

BUSINESS FOR CREATIVES

UAA Creative Studio

Eight-Week Industry Masterclass & Cross-Disciplinary Professional Practice Pilot

COURSE PROPOSITION

Talented young artists learn what happens when individual voice, professional collaboration, real projects, university-level practice, and accountability meet inside a working creative ecosystem.

**CREATE INDIVIDUALLY • COLLABORATE PROFESSIONALLY • SERVE THE WORK
• DELIVER RESPONSIBLY**

2026 UAA PILOT EDITION

Mark Henry

Songwriting, Music Production & Engineering | Cross-Disciplinary Professional Practice

Pilot window: October 12-December 4, 2026

Course Proposal Summary

An eight-week experiential creative-business and professional-practice residency built around work UAA students are already creating.

Element	UAA Pilot
Instructional home	Music Production & Songwriting
Format	Eight-week masterclass / creative-studio residency
Core work	Original songs, co-writing, music production / engineering, live school projects, interdisciplinary collaboration
Flagship project	UAA Cats production and related original music / score-album workflow
Recurring craft component	Planned weekly Songwriting Masterclass with an SUU professor, subject to final scheduling
Professional-practice lead	Mark Henry
Primary goal	Give students university-level and industry-level professional practice while protecting the creative work they already value

The pilot is adapted from the university course Business for Creatives: Freelancing & the Gig Economy - Entrepreneurship, Studio Systems & Professional Practice. Its professional spine is preserved while the delivery is redesigned around high-school readiness, active UAA projects, songwriting craft, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The original course builds a creative company. At UAA, the creative community already exists inside the school.

Teaching Philosophy & Course Spine

The pilot develops the person, the artist, the collaborator, the professional, the network, the operating system, and finally the ability to create value for others without sacrificing individual creative voice.

THE COURSE IN ONE LINE

Know yourself → develop your craft → learn continuously → collaborate → become a linchpin → earn trust → build the network → organize the work → discover the need → create value → execute professionally → remain on the hook.

1. Self-awareness - understand current state, desired future, strengths, gaps, priorities, resources, values, and constraints.
2. Original voice - continue writing and producing authentic individual work.
3. Production literacy - understand transferable recording, production, engineering, session, and delivery concepts independent of any single DAW.
4. Learning and adaptability - learn how to learn, verify, revise, and ask for the right help.
5. Collaboration - co-write, listen, communicate, share expertise, and solve creative problems together.
6. Professional value - become useful, accountable, trustworthy, and difficult to replace for the right reasons.
7. Network - recognize complementary expertise across UAA and beyond.
8. Studio systems - make projects visible through roles, workflow, files, deadlines, approvals, QC, and delivery.
9. Discovery and service - understand the objective before proposing a solution.
10. Strategy and execution - turn understanding into a creative response that can actually be delivered.
11. Presentation and handoff - explain what was created, why it matters, how it was made, and what each student contributed.

Learning Outcomes & Evidence of Learning

By the end of the pilot, students should be better able to:

- Develop an individual artistic voice while remaining open to collaboration and revision.
- Write, produce, and engineer original music with greater intentionality.
- Demonstrate DAW-agnostic production literacy: shared language, signal flow, session organization, tempo / meter, MIDI / audio concepts, routing, stems, versioning, and delivery.
- Co-write responsibly and distinguish authorship, contribution, production, performance, and credit.
- Give and receive useful professional feedback without confusing critique of the work with critique of the person.
- Build trust through preparation, communication, reliability, problem solving, and accountability.
- Work across disciplines and recognize when another person has expertise the project needs.
- Use project boards, version control, file standards, deadlines, approvals, and handoff practices.
- Conduct discovery before prescribing a creative solution.
- Understand introductory concepts of scope, value, pricing, copyright, licensing, ownership, permission, and professional ethics.
- Communicate production and engineering needs clearly enough to collaborate across different DAWs and technical workflows.
- Recognize when a legal, financial, licensing, or other specialist should be involved.
- Contribute meaningfully to a real UAA production or departmental project.
- Present portfolio evidence that explains both what the student made and how the student worked.

