



The University of Texas at Austin  
**School of Design and  
Creative Technologies**  
*College of Fine Arts*

## **Digital Musicianship AET 319**

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*"My kind of composing is more like the work of a gardener. The gardener takes his seeds and scatters them, knowing what he is planting but not quite what will grow where and when - and he won't necessarily be able to reproduce it again afterwards either." – Brian Eno*

**Fall 2018, DFA 4.126  
MW, 11:30 am – 12:45 pm**

**Instructor:** Jack W. Stamps, DMA  
**Office Hours:** TBA  
**Email:** [jstamps@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:jstamps@austin.utexas.edu)

### **I. Rationale:**

This course was created out of a need to teach basic musicianship skills as they relate to making music in a digital audio workstation. An essential understanding of the language of music is key to making better musical choices. Understanding the basics of compound meter helps to inform a better hip-hop composition. The application of the basics of melody helps in the composition of a more memorable game music experience. The digital musician must learn the fundamental rules of music and musicianship before he or she plans on breaking them, or expanding them to better express themselves as composers.

### **II. Course Aims and Objectives:**

*By the end of this course, students will:*

- Understand the principles of rhythm and meter.
- Understand the principles scales and harmony.
- Understand the principles of melody.
- Understand the principles of harmonic progression.
- Think critically about how, why and where music technologies are deployed within a theoretical

context.

- To compose music in a series of genres, ranging from game music to songwriting to film music and more.
- Apply the basics of musicianship in the analysis of popular music styles.

### **III. Assessment Model:**

#### **Daily Attendance: 10%**

Daily attendance is essential to the successful completion of the course. Please do everything you can to attend all classes.

#### **Weekly Class Quizzes 25%**

Quizzes are administered through Canvas and will usually be assigned on Wednesdays for completion by the following Monday.

#### **Text-based Theory Assignments: 35%**

The online text comes with lots of suggested assignments. I will be pulling assignments from these the aggregate of which will equal 35%.

#### **Final Composition: 30%**

Absolutely **no late submissions will be accepted.**

#### **Letter Grade Policy:**

To ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute, and will not be rounded up or down at any stage. Thus a B- will be inclusive of all scores of 80.000 through 83.999... The University does not recognize the grade of A+. Thus, the conversion from percentage value to letter grade is as follows:

A = 94 – 100

A- = 90 – 93.999...

B+ = 87 – 89.999...

B = 84 – 86.999...

B- = 80 – 83.999...

C+ = 77 – 79.999...

C = 74 – 76.999...

C- = 70 – 73.999...

D+ = 67 – 69.999...

D = 64 – 66.999...

D- = 60 – 63.999...

F = 0 – 59.999...

### **IV. Academic Integrity**

## Cheating and Plagiarism

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the student Honor Code and Academic Integrity policies as outlined by the Office of the Dean of Students [here](#). Infractions of this policy will be **severely penalized**. We have uncovered evidence of students cheating on quizzes or caught plagiarism on creative projects red-handed in the past. In such cases, **failing** the course, **suspension** from school, or even **expulsion** are all penalties that may be applied at the discretion of the Office of the Dean of Students. Academic Dishonesty may ruin your **grade, academic career**, and can **stain your reputation** for decades to come.

## Academic Dishonesty

“Academic dishonesty” or “scholastic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student or the attempt to commit such an act. In AET 319, this includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Submitting all or part of someone else’s work as your own, **without properly crediting** your sources (this especially applies to creative projects)
- 2) **Sharing answers** to quizzes or assignments with other students
- 3) **Using forbidden aids** like internet searches on quizzes or theory assignments

