



MUSC 1415 Introduction to Music Technology (3 credits)

Fall 2023 • TTh • 4:00-5:15 PM

Whitney 139 • Music Department • Visual and Performing Arts Division

course site: proferickson.com > **Intro to Music Tech**

online archive of past students' work: scmusictech.net

gmail address for sharing selected class assignments: scmusictech@gmail.com

Instructor and Contact Information

Dr. Christian Erickson

Office: Whitney 140-J

Office hours: Office hours: MTWTh 1:00 PM (additional hours by appointment)

(307) 675-0732

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Course Description

This course explores the use of computers in music creation. Emphasis centers on contemporary production techniques, hardware, software programs, and operating systems. This course assumes no prior experience with music or computer training.

Prerequisites

None

Co-requisites

None

Purpose

MUSC 1415 Intro to Music Technology exposes students to the latest methods, software programs, and computer hardware associated with the rapidly changing field of music technology. MUSC 1415 Introduction to Music Technology is a required course for students pursuing the Certificate of Completion in Music Technology or the Associates of Fine Arts Degree in Music, or it may be applied as a general elective for any Associate's degree at Sheridan College.

Course Format

Letter

Grading

Letter

Texts/Materials

- Manzo, V.J. *Foundations of Music Technology* (second edition). New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN-13: 978-0-19-936829-7
- Erickson, Christian. *Intro to Music Technology Lab Manual*. Available exclusively through the campus bookstore.
- Over-the-ear headphones with a 3.5 mm mini-stereo plug and 1/4" adapter
- Access to a computer with an internet connection and a browser
- USB flash drive, 2 GB or larger

Minimum Student Outcomes

Upon completion of MUSC 1415 Intro to Music Tech, the student will:

- apply basic theoretical concepts and vocabulary of music technology.
- explain the functions of the components that comprise a computer music workstation.
- demonstrate competency using current software to organize and edit digital audio, and to create written and recorded music.

Course Structure

This is a hands-on, highly-interactive course. Concepts and key information will be made available to you through lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual aids, handouts, and your textbook. Ultimately, however, your self-paced work on tutorials and projects will be where the greatest opportunities for learning lie. Aside from short quizzes over reading assignments, there are no traditional written tests (mid-term, final, etc.). Assessment will be based on completion of tutorials and application of concepts and skills within student projects. The course is divided into roughly four major topic areas: Mac MacOS basics, digital audio fundamentals, an introduction to a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), and a unit on notation and digital engraving.

Approximate Final Grade Evaluation

45% — Creative Projects

35% — Tutorials

20% — Quick Quizzes

Descriptions of Graded Course Components

- **Creative Projects:** [Letter-graded; four total plus one mini-presentation] Several aspects of music technology will be presented through lectures, readings, and tutorials. Once students are familiar with certain concepts, a creative project based on those concepts will be assigned. Guidelines and project specifics will be provided. Students will have portions of three class meetings to work on these projects, but time outside of class for project completion should be budgeted as well.
- **Tutorials:** [Letter-graded; 17 total] Concepts and skills will be reinforced via self-paced tutorials. These tutorials will be assigned at regular intervals (see the course calendar for specific dates). A portion of class time will be allotted for the completion of these activities. Some students may be able to finish before the end of class. If not, the remainder of the tutorial will be assigned as homework to be completed by the next meeting.
- **Quick Quizzes:** [Letter-graded; 12 total] Timed quick quizzes based on the prior meeting's reading assignment will be administered periodically throughout the semester. Quizzes are given at the top of the hour at the beginning of class. These quizzes cannot be made up or completed in advance, and they will be collected at five minutes after the hour. Missing a quiz here and there will not significantly affect your final grade, but consistent performance on them is important. Therefore, please be punctual for our meetings.
- **Attendance & Participation:** While not directly factored into your grade, attendance and participation are vital to learning. Students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive on time, and stay for the entire session. You are responsible for learning all material covered in class whether you are present or not. If you do miss a meeting or a portion of one, please ask a classmate if you may review his or her notes.