Primary evidence of learning

- Personal Creative Profile / Needs Assessment
- Individual original song or production
- Collaborative or co-written work
- Trusted Professional Network Map
- Creative brief / discovery record
- Studio workflow and project documentation
- Live UAA Creative Studio contribution
- Credits / contribution record
- Final project case study and portfolio reflection

Week 1 - The Creative as Professional

Who am I creatively, and what am I actually building?

The pilot begins by treating the student not simply as someone completing assignments, but as an emerging creative professional whose skill, judgment, reliability, network, creativity, intellectual property, and results can create value.

Learning objectives

- Identify current creative discipline, skills, interests, resources, and active work.
- Distinguish a creative job from building a durable professional practice.
- Understand learning preferences as strategies rather than fixed identities.
- Begin identifying what the student wants to learn, build, and become during the eight-week pilot.

Studio / classroom practice

- Inventory current original songs and productions.
- Introduce the UAA Creative Studio and active project opportunities.
- Build a Personal Creative Profile.
- Begin Learning Preferences & Adaptability work.
- Discuss what professionals actually sell: not only time, but judgment, trust, creativity, access, problem solving, IP, and results.

Deliverable

Personal Creative Profile + Learning & Adaptability Audit

Week 2 - Know Yourself / Original Voice

What kind of creative life am I actually trying to build?

Students protect the value already present in the program by continuing to write and develop their own music. Before students diagnose a collaborator or client, they learn to diagnose themselves.

Personal Creative Needs Assessment

Current State → Desired Future State → Gap → Priorities → Resources → Strategy

- What work gives me energy?
- What am I already good at?
- What do I need to learn?
- What kind of creative work do I want - and not want?
- What would success mean to me?
- Who or what could help me close the gap?

Original Voice strand

Each student selects at least one individual original work to develop during the pilot. The point is not self-branding; it is honest creative direction and deliberate growth.

Collaborative introduction

Structured co-writing begins. Students learn that inviting collaboration does not require surrendering identity or authorship. The purpose is to identify what another creator can add that the student cannot create alone.

Deliverable: Personal Creative Needs Assessment + Individual Song Project Brief

Week 3 - Everyone a Linchpin

What makes another creative professional want to work with me again?

Expertise + Accountability + Trust = Professional Value

A linchpin is not valuable because information is hoarded or because a title creates status. A linchpin produces results, solves problems, communicates clearly, accepts responsibility, and makes the people around them better.

Learning objectives

- Distinguish technical ability from trusted professional value.
- Understand reputation, responsibility, generosity, initiative, and word-of-mouth.
- Recognize that no creative professional is expert at everything.
- Build a network of complementary people and disciplines.

Studio / classroom practice

- Create a Trusted Professional Network Map.
- Identify classmates and UAA programs that strengthen current work.
- Discuss vendor vs. advisor vs. accountable expert.
- Use co-writing to solve a defined creative problem rather than collaborate for collaboration's sake.

Deliverable: Professional Network Map + Linchpin Reflection

Week 4 - Thinking, Collaboration & Discovery

Can I understand the problem before trying to solve it?

Students practice Feynman teach-back, lateral thinking, parallel thinking, and structured creative disagreement. The goal is to reduce ego defense and improve group judgment.

Amateurs prescribe from assumption. Professionals ask questions, listen, and diagnose.

Discovery questions

- What are you trying to accomplish?
- Who is this for?
- What does success look like?
- What is working now?
- What is not working?
- What do you actually need?
- What constraints matter?
- Who needs to approve?
- When is it due?

Studio / classroom practice

- Meet with participating UAA productions, departments, or collaborators.
- Conduct discovery for Cats and other selected projects.
- Use structured thinking before selecting solutions.
- Form project teams around real needs rather than arbitrary group assignments.

