

## DESN 275 Week 6 Assignments

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### Assignment 1:

**Complete the in-class demo mix and turn it in along with a screen shot of the final mix.**

(To make a screen snapshot on the Mac, press Apple + Shift + 3. Then look for a file called picture 1 on the desktop. Rename it and turn it in). Please include the screen snapshots of the final mix showing mix details and effect details regardless of which software you use.

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### Assignment 2:

**Using the basic tracks provided, mix and master two alternate stereo CD-quality sound files with the characteristics listed below. Also include a screen snapshot of each Tracktion final mix.**

• **Style 1: Almost dry, personal, warm EQ, softly compressed. Melody leads the way.** (As in a Jay Newland production as in *Sunrise with Nora Jones*.)

• **Style 2: As for a TV commercial production background, moderate to high compression, possibly more reverb and echo. Rhythm section leads the way.**

### Gradable Will Be Based On:

- Listenable - not blaring, edgy, muddy or boomy.
- Styles (above) clearly used.
- Thirty - sixty seconds is enough, but use fades.
- No *clipping*.
- Each instrument or vocal track easy to discern, *distinct* when one pays attention to it. *EQ or pass filter on every channel* as appropriate.
- Lead elements and vocals should be *easy to hear* but not louder than necessary over the background tracks.
- No track *obscuring* another track.
- Overall left to right balance in the *stereo mix*.
- Lead elements near the stereo center, such as lead vocals, and bass.

- Some *compression* on at least vocals, bass, guitars.
  - *Zero-point* starts and ends on clips.
  - *Cross-fades* on transitions between clips.
  - *Reverb* used appropriately, preferably as a *sub-group*.
  - Appropriate and at least slight overall *compression on the final mix*.
  - Quiet/unnecessary track sections removed if appropriate.
  - Turned in as MP3
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**Assignment 3: Read in *The Mixing Engineer's Handbook - The Mechanics of Mixing, The Mixing Part of Mixing, Panorama-Placing the Sound in the Soundfield, Element 3 Frequency Range-Equalizing*.**

### Chapter 2 Mechanics of Mixing

*What do "tall, deep, and wide" mean in a mix?*

*Low to high frequencies are still present  
Reverb places elements front to back  
Stereo pan*

*What are the signs of an amateur mix?*

*No contrast (usually verse to verse)  
Holes without fills (focal point)  
Noisy mixes - breaths, clicks, rattles  
No clarity nor punch - not distinct  
No intimacy - too much reverb  
Inconsistent levels  
Boring elements - overused stuff?*

### Chapter 3 Balance

*How can two elements "fight one another"?*

*Same freq range + same pan position*

*How do you keep elements from fighting?*

*Turn one off - move apart in pan  
EQ uniquely  
Limit the number of elements  
Turn one down*

*What is a foundation in pop music?*

*Usually bass and drums*

*What is a pad?*

*Long duration holding instruments  
Synth, horns, vibe chords etc*

*What is rhythm in a mix?*

*Something that interacts with the foundation*

*What is a lead?*

*The main vocal or instrument to listen to.*

*What is a fill?*

*Something you put in the pauses in lead*

*What are the rules for Arrangements?*

*3-5 elements at once are enough usually*

*Everything in its own frequency range*

*(Note the "kick" is the kick drum, the big one on the floor. It usually works closely with the bass guitar in a pop mix, and is crucial for dance mixes.)*

*What are a couple of elements that most mixers generally agree they start with?*

*Bass + Drums or Vocal/lead*

#### **Chapter 4 Panorama**

*Why do film soundtracks prefer a center channel?*

*Keep the phantom center from moving*

*What is usually panned to (near) the center?*

*Lead vocal - kick - bass*

*What should you pan all the way left or right?"*

*Probably nothing! (nothing important)*

*What is different about panning for dance mix?*

*Anything all the dancers right and left need to hear should be nearer to center.*

*What is Joe Chiccarelli's technique: panning for clarity. When does he do it?*

*Toward the end of the balance process*

*Fine tuning pan can yield increase in clarity*

#### **Chapter 5 Frequency Range**

*What are the three primary goals of EQing?*

*Make element clearer, better defined*

*Make element sound bigger*

*Make elements work together*

*What general frequencies represent the...*

*Bottom - kick drum - 63Hz*

*Boom - warmth - bass - 125Hz*

*Fullness - mud - 250Hz*

*Honk - body - boxy - 500Hz*

*Upper voice - crunch - brightness - 2kHz*

*Edge - 4kHz*

*Sibilance - brittleness - sparkle - 8kHz*

*Air - 10-16kHz*

*The more elements/instruments in a mix, the more... bass boosted OR bass cut on each?*

*What will you use the table on page 33 for?*

*EQing typical instruments for Bigness or Clarity.*

*Should the Q be wide or narrow when...*

*cutting? narrow!*

*boosting? wide!*

*If you want something to stick out, roll off the... bottom!*

*If you want something to blend in, roll off the...*

*top (treble)*

*Kick drum EQ starting point?*

*Boost 70 and 4k, cut 250*

*Bass guitar EQ starting point?*

*Balance 100 with 180 ranges*

*Boost 800-1k for clarity*

*Use a high-pass at 40-60Hz*

*Vocal track EQ starting point?*

*Depends on voice*

*+ 125-250 = strong and chesty*

*+ 2k to 4k for more consonants*

*seems closer - intimate*

#### **Compression Notes**

*Explain compression, dynamic range, threshold, ratio, gain make up.*

*What are the main uses for compression?*

*What does a limiter do to a track?*

*What does a gate do to a track?*