## V. Course Schedule

Unit	Date	Class Session	Assignments and Comments
	8/29 9/3	Introduction, Syllabus Labor Day Holiday: NO CLASS	Read Introduction and Chapter 1: “Pitch”
<b>I.</b>		<b>Pitch &amp; Rhythm</b>	
	9/5 9/10 9/12 9/17 9/19 9/24 9/26	Staff, notes, piano roll, middle C Clefs, Alphabet, lines & spaces, ledger lines Sharps and flats, Intervals: semi and whole tones Measures and Beats, Time signatures Simple and Compound Meter Tempo, Notes and Rest Values <b>Practice:</b> Rhythm Basics	Chapter 1 ( <b>Pitch Quiz 1</b> )  Chapter 1 ( <b>Pitch Quiz 2</b> ) & Theory Assignment Chapter 2  Chapter 2 ( <b>Rhythm Quiz 1</b> )  Chapter 2 Chapter 2 ( <b>Rhythm Quiz 2</b> ) & Theory Assignment
<b>II.</b>		<b>Advanced Rhythm</b>	
	10/1 10/3	Polyphonic Rhythm, Basic Drum Patterns Syncopation & Compound Meter	Chapter 3 Chapter 3 ( <b>Advanced Rhythm Quiz 1</b> )
	10/8 10/10	Ties & Extended Notes Triplets and Tuplets <b>Practice:</b> Rhythm Basics	Chapter 3 Chapter 3 ( <b>Advanced Rhythm Quiz 2</b> ) & Theory Assignment
<b>III.</b>		<b>Scales and Harmony Basics</b>	
	10/15 10/17 10/22 10/24 10/29 10/31	Key, Major Scales, chord types Major Harmony Key, Minor Scales, chord types Minor Harmony Minor Harmony II <b>Mid-Term Analysis</b>	Chapter 4 Chapter 4 ( <b>Major Scales Quiz</b> ) Chapter 5 Chapter 5 ( <b>Minor Scales Quiz</b> ) Chapter 5 Chapter 4 & 5 ( <b>Theory Assignment</b> )

<b>IV.</b>		<b>The Basics of Melody</b>	
	11/5 11/7	Arpeggiation and Intonation Text Setting and Contour	Chapter 6 Chapter 6 ( <b>Melody Quiz</b> )
<b>V.</b>		<b>Harmonic Progression</b>	
	11/12 11/14 11/19 11/21	Basics of Harmonic Progression Inversions, Form Form, Melody and Harmonic Progression NO CLASS: Thanksgiving	Chapter 7 Chapter 7 ( <b>Harmony Quiz</b> ) Chapter 7 ( <b>Melody and Harmonic Progression Quiz</b> )
<b>VI.</b>		<b>Genre-Based Composition Theory</b>	
	11/28 12/3 12/5 12/10	Game Music Song Form EDM, etc Film and TV Music	Chapter 8 (Game Music) ( <b>quiz</b> ) Chapter 9 (Song Form) ( <b>quiz</b> ) Chapter 10 (EDM, other forms) ( <b>quiz</b> ) Chapter 11 (Film and TV Music) ( <b>quiz</b> )  <b>Open Lap times: TBA</b>  <b>Final Composition Due: December 18, 1pm</b>

## VII. Course Requirements

### 1. Class attendance and participation policy:

- (a) Attendance—and *attentiveness*—is essential and required. Attendance is facilitated through the LAITS broadcast stream in Canvas and assessed by Instapoll and discussions.
- (b) If one must miss a class session and desires to ask for an excused absence, it is the *student's* responsibility to let the TA team know by email **in advance** of the absence. We **do not guarantee** an excused absence will be granted if you notify us only after missing a class session. It is the **student's responsibility** to catch up with material or class activities missed due to the absence—the TA team will not necessarily remind the student of what needs to be made up from the class session missed.
- (c) Instapolls and Attendance can be excused, but other in-class activities—Quizzes and Topical Discussions—**must be made up** or they will receive zeroes. There is a narrow window of time after each missed in-class activity within which make-up submissions will be accepted, so contact the TA Team ASAP after the missed class session (or preferably, before) to receive instruction on how to make up the assignment.

### Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the TA Team 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, we will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. With advance notice, we are happy to accommodate religious holy days.

### 2. Required Course Materials:

**Required Textbook:** *Digital Musicianship; A Theory and Practice of Popular Music*, by Dr. Jack W. Stamps. Kendall Hunt Publishing (Dubuque, IA: 2018):

<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/pixels-samples-lumens-illusion-foundations-art-and-entertainment-technologies>

The textbook is online only and contains many supplemental materials including links to videos, websites, music tracks, and more. Being able to access these online supplemental materials will be **essential** to success in the course. Buying a used textbook may result in having an access code that has already been used once and is thus invalid.

## 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.)*

- If you require accommodations on completing assignments and quizzes/exams, please bring your accommodation letter from SSD to Dr. Stamps during office hours as early in the semester as possible. We will be happy to provide accommodations as specified in the accommodation letter from SSD.
- 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](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."

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