COURSE SYLLABUS

South Plains College

Technical Education Division

Creative Arts Department

Sound Technology Program

Levelland Campus

DEPT-NO: MUSC 2447 (4:3:4)
COURSE: AUDIO ENGINEERING III
SECTIONS:
2447.001

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE: MUSC 2447 Audio Engineering III
INSTRUCTOR: Chris Neal
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OFFICE HOURS: POSTED ON INSTRUCTORS DOOR and on Blackboard (see Communication section)
WEB SITE: http://southplainscollege.blackboard.com/

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE IMPROVES EACH STUDENT'S LIFE

I. GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**:**

a. **Course Description:** Advanced practice of procedures and techniques in recording and manipulating audio. Includes digital audio editing, advanced recording techniques, and advanced engineering projects.

b. **Course Learning Outcomes:** Utilize advanced recording techniques and basic editing; and demonstrate engineering concepts to complete an advanced recording project. The student will explain microphone characteristics and placement; demonstrate advanced DAW setup, recording, editing and mixing skills.

c. **Course Competencies:** To receive a passing grade for this course a student must receive a 70% or higher grade on the competency exam at the end of the semester, and be able to master at least 60% of the skills and knowledge demonstrated throughout the semester which will be assessed through, in-class and out-of-class exercises, and written and hands-on exams and quizzes. The student must locate talent, communicate production ideas, schedule use of facilities and organize and execute a recording session. The student must be able to operate recording equipment using standard commercial studio techniques. The student will mix down the project to commercially accepted standards. The student will perform advanced console signal routing exercises, program a variety of digital signal processors, and edit the multi-track and final mix with digital editing equipment.

d. **Academic Integrity:** It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension. Students should refer to the SPC General Catalog policy regarding consequences for cheating and plagiarism. (See "Academic Integrity" as well as "Student Conduct" sections in the college catalog). At times, working with other students is encouraged for some assignments and meets SCANS competencies C9 through C14. If you have a question as to whether you may work with other students on any assignment, ask your instructor.

e. **SCANS:** This course includes ***all*** SCANS competencies C1 through C20. Foundation skills include F1, F2, and F5 through F17.

f. **Verification:** This course is an integral part of the capstone experience. Students may use tracks recorded during this class as part of their capstone requirements as prescribed in the syllabus for MUSC2448 Audio Engineering IV.

II. SPECIFIC COURSE/INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS:

a. **Textbooks**:

i. Mixing Secrets for the Small Studio, 2nd Ed. By Mike Senior
ii. Pro Tools 110: Fundamentals II v2023. Retain this book for use in MIDI I, Audio Post-Prod. and for the Pro Tools User Certification Exam.
iii. In addition, I will reference The Recording Engineer's Handbook, 3rd Ed. By Bobby Owsinski (from your Audio Eng.II course), the instructor may use handouts and other supplemental material, which will be made available online on Blackboard.

a. **Attendance:** Any student may be withdrawn from the course at the instructor's discretion if either 1) in compliance with the general attendance policy of South Plains College, a student fails to attend class for two consecutive weeks; 2) if the student has in excess of 3 excused or unexcused absences; or 3) it is determined by the instructor based on the student's grades and attendance record that the student is unable to pass the course.

i. Due to the amount and technical nature of the information it is imperative that students attend and are attentive during class time. Assignments, Quizzes, etc. missed may only be made up if arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the absence. Call or email the instructor if you are not going to be able to attend.
ii. Any student not present when roll is taken will be counted absent. A student who comes in after roll is taken may request that the absence be changed to a tardy after the class period has ended.
iii. Every absence above 3 will result in a ½ letter grade reduction in your final grade. A Tardy counts as ½ of an unexcused absence.
iv. In order to avoid a grade of "F" appearing on his/her transcript, the student should formally withdraw from the class if he/she no longer plans to attend. Students who receive financial aid and have excessive absences will be reported to the Dean of Students.

