

025:250 COMPOSITION: ELECTRONIC MEDIA I

Lawrence Fritts

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hours: MW, 12:30-3:30 and after class. Best to email for appointments.

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Goals: Students will explore the craft of composition in fixed form media, using the programs Peak and Pro Tools. Techniques to be studied include digital recording, editing, and mixing, sound processing, and audio mastering. Compositional strategies will focus on building sounds in the acousmatic domain, turning these sounds into gestures, then segments, phrases, and narrative form. The course work includes assignments to record, generate, and transform material for the final composition project, listening presentations, EMS concert set-up, attendance, and break down, and critiques of works in progress. A brief introduction to Max/MSP and Kyma will be given as a preview to Spring semester's class.

Grading: Grades are based on assignments (30%), listening presentations (10%), mid-term critique (30%), final critique (30%). Poor attendance will result in a lower grade.

Attendance: The presentation of the software and its compositional uses will unfold over the entire semester, hence attendance is critical. Please email me as soon as you know that you won't be able to attend class. Make sure that you get the handout from that class and sit down with Israel or Matt to make sure you understand what you missed. Missing out on a particular bit of info can cause large problems.

Assignments: Students will complete 3 assignments designed to develop skills in editing, mixing, and processing. These will be presented in class. Each assignment will be worth 10% of the final grade. The material should always be clean, normalized, no extra silence at the beginning or end of the assignment, and labelled clearly and rationally.

Listening Presentation: Each student will present the music of a composer and lead a discussion in a 15-20 minute presentation with handout. This presentation will be worth 10% of the final grade.

Mid-term Class Critique: Students will present their work for class discussion and critique. This music will be worth 20% of the final grade. Grading will be primarily based on length of the composition at that stage of completion. In general, it is not a good idea to present individual sounds when these could be organized into a compositional statement. Try to make as much of what you do be done in the service of the composition. In addition to quality, originality, and craft, the composition will be partly graded on length, where 2 minutes is excellent, 2 ½ minutes is very good, 1 minute is good, 30 seconds is fair and less than 30 seconds is poor.

Final Class Critique: The final critique is the same as the mid-term critique, except that expectations for length are now 4 minutes is excellent, 2 minutes is very good, 1 minute is good, and less is not so good.

EMS Concerts: Students are expected to attend each EMS concert and to assist with set-up or tear-down. Each concert will count as one class.

Class Materials: Memory stick, 2-5 GB.

EMS Hard Drives: Students can use hard drives in Studios 1 and 2. Since these drives are not secure, students are responsible for backing up their work after each session on their own media.

Studio and Equipment Access: Students will be assigned keys to the studios. Please speak with Israel about getting keys. Students can sign up for studio time that will be reserved for the entire semester. They can also sign up for time on a weekly basis. Students can check out microphones, cables, portable recorder, laptop with Digi-002 interface, and headphones.

Studio Problems: Please report any problems to the assistants as soon as they occur. The assistants will try to respond to emails from students quickly.

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Accommodations for Disabilities

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Fraud

Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Academic Fraud section of the Student Academic Handbook.

CLAS Final Examination Policies

Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety web site.

Calendar

Aug. 24-26	Introduction to the class, the studios, acoustics Overview of Peak and Pro Tools
Aug. 31-Sept. 2	Recording, editing, mixing in Peak and Pro Tools. Discussion of sound classes.
Sept. 7	University Holiday. No Class
Sept. 9	Editing, mixing, processing in Peak and Pro Tools. Creating hybrid sounds.
Sept. 13	Concert 7:30
Sept. 14-16	Editing, mixing, processing, control in Pro Tools. Creating gestures.
Sept. 21-23	Assignmet #1 Presentations of Hybrids
Sept. 28-30	Creating Sound Masses
Oct. 5-7	Assignment #2 Presentations of Gestures
Oct. 12-14	Reverberation and spatialization in Pro Tools.
Oct. 19-21	Assignment #3 Presentations of Sound Masses
Oct. 26-28	Listening Presentations
Nov. 2-4	Pre-critiques
Nov. 9-11	Mid-term critiques
Nov. 15	Concert 7:30
Nov. 16-18	Overview of Max/MSP and Kyma
Nov. 23-25	University Holiday. No Class
Nov. 30-Dec. 2	Pre-Critiques
Dec. 7-9	Final Critiques