**Syllabus**

**Computational Musicology and the Digital Humanities (MUS7921)**

**Instructor:** Dr. Daniel T. Shanahan

**Office:** M&DA, Room 297

**Email:** [dshanahan@lsu.edu](mailto:dshanahan@lsu.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 11am-12pm, and by appointment.

**Course:** MUS7921

**Term:** Spring, 2016

**Time:** MWF, 8:30-9:20

**Location:** MDA273

**Course Website:** http://shanahdt.github.io/mus7921

**Required Items:** Access to a computer with a Unix-style terminal (Mac, Linux, or a Windows computer running CygWin). You are able to access the technology lab in SOM, if need be.

**Course Objectives:**

This course is intended to provide the student with the ability to engage with music research from an empirical and computational viewpoint. Students will be exposed to symbolic notation systems that allow for searching, computational analysis, and computational modeling. Additionally, this class will teach students how to engage with recorded music and web APIs. This course will cover the basics of Unix (Bash) scripting, Humdrum, R, and Sonic Visualizer, as well as the general concepts and history of computational research.

**Required Materials**

There is no required text for this class, as most of what we will be working with is available as an electronic resource from the LSU library or online. PDFs for other sources will be made available on Moodle.

It will be necessary to download certain toolkits when necessary, such as Humdrum and RStudio.

**Required Classroom Etiquette**

1. **Attendance is expected at each class meeting**, since the instructor’s demonstration of practice techniques and study methods will benefit the students greatly. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting.
2. Excused absence constitutes absence excused by the University (e.g., performance, etc.) or a note provided from the University Health Center.
3. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange a make-up time/day with the instructor within ONE WEEK from the date of the excused absence. Failure to do so will result in a zero (0) for the missed assignment.
4. Tardiness will not be tolerated and may result at the least in the student’s ejection from the class. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in ejection from the classroom and report to the Dean of Students.
5. All written work is due at the *beginning* of class on the designated date.
6. Students are expected to complete all the assignments. The instructor reserves the right to collect or “spot” check HW or classwork (e.g., HW, in-class work, etc.) at any time. Incomplete or missing work will result in a “0.”
7. Cellphones are not permitted.

**Assignments**

1. The student is responsible for all the assignments that are distributed in class/posted on the course website (Moodle).

**Final Presentation**

Every Friday, a group will lead discussion about their reading for that week. Ideally, this will present the group an opportunity to discuss points that were difficult to write about, points that may have caused some contention, etc. This is less a presentation than a leading of the group discussion by all group members. Begin the discussion by asking the class a series of questions that will get them to think about the topic and explain how they approached it. This discussion can take any amount of time, ranging from 10 minutes to the length of the class. These presentations (which will be rotated between the groups) constitute 15% of your grade. Like the wiki contribution, every group member should be active and helpful. Should you miss class on the date of your group’s presentation, please send them something to discuss on your behalf.

As always, I am happy to meet with you beforehand to go over this. Before meeting with me and certainly before class, you should discuss the structure of the discussion with your group. An in-depth rubric of how these are marked can be found on Moodle.

**Midterm Project**

**Final Project**

Your final, 10- to 12-page paper will be due at 5pm on Monday, May 4th. I will meet with each of you individually during the week of Monday, March 30th, to discuss possible paper topics. Sign-up will be on Moodle the previous week. Please come to our session with at least two possibilities in mind. You are also required to submit a 1-page, single-spaced outline and a 1-page, single-spaced bibliography by the beginning of class on April 20th. I expect to find at least 6 distinct and substantial sources in your bibliography. (Although this class is very much wiki-centric, it is our own couture wiki; a Wikipedia article should not a substantial source, nor a blog.) Be succinct in your outline and judicious in your choice of sources for your bibliography. Since research methods and materials are specific to the topic you choose, we will strategize about them during our individual meetings in March.