b. **Supplies:** all students will need to have a USB drive to backup their assignments/projects, and a smaller USB drive to turn in projects (8GB should be sufficient). Due to certain restrictions on lab/studio computer use, certain computers may not be available for use on a given day. Therefore, it is important for students to copy their files to the network storage drive and keep a physical copy of their files with them on a USB drive or other personal storage. A fast USB (3.0) with 32 or 64GB+ storage would be recommended. The student should also utilize the "ST_Storage" network drive to backup their data. Having multiple backups of important data is a must these days. The student is responsible to purchase any necessary USB drives to turn in projects and assignments and backup their data.
c. **Assignment/Project Policy**: Students will be expected to read the textbook readings and watch video content as they relate to assignments and projects. Students will be required to complete several in- and out-of-class assignments and projects. Assignments and Projects will be distributed in class and where applicable available on Blackboard.
d. **Late Policy:** All materials to be turned in (projects, assignments, etc) are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any assignment or project received after the class period on the due date will be penalized based on the following, using business/school days M-F:
    i. 1 day late: 2.5% deduction; 2 days late: 5% deduction; 3 days late: 10%; and 4 days to 1 week late: 25% deduction; Late assignments **will not be accepted after 1 week** and will receive a zero.
    ii. <u>There may be some assignments or projects where this late policy will not apply and the project or assignment will not be accepted beyond the due date.</u> This will be communicated on the project details handout for the project or assignment.
e. **Make-up Work:** Assignments, tests, and other missed work can only be made up if arrangements are made with the instructor prior to an absence. Missed quizzes may not be made up under any circumstance.
f. **Workload Policy**: For college level courses you should plan on 2 hours of work outside of the classroom for every hour in the classroom. This means for a 4-credit course, like this course, you should plan on 8 hours a week for readings, homework, projects, etc. So please plan accordingly!
g. **Weekly Preparation**: Prior to each class meeting, you are expected to have 1) read the assigned readings and 2) completed assignments. A weekly course schedule with reading assignments will be distributed to the class.
h. **Communication:**
    i. Office Hours: My regular office hours will be posted on my door and are also available online on Blackboard. Other meeting times can be arranged by appointment. You may stop by my office at anytime, however, making an appointment will ensure my undivided attention. If at anytime during the semester you require help or special consideration regarding <u>any</u> subject, please feel free to contact me. I encourage you to utilize these office hours and appointments.
    ii. E-mail: I will utilize e-mail during the course of the semester to communicate with you. It is important that you have an active email and know how to use (or learn) e-mail, the Internet, and computing in general (such as word processing, graphics, and database management) as part of your college education.
    iii. I will utilize Blackboard (url listed at the beginning of this syllabus) to post grades, documents, hand-outs, additional required readings and other communications online. If you have questions regarding Blackboard please see your instructor or go log-on to your MySPC page, which also can link you to Blackboard.
i. **Grading Policy:** Students will be graded by examination, quizzes, assignments, exercises, projects, and professionalism.
    i. Exams will represent 40% of your final grade. Broken down as follows:

1. Mid-Term Exam = 10%
2. Final Exam & Course Competencies = 30%

ii. Studio Projects will represent 30% of your final grade. All studio projects must be completed and submitted for grading to receive ANY studio project points.
iii. Assignments/Exercises will represent 15% of your final grade.
iv. Professionalism will represent 10% of your final grade.
v. Quizzes will represent 5% of your final grade.
vi. Absences in excess of 3, excused or unexcused, will result in a ½ letter grade reduction for each absence. A Tardy counts as ½ of an unexcused absence.
vii. Students will not be allowed to make-up or re-take any test or quiz. Students will be allowed to take exams early by making arrangements with the instructor. Exceptions may be made for extreme medical or family related issues at the instructor's discretion.
viii. The instructor reserves the right to drop any student if the student's overall grade is below 60%.

