**Department of Recording Industry - Audio Production Program**

**Computer, Software, and Hardware Information**

Computer & Software

Our college uses Apple Macintosh computers, with students being encouraged to do the same. An Apple MacBook Pro laptop is strongly encouraged.

Given that Avid’s Pro Tools audio software is the professional digital audio workstation (DAW) standard, laptops and computers must meet Avid’s specifications. We use the most recent Pro Tools version based on the year of the Fall semester (e.g., Pro Tools 2019 for academic year 2019-2020, Pro Tools 2020 for academic year 2020-2021). While versions are generally compatible, students are encouraged to use the same version as features may vary from year-to-year and compatibility issues may arise when transferring work between different versions.

While we strongly encourage a MacBook Pro laptop, it is possible that students can use other computers. However, we are unable to support or assist with install or compatibility issues. Specifications and a list of compatible computers can be found via this link to Avid’s site:

<http://avid.force.com/pkb/articles/compatibility/Pro-Tools-System-Requirements>

Computers do NOT need to meet the enhanced specifications for “Pro Tools HD” or “Pro Tools Ultimate” (e.g., don’t worry about the “PCIe slot” requirement). “Pro Tools Standard” or just simply “Pro Tools” (not “Pro Tools Free” or “Pro Tools First”) is the version students will be using on their laptops. Note that computers do not need to be the most recent model as the software is often still compatible with older computers.

Computer internal SSD hard drive storage size should be a minimum of 128 GB. 256 GB is better, but 512 GB is probably unnecessary given the cost difference since students can easily purchase an external hard drive for a fraction of the cost (while providing increased flexibility).

\*Pro Tools software is available for a $100 per year subscription using educational pricing through Avid or Avid resellers. This subscription includes continuous updates. Students can also purchase an iLok (software licensing USB dongle) or have software validated through continuous internet connection (free). The earliest course students will use the software is RIM 3300 “Digital Audio Technology,” though they could use it to assist with topics in RIM 3010 “Audio Fundamentals.”

Hardware

\*External hard drives should be Macintosh-formatted or Macintosh-compatible if using a PC (through programs such as MacDrive).

\*External audio interfaces (such as those by Avid, Focusrite, Universal Audio, etc.) are not required, though students may desire to have input and output options different than those standard on a computer.

\*While students are required to have specific Sennheiser 650 model headphones (currently) for the post-candidacy RIM 4440 “Critical Listening” course, they do not need these until they are enrolled in that course (instructors may expand headphone options in the future). Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a quality pair of closed-back headphones such as those by Shure, AKG, Sennheiser, etc. Do not purchase headphones that are “bass enhanced” such as some from Sony, most Beats, etc., as these dramatically alter the ability to accurately analyze sound.