MIKE CURB COLLEGE OF ENTERTAINMENT AND MUSIC BUSINESS  
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course # / Title: SNG 3110/Songwriting Practicum  
Course Credit Hours: 3 hours  
Semester: SPRING 2010  
Instructor: JAMES I. ELLIOTT, A.A.S, B.A., M.A.  
Instructor Contacts: 460-5513, james.elliott@mai.belmont.edu  
Instructor Office Hours: Mon. 8:00-12:00, 2:15-3:15, Tue. 1:00-2:30, Wed. 11:30-12:30, 2:15-3:15, Fri. Office or writing  
Class Location: MS201  
Meeting Time(s): Monday & Wednesday 1:00-2:15  
Final Exam: Wednesday, May 5: 2:00-4:00

Course Description:  
The development of an individual’s unique songwriting “voice” is encouraged and the study of the songwriting business continues. The course explores songwriting creativity based on individual’s genre preference. The publisher/songwriter relationship will be developed through specific writing assignments. Internships at song-publishing companies are encouraged.

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

- Create songs.  
- Compose songs on assignment.  
- Critique the historic and current songwriting business models.

Performance Tasks: During this course, the student will:

- Demonstrate the ability to compose songs.  
- Discuss the process of composing commercial songs.  
- Create songs.  
- Compare the business opportunities for songwriters and examine the current state of the music industry.

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

- Original musical compositions.  
- Original lyrics.  
- Original melodies.  
- Songwriting exercises.  
- Multiple-choice and short answer tests based on lectures and readings.

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Testing & Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Description/Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Compose 6 Original Songs</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Based on six songs composed per guidelines in the syllabus. Each song has a value of 10% (6 songs X 10% = 60%) and will be graded using the critique forms provided by the professor. Songs must be submitted on CD on the dates listed in the Class Schedule. The songs should be labeled following the format on page 21 of <em>This Business of Songwriting</em> and must include a typed lyric following the format on page 23. Songs not submitted per these requirements will not be accepted and a grade of F will be applied. Songs must be written for this class during the semester and not submitted for another SNG course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Tests</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2 comprehensive tests (2 X 10% = 20%) comprising multiple-choice questions that will measure the depth of the student’s knowledge base of the topic and short-answer/essay questions that will assess the student’s assimilation of knowledge gained from lectures and readings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. “Do It Now” Writing Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Two of the six exercises from the book <em>Shortcuts to Hit Songwriting</em> will be completed for credit. Each exercise carries a value of 5% (2X5% = 10%) You may choose which exercises to submit for credit. They must be typed and should include “FOR CREDIT” at the top of the page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Final Exam Song Composition</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>The final song written for the class should demonstrate an ability to write a commercial song. A one-page paper must accompany the song describing what techniques from the textbook shortcuts and MasterWriter were utilized in composing the song. The song may be performed live or on a recording. A recording of the song must be submitted to the professor following song submission guidelines.</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 expected; attendance and absence will be noted.

**Materials:**

- *This Business of Songwriting*. Jason Blume, Billboard Books.
- MasterWriter software
  Purchase directly from MasterWriter by check or credit card for $39.00 (special rate – normal rate is $99.00)
  Call 866-848-8484 The student discount rate is per MasterWriter President, Barry DeVorzon
  www.Masterwriter.com

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

<table>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Final grades below 70 % will not apply to the major.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent (GPA)</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>
</tr>
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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  Class introduction – Reality Check: How hard are you willing to work at your craft?

Mon.  Jan. 18  MLK Holiday – no class

Wed.  Jan. 20  Listening to songs we’ve written – perform live or play Cd of the favorite song you’ve written

Mon.  Jan. 25  This Business of Songwriting – Chapters 1-10

Wed.  Jan. 27  Test

Mon.  Feb. 1   Guest Speaker

Wed.  Feb. 3  Shortcuts to Hit Songwriting - # 1 - 9 (pages XIII-22)
Complete the Ghost Song exercise on page 7 – present song in class.
Ghost Song Lyric due

Mon.  Feb. 8  Shortcuts to Hit Songwriting - # 10 -20 (pages 23-40)
Complete “Do It Now” exercise on page 23 – present “Reversed Engineered” songs in class
2 Reversed Engineered Songs due – 1 hit song, 1 original following the guidelines on page 23
Choose 2 other “Do It Now” exercises and be prepared to present in class
Present songs or discuss findings in class
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Wed. Feb. 10  Shortcuts to Hit Songwriting - # 21 – 35 (pages 43-74)
Complete “Do It Now” exercises and be prepared to discuss in class.
**Original Song # 1 due** using one of the song forms on pages 59-60.
Incorporate what you’ve learned from these chapters in your song.
Song should be recorded using the MasterWriter audio component.
Follow song submission guidelines.

Mon. Feb. 15  Shortcuts #36-47 (pages 77-104)
Complete the “Do It Now” exercises and be prepared to discuss in class “Do It Now”
exercise on page 104 Due

Wed. Feb. 17  Meet with cowriters

Mon. Feb. 22  Shortcuts #48-62
Complete “Do It Now” exercises and be prepared to discuss in class
Discussion of Cowriting protocol

Wed. Feb. 24  Shortcuts #63-73
Complete “Do It Now Exercise and be prepared to discuss in class
“Do It Now” Description (page 126) due
Original song # 2 due based on “Do It Now” Film/TV exercise on page 130

Mon. Mar. 1  Shortcuts # 74-85
**Original Song # 3 due- LRYIC only – use Shortcuts 71 & 72 in preparing your lyric. Attach**
the worksheets utilized in the assignment to your LRYIC
Also include a one page paper explaining how you utilized MasterWriter in completing this
assignment

Wed. Mar. 3  Shortcuts #86-103

**Original Song # 4 due – MELODY ONLY**
Use the exercises in the above shortcuts to assist you. In addition to your submitted melody
include a paper that explains what exercises you utilized in writing your MELODY

March 8 – 12  Spring Break

Mon. Mar. 15  Shortcuts #104-113
Complete “Do It Now Exercise” on page 238 and present in class
Write a bridge for an original song – present in class

Wed. Mar. 17  Shortcuts #114-126

Mon. Mar. 22  Song Presentations
**Original Song # 5 due – cowritten with classmate**

Wed. Mar. 24  This Business of Songwriting – Chapters 11 - 15

Mon. Mar. 29  This Business of Songwriting – Chapters 16 - 20

Wed. Mar. 31  Compose a song in a genre that is outside your comfort zone.
**Original Song # 6 due**
Include a one page paper explaining how MasterWriter assisted you with the assignment

Mon. Apr. 5  Test

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Wed. Apr. 7  Guest Speaker

Mon. Apr. 12  Song Presentations

Wed. Apr. 14  Song Presentations

Mon. Apr. 19  The Future of Music Publishing – Publishing Deals in 2010

Wed. Apr. 21  Pitch Meetings

Mon. Apr. 26  Pitch to Publisher

Wed. Apr. 28  Pitch to Publisher

Mon. May 3  The Final Set

Wed. May 5  Present Final Exam song in class

Final exam: 2:00 – 4:00