

**ACALANES UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
COURSE OF STUDY: CURRICULAR AREA – Visual and Performing Arts**

<u>COURSE TITLE:</u>	Digital Music Production
<u>GRADE LEVEL(S):</u>	9-12
<u>COURSE LENGTH:</u>	Year
<u>PREFERRED PREVIOUS COURSE OF STUDY:</u>	None
<u>CREDITS PER SEMESTER:</u>	5
<u>STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS:</u>	California Arts Standards for Public Schools
<u>GRADUATION REQUIREMENT:</u>	Meets District Visual & Performing Arts graduation requirement
<u>UC/CSU A-G DESIGNATION:</u>	Meets UC/CSU A-G requirements for Visual and Performing Arts (F) / Music
<u>ADOPTED BY AUHSD GOVERNING BOARD:</u>	June 4, 2025

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

Allen, J. Anthony, PhD. *Music Theory for Electronic Music Producers*. Slam Academy, 2018.

Soundtrap. Spotify, <https://www.soundtrap.com/>.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In Digital Music Production, students use computer-based technology to create original music. Students use tools such as loops, samples, MIDI, and live audio to independently and collaboratively create new musical ideas. Students in this course explore musical “mirrors,” music that is personally familiar to them, as well as musical “windows,” music that is new and unfamiliar. All of this happens in the context of a collaborative classroom environment where students can engage in music regardless of their previous musical experience.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Summative Projects: 80%
Formative Coursework: 20%

COURSE CONTENT — SCOPE and SEQUENCE

Units and Standards	Core Objectives
Unit 1: Digital Audio Workstation Fundamentals + Rhythm 101 California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work• Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work	<u>Core Objectives</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools.• Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. <u>Representative Assignment / Project</u> “Bad Guy” Sound-Alike: After exploring the fundamental features of the course’s Digital Audio Workstation (Soundtrap), students use the “patterns” feature in Soundtrap to create a sound-alike recording of the drum grooves in Billie Eilish’s “bad guy.”

<p>Unit 2: Sample Manipulation</p> <p>California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works With Societal, Cultural, And Historical Context To Deepen Understanding 	<p><u>Core Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Select melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger work using digital tools and digital resources. • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding. <p><u>Representative Assignment / Project</u> Loop, Chop, Reverse: After studying editing techniques by DJ Dahi (Kendrick Lamar, Drake, Steve Lacy), students manipulate loops from Soundtrap and external digital sources using loop, chop, and reverse. Students then create an original drum track to accompany these samples.</p>
<p>Unit 3: Music Notation Fundamentals</p> <p>California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 	<p><u>Core Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding. <p><u>Representative Assignment / Project</u> Mini-MIDI Project: Students develop and demonstrate their understanding of</p>

<p>11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding</p>	<p>pitch, rhythm, and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) through the use of the piano roll editor in Soundtrap. Using sheet music by Florence Price, Scott Joplin, and Joe Hisaishi, students adapt the melody and harmony of notated compositions to a digital setting. Students orchestrate their project, choosing appropriate digital musical instruments and creating original complementary drum tracks.</p>
<p>Unit 4: Song Form</p> <p>California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Responding—Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work • Responding—Anchor Standard 9: Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding 	<p><u>Core Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Select melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger work using digital tools and digital resources. • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Explain how knowledge of the structure (repetition, similarities, contrasts), technological aspects, and purpose of the music informs the response. • Evaluate music using teacher-provided criteria based on analysis, interpretation, digital and electronic features, and personal interests. • Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding. <p><u>Representative Assignment / Project</u></p> <p>Assessment: Micro Pop Song — After studying the form of student-nominated songs from various musical artists, students apply sampling tools such as loop, chop, and reverse to create an original song with a clear musical form. Students leverage their understanding of form and function to create verses, pre-choruses, choruses, and bridges. Students add original drum patterns to accentuate these formal elements. Students analyze their</p>

	song form and label this form using the Song Parts feature in Soundtrap.
Unit 5: Harmony California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work 	<u>Core Objectives</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. <u>Representative Assignment / Project</u> Chordal Cover: As students work through the course, they develop the ability to notate pitch in traditional Western music notation and in the Soundtrap's MIDI piano roll editor. In this assignment, students synthesize their knowledge of basic functional harmony and their facility in reading chord sheets to create a karaoke track of a song of their choice.
Unit 6: Mixing 101 California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Responding—Anchor Standard 9: Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and Relate Knowledge and Personal 	<u>Core Objectives</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Evaluate music using teacher-provided criteria based on analysis, interpretation, digital and electronic features, and personal interests. • Connect and demonstrate how personal interests, knowledge, and skills relate to choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music. <u>Representative Assignment / Project</u> Chex Mix: Students study the differences between Taylor Swift's <i>1989</i> album and her re-recorded, re-mixed <i>1989 (Taylor's Version)</i> album. After studying

Experiences to Make Art	how to add and manipulate effects such as Chorus, Delay, Distortion, Equalizer (EQ), and Reverb, students mix a multi-track recording of their choice from the “Mixing Secrets Multitrack Library.”
<p>Unit 7: Audio Hardware</p> <p>California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding 	<p><u>Core Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Select melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger work using digital tools and digital resources. • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding. <p><u>Representative Assignment / Project</u></p> <p>Audio and FX: Students create a project that features both acoustic audio (e.g. vocals, guitar, piano) and digital audio. Students showcase their facility in acoustic audio recording by using relevant hardware (dynamic microphones, condenser microphones, audio interfaces, XLR cables, USB Cables - A, B, & C) and by employing relevant recording concepts (gain-staging, signal-to-noise ratio, feedback, monitoring). Students add appropriate effects to their audio including Chorus, Delay, Distortion, EQ, and Reverb.</p>
<p>Unit 8: Music as a Creative Process / Music and Identity</p>	<p><u>Core Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools. • Select melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger

<p>California Arts Standards for Public Schools: Anchor Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating—Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work • Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work • Performing—Anchor Standard 4: Select, Analyze, and Interpret Artistic Work for Presentation • Responding—Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work • Responding—Anchor Standard 9: Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work • Connecting—Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and Relate Knowledge and Personal Experiences to Make Art • Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding 	<p>work using digital tools and digital resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations. • Describe how context, structural aspects of the music, and digital media/ tools inform prepared and improvised performances. • Demonstrate how understanding the context, expressive challenges, and use of digital tools in a varied repertoire of music influence prepared or improvised performances. • Cite reasons for choosing music based on the use of the elements of music, digital and electronic aspects, and connections to interest or purpose. • Explain how knowledge of the structure (repetition, similarities, contrasts), technological aspects, and purpose of the music informs the response. • Evaluate music using teacher-provided criteria based on analysis, interpretation, digital and electronic features, and personal interests. • Connect and demonstrate how personal interests, knowledge, and skills relate to choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music. • Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding. <p><u>Representative Assignment Assessment / Project</u> (Make-Your-Own) Song Exploder Podcast: After reflecting on Hrishikesh Hirway's <i>Song Exploder</i> interviews with Dua Lipa and other artists, students create a music podcast that reflects on their identities and creative processes. Students create original musical compositions, audio biographies, and draft podcast scripts before synthesizing all of these tools into metacognitive podcast episodes.</p>
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