Deliverable: Creative Brief / Discovery Record

Week 5 - Build the Studio

How does creative work move reliably from idea to completion?

Professional organization protects creativity from preventable chaos. Students build enough structure to make work visible, repeatable, reviewable, and deliverable.

- Project boards / Kanban
- Roles and ownership
- Scheduling
- Communication channels
- File naming and version management
- Session organization and DAW-agnostic handoff
- Tempo / meter maps, markers, stems, consolidated audio, and export conventions
- Storage and backup
- Review and approval
- Revision tracking
- Credits and contribution records
- Quality control
- Delivery and archive
- Rights / permissions awareness
- Escalation when something goes wrong

Studio application

Active UAA projects move into structured production. Students are expected to know the current status of their work, the next action, the owner of that action, and what must happen before delivery. The emphasis is on professional session and project communication that remains useful whether the current tool is Logic Pro or another capable DAW.

Deliverable: Project Workflow + Credits/Contribution Record + Project Board

Week 6 - Serve the Work

What happens when the project needs something different from what I originally wanted to make?

This is the philosophical center of the professional-practice work. Students learn that creative maturity includes responding intelligently to the needs of the song, performer, director, choreographer, audience, deadline, and larger production.

Students learn to distinguish

Concept A	Concept B
Creative criticism	Personal criticism
Revision	Failure
Changed creative idea	Changed scope
Price	Value
Authorship	Contribution
Ownership	Permission
Deliverable	Outcome

Studio / classroom practice

- Role-play professional note sessions.
 - Revise active projects from real feedback.
 - Document important decisions and scope changes.
 - Discuss value, estimate, agreement, licensing, and ownership at an age-appropriate conceptual level.
 - Practice the professional flow: Discovery → Strategy → Scope → Agreement → Execution.
- Deliverable: Revision / Decision Log + Updated Project Plan**

Live Project Discovery Inside UAA

The original university course sends students into the community to conduct a Community Creative Needs Assessment. UAA already contains an active creative community, so the same discipline can be practiced inside the school.

Potential collaborators

- Theatre and Musical Theatre
- Acting / Vocal
- Dance and Hip-Hop
- Stage Technology
- Film and digital media
- Visual Arts
- House Band and music ensembles
- Digital Business / communications
- Faculty and student productions
- Other school projects that have a genuine creative need

Students are not sent looking for random projects. They learn to discover actual needs, clarify expectations, and decide whether the studio has the ability and capacity to help.

Professional boundaries

- Permission and privacy
- Unreleased creative work
- Scripts and protected IP
- Student likenesses and recordings
- Public vs. internal portfolio use
- Rights and licensing questions
- When a faculty member, administrator, attorney, rights holder, or other expert must make the decision

The objective is not to say yes to everything. The objective is to understand before committing.

Week 7 - From Work to Understanding

What are we learning from what is actually happening?

This week remains intentionally flexible around the Thanksgiving schedule. Students analyze active projects while continuing production, recording, writing, editing, mixing, documentation, and project completion.

Analysis questions

- What did the collaborator originally ask for?
- What did we later discover they actually needed?
- What changed, and why?
- Where did communication work?
- Where did it fail?
- What did another discipline teach us?
- What evidence do we have?
- What are we assuming?
- What would an accountable professional do next?

Studio work

- Production and recording
- Song revision and co-writing
- Editing and mixing
- Project completion
- Credit and contribution review
- Portfolio documentation
- Case-study drafting

Deliverable: Project Case Study Draft

Week 8 - Deliver, Present & Remain on the Hook

Can I explain what I contributed, why it mattered, and what I learned?

Students complete and deliver appropriate work, then participate in a professional review rather than a conventional final exam.

Every student should be ready to explain

- What were we trying to accomplish?
- What did we discover?
- What did I contribute?
- Who helped me?
- What changed?
- What problem did I solve?
- What did I learn from collaboration?
- What would I do differently?
- What am I proud of?
- What do I still need to learn?
- What kind of creative professional am I becoming?

