

# FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Introduction to Music Technology

**Date:** January 2011

**Subject Area:** Visual and Performing Arts

**Proposed Grade Level(s):** 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

**Course Length:** One Year

**Grading:** A-F

**Number of Credits:** 5 per Semester

**Subject Area Credit:** Fine Arts

**Prerequisites:** None

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is intended to introduce students to music technology and music composition. Students will use computer software, such as Sibelius and Reason, to create and produce their own music. Students will also learn how to play the piano, or refine their piano skills if they have prior experience with the instrument, since the keyboard will serve as a vehicle for inputting notes into computer notation software and understanding music theory. This course is designed for students with a deep passion for music. No prior experience in music is needed since instruction and projects will be tailored to meet the needs of all experience levels. The curriculum will include units on music theory, music composition, piano skills (keyboarding), MIDI technology, composition software, and sound engineering. Students will create a portfolio that demonstrates knowledge, skill, and fluency within Music Technology.

### **GENERAL GOALS/PURPOSES:**

- Students will read about, write about, talk about, and reflect upon topics pertaining to the music technology industry.
- Students will work independently and collaboratively in learning about music technology.
- Students will gain skills in playing the piano and apply those skills to music theory and working with music notation software.
- Students will learn basic to advanced music theory that pertains to successful music composition.
- Students will learn basic to advanced song-writing skills.
- Students will analyze and compare the different styles music and recreate them using music technology software.
- Students will learn about career possibilities related to music technology.
- Students will develop creative skills in problem solving, communication and time management.
- Students will learn the concepts and vocabulary of music technology, music theory, and music composition.

### **STUDENT READING COMPONENT:**

- Students will be assigned readings from an array of sources including method books, music technology related magazines/publications, and Internet sites/articles.
- Students will be required to follow written instructions on assignments and projects.

### **STUDENT WRITING COMPONENT:**

- Students will describe, analyze, critique and write about music selections that will be heard during class through “active listening” assignments.
- Students will compare and contrast the different styles and genres of music.
- Students will write an essay/research paper on a music technology related career.
- Students will write written reflections and critiques for each composition project.

## **STUDENT ORAL COMPONENT:**

- Students will present for each other the pieces of music that they create in class.
- Students will express and present the concepts being learned.
- Students will often work in groups- presenting to the class an explanation of the process involved.
- Students will orally respond to musical pieces, examples, demonstrations, performances, etc. using vocabulary, concepts, and terms appropriate to music technology and composition.
- Regular in-class discussions will be conducted in order to assess the student's understanding of new concepts that have been introduced.

## **DETAILED UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:**

### **Unit 1 Introduction to music theory**

- a. Reading and performing notes and rhythms.
- b. Reading and performing basic chords, chord symbols, and chord structures.
- c. Relating music theory to the keyboard.
- d. Vocabulary specific to the music content area.

### **Unit 2 Introduction to the piano**

- a. Naming the notes/keys.
- b. Building technical facility in left and right hands.
- c. Playing melodies by ear.
- d. Playing written music.

### **Unit 3 Weekly piano lessons (ongoing)**

- a. Students will work through method books at their appropriate level.
- b. Students will work at their own pace, however they will be tested at the end of each week for progress.
- c. Students will play piano music from different time periods and cultures.
- d. Periodically students will perform songs for each other.

### **Unit 4 Introduction to Song Writing**

- a. Discussion of music genres and song writing in different cultures and time periods.
- b. Song form: AB, ABA, rondo.
- c. Song structure: melody, harmony, bass line, chorus/verse/bridge.
- d. Improvisation and how it relates to song writing.
- e. Listening activities will take place in which students will assess the effectiveness of different songs.

### **Unit 5 Music Composition**

- a. Melody structure.
- b. Chord progressions.
- c. Voice leading.
- d. Bass line composition.
- e. Orchestration and arrangement of music from different time periods and cultures.
- f. Students will present the pieces that they compose and/or arrange. Students will assess the effectiveness of each piece and offer feedback.

