



AUD-143: PRO TOOLS I

Effective Term

Fall 2026

BOT Approval Date

05/15/2025

Discipline

AUD - Audio Production

Course Number

143

Course Title

Pro Tools I

Short Title

Pro Tools I

Credit Status (CB 04)

D - Credit - Degree applicable

Units**Lecture Units**

3.00

Total Units

3.00

Hours**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

Out of Class Hours Lecture

96-108

Total Contact Hours

48 - 54

Total Out of Class Hours

96 - 108

Total Student Learning Hours

144 - 162

Distance Education

No

Catalog Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the world of digital audio production using Avid's industry-leading software. Ideal for aspiring audio engineers, music producers, sound designers, and creative professionals, this course covers the fundamentals of audio recording, editing, mixing, and mastering. Students will gain proficiency in navigating Pro Tools' user interface and utilizing its powerful editing and mixing tools to create high-quality audio projects. Upon completion, students will be well-prepared to pursue Avid's certification paths, including the Avid Certified User and Avid Certified Operator exams - credentials that are highly regarded in the industry and can unlock career opportunities in music production, film and television post-production, and live sound engineering.

Codes

TOP Code (CB 03)

1005.00* - *Commercial Music

CIP Code

10.0299 - Audiovisual Communications Technologies/Technicians, Other.

Repeatability Code

No

Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Commercial Music	End

Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

Learning Objective
1. Describe digital audio conversion and components of a Pro Tools System.
2. Demonstrate how to create a new session and work with various views and menus.
3. Organize new tracks, inputs and outputs, and import audio.
4. Differentiate between the three primary editing tools and edit modes.
5. Configure a basic recording session by setting tempo and meter.
6. Explain the basics of MIDI, import and record MIDI, and work with virtual instruments.
7. Apply workflow techniques on tracks, clip editing, nudging, and importing video.
8. Analyze signal flow, mixing, subgroups, auxiliary tracks, and master faders.
9. Integrate dynamic effects, AudioSuite plugins, reverb, delay, and use of inserts.
10. Outline the use of automation, mixing down, backing up, and archiving.
11. Compose audio projects that celebrate diverse musical styles and cultural sound profiles.

Learning Outcome Information

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome
1. Sound Fundamentals and Digital Evolution: After completing this course, students will have a comprehensive understanding of the basics of sound, its existence in both the physical and digital domains, and the evolution of digital audio technology. They will recognize the significance of Pro Tools in contemporary music production.
2. Proficiency in Pro Tools: Students will gain proficiency in using Pro Tools software, from setting up a session to navigating its various windows and menus. They will also appreciate the importance of integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles into their work, fostering an inclusive music production community.
3. Audio Track Management and Editing: By the end of this course, students will be well-versed in essential audio track techniques, including creating different track types, routing, importing audio, and utilizing the Workspace Browser for organization. They will also possess fundamental editing skills using Pro Tools, including scrolling, playback control, and the use of essential edit tools.
4. Recording and MIDI: Students will gain the knowledge and skills required for recording audio effectively, from optimizing recording spaces to setting tempo and meter. Additionally, they will have a solid understanding of MIDI, enabling them to work with MIDI and Instrument Tracks, control MIDI data, and use virtual instruments for music production.

5. Advanced Techniques in Mixing and Effects: Upon completing the course, students will be equipped with advanced skills in mixing, understanding signal flow, working with subgroups and master faders, and using various audio effects such as EQ and dynamic effects. They will also learn how to create automation and perform mixdowns, essential for producing high-quality music and audio projects

