

**BAIN MUSC 540/(737)**  
*(Advanced) Projects in Computer Music*

**SYLLABUS**

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**Instructor**

Dr. Reginald Bain, Professor  
Composition & Theory  
E-mail: rbain@mozart.sc.edu  
Phone/Voice mail: (803) 777-8183  
Office: Music Building, R227

**Course Information**

Location & Meeting Time: TBA  
Office Hours: MW 12-1 p.m., or by appointment

**Facilities**

Computer Music Studio B, R011  
Experimental Computer Music Studio (xMUSE), R039

**Course Description**

Directed study in computer music composition or research

**Prerequisites and Permission of Instructor**

The prerequisite for MUSC 540 *Projects in Computer Music* is MUSC 336 *Introduction to Computer Music*. Permission of instructor is also required. Acceptance into MUSC 540 is primarily based on the student's degree and expected graduation date. MUSC 540 is a required course for B.M. Composition degree, and is an elective course for the M.M. Composition degree and B.M. Performance Technology degree. MUSC 737 *Advanced Projects in Computer Music* is a much more advanced course that supports the DMA Composition degree. Permission of instructor is also required for MUSC 737.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will learn how to:

- Compose a full-length electronic music composition that involves advanced computer music software (e.g., Max, SuperCollider, Reason, ProTools, etc.), or execute a research project in the field of computer music
- Write a project proposal
- Develop a project plan in consultation with the instructor
- Conduct research in the field of computer music
- Define the technical and artistic scope of a project
- Execute the project in a timely fashion according to the project plan
- Present the completed project
- Write a final project report fully that documents the creative activity or research conducted

**Required Hardware, Software, Texts, and Media**

Students have two hardware/software options to choose from: (1) Design a project that may be executed in Computer Music Studio B, or (2) Design a project that may be executed in the student's home studio. Required texts will typically consist of open access online media resources that are recommended by the instructor: e.g., documentation, textbooks, articles, websites, podcasts, and video tutorials. Cloud media storage (e.g., Dropbox, Google Drive, or OneDrive) is required to backup, store, and share project work. For more information, see *Links for Students > Information Technology* on the class website.

**COURSE MODULES**

1. Project Proposal & Planning
2. Research and Development
3. Project Execution
4. Presentation
5. Final Report

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### PROJECT PROPOSAL

**Due:** *Last day of classes, previous term*

During the previous semester's advisement/open registration period, the student must submit a *project proposal* to the instructor. The proposal may be submitted in the form of an informal e-mail message (ca. 50-100 words). The instructor will evaluate the student's proposal and help the student refine it via a brief e-mail exchange. The instructor will provide feedback regarding the feasibility of the project and suggest alternative avenues for exploration, if necessary. When the proposal is finished, the instructor will grant the student permission to register for the course via e-mail.

### INITIAL MEETING: PROJECT PLAN

**Due:** *First 2 full weeks of the term*

The student must schedule an initial meeting with the instructor via e-mail. This meeting must take place during the first two full weeks of the term. At this initial meeting, the student and instructor will work together to draft a provisional **project plan** for the semester. The project plan will normally include items such as: (1) a *creative activity/research statement*, (2) a *list of project goals*, (3) a description of the *project's significance and methodology*, (4) a *time frame for completion* of the project's components, and (5) a list *deliverable items* that will be submitted at the end of the term (e.g., an audio file containing an original composition, a live performance, a research paper, software, etc.). Over the course of the following week, the student should prepare a formal **project plan document** (1 page, typed, double spaced) that addresses each of the 5 sections listed above and e-mail it to the instructor as an attachment. With instructor permission, the project plan document may be amended over the course of the term.

