

Basic Music Composition MUC 1101
(revised 3-11 to accommodate attendance at 3-30 NWSO dress rehearsal)

Dr. Orlando Jacinto García
Ms. Melissa Iverson (graduate assistant)
Spring 2018; GL 535
Fridays 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the elementary principles of composition. The class is open to all undergraduate music majors that are in Theory II or higher and is required for entering Freshman undergraduate music composition majors.

Course Objectives:

Students will develop their compositional skills by composing and analyzing works and if applicable performing their works in the class.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester students will have completed a full-length work that demonstrates their understanding of basic compositional techniques with regards to basic melodic writing, harmony, rhythm, and formal structure. In addition, students will be able to identify at least 80% of works from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th and 21st centuries on the listening list for the course.

Required Texts (none); Suggested Texts:

David Cope, *Techniques of the Contemporary Composer*; Additional books and articles will be placed on reserve as necessary.

Prerequisites: Theory and Sight Singing I and/or permission of the instructor – should be taken concurrently with Theory and Sight Singing II

Required Additional Tools: Notation software is required for the class as all assignments need to be turned in using notation software; Finale or Sibelius strongly recommended

Materials to be covered:

- I. Calligraphy/Notation (notation software required for the class – Sibelius or Finale).
- II. Melodic writing the use of cadences, melodic contour, flow, balance, climax, etc.
- III. Tools for the development of musical ideas

(1) rhythmic developmental tools

(2) harmonic developmental tools

(3) melodic developmental tools

IV. Formal Structure using form as a basis for a composition, overview of possible forms.

V. Instrumentation analysis of the instruments used in the class as applicable

Course Format:

Group meetings 1 hour per week. Additional 20 - 30 minute individual meetings during each week to review materials strongly suggested. Meeting times for additional sessions available on Mondays and Wednesdays between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM with Ms. Iverson in WPAC 146C. On time attendance in the class is mandatory. Failure to attend class sessions without an acceptable excuse may result in the lowering of the final grade by one full letter grade per session missed at the discretion of the instructor. Only verifiable documented excused absences (e.g. medical) will be considered.

Assignments:

There will be composition assignments throughout the semester culminating in a large project. These assignments will be graded individually, the grading based on the demonstrated understanding of compositional concepts discussed in the class sessions. Each assignment will have a section with terms/concepts that the student must define as well as composition section where the student will be composing a work based on criteria set forth in the class/assignment. The works must be performed in class in order to receive full credit so must be ready at the start of the class in hard copy and created using notation software in order to be accepted (hand written scores will not be accepted and receive 0 credit). Calligraphy/notation will be stressed and count 10% of each assignment grade. The performance of the assignment on each due date will also be worth 20% of each assignment grade. An analysis accompanying the assignment is also required and counts 25% of the grade. Late assignments will not be accepted and receive a 0%. More specific information for each assignment will be presented each week as applicable.

Listening Identification Tests:

There will be 3 listening identification tests with works from the repertoire given throughout the semester. Listening Exams are pass/fail tests and will consist of musical examples which will be available on line/in the library which the student must identify. Students *must* pass all 3 exams with a B (80%) or higher on each exam to pass the course. Listening exams can be retaken generally once if the student does not achieve the minimum grade required the first time the test is taken.

The Naxos Music Library: As an FIU student, you have access to the Naxos Music Library, a digital online music collection, with 100,000+ classical, jazz, and world music tracks. To access either on-campus, or from home If you are connecting directly to the FIU computer network, no login is required: <http://FIU.NaxosMusicLibrary.com>

IMPORTANT: If you are accessing the system from home by any of the commercial providers, Naxos has to validate you as an FIU user. Go to the library home page at: library.fiu.edu and click on "Connect from Home" and follow the instructions.

Ethical Conduct & Plagiarism: Student must follow the Standards of Conduct described in the student handbook (http://www.fiu.edu/~sccr/standards_of_conduct.htm). In addition, students are expected to use all resources, including books, journals, and computers only in legal and authorized ways. Participants are expected to perform individual assignments without consulting each other. Participants in this course are also reminded that materials may not be pasted or paraphrased from printed, electronic or any other sources without appropriate citations and credits. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in penalties as set forth by University policies.

Cell Phone Policy: Please note that as a courtesy to the student(s) in the class and the instructor, cell phones are to be kept turned off and put away during class. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a warning followed by a half a letter grade reduction in the final course grade for each subsequent offense.

Please note that per the Academic Calendar the last day to drop classes with a DR or a WI grade is March 19.

My office hours are Wednesday 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM and Thursday 2:00 PM – 2:30 PM or by appointment.

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Please feel free to see me if you have any questions.

BASIC MUSIC COMPOSITION COURSE OUTLINE

1/12 Introduction; Course overview; Basic Calligraphy and its importance (use of notation software); Discussion of Melodic writing;

1/19* Student presentation of assignment #1 (16 mm melody A section); Discussion of possible adjustments to assignment #1; Melodic writing pitch considerations; Other Melodic Structural considerations; Basics of writing for the piano;

1/26* Student presentation of assignment #2 (adjusted 16 mm melody with accompaniment Theme I); Larger Formal Structures; Sonata Allegro Form; Writing a contrasting theme;

2/2 In class performance of assignment #3 (16 mm melody with accompaniment Theme I and 16 mm Theme II); Writing a Transition; Listening Test #1;

2/9 In class performance of assignment #4 (Theme I, transition, Theme II) Writing a codetta;

2/16* Student presentation of assignment #5 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta); Writing a development section;

2/23 Performance of assignment #6 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first segment of Development section); Pitch based developmental tools;

3/2 Performance of assignment #7 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section); Rhythm based developmental tools;

3/9 Performance of assignment #8 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section with 3rd section closing in dominant completing the Development); Writing the Recapitulation; Listening Test #2;

3/16 No Class Spring break

3/23 Performance of assignment #9 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section with 3rd section closing in dominant and return of Theme I);

3/30 Regular class cancelled instead Dress Rehearsal with the New World Symphony Orchestra at the New World Center with composer conductor John Adams; Friday March 30 - arrive between 9:30 AM and 9:45 AM rehearsal is 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM – attendance mandatory;

4/6 Performance of assignment #10 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section with 3rd section closing in dominant and return of Theme I, transition, Theme II transition). Writing a Coda;

4/13 Performance of assignment #11 (Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section with 3rd section closing in dominant and return of Theme I, transition, Theme II transition, part one of Coda) Discuss possibilities for 2nd part of Coda; Listening Test #3;

4/20 Performance of assignment #12 entire work Theme I, transition, Theme II, codetta, first and second segment of Development section and return of Theme I, transition, Theme II transition, part one and two of Coda); student evaluations

4/27 Final Performance of completed work with any adjustments needed; Makeup listening as needed (last opportunity)