Course Websites

Our class companion website for this course is available at proferickson.com. Here you'll find printable documents (such as the syllabus and other handouts), assignments and assignment resources, links to useful sites, and audio files. Any copyright-protected material will be posted in a password-protected directory (login: **musc**, password: **1415**).

Course and Departmental Policies

Late and Incomplete Assignments

Just as regular practice for lessons and ensembles is vital for the growth of musicianship, so too is consistent reinforcement of concepts and skills explored and developed in academic music classes. Therefore it is the policy of the Sheridan College Department of Music to expect our students to complete assignments by prescribed due dates. Assignments submitted after the due date will NOT be accepted. In the event of a documented emergency, late work may be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Note: As the course officially ends after the final class meeting, no late work will be accepted after our scheduled final meeting time concludes.

Absences and Make-up Policy

In cases of school-sponsored activities or illness resulting in an absence by the student, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor in advance of the missed class. Absences with advance notice are considered "excused." Students are responsible for all reading, listening and other homework assigned during the absence. Absences without prior notification to the instructor ("unexcused") will automatically result in forfeiture of any possible points associated with the missed class. Quick Quizzes are exempt from this policy as they must be completed in class and cannot be made up or taken in advance.

Course Withdrawal/Petition for Incomplete Grade

On occasion, unforeseen circumstances may interfere with a student's ability to complete a course or to accomplish a satisfactory level of personal academic achievement. If you find yourself in this situation, I encourage you to visit with me to evaluate your options. Rarely is a grade unsalvageable if a student is willing to take the steps necessary to rectify it. If, however, a student is ever unable to fully devote his or her energies to the coursework, withdrawal may be the best option. Consult the college's academic calendar for the withdrawal deadline. Paperwork for withdrawals can be obtained from the Office of Records and Admissions.

A temporary grade of "I" or "incomplete" is available to students who cannot finish the course due to an emergency situation that arises late in the semester. The administration of an incomplete is at the instructor's discretion. Although I can be flexible depending on the circumstances of the student, my general policy is that the student should have at least 75% of the course completed and have a current grade of C or better at the time of the request for the incomplete grade. The incomplete portion of the course must be completed by the end of the semester following the request (summer sessions excluded) or the "I" will revert to an "F."

Course Calendar

Subject to revision. All assignments are due at beginning of the next class meeting unless otherwise noted. Quick Quizzes are over the previous day's assigned reading.

Meeting 1 — August 29

- **Topics:** Syllabus Formalities; Course Website; Intro to Tutorials; Introduction to macOS
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 1—The Macintosh Environment, Part 1
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Meeting 2 — August 31

- **Topics:** Troubleshooting; Information Technology Services
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 2—The Macintosh Environment, Part 2
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Meeting 3 — September 5

- **Topics:** Shortcuts & Backups; Google Accounts and Collaborative Tools
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 3—Online File Sharing and Collaboration Tools
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Meeting 4 — September 7

- **Topic:** Intro to Google Presentations
 - **Assignment:** Mini-Presentation
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Meeting 5 — September 12

- **Topic:** In-class Presentations
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 1, pp. 1-6; Complete **Quick Quiz 1** on Canvas
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Meeting 6 — September 14

- **Topics:** Sound Theory Basics
 - **Assignment:** Exploring Sound Activities 1-3
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 1, pp. 7-13; Complete **Quick Quiz 2** on Canvas
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Meeting 7 — September 19

- **Topics:** Lab Day for Sound Activities
 - **Assignment:** Exploring Sound Activities 4-6
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 3, pp. 41-46 (up to “Loop-Based DAWs”); Complete **Quick Quiz 3** on Canvas
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Meeting 8 — September 21

- **Topics:** The Digital Revolution and “Tapeless” Recording; Intro to Amadeus Pro
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 4—Basics of Digital Audio Editors
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 9, pp. 135-141 (up to “EQ”); Complete **Quick Quiz 4** on Canvas
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Meeting 9 — September 26

