COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: MUSI 2015 – Laptop Orchestra

CREDITS & HOURS: 3 credit hours: lecture 2 hours + lab 3 hours

REQUIRED PREREQUISITE: MUSI 2010—Fundamentals of Musicianship I

PURPOSE: Laptop ensembles are the first large-format digital ensembles to gain traction in the 21st century, establishing fundamentally new paradigms for creating and performing music in concert. This course explores laptop orchestras from a hands-on perspective through the analysis of existing repertoire for laptop orchestra, the rehearsal and performance of that repertoire, and the creation and performance of entirely new works for laptop ensemble. At the same time, the course focuses on skills fundamental to 21st century digital musicians, including performance of improvised and notated music on digital instruments, reading and creating graphical music notation, active listening in large ensembles with amplified sound, and designing and programming interactive performance systems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the class, the students will be able to:

1. Analyze the aesthetic approach and technical implementation of a repertoire work for laptop ensemble.
2. Rehearse and perform a repertoire work for laptop ensemble, demonstrating skills in active listening within large ensemble and interpretation of musical scores in nontraditional notation.
3. Collaboratively conceive, notate, implement, and perform a new work for laptop ensemble.

EXPECTATIONS:

**Preparation for class** includes completing assigned listening and reading (available on t-square) and individual practice of repertoire works.

**Performances (2)** will require participation in sound checks and concerts that take place in the evenings, outside of regularly scheduled class meetings. These will be publicized in advance and are required.

**Analysis Paper and Presentation (1)** discusses an existing piece of repertoire for laptop orchestra and the issues it raises and addresses in performance.

**Group Project (1)** includes conceiving of a new work for laptop orchestra, notating a score for it, implementing the technology to realize the work, and leading the work in rehearsals and performance.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

The following evaluative tools will be utilized in measuring progress towards obtaining the class objectives:

Analysis Paper / Presentation 10%

Group Project 50%

Participation and attendance 10%

Musicianship assessment 30%

TOTAL 100%

All assignments, quizzes, and tests will be graded by points. The final grade for the course will be determined by dividing the total points earned by the number of points possible for each of the categories listed in Method of Evaluation. These numbers will be converted into a grade according to the following scale: A=100-90%, B=89-80%, C=79-70%, D= 69-60%, F= 59% and below.

GRADING POLICIES:

Homework assignments are due *by the beginning of class* ON THE DUE DATE. A penalty of one letter grade per day will be applied to all late assignments. Documented illnesses and family emergencies are excepted, of course. Quizzes and exams cannot be made up unless you have a valid, documented excuse.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students must do their own work on assignments, projects, and tests unless collaboration is previously specified and approved by the instructor. Students caught cheating will receive zero credit for that assignment/quiz/test and may be subject to further sanctions through the Office of Student Integrity. Students are expected to abide by the Georgia Tech Honor Code and avoid any instances of academic misconduct, including but not limited to:

1. Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or oral information in the preparation of a paper or for an exam.
2. Substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual or individuals.
3. False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the student.

Please refer to the published Georgia Institute of Technology Academic Honor Code for further information:

* osi.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=46

STATEMENT REGARDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation. The ADAPTS Office will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations. The web site for a student requesting accommodation is:

* <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=12>

MATERIALS:

All reading and listening materials are posted on t-square. There is no textbook.

You are expected to use your own laptop in rehearsals and performances and in the realization of your group project. The software you will need for this course — Ableton Live, Max/MSP, and Finale — is all available via the School of Music’s licensing KeyServer.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1:

Lecture: Course Introduction; Laptop Orchestra History

Lab: Making Sound Together; Following a Conductor; First Rehearsal

Week 2:

Lecture: Improvisation Strategies

Lab: Improvisation Exercises, graphical notation, open forms

Week 3:

Lecture: Analysis Papers due / Analysis Presentations

Lab: Active Listening Strategies in Laptop Ensemble

Week 4:

Lecture: Musical Form in Context: Harmony, Rhythm, Timbre

Lab: Repertoire rehearsal for first concert

Week 5:

Lecture: Musical Form in Context: Phrasing, Hierarchy

Lab: Repertoire rehearsal for first concert

Week 6:

Lecture: New Interfaces for Musical Expression

Lab: Repertoire rehearsal for first concert

Week 7:

Lecture: Networked Music

Lab: Final concert preparation

End of week: first concert!!

Week 8:

Lecture: Introduction to Group Project

Lab: Group assignments, collaboration strategies, concept development

Week 9:

Lecture: Project concept presentation and discussion

Lab: Groups develop initial score and technology prototypes

Week 10:

Lecture: Laptop Orchestra Techniques with Ableton Live

Lab: Groups refine score and prototypes

Week 11:

Lecture: Laptop Orchestra Techniques with Max/MSP/Max for Live

Lab: Groups refine projects; begin rehearsal of project for concert 2.

Week 12:

Lecture: Notating Music for Laptop Orchestra

Lab: Project rehearsal for concert 2

Week 13:

Lecture: Conducting Strategies

Lab: Project rehearsal for concert 2

Week 14:

Lecture: Transparency and Intent/Reception Theory

Lab: Final concert preparation

End of week: second concert!!

Week 15:

Lecture: The Future of the Laptop Orchestra

Lab: Groups complete self-critique exercise