

# Music 173 - Electronic Music Production and Composition

Instructor: Jennifer Hsu ([jsh008@ucsd.edu](mailto:jsh008@ucsd.edu))

TA: Isaac Muñoz ([igarciam@ucsd.edu](mailto:igarciam@ucsd.edu))

Course website: <http://musicgrad.ucsd.edu/~jhsu/music173.html>

Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 - 10:50AM in CPMC 367

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## Course Description

This class is a project-based class that covers common music production methods for electronic music with a focus on the Ableton Live Suite. This course will cover MIDI, audio sampling and manipulation, and creative composition strategies. The course schedule as well as topics covered are subject to change depending on the instructor's discretion as well as student interest.

It is assumed that everyone in the class will use Ableton Live as their main composition tool for this course. Trial/demo versions of Live can be obtained for 30 days through the official website (<https://help.ableton.com/hc/en-us/articles/209071129-Live-Trial-Installation-and-Setup>). Significant student discounts are also available. The ICAM studios and room 204 in CPMC all have full versions of Ableton Live available for students' use. If you are interested in this option, you will need to get an access card. Please fill out this form and follow the instructions: [https://music-cms.ucsd.edu/intranet/forms/access\\_card.html](https://music-cms.ucsd.edu/intranet/forms/access_card.html).

For the final project, you are welcome to use any software you like (Ableton, Logic, Fruity Loops, etc) as long as you can describe in detail the process you used for creation.

If possible, please bring your laptops to class so that you can follow along with the lectures.

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## Office Hours

Office hours for Jennifer and Isaac are by appointment. Please email us to set up a meeting or ask us before/after classes. In addition, students are welcome to ask questions after each class.

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## Class Schedule

### Week 0

Thursday, September 27, 2018

- Introductions
- Syllabus and logistics
- Ableton Live overview

### Week 1

Tuesday, October 2, 2018

- Making sound in Ableton Live (drawing, recording, and editing MIDI)
- Staying organized in Ableton Live

Thursday, October 4, 2018

- Ableton Instruments (part 1) - melodic instruments
- Basic synthesis techniques, samplers, and physical modeling instrument parameters

### Week 2

Tuesday, October 9, 2018

- Ableton Instruments (part 2) - drums/beats!
- MIDI Effects
- Talk about Project 1

Thursday, October 11, 2018

- Recording and editing audio
- Warping and Automation

### Week 3

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

- Audio Effects (part 1)

Thursday, October 18, 2018

- Audio Effects (part 2)
- More Automation

 Reminder: Project 1 is due by Week 4 Tuesday class!

### Week 4

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

-  Project 1 Presentations (part 1)

Thursday, October 25, 2018

-  Project 1 Presentations (part 2)

## Week 5

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

Performing with Ableton Live (Part 1)  
Instrument Rack and Audio Effect Racks  
Talk about Project 2

Thursday, November 1, 2018

Performing with Ableton Live (Part 2)  
Hardware controllers, Push 2 demo

 Reminder: Project 2 is due by Week 6 Tuesday class!

## Week 6

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

 Project 2 Presentations (part 1)

Thursday, November 8, 2018

 Project 2 Presentations (part 2)


## Week 7

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Remixing songs  
Analyzing and recreating parts of songs  
Talk about Final Project and Final Project Milestone: Listening Assignment

Thursday, November 15, 2018

Humanizing your music / swing / groove  
Analyzing the "off-gridedness" of songs in Ableton

 Reminder: Final Project Milestone: Listening Assignment due before Week 8 Tuesday class!

## Week 8

Tuesday, November 20, 2018

 Final Project Milestone: Listening Assignment Due and Class Discussion

Thursday, November 22, 2018

 No class - happy Thanksgiving!

## Week 9

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

Max4Live Introduction and experimental music ideas


Final Project questions and work time

Thursday, November 29, 2018

Mixdown strategies to prepare for mastering

Creative blocks

Course wrap up and final questions

 Reminder: Final Projects are due by Week 10 Tuesday class!

## Week 10

Tuesday, December 4, 2018

 Final Project Presentation (part 1)

Thursday, December 6, 2018

 Final Project Presentations (part 2)

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## Assignments & Grading

For this course, you will complete two projects to demonstrate your understanding of basic production techniques as well as a final project. All three projects are composition-based. In addition, the final project also includes a listening and response assignment. All assignments are due before class on the discussion or presentation dates as noted in the class schedule. Assignment details will be announced and discussed in class. The grading for the course follows this grading breakdown:

Project 1: 20%

Project 2: 25%

Final Project Milestone - Listening Assignment: 10%

Final Project: 35%

Attendance / Participation: 10%