- **Topics:** Audio Editing Techniques, continued
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 5—More Digital Audio Editing Techniques
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 9, pp. 141-147; Complete **Quick Quiz 5** on Canvas
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Meeting 10 — September 28

- **Topics:** Intro to Digital Audio Effects
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 6—Effects
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Meeting 11 — October 3

- **Topic:** Introduction to the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 7—Basics of a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)
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Meeting 12 — October 5

- **Topics:** The DAW: Your Computer Alone; Lab Day for Project I
 - **Assignment: Begin Project I—Sound Scene**
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Meeting 13 — October 10

- **Topics:** Lab Day for Project I
 - **Assignment: Complete Project I**
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 3, pp. 46-50; Complete **Quick Quiz 6** on Canvas
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Meeting 14 — October 12

- **Topics:** Intro to GarageBand
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 8—Intro to GarageBand
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Meeting 15 — October 17

- **Topics:** Intro to Loop-Based Composition
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 9—Funky Loop-Based Composition
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Meeting 16 — October 19

- **Topics:** Intro to Construction Kits
 - **Assignment:** Begin Project II—Construction Kit Challenge
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 2, pp. 14-19 (up to “cables”); Complete **Quick Quiz 7** on Canvas
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October 23 — Fall Break, No Class Meeting

Meeting 17 — October 26

- **Topics:** Lab Day for Project II
 - **Assignment: Complete Project II**
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 2, pp. 28-31 (up to “Digital Audio Workstations”); Complete **Quick Quiz 8** on Canvas
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Meeting 18 — October 31

- **Topics:** The DAW: Your Computer + an Audio Interface; Intro to the Audio Interface and Recording in a DAW
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 10—Recording with an Audio Interface
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 5, pp. 66-72 (up to “Go to Software Lesson: MIDI”); Complete **Quick Quiz 9** on Canvas
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Meeting 19 — November 2

- **Topics:** Intro to MIDI
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 11—Intro to MIDI and Standard MIDI Files
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 5, pp. 72-76 (up to “Sampling”); Complete **Quick Quiz 10** on Canvas
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Meeting 20 — November 7

- **Topics:** MIDI Sequencing Techniques
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 12—Twelve-Bar Blues MIDI Backing Track
 - **Reading Assignment/Quiz:** Read Chapter 2, pp. 24-27; Complete **Quick Quiz 11** on Canvas
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Meeting 21 — November 9

- **Topics:** MIDI Expression Controllers
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 13—Mixing & Effects
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Meeting 22 — November 14

- **Topics:** Principles of Composition
 - **Assignment: Begin Project III—Multi-Track Composition**
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Meeting 23 — November 16

- **Topics:** Automation Demo
 - **Assignment: Continue Project III**
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Meeting 24 — November 21

- **Topics:** GarageBand Extras
 - **Assignment: Complete Project III**
 - **Reading Assignment:** Reading Assignment/Quiz: Read Chapter 6; Complete **Quick Quiz 12** on Canvas
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November 23 — Thanksgiving Break, No Class Meeting

Meeting 25 — November 28

- **Topics:** Intro to Software for Music Notation
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 14—Web-Based Notation, Part 1
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Meeting 26 — November 30

- **Topics:** Web-Based Notation, continued
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 15—Web-Based Notation, Part 2
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Meeting 27 — December 5

- **Topics:** Intro to Dorico
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 16—Notation with Dorico, Part 1
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Meeting 28 — December 7

- **Topics:** Lab Day for Tutorial 17
 - **Assignment:** Tutorial 17—Notation with Dorico, Part 2
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Meeting 29 — December 12

- **Topics:** Notation Software Options for Students
 - **Assignment: Begin Project IV—Notation Project**
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Meeting 30 — December 14

- **Topics:** Lab Day for Project IV
 - **Assignment: Complete Project IV—Notation Project**
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