

# MTEC 1A: MUSIC BUSINESS

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

| Heading                 | Value                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Effective Term:         | Fall 2026                                                |
| Units:                  | 4                                                        |
| Hours:                  | 3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)  |
| Advisory:               | Not open to students with credit in MTEC 80A or MUS 50A. |
| Degree & Credit Status: | Degree-Applicable Credit Course                          |
| Foothill GE:            | Non-GE                                                   |
| Transferable:           | CSU/UC                                                   |
| Grade Type:             | Letter Grade Only                                        |
| Repeatability:          | Not Repeatable                                           |
| Formerly:               | MTEC 80A                                                 |

## Description

Study of legal and business aspects of the music industry. Emphasis on publishing, licensing, and promotion. Copyright law, interaction between songwriters and music publishers, record companies, distributors, and the rules that govern them. How music is licensed, service marks, trademarks, and patents. The role of lawyers, agents, personal managers, producers, and promoters. Licensing and copyright of intellectual properties in the growing multimedia industry and the internet. Synchronization of music in film, video, and television. Career development and how major/independent labels market and distribute media. Examples of successful music industry professionals from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic tenets of business as currently practiced in the U.S.
2. Discuss the traditional structure of record companies, and the changes taking place due to the advent of digital delivery.
3. Discuss and define the role of songwriters in the music industry, including the publishing and licensing of songs both in the U.S. and abroad.
4. Examine the role of agents and managers in the music industry.
5. Examine the role of ethnic musical styles in the music industry by writing reports on record companies that specialize in culturally diverse styles.

## Course Content

1. How music generates income in the entertainment industry
  - a. Publishing and licensing
    - i. Publishing rights in the U.S.
      1. Copyright ownership
      2. Arrangements
      3. Works for hire
    - ii. Licensing musical compositions and arrangements

1. Who may license
2. Fair use
3. Licensing organizations: BMI, ASCAP, SESAC
2. Representation in the music industry
  - a. Agents and personal managers
    - i. Regulations in California
      1. Conflict of interest
      2. Licensing of agents
      3. Talent agencies
  - b. Unions and guilds (American Federation of Musicians, Screen Actors Guild, American Guild of Musical Artists)

## Lab Content

1. Develop a business plan for a record label.
2. Design a distribution and marketing plan for an online music distributor.
3. Create a flowchart for a distribution network handling mixed media.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. When taught on campus: access to a CD and DVD player; classroom sound system, screen, overhead projection system.
2. When taught online/hybrid: on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Written examinations on copyright law in the U.S. since the copyright act of 1976 (and subsequent revisions) as it pertains to musical works  
Proposing written hypothetical publishing scenarios and detailing the legal aspects of such  
Writing contracts that license arrangements of a musical work  
Comparing and contrasting agents and personal managers and the regulations that pertain to them in California, the U.S., and the world in written essays

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture presentations and classroom discussion using the language of the music business  
In-class viewing of video interviews with music business experts  
Listening to audio examples from 1920-1970 that demonstrate elements of copyright law

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Passman, Donald. All You Need To Know About The Music Business. 2019.

Herstand, Ari. How To Make It In The New Music Business. 2019.

Although these texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal in this area of study.

## **Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments**

1. Write a business plan for a small record label.
2. Write a review of a concert DVD or live concert focusing on business and marketing strategies employed by the promoters.
3. Draw up a contract for a group performance at a nightclub with attached rider.

## **Discipline(s)**

Commercial Music