective: media production</td>
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<td>as a multi-track project</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/05/15</td>
<td>Studio Aesthetic I: seminar-discussion: plug-ins Logic</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/12/15</td>
<td>Studio Aesthetic II: seminar-discussion: plug-ins Logic</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/19/15</td>
<td>Studio Recording Day: inter-department session planned</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10/26/15</td>
<td>Production Day: Mixing</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/02/15</td>
<td>Mastering: Production finishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11/09/15</td>
<td>Studio Aesthetic III: MIDI manipulation seminar-discussion</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11/16/15</td>
<td>Discussion of film and media sound</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11/23/15</td>
<td>Live Sound Issues and Roles (Possible Field Trip)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>11/30/15</td>
<td>Listening Day 2 <em>concert recordings due</em> (one example from program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>12/07/15</td>
<td><em>final projects due in class for presentation</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Final must be turned in by or before 7:45, date of final exam</td>
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*Please Note: This schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Changes and important notifications will be mentioned in class and via email.*