j. **Grading Format:**
   i. A = 90 - 100%; B = 80 - 89%; C = 70 - 79%; D = 60 - 69%; F = 0 - 59%

k. **Miscellaneous:**
   i. <u>There will be no phones, laptops, or electronic devices **of any nature** allowed during class time or testing</u>. Use of a device during class will result in the students removal from class and the student's attendance grade for the day changed from Present to Tardy.
   ii. Using phones or text messaging during class will result in immediate dismissal from the class and result in an unexcused absence for that class period. If you must take a call or read/answer a text message please leave the classroom, as making/taking calls and text messaging during class is distracting to the instructor and other students. Leaving class repeatedly to make/take calls or text messages will result in a loss of professionalism points.
   iii. I expect: students to be on time, awake & attentive, respectful, and complete the assignments and readings on-time.
   iv. The student can expect: class to start and end on-time, proper time to prepare for tests and complete assignments, and to be treated with respect.

l. **Class Conduct**:
   i. Students are expected to be respectful of the instructor and the other students. Students should behave in a manner that reflects the degree of professionalism to be expected in a learning and professional audio environment. Students should not talk when the instructor is talking. When a student is asked to respond verbally other students should listen respectfully. The only time more than one person should be talking is when the instructor permits group discussion.
   ii. Sleeping in class is prohibited and will not be tolerated. If you are too tired to stay awake in class don't come. It is unprofessional, rude, and distracting to the instructor and to the rest of the class and you will be asked to leave. It is your responsibility to insure that you have the rest you need so that you may fully participate in the class. If you think you may have a sleeping disorder you must contact the Student Services office and get the proper counseling, treatment and/or accommodation for your disorder.
   iii. Medical/physiological conditions: The same goes for any other condition that you may have that could impact your performance in the classroom. There are services available to address learning disabilities, physical impairments, chronic illnesses, etc. but it is your responsibility to make arrangements with Student Services in order to find the most appropriate solution.
   iv. Respect the equipment. It belongs to everyone who is enrolled in Sound Technology courses. Budgets are very tight and equipment is expensive. If something gets destroyed, lost, or is taken it may not be replaced. If you see anyone abusing the gear or attempting to remove equipment from its designated area please tell an instructor or lab assistant. Use common sense. Audio equipment, whether it is a $50 mic stand or a $5000 pair of reference monitors, is delicate equipment and should not be forced or pushed too hard under any circumstances. If you think you need to force it you are doing it wrong! (Or someone else forced it and now it's messed up.) Get an instructor to help you.

m. **SPC Tutors:** Tutoring is FREE for all currently enrolled students. Make an appointment or drop-in for help at any SPC location or online! Visit the link below to learn more about how to book an appointment, view the tutoring schedule, and view tutoring locations.
   i. http://www.southplainscollege.edu/exploreprograms/artsandsciences/teacheredtutoring.php

ii. **Brainfuse:** You also have 180 FREE minutes of tutoring with Brainfuse each week, and your hours reset every Monday morning. Log into Blackboard, and click on the tools option from the left-hand menu bar. Click on the Brainfuse link and you will automatically be logged in for free tutoring. You may access Brainfuse tutors during the following times:
    1. Monday – Thursday: 8pm-8am
    2. 6pm Friday – 8am Monday morning
iii. For questions regarding tutoring, please email tutoring@southplainscollege.edu or call 806-716-2241.

III. DESCRIPTIONS**:**

a. **Class Participation**: Active participation in this course is required and is an important part of the learning process. Students are expected to participate in various in-class activities that are designed to enhance the learning process.

b. **Examinations**: The tests will be made up of any combination of multiple-choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, hands-on, and other various formats.

c. **Quizzes**: There will be announced and unannounced quizzes given before, during, or at the end of class. Quizzes will cover lecture material as well as the assigned readings/videos. These quizzes are intended to give the student an idea of how certain topics will be assessed on examinations, and to give the instructor feedback on the student's mastery of topics.

d. **Competencies**: Each competency must be passed with a score of 70% or better in order for the student to pass that competency. ALL competencies must be passed to receive credit for ANY of the competencies. The majority of the competencies, including the hands-on competencies, will be given during the week prior to finals week. The student will be given one chance to re-take a competency, if the student does not receive a passing grade on their first attempt. In order to pass this exam the student will show mastery of the equipment and studio techniques discussed and demonstrated during class.