### OTHER REQUIRED MEETINGS

Whereas the first half of the term normally focuses on reading, research, learning to use software, taking tutorials, compositional planning/sketching, composing, programming, and the like, the second half of the term normally focuses on the preparation of the presentation phrase of the project. All students must schedule, and attend, *at least* the following required meetings: (1) an initial project plan development meeting in Weeks 1-2; (2) a midterm project meeting in Weeks 6-9 where end-of-term deliverables are established; (3) a final project meeting where the student presents the finished work to the instructor (in Weeks 12-14). The student should maintain at least bi-weekly contact with the instructor via e-mail (e.g., asking questions, providing a brief report of how things are going, filing a status report re: pending action items, etc.). When the student is ready to share work in progress, or requires help, the student should request a meeting with the instructor via e-mail. Depending on the project plan, attendance at concerts, rehearsals, concerts, group meetings, on-campus lectures, etc. may also be required. So the student will have time during final exam week to fine-tune the project as directed by the instructor, the **final project meeting must take place on or before the last day of classes: Monday, April 22. All work for the course is due by Wednesday, May 1, at noon.**

*The instructor will remind the student via e-mail to schedule the required meetings above.  
Once the reminder goes out, it is student's responsibility to setup up the appointment.*

*Shortly after each meeting, the instructor will send the student an e-mail  
containing a summary listing of action items from the meeting.*

*Students must be prepared present completed work at the required meetings.*

*Failure to follow the guidelines above will be factored into the student's grade.*

## FINAL PAPER AND DELIVERABLES

**Due:** Wednesday, May 1, at noon

### Final Report

All students must submit a final paper, i.e., the final *Project Report*. The format and length requirements are:

**Undergraduate students:** .docx, 5-8 typed, double-space pages

**Graduate students:** .docx, 7-10 typed, double-spaced pages

The final report should **describe the final project in all matters of detail** and **document your creative/technical process** over the course of the entire term. Up to 25% of the report may be dedicated to personal assessment and reflection on the learning and/or creative processes. Specific criteria for the report will be established at the midterm and final project meetings.

### Deliverables

The exact deliverables, and appropriate submission formats for those deliverables, will be established at the final project meeting.

### Informal Journal

In order to accurately document your creative/technical processes over the course of the term, you should *keep an informal journal* and *record entries in it at every work session*. The journal may take the form of a typed file on your computer or handwritten entries in a notebook, lab book, and/or sketchbook. The items in your journal will be discussed at each project meeting.

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### Academic Integrity

All of the work you turn in for this course must be your own. For more information, read the university's Honor Code:<<http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf>>. It is expected that all students will follow these policies.

### Attendance

This is NOT a traditional class with a traditional number of regular class meetings or weekly lessons. Rather, you are expected to attend 100% of a limited number of scheduled meetings, demos, rehearsals, concerts, etc. As with any directed study, you will typically get as much out of the class as you put into it. Success begins with 100% participation in the required meetings. It is also important that you keep me regularly informed regarding your artistic and technical progress.

*I am here to help you at every step along the way.*

### Health and Wellness

[https://sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/music/spark\\_laboratory/music\\_wellness/index.php](https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/music/spark_laboratory/music_wellness/index.php)

### Learners with Special Needs

If you are registered with the **Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC)**, please be sure that I receive a copy of your accommodation letter during the first week of class so I may work with you, and with the SDRC as necessary, to make sure your accommodations are met. For more information, visit <http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/>, e-mail: [sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu); or call 777-6142.

## Grading Scale

100-90 <b>A</b>	89-85 <b>B+</b>	84-80 <b>B</b>	79-75 <b>C+</b>	74-70 <b>C</b>	69-65 <b>D+</b>	64-60 <b>D</b>	59-0 <b>F</b>
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## Grading Distribution

30% -

### **Class participation and preparedness**

- Timely attendance at required meetings
- Prepared for required meetings
- Timely submission of project plan, project plan updates, bi-weekly progress reports, project work in-progress, etc.
- Journal entries are recorded on a regular basis
- Dutiful follow-up on instructor's action items: e.g., recommended reading, listening, tutorials, programming, research, lecture attendance, concert attendance, group meeting attendance, etc.

40% -

### **Final Project**

- All required deliverables are uploaded into Blackboard by the deadline; e.g., audio file (.wav), score (pdf), sketch/charts (pdf), data files (.maxpat), etc.
- The artistic/technical goals set forth in the project plan were realized in the final project deliverable(s)
- Quality, quantity, creativity, consistent effort, depth, etc. will be taken into account
- Unless otherwise stated in the project plan, if a student pursues multiple projects (e.g., a solo project and group project), the percentage that each project counts under this category will be of equal weight.

30% -

### **Final Report**

- Paper meets the requirements for length, format and content described above
- Self-reflections demonstrate artistic/technical growth over the course of the term
- Paper documents all phases of the project cycle and journal entries were used to reliably document the details of the project