Final evidence

- Individual original work
- Collaborative / co-written work or documented collaborative contribution
- UAA Creative Studio project contribution
- Professional documentation
- Credits and contribution records
- Personal reflection
- Portfolio-ready case study

The class may end. The network, habits, and professional responsibility should continue.

UAA Creative Studio Portfolio

The final portfolio is not simply a collection of finished songs. It is evidence that students can create, collaborate, organize, solve, communicate, revise, deliver, and explain their work.

Portfolio Area	Representative Evidence
The Artist	Personal Creative Profile, needs assessment, individual original work
The Collaborator	Co-write, collaboration notes, contribution record, peer feedback
The Studio	Project board, roles, workflow, session / file standards, interoperability, QC / delivery practice
The Project	Creative brief, discovery notes, revision history, completed contribution
The Professional	Network map, communication, rights awareness, accountability evidence
The Reflection	Case study, presentation, next-step statement

Capstone standard

A strong portfolio shows that the student can move from self-awareness and craft through collaboration and studio systems into discovery, execution, communication, delivery, and accountable professional practice.

Suggested Assessment Framework

Because this is a professional-practice pilot, students should not be evaluated primarily on subjective artistic taste. Evaluation should reward applied behavior, growth, contribution, and responsible delivery.

Evidence of Learning	Suggested Weight	What Is Evaluated
Professional Practice & Accountability	20%	Preparation, reliability, communication, deadlines, trust, studio behavior
Original Creative Development	20%	Songwriting / production / engineering growth, revision, intent, craft decisions
Collaboration & Co-Writing	15%	Listening, contribution, creative generosity, credit, problem solving
UAA Creative Studio Project	25%	Meaningful professional contribution to a live interdisciplinary project
Professional Documentation	10%	Briefs, workflow, project records, credits, handoff
Final Portfolio & Reflection	10%	Ability to explain growth, contribution, decisions, learning, next steps

Evaluation principle

Reward students for asking better questions, learning, improving, recognizing what they do not know, seeking the right help, communicating clearly, contributing meaningfully, protecting trust, responding to feedback, solving problems, and delivering responsibly.

Recommended Reading & Listening

Optional enrichment - not required homework. Students may read or listen to complete books, selected chapters, interviews, or other instructor-approved material as time allows. The goal is to capture useful ideas and test them against current creative work, not to add a heavy reading burden.

- **Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World - David Epstein:** Recommended by Dr. Drew Williams; breadth, experimentation, transfer, and learning across disciplines.
- **Linchpin - Seth Godin:** Initiative, responsibility, trust, and professional value.
- **Six Thinking Hats - Edward de Bono:** Parallel thinking, creative collaboration, and disciplined group decision-making.
- **The Win Without Pitching Manifesto - Blair Enns:** Expertise, discovery, positioning, value, and professional client conversations.
- **Tribes - Seth Godin:** Networks, leadership, community, and the responsibility to contribute.

Recommended Reading / Listening Log

Use as useful. A short note is enough: what idea is worth keeping, and where might it apply to a song, session, collaboration, project, or professional decision?

Date	Resource / section	Idea worth keeping	Where I can apply it

Original Voice, Collaboration & Production Literacy

The pilot does not replace individual songwriting with group work, nor does it turn the eight-week pivot into software instruction. Students already use Logic Pro for songwriting, beat recreation, tempo mapping, chord mapping, virtual instruments, production, and engineering. The pilot builds on that foundation by teaching transferable professional language, judgment, communication, workflow, and responsibility.

Mode	Student Experience	Professional Question
I WROTE THIS	Individual original song / composition	What can I create and finish from my own voice?
WE CREATED THIS	Co-written or meaningfully collaborative work	What becomes possible when another creator brings a different strength?
I PRODUCED THIS	Production / engineering responsibility for a recording	How do I turn creative intent into a reliable, communicable, finished result?
I HELPED DELIVER THIS	Contribution to a larger UAA project	How can my expertise help something larger than myself succeed?

