MUSC 103, The Materials and Design of Music  
Fall 2014

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Office: Music Studios 307  
TU TR 9:00–10:20 RHH003  
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Office hours: TU TR 11:00–12:00

Course Description and Objectives:  
This course is an introduction to the basic elements of Western musical notation and design. It introduces a set of conceptual tools that help to explain how the unfolding of musical experience is structured, and provides students with a vocabulary for discussing and analyzing sounds construed under the rubric of music. Together we will engage in exercises that employ close reading, formal description, performance, and model composition, attempting to create a living laboratory of musical parameters in the classroom. In addition to the Western tradition, we will also explore some of the basic building blocks of jazz, popular styles, and specific non-Western traditions. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Recognize and use the written symbols and vocabulary of Western music.
- Perform simple notated pieces vocally or at the keyboard.
- Identify, describe, and explain the function of basic harmonic and rhythmic structures.
- Understand and employ various systems within which sound is rationalized in the form of a composition.

Students can achieve success in this course without previous musical knowledge.

Policies:  
Attendance. Because course material is cumulative, it is important to come to all class meetings and complete written work promptly. Please arrive on time and remain in the classroom for the duration of our 80-minute class period. Whatever the reason for an absence, you are responsible for handing in any assignments on or before the due date for full credit, and for getting notes from a classmate.

Courtesy. Please turn your cellular phone off and refrain from text messaging or using laptop or tablet computers during class. These devices distract those around you.

Materials:
- Required texts (available at Broad Street Books):
- Staff paper and pencil (please bring to class each day)
- Streaming sound files and supplementary materials available on course Moodle site
- Recommended text (available at Broad Street Books):
Grading Rubric:
Skills Section (25%) Each week, students will meet in small groups of 10 or fewer in 101 Music Studios. Every student in Music 103 must sign up for one of these meeting times.

Written Assignments (25%) The eight written assignments are designed to give you the opportunity to practice skills and concepts from lecture through worksheets, analyses, or short compositions. Completed assignments are due in hard copy on Tuesdays at the beginning of class. The large enrollment in this course prohibits us from accepting late assignments under any circumstances. However, your lowest assignment score will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Midterm (15%) and Final Examination (20%) The Midterm assignment involves a group composition and performance of a two-part counterpoint exercise. The Final Exam will be cumulative, and must be taken at the scheduled time. A Make-up will not be given except in cases of extreme illness, emergency, or conflict with a religious holiday.

Participation (15%) This grade reflects a global assessment of your preparations for and contributions to in-class discussions, analyses, performances, and other group activities.

Final letter grades are determined according to the following scale:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100–93</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90–92</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73–76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–72</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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Disability Resources:
Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860-685-2332 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.
**Academic Honesty:**
Students are expected to abide by Wesleyan University’s Honor Code in all assignments and examinations. Discussion of class content among students is strongly encouraged, but simply copying a classmate’s responses to homework or exams undermines our community of trust, and keeps you from practicing the skill covered in the assignment.

Suspected Honor Code violations will be referred to the Honor Board. Don’t hesitate to approach me if you have questions or concerns about academic honesty in this course.
Schedule of Class Topics and Assignments*
*Subject to revision. Changes will be announced in class and updated on Moodle.
Singing and keyboard assignments should be prepared in advance of each skill section meeting.

Schedule and assignments (subject to revision).

I. Fundamentals

Week 1
2 September  Introduction; Fundamentals of notation: pitch and time
4 September  Fundamentals of notation: time

Week 2
9 September  The diatonic framework: diatonic scales, key signatures
            Assignment 1 due: Rhythm worksheet
11 September  Key signatures and intervals

Week 3
16 September  Intervals in context I
            Assignment 2 due: Scale and Key signature worksheet
18 September  Intervals in context II

Week 4
23 September  Transposition
            Assignment 3 due: Melody composition assignment
            1. Diatonic   2. Non-diatonic

II. Counterpoint

25 September  Beyond diatonicism: modes and first species counterpoint

Week 5
30 September  Modes continued, featuring Prof. Balu Balasubrahmanian

2 October  Second species

Week 6
7 October  Third species

9 October  Fourth species

Week 7
14 October  Fifth species
16 October       Counterpoint workshop and rehearsals

**Week 8**
21 October       **Fall Break**

23 October       Counterpoint performances and presentations

**Due: Midterm group contrapuntal composition assignment**

### III. Harmony

**Week 9**
28 October       Basic triads and inversions

30 October       Seventh chords

**Week 10**
4 November       Figured bass and lead sheet symbols

Assignment 6 due: root and type (Exercise 3–3 A only)

6 November       NO CLASS: American Musicological Society / SMT

**Week 11**
11 November       Harmonization

Assignment 7 due: lead sheet exercise

13 November       Jazz Harmony, special guest

### IV. Rhythm

**Week 12**
18 November       Advanced rhythmic notation

Assignment 8 due: harmonization of melody

20 November       Rhythmic dissonance

**Week 13**
25 November       Analyzing and performing rhythmic dissonance

27 November       **Thanksgiving Break**

**Week 14**
2 December        Rhythm, special guest

4 December        Review for the final exam

**Final Exam:**
12 December       9:00am–12:00pm