Content

Course Lecture Content

1. Audio Basics, DAWs, Installing Pro Tools
 - a. Understanding Sound
 - i. Sound in the Physical World
 - ii. Sound in the Digital Domain
 - b. Evolution of Digital Audio Technology
 - i. Historical Overview
 - ii. Spotlight contributions from historically underrepresented communities in audio production
 - iii. Discuss the importance of equity and representation in shaping the future of audio
 - iv. Advancements Leading to Modern Tools
 - c. Why Pro Tools?
 - i. The Role of Pro Tools in Modern Audio Production
2. Power Up The System, File Hierarchy, Edit Window, Mix Window, Transport Window, Understanding the Menus
 - a. Starting Pro Tools
 - i. Powering Up the System
 - ii. Creating a New Session
 - b. Navigating Pro Tools Windows
 - i. Edit Window Overview
 - ii. Mix Window Overview
 - iii. Transport Window Overview
 - c. Understanding the Menus
 - i. Key Menu Functions and Uses
 - d. Incorporating DEIA Principles
 - i. The Importance of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Music Production
 - ii. Applying DEIA in Pro Tools Mastery
3. Basic Audio Track Techniques - Track Types, Routing Tracks, Importing Audio, Working with the Browser
 - a. Track Management Fundamentals
 - i. Understanding Different Track Types
 - ii. Creating and Managing Tracks
 - b. Routing Tracks
 - i. Effective Track Routing Techniques
 - c. Working with Audio
 - i. Importing Audio into Pro Tools
 - ii. Utilizing the Workspace Browser for Organization
4. Editing Fundamentals - Scrolling, Playback Cursor, Trim/Selector/Grabber, Edit Tools, and Modes
 - a. Navigating the Timeline
 - i. Scrolling and Zooming Techniques in the Edit Window
 - ii. Using the Playback Cursor for Audio Control
 - b. Key Editing Tools
 - i. The "Big Three" Tools: Trim, Selector, Grabber
 - ii. Introduction to Additional Essential Edit Tools
5. Recording Audio - Inputs/Outputs, Setting Tempo and Meter, Basic Recording, Preparing Tracks
 - a. Setting Up for Recording
 - i. Optimizing Your Recording Space
 - ii. Setting Tempo and Meter
 - b. Preparing Tracks
 - i. Essential Tips for Track Preparation
 - c. Basic Recording Techniques
 - i. Microphone Placement
 - ii. Signal Routing
6. MIDI - Instrument and MIDI Tracks, MIDI Control, Editing MIDI, Importing and Recording MIDI

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- a. Introduction to MIDI
 - i. Understanding MIDI and Instrument Tracks
 - ii. How MIDI Controls Shape Music
 - b. Working with MIDI
 - i. Importing and Recording MIDI Data
 - ii. Utilizing Virtual Instruments
 7. Taking Your Workflow to the Next Level - Basic Clip Editing, Nudging, Using Fades, Tab Key, Working with Video
 - a. Advanced Editing Techniques
 - i. Managing Multiple Tracks
 - ii. Basic Clip Editing and Nudging
 - b. Enhancing Video Projects
 - i. Using Fades and the Tab Key
 - ii. Integrating Audio with Video
 8. Getting Started with Mixing - Signal Flow, Working with a Static Mix, Subgroups, Master Faders
 - a. Introduction to Mixing
 - i. Understanding Signal Flow
 - ii. Working with a Static Mix
 - b. Advanced Mixing Techniques
 - i. Using Subgroups
 - ii. Master Faders Overview
 9. Using Effects - Managing Multiple Plug-ins, EQ, Dynamic Effects, Effects Sends, Ambiance, AudioSuite
 - a. Exploring Audio Effects
 - i. Introduction to Audio Effects Families
 - ii. Dynamic-Based and Time-Based Effects
 - b. Using Effects in Pro Tools
 - i. Managing Plug-ins
 - ii. Utilizing EQ, Dynamic Effects, and Effects Sends
 - c. Enhancing Audio Mixes
 - i. Working with Ambiance
 - ii. Introduction to AudioSuite
 10. Automation and Mixdown - Creating Automation, Automating Plug-in Effects, Creating a Mixdown, Backing Up, and Archiving
 - a. Transitioning to Mix Automation
 - i. Moving from Static Mixes to Dynamic Mix Automation
 - ii. Customizing Settings for Specific Sections
 - b. Mastering Mix-down
 - i. Rendering Pro Tools Sessions for External Systems
 - c. Final Steps
 - i. Backing Up and Archiving Projects

Methods of Instruction

Method

In-class Exercises

Integration

Instructors will use in-class exercises that are designed to emphasize the practical application of lecture topics such as importing, construction of new sessions, track creation and separation, inserts and equalization.

