

**UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music
Summer 2024 - Music Industry 115A
THE ART OF MUSIC PRODUCTION**



Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR: Adam Moseley

OFFICE:

OFFICE HOURS:

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The course explores the techniques, methods and process of not only music production in general, but also in the art of making music. How to create and capture performance and emotion in music, through artistic direction and also the choices made in sound, arrangement and the application of technology and various other tools. Students are required to watch, critique and comment upon music documentaries, interviews and videos that provide a broad range of experience and knowledge. Through critical listening to music in various genres, students will discover the different methods and concepts that are used in the Art of Music Production.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

The Great British Recording Studios, Howard Massey. *Behind The Glass, Volumes I & II. Top Record Producers Tell How They Craft the Hits*, Howard Massey. *Sound Man*, Glyn Johns. *Here, There & Everywhere*, Geoff Emerick. *Abbey Road to Ziggy Stardust*, Ken Scott.

Required Viewing:

Standing In The Shadows of Motown: Documentary (iTunes, Amazon, DVD)

MATERIALS:

Class website: cclle.ucla.edu (or, access from my.ucla.edu).

Students will be provided with a Music Playlist that accompanies the course.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Final grades will be the result of the grades received for the assignments, quizzes, and exams as following:

10% Participation (includes attendance)

30% Assignments (15% for each assignment)

30% Mid-term exam

30% Final Exam and Project

LETTER TO NUMBER GRADE EQUIVALENCE:

A+	97-100	C+	77-79		
A	93-96	C	73-76		
A-	90-92	C-	70-72		
B+	87-89	D+	67-69		
B	83-86	D	63-66		
B-	80-82	D-	60-62	F	59 and below

A passing grade is 60% and above. There will be no curve of grades.

SYLLABUS:

There are two classes each week:

Class 1 will be in the recording studio and will include listening to a variety of instruments and acoustic environments to understand how to capture sounds that create different emotional responses.

Class 2 will be in a Tech Lab or classroom and will involve critical listening and discussion of production techniques.

WEEK 1:

Topics: Course overview, objective & main concepts.

Music Production is: “The arrangement of musical notes into parts... and the arrangement of those parts within the sonic field”.

What is the role and what are the ‘duties’ of the Music Producer ?

What are “The Key Elements” and process of Music Production ?

Listening: Complete critical music listening assignment from course playlist.

WEEK 2:

Topics: **The Sonic Field** is: The space between, above, below, behind and in front of the speakers (or ear buds).

Critical listening and discussion of musical arrangement within the “Sonic Field”

Concept: Defining the musical concept, vision and the emotional goals for a song or music. Creating dynamics through arrangement of musical parts and sound.

Listening: Complete critical music listening regarding the “Sonic Field”.

WEEK 3:

Topics: **Song Structure:** Exploring the effect and variations of Song Structure.

Listen and study examples of alternative forms of Song Structure.

Examples of layering big or minimal music production.

Assignment #1: Analysis of song structure in a selection different songs.

WEEK 4:

Topics: How to **create emotion** through sound and placement in the Sonic Field.

Critical listening to different ‘moods’ created by production choices. The art of creating emotion with the choice of sounds, instruments, musical parts and arrangement.

Mid Term: **Reverse engineering** a song. Students select 3 songs to analyze and discover how the sound of the song creates a sense of emotion in them.

WEEK 5:

Topics: Q&A in class to discuss the songs selected in the “Emotion” assignment.

Critical listening to different examples.

Visualization: Imagining the end result in terms of shape, depth, colours, dynamics and follow that plan.

Viewing: Interviews with Quincy Jones, Tom Dowd, Butch Vig, Rick Rubin and others.

WEEK 6:

Topics: **Pre Production:** The Importance and purpose of Pre Production:
Defining the arrangement of musical parts in Pre Production.
Creating and managing a “team”.
Planning for the recording.

Assignment #2: Read my interview in “The Songwriter’s Handbook”.
Write notes, observations and answer questions based on the interview.

WEEK 7:

Topics: **Performance:** Producing, "Directing" and Achieving the Performance.
How to communicate with the artist and create a team.
Exploring different styles and the emotional effect of vocal performance.
Q&A based on the interview in “The Songwriter’s Handbook”.

Listening: Critical music listening to examples from course playlist.

WEEK 8:

Topics: Creating, Capturing and Presenting the Sound.
Recording Techniques: Selection and placement of microphones.
“**Ear to Hand, Hand to Ear**”. Exercises in exploring and understanding sound.
Microphone technique, selection and placement to capture different emotions to sound. Using and training your ears. The different types of microphones.

Viewing: Video clips about recording techniques.

WEEK 9:

Topics: **Mixing:** Analyze 'spacial' effects, sounds, dimension, positioning. Mixing techniques. Concepts of dimension, distance, depth, width, high, low, space, and movement to create dynamics in your mix and achieve your emotional, musical goal. Understanding the power of sound. Using plugins and effects.
I use real ProTools sessions to demonstrate mixing techniques and tricks.

WEEK 10:

Topics: **In The Box:** How to re-create old style effects from the 'old days', when "working in the box" or on a limited budget, to make your recordings more unique.
How to re-create visual effects and concepts, inspired by film or images, in the sound of your music production. Acoustic sound treatment.
I use real ProTools sessions to demonstrate mixing techniques and tricks.

Final: **Course Summary:** Students respond to a questionnaire that I have prepared regarding all topics that have been covered during the course.

NOTE:

I WILL PREPARE PLAYLISTS TO ACCOMPANY THE COURSE WITH EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT STYLES OF PRODUCTION, ARRANGEMENT, THE SONIC FIELD & EMOTION.