DAW-agnostic production principle

Production literacy over software dependency. The DAW is a tool; the durable skill is the language, workflow, judgment, and communication that transfer between tools.

Students develop transferable concepts such as signal flow, tempo and meter, MIDI and audio, routing, arrangement, stems, session organization, versioning, recording workflow, QC, archive, and delivery. Logic Pro is the current working environment, but the course does not depend on Logic-specific button knowledge. Communication is the interoperability standard: students practice describing production needs clearly enough to collaborate across different DAWs and technical workflows.

Co-writing and collaboration practice includes

- Communicating creative intent and open questions
- Listening before changing and solving defined creative problems
- Giving and receiving specific, useful notes
- Documenting authorship and production contribution
- Discussing writer splits, credits, and when another person's idea serves the work better

Bring your voice. Share your expertise. Serve the work. Credit everyone.

Songwriting Masterclass Integration

Drew Williams has expressed interest in maintaining dedicated Songwriting instruction with an SUU professor at least one day per week while the regular teacher is out. The final day remains subject to scheduling.

The recurring masterclass becomes a core part of the pilot rather than a separate track. It preserves deep craft instruction while the rest of the week gives students an environment in which to apply that craft professionally.

Possible masterclass emphasis

- Lyric development
- Melody and harmony
- Form and structure
- Voice and point of view
- Revision
- Critical listening
- Co-writing
- Song analysis
- Professional songwriting practice
- Developing material for performance and recording

Pipeline

Songwriting Masterclass → Co-writing / revision → Production → Recording → Feedback → Revision → Delivery / portfolio

This creates an unusual opportunity: students receive advanced craft mentorship while simultaneously learning how songs move through a collaborative production environment.

Program Fit & Cross-Disciplinary Model

The UAA Creative Studio is designed to use the school itself as a functioning creative ecosystem. Music Production and Songwriting serve as the operational home, while projects can interface with other programs when there is a genuine creative reason to do so.

Role progression by class level

Course Level	Working Identity	Typical Responsibility
Workshop	Developing Creative Specialist	Craft, professional habits, communication, basic production / engineering workflow, collaboration, completion
Methods	Creative Specialist / Project Owner	Independent execution, session / engineering management, documentation, revisions, deliverables
Next / Advanced	Creative Lead / Producer / Coordinator	Leadership, mentoring, production oversight, project visibility, problem solving, standards, QC, handoff

Advanced students should increasingly be evaluated not only on “Can you make excellent work?” but also “Can you help a team make excellent work?”

The studio model allows different students to work on different projects without requiring every class or department to participate in everything.

Current Resource & Rights-Awareness Standard

The pilot teaches students not to treat remembered rules, social-media advice, or old links as permanent authority. Current legal, licensing, release, tax, platform, and rights questions should be verified from current primary or qualified professional sources at the point of use.

Student-facing principles

- Creating something does not automatically grant permission to use every underlying work, recording, image, script, logo, or likeness.
- Public release requires a rights and permissions check appropriate to the project.
- Writers, performers, producers, engineers, artists, and other contributors should be documented and credited appropriately.
- Unreleased or protected material should not be uploaded to third-party AI or cloud systems without authorization.
- AI-assisted work still requires a human accountable for factual accuracy, quality, confidentiality, copyright/IP considerations, and delivery.
- Students should learn when a question belongs to school administration, a rights holder, an attorney, an accountant, an insurer, or another qualified expert.

Cats application

The planned Cats recording / album workflow becomes a practical case study in composition, recording, performance, artwork, credits, metadata, adaptation, distribution, and permissions. Students can learn the professional questions even when adults or rights holders must make the final legal decisions.

Why the Fit Is Strong for UAA

This pilot is built around characteristics already present in an arts-school environment: original work, critique, collaboration, creative problem solving, performance, production, interdisciplinary relationships, and students preparing for advanced arts study and professional practice.