**Grading Scale:**

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

**Overall Evaluation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Homework | 25% |
| Attendance and In-class participation (see rubric below) | **20%** |
| Midterm Project | **20%** |
| Final Presentation | **10%** |
| Final Project | **25%** |

**Attendance and Participation Rubric:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Attendance | Present (2) | Late (1) | Unexcused Absence (0) |
| Participation | Contributes to Discussion (2) | Inattentive, unprepared, or non-responsive (1) | A distraction to others (0) |

**Late Assignments**

I will accept late assignments for **one week after the due date**. Late assignments will be deducted 5 points per class. For example, an assignment due on Monday that earns a 94 will be awarded an 89 if handed in before Wednesday, an 84 if handed in before Friday, etc. **ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT ALL AFTER ONE WEEK**.

**Attendance and Tardiness**

*Attendance is required,* and is an extremely large part of your grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you are unable to sign in (e.g. if you arrive to class after the attendance sheet has been collected), it will be treated the same as an absence.

I will drop the two lowest attendance grades, and no grade will be given at all (no addition or deduction) for excused absences.

For further information, see the LSU’s university-wide attendance policy ([PS-22](http://sacsfifthyear.lsu.edu/Part%203/Policy%20Statements/item9278.pdf)).

**Schedule (Tentative and Subject to Change)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Reading Topic | Skills | Important Dates |
| 1 (1/11) | **Topic 1: Symbolic Notation**  Introduction | Basic Unix commands, installing toolkits, working with git. |  |
| 2 (1/18) | Early approaches to computational musicology | Kern notation and basic searching, writing a shell script | No Class on Monday (Martin Luther King Day) |
| 3 (1/25) | What is empirical musicology? Generating hypotheses. | Regular expressions, the pipe, and extended searching, mint, hint |  |
| 4 (2/1) | Building a corpus | The basics of awk and sed, deg, solfa |  |
| 5 (2/8) | Information Theory and Music | More on awk and sed, infot, pc, midi, and freq, | No class on Monday or Wednesday (Mardi Gras) |
| 6 (2/15) | Transition Probabilities | Assemble, tmp files |  |
| 7 (2/22) | **Topic 2: Statistical Programming**  Linear regression and corpus studies | Working with R |  |
| 8 (2/29) | Multiple regression and corpus studies | R, continued |  |
| 9 (3/7) | Key-finding algorithms | Graphing with R | **Midterm Week (Midterm Project due on Friday, 3/11)** |
| 10 (3/14) | **Topic 3:** Performance Analysis (the Mazurka Project) | Introduction to Sonic Visualizer |  |
| 11 (3/21) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Spring Break |
| 12 (3/28) | Cook, Sapp, and Similarity analysis | More with Sonic Visualizer |  |
| 13 (4/4) | CHARM performance analysis papers | More with Sonic Visualizer |  |
| 14 (4/11) | Topic 4: Working with the Web | Web APIs |  |
| 15 (4/18) | The Perils of Big Data | Shell, R, and web APIs |  |
| 16 (4/25) | Presentations | Presentations | **Final Project due May 2nd at 5pm.** |

**Academic Integrity**

Louisiana State University adopted the Commitment to Community in 1995 to set forth guidelines for student behavior both inside and outside of the classroom.  The Commitment to Community charges students to maintain high standards of academic and personal integrity.  All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at [www.lsu.edu/saa.](http://www.lsu.edu/saa.%C2%A0" \t "_blank) It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community.

Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the office of Student Advocacy & Accountability.  For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation.  For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU.  For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

**Assistance**

I am available and interested in talking with you about the course, the course material, and strategies to enhance your learning. We can usually have brief discussions after class, and I am able to answer questions by e-mail (dshanahan@lsu.edu) at any time. Please feel free to visit me during office hours (see above) at any point during the semester. Additionally, I am happy to set up an appointment at a time that is mutually acceptable for more lengthy discussions.

**Food and Drink**

Please refrain from having any food or drink in the classrooms.