e. **Assignments**: There will be weekly assignments given throughout the semester. These assignments unless otherwise indicated on the instructions are individual assignments allowing the student to apply a given technique or set of techniques as described in class.

f. **Assigning Grades**: The grade of "F" will be assigned to a student as an earned grade in regard to the learning objectives of a course. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus, and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" as determined by the instructor. An "F" will not be assigned to any student administratively withdrawn from a course for non-attendance by an instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

   An "F" may be assigned to a student in the case of academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism at the discretion of the instructor, as clearly defined in the course syllabus, due to the severity of the student's actions and disregard for the learning objectives of the course.

g. **Professionalism**: Each student will start with 100 professionalism points. Points will be deducted for behavior, attitude, or work that is deemed by the instructor to be unprofessional. This includes, but is not limited to the following: unapproved absences, lateness, late work, failure to turn in assignments on time, sloppy or substandard work, uncooperative or negative attitude, disrespectful treatment of instructor or fellow students, inappropriate behavior, inappropriate attire, failure to turn off cell phones, misuse or abuse of equipment, etc. The severity of the offense will determine the amount of points taken off and will be solely at the instructor's discretion. Repeated offenses will result in more severe penalties.

h. **Studio Projects**: there will be 2 in-studio individual recording projects. You will complete these projects in the SPC studios and labs. Two studio recording projects that meet the requirements as described in the project's instructions must be submitted for grading in order to receive ANY of the points (as described in the Grading Policy section of this syllabus) for Studio Projects. Details about each studio recording project will be distributed to the class at a later date.

i. Both recording projects **must include** all of the following instruments and actually be recorded via a microphone (with the exception of a DI'd Elec. Bass) by the student: acoustic drums, acoustic or electric bass, a rhythm instrument, a lead instrument, and a lead vocal. These are minimum requirements. Students are allowed **and encouraged** to utilize additional instruments and vocals to enhance the project. Permission to deviate from these requirements must be obtained in advance.

ii. Each student will receive a total of 20 hours of priority studio time in which to record & mix both projects. Personal studio time is also available for projects. Studio time and booking procedures will be discussed in class. Additional time will be made available for any class assignments that need to be completed in the studios. The studio time is available on a first-come, first-served basis and students must comply with published studio rules when completing studio request forms.

iii. Students are to arrange their own talent for each project. It is the student's responsibility to make sure musicians show up at the appointed time.

iv. Grading of Projects: The recording/mixing portion of the final project will represent 50-80% of the final project grade and will be graded using 10 categories (Mix, FX, Stereo Image, Distortion, Noise, Drums, Bass, Rhythm Inst., Lead Inst. and Vocals) worth ten points each. The remainder of your grade for the project will be assessed from documentation and other additional items added by the instructor to the project. Neat and accurate documentation is an integral part of a recording engineer's job and will therefore be an integral part of the project requirements.

v. *It is recommended that students partner with another student to assist each other with engineering, production, and arranging on their projects*. This will help you learn about being an assistant engineer and provide you with needed help to make your session proceed smoothly. This will also help you to complete and track the necessary documentation for the project.

vi. Students must follow all recording studio rules and regulations as posted in each studio. The student engineer is responsible for ensuring that all participants in the session are aware of proper procedures. If participants are unwilling to comply with studio rules, the student engineer should notify the staff member on studio watch or an instructor. Non-compliance with studio rules constitutes grounds for loss of studio privileges.

vii. Students must follow specific guidelines in the placement, naming, storage and back-up of their studio files on SPC Sound Technology department computers. Failure to follow the prescribed guidelines may result in the loss of important recording session product (your session files), and/or a deduction in the student's project and/or professionalism grade(s). Continued disregard of the policies may result in loss of studio privileges.

viii. Extreme profanity, vulgarity, or lyrical content that would be considered offensive to people of a specific race, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation or other affected groups is not suitable for the educational objectives of this project. Any attempt to record such material will result in a loss of studio privileges. No project containing such material will be accepted for grading. Acceptable conduct is expected of SPC students while engaged in school-related activities. Please refer to the general catalog and student handbook for further information.