Method

Lecture

Integration

Incorporating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principle within the course lectures, is crucial to ensuring that the learning experience is accessible and beneficial to a diverse group of students. Here's how DEIA can be integrated into the teaching approach for lesson(s):

Diverse Examples and Contexts: Use examples and contexts from various music genres, cultures, or industries to make the content more relatable and inclusive for a diverse student body.

Promoting Inclusivity: Create an inclusive and welcoming classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and questions. Encourage the sharing of diverse experiences related to music and technology.

Method

Projects

Integration

Complex projects based on lecture topics and in-class exercises will be used to explain the importance of session organization, window display (Mix or Edit), track order, clips-bin hierarchy, routing busses, and automated mixdown procedures.

Methods of Evaluation**Method**

Homework

Integration

At the end of each Lesson, students will complete questions from the book and upload the answers into Canvas. The questions serve as review guides for the midterm and final exams. Additionally, the lesson review questions should be reviewed on a consistent basis to prepare for the Pro Tools 101 Assessment Exam.

Method

Projects

Integration

Recording, mix-down, and mastering projects will be used to demonstrate student understanding and mastery of complex editing techniques which will include routing, session set-up, and automated mix-down. Assessments will be based on a student's ability to complete assigned projects, visual inspection of session/project perimeters for thoroughness, and listening for overall audio quality. Projects support the learning objectives by applying concepts and techniques from each lesson. The goal of the Projects is to give students a "Hands-On" experience with Pro Tools software and hardware components. To promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) project evaluations will adhere to the following:

Accessibility and Accommodations: Provide Pro Tools sessions or project files, including detailed written instructions, screenshots, and video walkthroughs. For students who may struggle with complex software interfaces, step-by-step guides will be utilized to maximize learning outcomes as related to course content.

Equity in Assessment: Offer assignments that allow for multiple formats or approaches. Empower students to demonstrate their proficiency with Pro Tools through a detailed project involving multitrack recording, another might prefer to focus on sound design or podcast production. Offer additional support to ensure that those who are new to Pro Tools software are not at a disadvantage.

Method

Quizzes

Integration

In the Pro Tools class, written quizzes are an essential tool for assessing your comprehension of daily lecture topics. These quizzes will cover key concepts discussed in class, including the creation of sessions, bit-depth, sample rates, equalization, editing modes, and track types. You will be expected to provide short, written answers to listening exercises and small essay questions, demonstrating your understanding of these critical elements in audio production.

Each quiz will align closely with the review questions provided at the end of each lesson, serving as both an immediate assessment of your learning and a study guide for the midterm and final exams. By engaging with these quizzes, you will reinforce your grasp of the material, ensuring that you are well-prepared for the more comprehensive assessments later in the course.

This approach not only helps solidify your knowledge of Pro Tools but also prepares you for practical application in your future work with the software, whether in professional audio production, education, or any other field where Pro Tools is utilized.

Method

Exams/Tests

Integration

A midterm and final exam are used in summative applications to assess student knowledge of the quizzes and review questions. Both the midterm and final are non-accumulative and serve to assist students to prepare for the Pro Tools Assessment Exam administered by Avid Technologies.

Assignments

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Title: Pro Tools 101: An Introduction to Pro Tools

Chapter: Chapter 1 - Introduction to Pro Tools

Reading Assignment:

Read Chapter 1, "Introduction to Pro Tools" from the book "Pro Tools 101: An Introduction to Pro Tools" by Frank D. Cook.