### **Unit 6 Introduction to Music Notation Software**

- a. Noteflight and Sibelius (Noteflight is available for free online and is a more basic, point-and-click approach to music notation. Sibelius is available for purchase and is a more powerful program used by professionals in the field).
- b. Setting up scores.
- c. Inputting notes and rhythms using the computer keyboard and MIDI pianos.

## **Unit 7 Music Notation Software for Arranging and Composing**

- a. Replicating given notated music using notation software.
- b. Arranging music for a variety of instruments using notation software.
- c. Composing original music using notation software.
- d. Exporting audio in Sibelius.

## **Unit 8 Intro to Reason**

- a. How basic musical elements relate to Reason: melody, harmony, rhythm, form, tempo, texture, and timbre.
- b. Introduction to Mixing: how balance, tonal adjustment, sound placement, and ambience can enhance the musical elements of a song.
- c. Creating rhythm patterns and phrases.

## **Unit 9 Composing and arranging with Reason**

- a. Songwriting: Students will create a song by layering in one element at a time. They will start with a drum track and eventually add in a bass line, melody and harmonies, and will arrange and edit the final product.
- b. Working with loops: Students will use their knowledge of the elements of music to manipulate loops.
- c. Students will use loops to create their own songs.
- d. Students will use effects, such as reverb, distortion, and delay, to enhance their songs.

## **Unit 10 Editing music with Reason**

- a. Students will become sound engineers in this project. Students will be given a variety of “problems” to solve in order to make raw song files ready to be shared with the public.
- b. “Problems” that students must figure out how to solve include issues with balance, tempo, dynamics, timbre, and creating variety.

## **Unit 11 Creating a Portfolio**

- a. Students will create a portfolio of their work in Reason and Sibelius. Students will put finishing touches on the songs that they have created over the school year and compile them into a CD.
- b. Students will present an overview of their portfolio to the class.

## **Unit 12 Research project**

- a. Students will be given a career in music technology to research. They will write their own research paper that will include the steps needed to obtain such a career (college, apprenticeships, etc.).
- b. Students will present their finding in groups and/or in front of the class.
- c. By the end of the project students will have information on the types of careers available to those who are interested in music technology and how to go about finding and obtaining those jobs.

## **SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:**

### **1.0 Artistic Perception**

*Processing, Analyzing and Responding to Sensory Information through the Language and Skills Unique to Music*

- Units 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11

### **2.0 Creative Expression**

*Creating, Performing and Participating in Music*

- Units 3, 5, 7, 9, 11

### **3.0 Historical and Cultural Context**

*Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music*

- Units 3, 4, 5

### **4.0 Aesthetic Valuing**

*Responding to, Analyzing and Making Judgments about Works of Music*

- Units 4, 5, 10, 11

### **5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications**

*Connecting and Applying what is Learned in Music to Learning in Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers*

- Units 10, 12

### **THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE CAHSEE AND/OR CST'S:**

Language Arts

### **LAB FEE, IF REQUIRED:**

Not Required.

### **DISTRICT ESLRs TO BE ADDRESSED**

**Self-directed Learners** – Students will use techniques learned in class to analyze and solve a variety of musical problems presented to them in class.

**Effective Communicators** – As students learn how to communicate through music composition and performance, they will gain confidence that will help them be more self assured and professional in other areas of their lives.

**Quality Producers/Performers** - Students will develop an appreciation for the discipline required by the performing arts, thereby enhancing their work ethic and study skills.

**Collaborative Workers** – Students will learn that they need to be able to work together to create a high quality musical product that meets the given criteria. While individual knowledge and effort is required, collaboration can give students new ideas and points of view

**Constructive Thinkers** – Students will analyze their own compositions and performances and solve problems, using techniques that they learn as the course progresses.

**Responsible Citizens** – Students will demonstrate that their individual effort is essential to the group product and to the creation of a well-rounded portfolio. Students will also learn that sharing their creativity with the community is a positive way to contribute to society.