MIKE CURB COLLEGE OF ENTERTAINMENT AND MUSIC BUSINESS
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course # / Title: SNG 2110.02/Fundamentals of Commercial Songwriting I
Course Credit Hours: 3
Semester: Spring, 2010
Instructor: Ginny Owens, Bachelor of Music Education
Instructor Contacts: ginny.owens@belmont.edu; 615-289-2828
Instructor Office Hours: Mon/Wed 2-4 or by appointment
Class Location: 34 Music Square East 218
Meeting Time(s): Mon/Wed 4:00-5:15 p.m.
Final Exam: May 7, 7:00 p.m.

Course Description:
This is the practical application and technique of the working songwriter. Melody, lyrics, "hooks," points of view and song logic will be covered. Solo writing as well as the concept of collaboration is introduced. Participants will work individually and in small groups.

Course Outcomes: At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- define commercial song terminology
- explain commercial song structure
- distinguish between commercial song genres
- critique commercial hit songs
- explain the essential elements of a commercial hit song
- define and identify his/her unique "creative process"
- create (with competence and confidence) songs with commercial song structure
- work effectively as part of a songwriting team
- use a self-reflective approach to analyze group projects

Performance Tasks: During this course, the student will:

- Demonstrate the application of song structure by creating songs
- Identify the structure of commercial hit songs
- Demonstrate the application of collaboration by co-writing songs with fellow students
- Identify commercial songs from all popular music genres

Assessment Tools: During this course, outcomes mastery will be evaluated by:

- Written responses comprising short and multiple choice answers, as well as presentation of original musical compositions submitted in written, recorded or live performance forms.
- Song collaboration assignments
- Weekly journal submissions

Testing & Assignments:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Purpose/Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Weekly Journal entry</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>A song, poem, essay, memoir, or story submitted each Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Song Assignment 1</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>Original composition evaluated for writer's potential strengths, weaknesses, and &quot;writing voice.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Song Assignment 2/Midterm</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>Original composition assessed for its commercial viability; multiple choice mid-term exam based on previously-covered material</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Song Assignment 3</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>Composition co-written by two or more class members. Evaluated on the basis of commercial song structure and viability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Song Assignment 4/Final Exam</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td>An original song assessed for commercial viability, as well as a multiple choice/short answer exam based on material covered throughout the semester.</td>
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Course & Classroom Policies:

Attendance & Participation:
Class attendance follows university policy as stated in the current Undergraduate Bulletin. Class participation is required! Students planning to miss a class should contact the instructor via email or phone in advance. Attendance and absence will be noted.

Materials:
6 Steps To Songwriting Success: Jason Blume (Billboard Books)
Spiral-bound notebook, loose-leaf binder with blank pages, or journal for writing activities
Writing utensils

Recommended Reading:
Bird by Bird: Anne Lamott, (Random House)
The Artist's Way: Julia Cameron "Tarcher"
Writing Down the Bones: Natalie Goldberg (Shambahla)

Grade Evaluation: As per CEMB policy, the grade assignment scale for this course is:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent (GPA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 (4.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 (3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 (2.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 (2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 (1.7)</td>
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Final grades below 70% will not apply to the major.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Honor Code: It is the responsibility of each student to abide by the Belmont University Honor Code. “In affirmation of the Belmont University Statement of Values, I pledge that I will not give or receive aid during examinations; I will not give or receive false or impermissible aid in course work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other type of work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of my grade; I will not engage in any form of academic fraud. Furthermore, I will uphold my responsibility to see to it that others abide by the spirit and letter of this Honor Pledge.”

Accommodation of Disabilities: In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Belmont University will provide reasonable accommodation of all medically documented disabilities. If you have a disability and would like the university to provide reasonable accommodations of the disability during this course, please notify the Office of the Dean of Students located in Beaman Student Life Center (460-6407) as soon as possible.
Class Schedule:

Wed. Jan. 13: Introductions/Class syllabus, set presentation schedule
Mon. Jan. 18: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Wed. Jan. 20: Creative exercise; The History of the Popular Song- Early 20th Century; Group 1 presentations
Mon. Jan. 25: Creative exercise; The History of the Popular Song (continued); Group 2 presentations
Wed. Jan. 27: Creative exercise; Identifying Song Components Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Bridge; Group 3 presentations
Mon. Feb. 1: Creative exercise; Common commercial song structures; Journal Entry 1 due by midnight
Wed. Feb. 3: Creative exercise; More on song structures
Mon. Feb. 8: Creative exercise; Song Analysis Presentations; Journal Entry 2 due by midnight
Wed. Feb. 10: Creative exercise; Song analysis presentations (continued)
Mon. Feb. 15: Creative exercise; Group efforts; Journal Entry 3 due by midnight
Wed. Feb. 17: Creative exercise; The basics of lyric-crafting
Mon. Feb. 22: Creative exercise; Lyric contest; Journal Entry 4 due by midnight
Wed. Feb. 24: Creative exercise; A deeper look into lyrics—titles and hooks
Mon. Mar. 1: Creative exercise: Group 1 presentations; Journal Entry 5 due by midnight
Wed. Mar. 3: Mid-term; Group 2 and 3 presentations
Mon. Mar. 8: Spring Break
Wed. Mar. 10: Spring Break
Mon. Mar. 15: Creative exercise; More on lyrical hooks; Embracing Magic Words; Abandoning the Cliché; Journal Entry 6 due by midnight
Wed. Mar. 17: Creative exercise; special guest
Mon. Mar. 22: Creative exercise; All about music; Journal Entry 7 due by midnight
Wed. Mar. 24: Creative Exercise: The "musical hook"; a word on co-writing; Co-writing teams formed
Mon. Mar. 29: Creative exercise; Co-writing fun begins; Journal Entry 8 due by midnight
Wed. Mar. 31: Creative exercise; co-writing (continued)
Mon. Apr. 5: Creative exercise; Co-writes performed Journal Entry 9 due
Wed. Apr. 7: Creative exercise; Melodic crafting
Mon. Apr. 12: Writing exercise; "Let's Make a Demo!" Journal Entry 10 due by midnight
Wed. Apr. 14: Writing exercise; “Let’s Make a Demo” (continued)
Mon. Apr. 19: Writing exercise: Publishing Low-Down--being an artist-writer, becoming a staff writer, or doing it yourself; Journal Entry 11 due by midnight
Wed. Apr. 21: Writing exercise; Special guest
Mon. Apr. 26: Creative exercise; Class Review
Wed. Apr. 28: Creative exercise; Review (continued) Group 1 final song presentations
Mon. May 3: Group 2 Final song presentations