Take notes on the following topics:

What is Pro Tools?

- The history of Pro Tools
- The different versions of Pro Tools
- The different components of Pro Tools
- The hardware and software requirements for Pro Tools

Reflect on the reading and video tutorials and write a one-page summary of what you have learned. Be sure to include the following:

- What is Pro Tools and how it works
- The basic components and requirements of Pro Tools
- The different versions of Pro Tools and their features
- Your thoughts on the reading and video tutorials

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Task: Mix Analysis and Reflection

Objective: To analyze a mix and reflect on the process and techniques used in creating it.

Instructions:

Choose a mix from a commercial release or a student project, preferably in the genre of your choice. Listen to the mix at least three times, paying attention to the overall sound, balance, panning, levels, and effects. After listening, experiment with your mix checking how your ideas match the original.

Write a reflective essay (500-800 words) on your mix analysis and experience. Address the following questions:

What did you learn from the mix analysis process?

What were the challenges you faced while mixing, and how did you overcome them?

What techniques did you use to achieve the desired sound, and how did they contribute to the mix's overall sound and feel?

What would you do differently if you were to mix this song again?

What advice would you give to someone who is new to mixing?

Submission guidelines:

Submit your Pro Tools session and the exported stereo audio file.

Submit your reflective essay as a Microsoft Word document or PDF.

Make sure your essay is well-structured, with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

Use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Cite any sources used in your essay (if applicable).

Submit your assignment by the deadline specified by your instructor

Assignment Type

Other

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Assignment Title: Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility through Music Production

Assignment Overview: In this assignment, you will create a music project using Pro Tools that promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. You will explore different ways to integrate these principles into your music production process and create a project that celebrates diversity and promotes accessibility for all listeners.

Instructions:

Choose a topic that relates to diversity, equity, inclusion, or accessibility. You can choose a specific theme or issue that resonates with you, such as social justice, representation, disability rights, or cultural identity.

Conduct research on the chosen topic to gain a deeper understanding of its significance and how it can be addressed through music production. You can use various sources, such as academic articles, news articles, videos, and music industry reports.

Plan and produce a music project that promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. You can use any genre or style of music that suits your topic and personal preferences.

Incorporate different techniques and tools in Pro Tools that promote accessibility and inclusivity. This may include using closed captions or audio descriptions for your music video, ensuring that your audio levels are balanced for listeners with hearing impairments, and using font sizes and contrast colors that are easy to read for visually impaired individuals.

Use your music project to promote and celebrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. You can share your project on social media platforms, submit it to relevant music festivals or events, or collaborate with other musicians or artists who share your values and vision.

Assessment Criteria:

Your assignment will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Relevance of the chosen topic to diversity, equity, inclusion, or accessibility.
Depth of research and understanding of the topic and its connection to music production.
Creativity and originality of the music project.
Effective use of Pro Tools techniques and tools to promote accessibility and inclusivity.
Clarity and coherence of the project's message and promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Course Materials

Textbooks

Hagerman, Andrew. (2023) Pro Tools Fundamentals I. Avid Technologies. ISBN 978-1-7376692-0-3

Class Size Information

Class Size

30

Class Size Category

F - Individualized, skills#based instruction/field practice 30

Diversity and Inclusion

Course Design and Materials: Course will incorporate diverse perspectives, authors, and examples that reflect a variety of cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Instructional materials will be reviewed regularly to ensure representation, inclusivity, and alignment with equity-minded practices across disciplines.

Inclusive Learning Environment: Instructors will establish classroom norms and policies that promote respect, civil discourse, and belonging in both online and face-to-face classes. Clear expectations for communication and engagement will support a learning space where all students feel valued and heard.

Accessible Instruction: Course content will be delivered using accessible design. Materials will follow accessibility guidelines within the CMS, including captioned media, readable document formats, and multiple means of engagement to support diverse learning.

