Mendocino High School Multimedia Arts Program
Music Production Unit Outline

Unit 1: Introduction to the Media Lab
- Studio etiquette
- Studio operations
- Safety/Health briefing
- Maintenance and care of equipment

Unit 2: Understanding Audio Signal Flow

Before students get their hands on the various radio/audio technologies in the classroom, they will be introduced to the concept of audio signal flow. Students will be able to understand how audio signal flow travels in, through, or out of both analog and digital radio/audio devices. In addition, students will also learn how to setup and configure various recording stations - simple and complex - so they can be prepared for various productions. Lastly, students will understand the importance of maintaining a safe, clean, and organized studio.

Unit 3: History of Music Production

Students will explore the early history and cultural impact of various producers, engineers, record labels, production companies, and artists. Students will also be able to recognize and distinguish the historical and/or cultural underpinnings of sound, audio and music in developing basic historical/cultural literacy in the discipline.

Unit 4: Basics of Audio Editing/Recording

Students will be introduced to the equipment and software we have in the classroom and begin producing their own content. Through various projects throughout the unit, students will be able to produce high quality, meaningful work that establishes links to acknowledge cultural and artistic traditions in music and sound. Students will acquire the technical skills - an understanding of analogue and digital recording, mixing and mastering, overdubbing, effects, microphone techniques, transitioning, and media/music management.

Unit 5: Beginning Music Theory

Once students have an idea of how to edit audio, beginning music theory will be explored. First, students will be introduced to musical notation - music staff, musical notes, articulation - and how it varies between each instrument/voice. From there, using various string/wind instruments and their voices, students will explore different scales, chords, and pitches.

Unit 6: Fundamentals of Vocal and Instrumental Music Performance

As students begin to understand how an instrument is played or how a voice is used to sing, they will be introduced to the art of performing in front of a live audience. Students will be exposed to various musical artists to see how their body language, emotions, and energy affect their audiences. From there, students will spend time on how they want to express themselves in addition to doing so with others.

Unit 7: Music Appreciation
In this unit students will explore the vast amount of music that is out there not only in the US, but the world. While exploring different music genres and performance styles, students will learn how it changes from culture to culture.

Unit 8: Effects, Mixing, and Mastering.
Once students have a firm understanding of audio, editing and mixing, students will learn to make aesthetic judgments and evaluations of their own audio art, and other's work, as distinct from personal preference or "taste." They will do this by reviewing their projects created during the prior units and seeing how they can make their work even better. But in order for students to gain a deeper understanding of their own work, students will be introduced to various effects, mixing, and mastering techniques such as adding reverb, compression, and pitch shifting. This in turn, will give students the opportunity to create content that is a higher quality than what they originally created. Once this process is completed, students will have a deeper understanding of the step-by-step process during music production.

Unit 9: Application of Audio/Music Production Skills
Now that students understand music production on a practical and fundamental level, students will practice those skills through various projects in the classroom. Students will be tasked with demonstrating their knowledge of music theory, music performance, and audio editing. Working either solo or with a group, students will also be tasked with performing one piece of music per semester in front of the class.