Spring 2016

Music Perception and Cognition (PSYC / NS&B 342)
TR 9:00 – 10:20
Location: Judd 113
Instructor: Psyche Loui
Office Hours: M 2:00 – 4:00 or by appointment in Judd 002

Description
This course provides an overview of the perceptual, cognitive, and neural bases of performing, composing, and listening to music. Topics include acoustics and biological processing of sound; theories and empirical research on pitch, rhythm, harmony, melody, timbre, orchestration; similarities and differences between music and language; evolution and development of musical ability, and special populations in musical functions. Meetings will include laboratory demonstrations and exercises in experiment design and data analysis. A final project (paper and in-class presentation) is required.

Evaluation
Your final grade will be based on the following:
10% Attendance and Participation
10% Presentation
30% Tests (10% x 3 tests) OR 20% Tests + 10% response paper
50% Project (10% proposal + 15% talk + 25% paper)
The final letter grade will be based on your overall score consistent with the university grading system:
A+ 97 – 100%  B+ 87 – 89%  C+ 77 – 79%  D+ 67– 69%  E 51 – 60%
A  92 – 96%   B 82 – 86%  C 72 – 76%  D 62 – 66%  F<50%
A- 90 – 91%  B- 80 – 81%  C- 70 – 71%  D- 60 – 61%
NOTE: All final grades will be rounded to the nearest percentage point. (“Rounding up” is defined as going to the next integer for any score at .5 or above.)

Presentations
Each student will present one reading throughout the semester. The purpose of these presentations is to generate interest and a dialog within the group. In the first week, you will sign up for specific papers to present. I am happy to meet individually as needed to prepare these presentations.

Tests
There will be three noncumulative midterms. Each will consist of 7-8 long answer questions. Please bring a blue or black pen for exams. You do not need a scantron form.
NOTE: Please read the Wesleyan Honor Code and abide by it closely (www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/honorboard/honorcode.html).

Response paper
Instead of (or in addition to) one of your midterms, you have the option of submitting a 4-page response paper. This paper should summarize and react to all the papers listed for a single topic below. The grade for this paper will be returned before the third midterm. You have the option of using this paper to replace one of your midterms.

Project
There will be one end-of-term project in which you can explore an area of interest within the field of music perception and cognition. Early in the semester, you will submit a project proposal for feedback and suggestions from the group. There will be an oral component (spoken presentation) and a written component (10-page paper) to the final project. Details for this project will be given out later in the semester.

**Textbook and Course Website**
There is no official textbook for this course; however, much background information will be drawn from:
This volume is available for sale or for rent in the Broad Street bookstore. Two copies of the textbook have also been placed on reserve in the Olin library, and the first three chapters of the Deutsch book are also shared on Moodle.
In addition to the Deutsch book, primary reading materials will be posted on the course website on Moodle throughout the course. These will be research articles or review articles that will be discussed during class. Reading these are required for presentations; however you will be tested on material from the articles that are covered in class.

**Class Schedule**

**Unit 1: Sounds and the auditory system**

1/21  **Introduction. What is music? The auditory stimulus.**
Dan Levitin, *This is your brain on music*. Preface and Chapter 1. What is music?

1/26   **The auditory system**
Principles for Good Conversations

1/28   **The voice**
Background: Deutsch, Chapter 3. Perception of Singing.

2/2   **Auditory scene analysis, and auditory illusions**

2/4   **Loudness, Spatial hearing and room acoustics**

**Unit 2: The musical surface**

### 2/9 Pitch

**Background:** Deutsch, Chapter 1. The Perception of Musical Tones.


### 2/11 Consonance, tuning, and scales


### 2/16 Timbre

**Background:** Deutsch, Chapter 2. Musical Timbre Perception.


### 2/18 TEST 1 & Project proposals discussion

### 2/23 Harmony


**2/25 Melody**


**3/1 Rhythm and meter**


**3/3 Meter, counterpoint, and voice-leading & Project proposals DUE**


**Unit 3: Cognitive theories**

**3/22 Music and language: Syntax**


3/24 Music and language: Prosody and semantics

3/29 Expectation and anticipation

3/31 Perception and action

4/5 TEST 2
4/7 Music and emotion
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4/12 Musical training and brain development

4/14 Exceptional musical ability

4/19 Creativity and improvisation

4/21 Neurology of music and therapeutic approaches


4/26  Project presentations & optional response paper DUE

4/28  Project presentations

5/3   TEST 3 (optional)

5/12  Final paper DUE

Course Registration
Enrollment in this course is by Permission Of Instructor during the pre-registration period. If you would like to enroll, please send an email to ploui@wesleyan.edu with your name, class year, major, previous relevant courses you have taken, and a brief explanation on why you want to take the course. To secure your place in the course, please be sure to come to the first day of class.

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.