Commercial Music: Recording A.A. Degree

FULL TIME

This program roadmap represents one possible pathway to complete the program. **Please see a counselor** to create an education plan that is customized to meet your needs. This roadmap is not a guarantee of course availability or financial aid applicability.

Catalog: 2026-27

GE Pattern: local AA/AS

Total Units: 60

First Year

Semester 1

14 Units

CAT.	COURSE	UNIT	PREREQUISITES	GE AREA
Req	**MUSM 311** Introduction to Music Business	3		
Req	**MUSM 334** Introduction to Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI)	2		
Req	**MUSM 342** Recording Studio Techniques I	3		
GE	**ENGL C1000** College Composition **or** **ENGL C1000H** [H] Honors College Composition	3 3		L1A
GE	**any Area L7A (Physical Education) course**	1		L7A
GE	**any Area L7B (Life Development Skills) course**	2		L7B

Semester 2

16 Units

CAT.	COURSE	UNIT	PREREQUISITES	GE AREA
Req	**MUSM 344** Recording Studio Techniques II	3	MUSM 342	
Req	**MUSM 356** Pro Tools 101, Introduction to Pro Tools	1.5		
Req	**MUSM 357** Pro Tools 110 Intermediate Pro Tools	1.5	MUSM 356	
Req	**ET 302** Principles of Electricity and Electronics	4		
RE	**MUFHL 321** Basic Musicianship	3		L3
GE	**MATH 300** Introduction to Mathematical Ideas	3		L2

CAREER PATH

Career Options:

ARC's Commercial Music: Recording program provides students the core skills needed to enter a career in audio engineering. Foundational classes in the theory and art of recording are coupled with laboratory experiences in order to prepare the student for further study at a four-year institution or for an entry-level career position. Many students work in a recording studio or even start a studio/ business of their own.

Once students have gained a background in music production, coupled with business and entrepreneurship skills, they are prepared to work in a wide variety of niches in the music industry such as:

- recording studio audio engineer/audio engineering assistant
- music producer
- post-production audio (voiceover, audio FX, Foley and ADR for film/TV)
- mastering engineer
- live sound operator
- acoustic design and installation engineer
- audio/media specialist for houses of worship
- audio engineer for video

Second Year

Semester 3

15 Units

CAT.	COURSE	UNIT	PREREQUISITES	GE AREA
Req	MUSM 350 Recording Studio Techniques III	3	MUSM 344	
Req	MUSM 367 Audio for Video Post Production	3	MUSM 344	
Req	MUSM 320 Contemporary Songwriting	3		
GE	any Area L1B (Oral Communication & Critical Thinking) course	3		L1B
GE	any Area L5 (Natural Sciences) course	3		L5

Semester 4

15 Units

CAT.	COURSE	UNIT	PREREQUISITES	GE AREA
Req	MUSM 362 Mixing and Mastering Music Projects	3	MUSM 350, 356 and 357	
Req	MUSM 306 Live Sound Reinforcement	3	MUSM 342	
RE	MUSM 361 Advanced Studio Sessions	3	MUSM 350	
GE	any Area L4 (Social & Behavioral Sciences) course	3		L4
GE	any Area L6 (Ethnic Studies) course	3		L6

H honors courses

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES		
Req	Required Core	A course that is required for this program
GE	General Education	A course that fulfills a specific general education requirement for a degree, which can be replaced with another course that meets the same requirement
RE	Restricted Elective	A course selected from a list of elective courses specified for this program in the course list in the catalog, which can be replaced with another course from the same list

- audio gaming engineer
- audio multimedia specialist
- audiovisual consultant
- multimedia educators and specialist (K-12, college, university, conservatory, private studio)
- stage technician
- studio manager

Advising Notes:

- Students should meet with a counselor and the Commercial Music program director to ensure they are following an education plan that takes their needs and goals into consideration.
- This degree can be completed using either the local AA/AS general education (GE) pattern or the Cal-GETC transfer GE pattern. See a counselor to determine which pattern is best for you based on your academic goals.
- This map is designed for students who are able to take 12 units or more each semester, which is considered a full-time load. It shows one possible way to finish the program in two years. See a counselor to adjust the coursework to meet your specific needs.
- Students can substitute ESLW 340 for ENGL C1000/C1000H (formerly known as ENGWR 300/480).

Scheduling Notes:

- MUSM 356 is scheduled during the 1st 8 weeks and MUSM 357 during the 2nd 8 weeks in the spring, so they can be taken in the same semester.
- MUSM 367 is offered in the fall.

- MUSM 306 and 362 are offered in the spring.

Other Notes:

- Students can use this degree, with additional coursework, to prepare to transfer to earn bachelor's degrees in Audio Recording, Music Production, Acoustical Engineering, and other related fields.
- At the end of semester 3 students qualify for the Digital Audio Production certificate, and at the end of semester 4 students qualify for the Commercial Music: Recording certificate.

Published July 15, 2026