MTEC 80C: BASICS OF MUSIC PUBLISHING

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2021
Units:	4
Hours:	3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Not open to students with credit in MUS 18, 51, or 59.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	CSU
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Description

Prepares the student to navigate the music publishing business by eliminating the legalese and explaining the business in everyday language. Class includes writing original songs for review. Active listening and constructive critiquing of original student compositions.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:
A. Define and describe the function of a music publisher.
B. Explain the positive and negative financial aspects of music publishing agreements.
C. Discuss the industry standards for gaining access to music publishers.
D. Interpret historical data in music publishing and compare/contrast it with the modern paradigm.
E. Discuss the benefits of an outside music publishing deal and compare it to self publishing.
F. Write an original song under simulated staff writer conditions.
G. Constructively critique student work during in class presentations.

Course Content

A. Introduction to music publishing
1. A history of the music publishing business from the late 1800s to the present
B. What do music publishers do?
1. Exploiting the copyright
2. Administer the copyright
3. Sign new songwriters
4. Build catalogs
5. Review of the music publishing various departments
a. Creative
b. Accounting
c. Song licensing
d. Business and legal affairs
e. Print
f. International affairs
g. Royalty collection and payment
h. Copyrights
C. Different types of publishers
1. The importance of location
2. Different publishing genres
3. Big vs. small publishers
a. Advantages of each
4. Role of administrative publishers
D. Music copyrights
1. Listing of exclusive songwriter rights
2. Fair use of copyright limitations
3. Importance of copyrighting songs
4. Registering your copyright
5. Copyrighting myths
6. Work for hire
a. The advantages and disadvantages
7. What's not protected by copyrights
E. Revenue streams and Performance Rights Organizations (PRO)
1. Royalty sources
a. Mechanical royalties and the Harry Fox Agency
b. Synchronization royalties
c. Performance royalties
d. Print royalties
e. New tech royalties
2. The various PROs
a. ASCAP
b. BMI
c. SESAC
F. Finding a music publisher
1. The importance of networking
a. Personal connection
b. Songwriting organizations
2. Songwriting reference books
3. Submission mistakes
4. What to be wary of in a search for a publisher
G. Royalty splits
1. What publishers look for in a songwriter
2. How the royalty pie is cut up
a. The concept of the 200% pie
3. The importance of retaining some portion of publishing rights
H. Music entertainment attorneys
1. Why they're important
2. How to find an attorney
a. Networking
b. Referrals
c. Referral organization
3. How to interview an attorney
I. Music publishing agreements
1. Types of agreements
2. The advance
3. Reversion clauses and why they're crucial
4. Auditing rights
5. Single song agreements
6. Staff writer agreements
7. Artist development deals
J. Self publishing and the future
1. Definition of self publishing
2. Why self publishing should be considered
3. What self publishing entails
4. How to start your own music publishing company
5. The impact of new technology
6. The erosion of the major labels
7. The various ways to promote your music online

Lab Content

The goal of the lab activities is for the students to apply the theoretical knowledge that they learned in the lessons to the 'real world' challenges confronted by professional songwriters. Some examples of the these exercises include:
A. Writing a song for a specific film project using a specific title and song concept.
B. Writing a song in the style of an established artist.
C. Choosing the most commercial song out of your catalog for publisher consideration.
D. Write lyrics for one of your favorite songs.
E. Composing a new melody for one of your favorite songs.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

A. When taught on campus:
1. Classroom with digital recording system for student feedback.
2. Projection system for video and multimedia content.
3. Basic sound reinforcement system for in-class performances.
4. Drums and amplifiers.
5. Grand piano.
B. When taught via Foothill Global Access:
1. On-going access to computer with email software and capabilities.
2. Email address.
3. JavaScript enabled internet browsing software.

Method(s) of Evaluation

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

Weekly quizzes
Midterm exam
Final exam
Submitted songwriting assignments

Method(s) of Instruction

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

Lecture
Discussion
Cooperative learning exercises
Electronic discussions/chat
Laboratory
Demonstration

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.

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

A. Reading assignments include reading approximately one lesson per week. These include:
1. Evolution of Music Publishing
2. What Do Publishers Do?
3. Different Types of Music Publishers
4. Music Copyrights
5. Revenue Streams and PROs
6. Finding a Publisher
7. Royalty Splits and Attorneys
8. Music Publishing Deals
9. Self Publishing and the Future of Publishing
B. Three writing assignments include responding to a scenario, such as: You're a staff writer with a major publisher. Your publisher has just informed you that she's heard that there are three movies in production looking for title songs. The producers are looking for a song that sounds like it was written in the late 1950s. Please pick one of these projects, write a song using one of the titles while addressing the concept in the lyrics:
1. 'Unsuspecting Heart' a love story about love the second time around. They're looking for a love song.
2. 'Carrington County' a story of a small town loser and his redemption with a country music soundtrack. They're looking for an upbeat country song.
3. 'Radio Thunder' a story about chasing dreams in the early days of Rock n Roll.

Discipline(s)

Commercial Music