Sound Synthesis and Audio Processing
AET 341

"Computers and electronic music are not the opposite of the warm human music. It's exactly the same." - Bill Laswell

Spring/2017
Room MRH 3.124 (MML)
M-W, 12pm – 1:30pm

Instructor: **Jack W Stamps, DMA**
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Office Hours: **TBA**

I. Rationale:

AET 341 is a lecture/lab course designed to introduce students to the concepts and current trends of the use of virtual instruments. Looking closely at programs such as Kontakt, Absynth, Reaktor, Battery and more, students will learn how to "orchestrate" musical ideas. Students who successfully complete the course will be skilled in using virtual instruments to produce and arrange in a variety of contemporary musical settings. *Please note that at the time of writing this, I am currently working to negotiate a deal with Spectrasonics to get some of their instruments in the lab as well. If successful, this will add more virtual instruments and thus, alter the schedule.*

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Acquire a working knowledge of a variety virtual instruments and how best to use the effectively
- Think critically about how and why to use certain instruments to achieve your musical goals
- Understand how to arrange a complex composition from minimal MIDI data.
- Understand how to make your own custom instruments for use across multiple projects and production settings
- Understand how to best use virtual instruments to *produce* in a variety of different musical and genre settings.

III. Tentative Course Schedule

Please refer to the modules for the course at Canvas. They serve as a more-or-less week by week schedule of topics. But, I treat these as topics first. That is to say, if we get through a module in less than a week, it gives us a little more time to work on other stuff. I find keeping the schedule malleable is crucial to a successful completion of the materials.

IV. My Assumptions

I come to the teaching of this course with the assumption that you do not have any musical background. Thus, there is no pre-requisite in music theory or composition. The nature of the coursework is such that the student, with no musical skill, can find his/her *voice* through the aid of the digital audio workstation and copious examples of electronic music composition and music software

It has been my longstanding belief that, with the certain alignment of circumstances, creativity and artistic discernment can be taught. It has been my experience with the teaching of this course that students with little to no prior music experience stand to gain much knowledge from fellow classmates with some musical skill. More importantly, I have found the opposite to be true: that students with musical experience learn A LOT from the outside-the-box perspective brought by in the inexperienced. I will work hard to keep this dynamic alive throughout the term.

V. Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation policy:

(a) Expected classroom behavior (may want to develop this with the students, e.g., What guidelines are appropriate for behavior and participation in a large class? [See last page of this handout for a sample.]
(b) Ground Rules for participation in discussions or activities
(c) Civility statement and code of conduct

Religious Holy Days
By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

2. Course Readings/Materials:

I will post reading materials as necessary

Supplies needed:
One minimum 8gb flash drive

3. Assignments, Assessment, and Evaluation

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is required. Absences of each student are recorded without exception from the official date of her/his enrollment. The counting of absences begins on the first day of a student's enrollment in the course after classes begin.

Both tardiness and early departure from class are forms of absenteeism. If you are more than 20 minutes late, this constitutes an absence. Lesser tardiness will affect your class participation grade for that day. Students are expected to be in class the entire class period and actively engaged in classroom activities at all times. Absences from the room in either body or spirit will negatively affect your grade.

4. Use of *Canvas* in class

In this class I use *Canvas*—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at http://courses.utexas.edu —to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments.

VI. Grading Procedures: Grades will be based on:

1. Instrument Projects (number TBD)	30% *total*
2. 3 Arrangement/Orchestration Projects (10% each)	30%
3. Final Project	30%
4. Class Participation/Discussion/Attendance	10%

VII. Academic Integrity

University of Texas Honor Code
The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

VIII. Other University Notices and Policies

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students

- All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at **http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564** .

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. *(Note to Faculty: Details of a student's disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student's condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)*

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

> "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

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