Equitable Teaching Practices: Instructors will use transparent and grading criteria, varied assessment methods, and timely feedback to promote fairness and student success. Opportunities for revision, reflection, and multiple demonstrations of learning may be incorporated when appropriate to the discipline.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogies: Instructional strategies will encourage critical thinking about diverse perspectives and systems of power relevant to the course content. Faculty will foster opportunities for students to connect course material to real-world contexts.

Ongoing Reflection and Improvement: Faculty will engage in continuous professional development related to IDEAA principles and reflect on course practices using metacognition to identify opportunities for increased equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Explain how diversity and inclusion(e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.

Several key teaching strategies are used to infuse diversity and inclusion into course learning outcomes. First, students will read articles, watch movies, and discuss the practice of sound recording techniques of other cultures to gain a global perspective of practices that are not solely based on Western ideologies. Second, using a “proactive design approach”, the course is infused with learning outcomes that address diversity through practice. Diversity through practice refers to building equity-minded instruction that considers how students communicate with each other. As instructors, we have the duty as guides to help students interact with each with positivity and respect for diversity. Maintaining a consistent degree of intelligent design, therefore, limits exclusionary practice, and promotes communication and trust between students and the instructor.

Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.

The instructor will maintain and nurture a learning climate that reinforces differentiation that meets the needs of diverse learners when working in face-to-face recording studio environments. This learning climate, based on well-crafted content differentiation, creates a two-dimensional framework for inclusion for both the teacher and learners involved. To achieve this framework, the instructor can allow students to retake equipment exams and scaffold work through a formative and summative design. This enables new and previous information to synthesize together, reinforcing student self-confidence and success.

Interactions

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.

Discussion posts for each lesson are used to address topics pertinent to our course learning objectives. Topics range from opinions on current trends in audio technology to assessments of videos that describe technical information that will build a narrative for class discussion. Students create a dialogue that supports learning and encourages open thinking. Students are encouraged to “Listen like a partner and not like a critique.” When they do this, a community based on mutual goal-driven beliefs helps to make our quest for knowledge meaningful and productive.

Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.

To overcome barriers based on gender, culture/race, and sexuality, it is imperative that the instructor give effective feedback that considers the giver, receiver, and environment in a holistic, non-biased manner. The importance of constructive teacher-to-student interactions helps to create feedback that is bidirectional and values diversity and inclusion-based outcomes. As an example, when justifying grades given to students on a creatively subjective assignment (such as a final mix or a creative listening project), it is vital that the instructor provide instructions for students to improve. To achieve this, the instructor can deploy the SKS (stop/keep/start) model of providing feedback. The SKS model is a simple and effective model that asks questions such as: What should I stop doing? What should I keep doing? What should I start doing? SKS can help students self-assess if they are in a behavioral rut and improve on strengths versus weaknesses. As well, SKS can help students self-reflect on what seems scary, and how to mitigate fears through constructive, non-biased feedback.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.

In addition to the hands-on studio recording sessions done throughout the class, students will also be able to reference the concepts through accessible and ADA-compliant materials such as recorded and written lecture materials, illustrative images, video, or audio lectures, embedded or linked multimedia content (such as films, YouTube videos, podcasts, etc.), and student created or curated content. For example, after demonstrating their understanding of the content in class, students can further explore concepts on the signal flow process when preparing to record instruments, vocals, and other related components to a session through these additional resources.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).

Using concepts based on Bloom’s Taxonomy on Metacognitive Knowledge, course content is infused with techniques and methods for students to develop autonomous thinking and self-interaction/reflection of their own projects and their development of a critically trained ear. Factual, conceptual, and procedural dimensions of the metacognitive process are introduced through discussions, projects, and assignments that introduce various levels of abstract thought in sound recording. The course incorporates cognitive dimension skills to help students remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create within the field of sound recording. In the cognitive dimension, it is espoused that learners begin with recalling information and then move to the understanding of information.