COURSE: MU311T/NT Songwriting
CREDIT: 2 Semester Hours
SEMESTER: SPRING 2023
DAY/TIME/LOCATION: Tuesday 1-2:20pm E ed 107
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Ian Guthrie
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I. DESCRIPTION

A thorough study of the important elements of planning and writing songs. Students will explore the craft of songwriting from the initial inspiration through the proper completion of a song. The final project includes a polished score ready for publishing. It is recommended that students have completed or are currently enrolled in MU213 – Music Technology.

II. OBJECTIVES

A. General competencies to be achieved. The student will:

1. Function more effectively in a music related career by developing better understanding of the power of a song to effect and inspire.
   a. Program Objectives 3
   b. Assignments A1, D1, E1
2. Discover learning tools and other inspirations that can be used in breaking through writer's block and rediscover deeper creativity.
   a. Program Objectives 3
   b. Assignments A1, E1
3. Learn and implement writing exercises to enhance songwriting.
   a. Program Objectives 3
   b. Assignments A1, B1, D1
4. Discover the most effective tools to capture ideas and melodies as they are first beginning to emerge.
   a. Program Objectives 3
   b. Assignments C1, D1
5. Explore the best ways to follow an idea or inspiration through the journey of creative writing and chord progression to become a fully realized, complete song.
   a. Program Objectives 3
   b. Assignments A1, B1, C1, D1

B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student will:

1. Adequately exhibit functional steps needed to know and identify the characteristics and structure of a song.
2. Adequately apply the use of journaling and songwriting exercises to achieve a richer environment out of which to write a well written, complete song.
3. Adequately exhibit functional use of songwriting tools, and reliance on inspiring activities and environments that lead to better songwriting.
4. Articulate a basic understanding of terminology related to songwriting.
5. Understand, articulate and implement how to write better lyrics and melodies.

III. REQUIREMENTS

A. Assignments: Complete the assignments from assigned readings, in room discussions and instructor in a timely manner as specified by the instructor.
B. Text: Complete assigned readings in the textbook, which will be assigned throughout the term.
C. Projects: Complete the assigned projects using information from class lectures and assigned readings.
D. Time:
   1. The student should spend some time every day honing their creative skills in lyrics and music composing.
   2. The student should expect to spend time daily exploring new creative environments, discovering what kinds of experiences and techniques actually inspire the writer to write.
   3. Additional time should be spent on reading, research and projects.
E. Journaling/Sketching: All students should sketch or journal on a daily basis, recording any and all ideas that they cannot incorporate into their projects, at least at that time. Like any good songwriter or composer, the best ideas usually come by seeking out creativity, not by waiting for it.

IV. METHODS

A. In-class methods will include discussion, explanation, exercises, and illustration. Student will attend MU311 21 hours over the semester.
B. Out-of-class methods will include personal work at the computer, or other writing venues, reading, practicing, journaling, writing, researching, and completing assignments and projects.

V. MATERIALS

A. The instructor will assign books from the CU Library and Music Resource Library; students will be expected to check out and study these materials as prescribed.
B. See "Bible is a required textbook" statement below. You may use your familiar Bible translation in class. My preferred translation is the NASB or the ESV or the YLT.

VI. GRADING

Assignments are due at class time or on the date assigned. Papers and reading assignments must be completed on time. **Work not completed on time will be graded down accordingly**. A song turned in unfinished, according to the definition in class, will receive no credit. Illness is the only acceptable exception.

Class discussion and in-class work	**15%**
Songwriting assignments	**25%**
Journaling	**20%**
Completion of final song	**40%**
Total	**100%**

VII. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE – Class/Lab schedule

A. The student will spend at least 1-3 hours per week outside of class, working on songwriting skills.
B. Classroom – The students are expected to attend every class for a Participation grade. Unexcused absences will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but no one should expect to get an idea grade if they routinely skip class, avoid participating in class, or ignore assignments.

*after week 8 there will be a Fall break of a week
*Week 16 *is* Finals, so everything will be covered by Week 15

Week 1: Syllabus; introduction to different genres of Christian music
Week 2: Chord progressions and "retrogressions" (the rad progressions)
Week 3: Lyrics (no school Jan. 24-25) *this may need to be recorded
Week 4: Song forms
Week 5: Major, minor, and emotions; music and messages
Week 6: Classical notation, Nashville Notation, chord charts, and fake books
Week 7: Intros, Instrumentals, Interludes, and Outros
Week 8: Project no. 1 due presentation (Instrumental ideas only)

Week 9: Music and messages
Week 10: Verses *Dr. Guthrie may be gone Mar. 21st
Week 11: Choruses
Week 12: Bridges and post-choruses

Week 13: Expanding and experimenting with tonality (Yes—both hymns and Rock can be atonal!)
Week 14: Final drafts
Week 15: Copyright, CCLI, and PROs
Week 16: Final projects

VIII.   Other Important Information

The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinator (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.

Plagiarism is defined as copying any part of a book or paper without identifying the author. This also includes taking another person's ideas and presenting them as your own.

The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.

All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th edition and the Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.

In-class attendance and discussion is mandatory and is part of the student's overall final grade.

Grading Scale: See grading scale in the university catalog

Assignments	Hours	Assigned
"Seat Time" in class	21	21
Reading	15	300 pages
Journaling	21	

Daily Songwriting exercises Project/Homework	21	Avg. hours expected to complete project.
Final, completed Song	12	
Total	90	