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The Music Business: an introduction to basic concepts and operations

PROF. GABRIELE MINELLI, LUCA TOCCACELI

Area of study:	Media and Communications
Area Code:	IB/CM370
Method of Instruction:	In-person

Description

The course is an introduction to the structural, operational, legal, economic, and financial factors organizing the music business. Through lectures and experiences students will gain knowledge on the activities of the main actors on the music business scene – publishing companies, live event agencies and recording companies. Students will learn about sources of revenue and opportunities for development in relation to the constant evolution of production and communication technologies. Through hands-on engagement with the diverse operations of a recording company, students will gain a deeper understanding of what companies and partners do to reach music fans and to communicate with them. They will also become familiar with key music marketing principles, terms, and practices, including publicity, advertising, promotion, touring, digital distribution, licensing, and synchronization.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the business of the music industry
- Outline the legal basis of publisher and recording company revenues
- Analyze and compare the main stream of revenues in the music business
- Understand and compare the structure and the operations of major and indie labels
- Identify the diverse types of deals that connect artists and recording companies
- Discuss the production process of a music project
- Analyze the strategic elements for planning and executing marketing and promotional activities
- Design and structure a marketing strategy for a music project

Method of teaching

Lectures and discussions on assigned readings; meetings with professionals and practitioners from diverse business areas.

Credits

6 ECTS

Grading

Attendance and active participation	20% of final grade
Assignments and class activities	20% of final grade
Midterm Exam	20% of final grade
Final Project	40% of final grade

Required readings:



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- Chanan, Michael, *Repeated Takes. A short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music*, Verso, 1995
- Hull G.P. – Hutchison T.W. – Strasser R., *The Music Business and Recording Industry*, Taylor & Francis, 2011
- Macy A. – Rolston C. - Allen P. - Hutchinson T., *Record Label Marketing*, Focal Press, 2016
- Passman, Donald, *All You Need to Know About the Music Business*, Simon & Schuster, 2019

Recommended readings:

- Brown, Jake, *Rick Rubin in the studio*, ECW Press, 2009

Recommended filmography:

- Documentary: *Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives*
- TV series: *The Playlist* (6 episodes)

Instructors bio

Gabriele Minelli is A&R manager at Island Records, a division of Universal Music Italy. He has worked in the music business for over 20 years, starting at a small indie label and eventually moving to roles at major labels, first as an International Marketing Manager and later as A&R.

Luca Toccaceli has taught on *Mass media communication* and on *Planning and managing music events* in various Milan educational institutions (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca, Università Cattolica Milano, Istituto Europeo di Design Milano, IES Abroad Milan) for over fifteen years. He is also founder and partner of Decam Network, a music publishing company.

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