UAA Creative Environment	Pilot Expression
Original work	Students continue developing their own songs and productions.
Pre-professional practice	Students use roles, deadlines, briefs, revisions, QC, delivery, credits, and handoff.
Collaboration	Co-writing and cross-department projects make collaboration structural rather than optional.
Candid feedback	Students learn to receive and act on notes without collapsing critique into personal judgment.
Critical thinking	Discovery, parallel thinking, evidence vs. assumption, and root-cause questions precede solutions.
Whole-person growth	Needs assessment connects career direction to values, strengths, resources, constraints, and life goals.
Learning beyond one classroom	Students work with other UAA programs and real productions rather than hypothetical prompts.

The strongest UAA adaptation is therefore not to reduce the university course to business vocabulary. It is to preserve the studio, critique, original-work, self-awareness, discovery, network, and accountability components while calibrating legal and financial depth to student age and readiness.

Weekly Operating Rhythm

The exact weekly schedule can be adjusted once Mark Henry's availability and the SUU professor's songwriting day are finalized. The operating model matters more than assigning a fixed weekday in advance.

Studio Mode	Purpose	Typical Work
Professional Practice Day	University / industry concept + immediate application	Identity, collaboration, linchpin, discovery, workflow, rights, value, communication
Original Voice / Production Day	Protect individual creative development and production literacy	Songwriting, production, engineering judgment, critical listening, critique, revision, technical mentorship
Collaboration / Live Project Day	Apply craft to real needs	Co-writing, Cats, recording / engineering, cross-department meetings, production work, session handoff
Songwriting Masterclass	Deep craft instruction with SUU professor	Lyrics, melody, harmony, structure, revision, co-writing, analysis

45-minute studio period

Time	Function
5 min	Studio call - status, changes, deadlines, blockers
10 min	Master concept - one focused professional or creative idea
25 min	Application - write, produce, record, edit, meet, revise, research, build
5 min	Handoff - accomplishment, next action, owner, due point

Mark Henry

A professional-practice pilot built from production experience, university teaching, and the belief that young creatives benefit from learning both their craft and the responsibility that comes with using it.

Mark Henry is a producer, production coordinator, local fixer, production sound mixer, audio supervisor, and educator with more than 25 years across documentary, unscripted television, feature film, commercial, branded, production, and post-production environments.

His academic appointments include teaching at the American Film Institute and John Paul the Great Catholic University. At AFI, he taught production and post-production sound across the workflow, including production sound mixing, sound editorial, sound design, re-recording mixing, and post-production sound supervision. At JPCatholic, he taught production sound, post-production sound, and ENTM386 Freelancing & The Gig Economy - the university course from which this UAA pilot is adapted.

His teaching emphasizes craft, collaboration, accountability, service to story, ethics, trust, professional communication, and remaining available to the next generation of creatives.

The objective is not simply to produce better songs or teach one DAW. It is to develop better creative collaborators, problem solvers, producers, engineers, writers, artists, and future professionals.

The Experiment

Drew Williams has proposed an experiment: while the regular teacher is away, give students the opportunity to learn professional-practice concepts at a level they would not ordinarily encounter until university or the industry - while continuing the songwriting and production work they already value.

The pilot therefore combines three unusual opportunities:

1. Continued high-level songwriting craft through a recurring SUU professor-led masterclass.
2. Industry and university-level professional practice through Business for Creatives.
3. Real application through the UAA Creative Studio, Cats, original student music, production / engineering practice, and other active school projects.

The central question

What happens when talented young artists are given access not only to excellent craft instruction, but also to university-level professional practice while they are actively creating?

For eight weeks, UAA can find out.

Students are not asked to stop being students. They are invited to begin understanding what it means to become professionals.

The studio may end. The projects may end. The network, habits, and responsibility to create value should continue.

Students remain on the hook.