ix. Recording Supplies: The student will need blank CDs, DVDs, and or a thumb drive for their projects. The student must mix-down and back up their project(s) on CD/DVD or thumb drive and make sure that the backup is totally functional. Your sessions may also be backed up to the local network hard drives. Work lost from the hard drive must not prevent the student from turning in a project. The student is responsible to purchase the necessary CDs and DVDs to turn in projects and assignments and backup their data. CDs and DVDs may be available for purchase from instructors and studio watch personnel.

i. **Out-of-Class Assignments**: There will be several outside of class assignments.

j. **Meeting Place**: the class will typically meet in CA 122, however, on occasion the class will meet in one of the other classrooms/studios.

k. **Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus.

When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the instructor. Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first class meeting.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

IV. **Course Schedule**:

Week	Topic
1	Syllabus, general course information, assignments, and projects
2	Headphone setups and Microphone Techniques, Pro Tools 110-L1
3	Microphone Techniques-Stereo Techniques and setup, Pro Tools 110-L2
4	Evaluate stereo techniques, Drum phase check, PT multi-track recording & playlists, Pro Tools 110-L3
5	Analog Console operation, Pro Tools 110-L4
6	Essential groundwork for session setup, Pro Tools 110-L5
7	Basic subgrouping and FX setups, Pro Tools 110-L6
8	Basic mixing techniques, second set of assignments/project
9	Mid-Term Review and Exam
10	Dynamics processors
11	Equalization and dynamics demos, Pro Tools 110-L7
12	Dynamics and EQ demos, mix assignment #2, Pro Tools 110-L8 (MIDI review)
13	Mix assignment, complex subgrouping, mixing
14	Automation, Pro Tools 110-L10
15	Reverb and Delay, Final Review
16	Final Exam

V. **Accommodations:**

a. **Online Link:** https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/

VI. **SCANS Key**

Competencies

C1 Time Management
- Completion of projects by due dates
- Completion of assignments by deadlines

C3 Material/Facility Management
- Using available facilities to complete projects in time allotted

C5 Study/Evaluation Skills
- Demonstrating knowledge of written material through quizzes and tests.

C6 Organizing and Maintaining Information
- Note taking
- Assignment/project documentation

C8 Computer Usage
- Using computer-based editors and recorders.

C10 Teaching Others
- Listening to and providing feedback on others projects

C13 Making Decisions
- Choosing which processes to use to improve a stereo mix
- Deciding which processes to apply to a mix

C15 Understanding Social, Organizational and Technological Systems
- Understanding signal flow in audio systems
- Understanding work flow in a recording project environment

C16 Monitoring and Correcting Performance
- Storing and recalling mix set ups so mixes can be refined after evaluation

C18 Selecting the Appropriate Technology
- Selecting the most efficient and effective processes for the job
- Selecting the proper equipment for a specific task

C19 Applying Appropriate Technology to Tasks
- Making sure the tools and processes applied actually make improvements in the final product rather than just changing the final product

Foundation Skills

F1 Reading – locates, understands, and interprets written information
- Displaying comprehension of reading assignments

F2 Writing - communicates thoughts, ideas, information in written form
- Writing answers on written tests
- Providing documentation for projects/assignments

F5 Listening - receives, interprets, responds to verbal messages
- Listening to lectures, following verbal instructions
- Following verbal instructions regarding project procedures

F7 Creative Thinking – generates new ideas
- Coming up with creative ways to mix and place elements in a mix

F8 Decision Making–specifies goals, assesses risk, makes best choice
- Deciding which processes will improve the quality of a stereo mix
- Deciding which processes will have the greatest impact in the creation of a mix

F9 Problem Solving - recognizes problems, implements plan of action
- Identify deficiencies in a stereo mix, determine what processes can be implemented to correct them, and use critical listening to assess if the processes result in the desired improvements.

F11 Knowing How to Learn - acquire and apply knowledge/skills
- Applying general mixing techniques to a number of specific audio tracks

F13 Responsibility - perseverance toward goal attainment
- Turning projects and assignments in on time

F14 Self-esteem – believes in own self worth/has a positive view of self
- Producing professional quality projects