Production For Producers
(a/k/a Advanced Topics in Music Technology) MPATE-GE 2637; 3 points
Thursdays, 9:30 – 11:40 AM; Dolan Recording Studio, 35 W 4th Street
Fall 2018

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus may be revised during the term. Revisions will be posted on NYU Classes with an announcement of the posting.

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR
Kevin Killen (kk62@nyu.edu)

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR
Phil Galdston (phil.galdston@nyu.edu)

Office hours: By appointment and via phone

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will explore the skills and tools, both aesthetic and technical, necessary for the production of artistically and commercially successful demonstration recordings of the compositions of songwriters. More specifically, students will learn how to: establish an environment in which creativity can flourish; elicit the best performances by all involved in a particular recording; make the best recording possible with the tools available in a particular work environment; nurture and develop a vision for each recording; create a recording to which the target audience (and beyond) wishes to continue to listen.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The course will focus on contemporary, non-traditional recording environments, utilize ProTools (the industry standard) as its primary platform, and employ the most frequently used “soft” (in the computer) synthesizers and sample libraries. Among the specific skills to be practiced are:
• song development and assessment prior to recording;
• a basic understanding of signal flow;
• a basic tutorial on microphones;
• the utilization of the minimum number of plug-ins;
• how to create the best recording before mastering;
• the chemistry of collaboration;
• the value of ensemble performance;
• the ability and willingness to cast the best musicians, vocalists, and technicians for any given task;
• how to overcome fear and complacency to better access and utilize imagination;
• NOTE: As determined by the faculty, some students will produce songs they have written or co-written; some students will produce songs written by others.
COURSE EXPECTATIONS
Beyond the course requirements, students are expected to:
• participate in class discussion, offering strong, but respectfully-stated, constructive opinions;
• work in collaborative groups;
• understand that a good deal of the course work is to be performed outside of the classroom;
• expand their musical horizons by listening in detail, without prejudice;
• submit two songs to be considered for production for the term no later than January 5, 2018;
• be clear that song selections will be announced by January 11, 2018 and will remain your sole focus for the duration of the course;
• revise songs on an ongoing basis;
• when required, deliver sessions of your song in ProTools format.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND EQUIPMENT
• High-quality audio equipment, whether personal or public.
• All readings, websites, and listening will be announced in class and via NYU Classes.

ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments will be announced and should be submitted via googledrive.
1- Due WEEK 2: Proposed songs to be recorded.
2- Due WEEK 5: Knowledgable Listening grid/paper re: Marvin Gaye’s What’s Going On.
4- Due WEEK 6: Production schedule.
5- Due WEEK 7: Second audio files of production in-progress due.
6- Due WEEK 10: Remix of Kevin Killen-engineered/produced track.
7- Due WEEK 11: Third audio files of production in-progress due.
8- Due WEEK 13: Final mix of recorded songs.

FORMAT OF ASSIGNMENTS (Please do not vary from the following.)
1- All audio files should be delivered as 48kHz, 24-bit, .WAV.
2- All papers should be in Word format, double-spaced.
3- Label your document with your last name, the title of the assignment (or an abbreviation of it), and the date of your submission.
4- At the top of the first page of each assignment you submit, list your name, last name first, your e-mail address, and the date of submission.
5- Place your last name at the top of every page of a multi-page assignment;
6- Insert page numbers on all pages.
7- Do NOT write your SSN or student ID number anywhere on your paper.
8- Place song titles in quotes, album titles in bold italics.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
Please refrain at all times from texting, use of social media, and all computer activities not related to class activities. Listening closely to the work of classmates is crucial to helping them and to helping you to learn more about music creation. Once again, opinions—even strong opinions—are not only welcome, they’re essential. As long as they are offered in a constructive, polite way, all of us can benefit from a free exchange of them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
It is your responsibility as a student in this course to check your email for course announcements via NYU Classes.
ATTENDANCE
Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and stay until the end of the class. One unexcused absence is permitted; all others will require a doctor’s note or other satisfactory explanation. Unexcused absences beyond the one permitted will affect grades. Whenever possible, advance notice is desirable. Regardless of the reason for an absence students will be responsible for any missed work.

GRADES
Grades are based on class participation, good-faith effort to review all submitted materials, written assignments, and growth of communication skills.

- 25% Class participation
- 15% Written assignments
- 60% Recorded work

Class participation will be evaluated by the quality of questions and comments offered.

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction
Week 2: Review of Song Choice
Week 3: Review of Song Choice
Week 4: Review of Song Choice
Week 5: Knowledgable Listening Class- Dissection of a Song/Recording Begins
Week 6: O/D Session 1
Week 7: O/D Session 2
Week 8: O/D Session 3
Week 9: Review of KK mix tools/Finalize Recordings
Week 10: Remix of KK mix
Week 11: Review of Mix in Progress 1
Week 12: Review of Mix in Progress 2
Week 13: Final Mix Presentation 1
Week 14: Final Mix Presentation 2

STEINHARDT GRADING SCALE (NOTE: There is no A+ or D-)

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**EVALUATION RUBRIC**

A=Excellent  
The written assignments are comprehensive, detailed, and insightful. They creatively incorporate, or challenge, concepts from listening, discussions, lectures, and readings. Work demonstrates understanding of the underlying concepts discussed in class. The assignments demonstrate proficiency in the techniques discussed in class and its underlying aesthetics. Contributions to classroom discussions are frequent and insightful.

B=Good  
Work demonstrates understanding of the underlying concepts discussed in class. Written assignments are complete and demonstrate proficiency in grasping the concepts discussed in class. Classroom participation is consistent.

C=Average  
This work is adequate, but superficial. Assignments show some superficial understanding of what has been discussed in class. Written assignments fail to demonstrate knowledge of the concepts discussed in class. Classroom participation is inarticulate.

D= Unsatisfactory  
This work is incomplete, and evidences little understanding of the discussions and breakthroughs explained in class. Assignments demonstrate inattention to detail, misunderstand course material and overlook significant concepts. Classroom participation is spotty, unprepared and off topic.

F=Failed  
This grade indicates a failure to participate and/or incomplete assignments

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available at [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity).

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities ([http://www.nyu.edu/csd/](http://www.nyu.edu/csd/), 719 Broadway, 2nd Floor, 212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor.