



Southern Methodist University

Meadows School of the Arts, Division of Music

MUTH 1229, Music Theory I (2 units), Fall 2008

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00 – 9:20 a.m., OFAC 2040

Grading Options: Letter (+/-) only; Pass/Fail is not available for this course

Instructor: Dr. Mark Feezell

Office hours: OFAC 2017; MW 8:30-9, 10-11; TR 11-12, 1-2 or by appointment

Email: mfeezell@smu.edu (email is by far the best way to reach me)

Telephone/fax: 214-768-3632 (but email me first)

My sincere desire is for every one of my students to succeed – otherwise, I wouldn't be here! Please contact me immediately with any concerns, circumstances, or issues that may impede your success.

I. RATIONALE

This course is designed to develop competency in beginning/intermediate music theory, including terms, symbols, practices, and conventions of Western music. The conceptual focus of the course is on harmonic theory normative to the late Baroque Period, the Classical Period, and the Nineteenth Century. This study is required to facilitate performance as well as theoretical understanding and provide practical application of such knowledge to the scholarship, performance, and pedagogy of music.

II. COURSE AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

- Define theoretical terms related to music as discussed in class
- Classify elements and structures in a given piece of music using appropriate terminology
- Modify a given element intelligently, e.g. changing a major triad to a minor triad
- Analyze a piece of music globally on a level appropriate to the student's theoretical expertise
- Create a short musical example demonstrating an understanding of theoretical concepts
- Evaluate the music of others according to the style and terminology covered in class

These learning outcomes are based on Bloom's Taxonomy: Knowledge (define, repeat), Comprehension (classify, convert), Application (demonstrate, modify, arrange), Analysis (infer, estimate), Synthesis (create, design), Evaluation (critique, justify, discriminate). For more, see <http://www.clt.cornell.edu/campus/teach/faculty/Materials/BloomsTaxonomy.pdf>

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

- Rudiments (notation, clefs, key signatures, intervals, scales, modes), diatonic and chromatic harmony, figured bass, part-writing, analysis. MUTH 1229 is the first semester of a four

semester theory sequence for music majors and minors. This semester will cover chapters 1 through 12 in the textbook.

- Fundamental music theory knowledge (staves, clefs, note reading, scales, key signatures) is assumed. A Department of Music Theory Mastery Level Exam covering basic fundamental skills (note name in treble and bass clef, key signatures, scales, basic triads, etc.) will be required to be passed by the end of the 8th week (Oct. 10th). **Students not passing this exam by this date will be dropped from the course.**
- Corequisite: MUTH 1129. Required of all majors. **You should also be enrolled in MUTH 1129 at this time. See me if you are not.**

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS, AND POLICIES

1. MUTH Departmental Attendance and Participation Policy

- Prompt attendance is vital. Absences and tardies will affect your grade as follows:
 - Attendance will be taken via a sign-in sheet that will be collected 5 minutes after class begins.
 - If a student arrives late, it is the student's responsibility to sign and circle their name on the sign-in sheet after class is over. If the student fails to sign-in, she or he will be counted ABSENT.
 - 1-2 unexcused absences will not affect your grade.
 - Each unexcused absence after 2 will lower your final grade by 2 points.
 - 1-2 late arrivals will not affect your grade.
 - Each late arrival beyond 2 will result in the lowering of your final grade by 1 point.
 - There is no limit to the number of points that may be deducted, even though participation is only 10% of the course grade.
 - After 4 consecutive unexcused absences (two weeks) you may be dropped from the course without notification or appeal.
- Excused absences:
 - Oversleeping, family reunion trips, vacations, etc. will not be considered as excused absences.
 - Excuse procedure:
 - **OPTION ONE:** Notify the instructor of the (valid) reason for the absence via email at least 30 minutes prior to class. *In this case no further documentation will be required.*
 - **OPTION TWO:** If the student fails to notify the instructor (including a valid reason for the absence) via email at least 30 minutes prior to class, written documentation from the appropriate authority will be required. For example, illnesses require an excuse note from a health professional or an excuse note from the Health Center (see below). See “SMU Course Policies” below for extracurricular activities and religious observance.
 - From Nancy Merrill, MD, Co-Medical Director: “The physicians at the Health Center do not routinely write excuses for missed classes. *Only truly disabling injuries or illnesses are considered worthy of an excuse.* Examples of disabling illnesses include hospitalization or surgery, illnesses that require admission to the Observation Room (daytime infirmary) for IV fluids, severe asthma, diabetic crisis, fever greater than 102, etc. Verification of medical illness is documented one of two ways. Either: (1) a hand

written note on a health prescription form, or (2) a signed letter written on Health Center stationery. Excused medical absences shall have specific dates of time periods indicated.”

- From the Provost’s office: “Verification of medical illnesses and request for an excused absence from class will be handled in one of two ways: (1) a hand-written note on a Health Center prescription form, or (2) a signed letter written on Health Center stationery. *Encounter Forms and Walk-Out Statements verify a student’s visit to the Health Center, BUT DO NOT INDICATE AN EXCUSED MEDICAL ABSENCE.*”
- Make-up work:
 - It is the student’s responsibility to obtain handouts, notes, and assignments for all classes missed. Consult the course website for more information. *Exchange phone numbers and emails with fellow students.*
 - Missed homework will be accepted late **only** for excused absences. Except in extreme circumstances, late homework must be turned in **within one calendar week** of the absence. Otherwise, a zero will be recorded in the gradebook.
- Absences on exam days:
 - Missing an exam is a serious issue. Exams missed due to *planned, excused* absences (including extracurricular activities and religious observance) must be made-up **before** the exam date.
 - Other *excused* absences on test days will be considered on a case by case basis. **In all cases, exams missed due to an *unexcused* absence will result in a zero (0) for that exam grade.**
 - **Regarding the final examination:** The final examination day and time are established by the university and cannot be changed. Please plan accordingly. **Make-ups will not be offered after the final exam date.** In the event of an *excused* absence with a letter from the appropriate authority, the midterm exam grade will be used for the final exam grade. **In all other cases, a zero (0) will be recorded for the final exam.**

2. Course Materials

Stefan Kostka and Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony*, 6th edition.

Workbook to accompany *Tonal Harmony*, 6th edition.

Music paper (available at www.drfeezell.com/musictheory), pencils and erasers

WWW access via lab or personal PC/Mac - courses.smu.edu

Recommended (not required): Kostka & Payne, CDs for use with *Tonal Harmony*, 6th Ed.

3. Assessments and Assignments

There will be multiple homework assignments, several quizzes, a final project, one (1) midterm exam, and one (1) final exam. **The Department of Music Theory Fundamentals Mastery Exam must be passed by October 10th to continue in this course.** Method of grading will be as follows:

- 10% Attendance/participation (see #1 above)
- 50% Homework/quizzes (*the 2 lowest grades will be dropped*)
[Department Fundamentals Exam given **Thursday, September 25**]
- 15% Midterm examination (**Thursday, October 9**)
- 10% Final project (**Due November 25**)
- 15% Final examination (**Thursday, December 11, 8a-11a**)

4. Grades

- Homework will be assigned almost every class period. It is a vital part of achieving the learning outcomes for the course.
- “*What did you get for number seven?*” While you are welcome to provide general help to each other, **COMPARING ANSWERS IS NOT O.K.** If in the judgment of the instructor two students have collaborated on an assignment, both students will receive a zero for that assignment. DO YOUR OWN WORK.
- **Grading rubric:** Each homework assignment shall generally consist of analysis/exercises and part writing. These two components will be graded separately, with the two grades averaged to get the final homework grade. The analysis/exercises portion(s), if any, will be graded according to a straight percentage of incorrect answers divided by total possible answers. The part writing will be graded on the following point deduction system (from 100 possible points):
 - **The “Big Five” or “Fiendish Five” (5 points deducted for each):**
 1. Parallel 5ths/8ves
 2. Direct 5ths/8ves
 3. 5ths/8ves by Contrary Motion
 4. Unresolved tendency tones (7ths, LTs, +6, N)
 5. Missing LT in minor keys (esp. V and vii°)
 - **All other errors are 2 points off for each occurrence, including:**
 - Stem direction
 - Order of voices (crossed parts)
 - Spacing
 - Improper ranges
 - All members of the triad not present
 - Incorrect roman numerals
 - Overlap
 - Augmented melodic intervals
 - Doubled leading tone (but see #4 above)
 - Incorrect doubling (must double bass for root position and second inversion)
 - Unstylistic chord progression
 - NCT errors (esp. writing an unaccented sus/retardation)
- Grades will be posted on the course website throughout the semester. (You will only have access to your own grades.) Students are encouraged to track their progress online.
- Grading system. All averages will be rounded to the nearest point, up or down.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Range	92-100	90-91	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	0-59
GPA points	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.0

V. SMU COURSE POLICIES

- **Academic Honesty and Misconduct:** You are bound by the Honor Code and the SMU Student Code of Conduct. For complete details, see: http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_01_ToC.asp
- **Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)
- **Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors *in writing* at the *beginning* of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)
- **Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor *prior* to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

VI. PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, EVENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A schedule of classes, topics, readings, and homework will be available under the Course Documents section of the course's Blackboard page. This schedule will be revised as appropriate, with changes being posted to the course page.

VII. WEEKLY NOTES AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Standard Operating Procedure:

- Instructor takes roll at start of hour
- Word of the Day
- Instructor collects assigned homework
- Instructor returns corrected homework from previous class and takes questions
- Quiz (if any; usually, but not always, announced in advance)
- New topic(s) presented
- Application/interaction using new concept(s)
- Homework is assigned for the next class
- Between classes, instructor grades homework and updates course page. Students read material for the next class, do the homework, and contact instructor with any questions.

2. Topics by Week (estimate only; subject to change):

Week 1: Intro, scales, keys, intervals part I, triads part I

Week 2: Triads cont., intervals cont.

Week 3: Rhythm/meter, Triads cont., 7th chords

Week 4: Minor scales, diatonic triads and seventh chords

Week 5: Practice and administer mastery exam

Week 6: Diatonic triads and seventh chords, roman numeral analysis, Review

Week 7: Midterm exam; Root position part writing

Week 8: Harmonic progression, voice leading, stylistic melody, voicing a triad;

Week 9: Root position part writing, cont.; transposing instruments

Week 10: Harmonic progression, sequence, harmonizing a simple melody

Week 11: 1st inversion triads, parallel sixth chords, 1st inversion part writing, counterpoint

Week 12: Second inversion patterns (4), cadences

Week 13: Motive, sequence part 2, basic form terminology

Week 14: Non-chord tones

Week 15: Review for final exam

3. How to Succeed in this Course:

- Do the homework the day of the class, not the night before it is due!
- Read the textbook page(s) in advance of the lecture
- Ask questions as soon as you think of them, especially during class
- **Ultimately, you are responsible for your learning. Be assertive in getting the help you need and don't give up until you understand!**

VIII. APPENDIX/OTHER

1. Course website

This course will make use of a Blackboard website. To access the website, visit courses.smu.edu and login using your SMU ID and password. The ID/password should be identical to the one you use for Access.SMU. Help is available on the website, or you may contact the instructor at mfeezell@smu.edu with any questions. Here are some things that you will be able to do from the course website:

- View current and past homework assignments (in case you missed it in class)
- View all your grades (only your own grades)
- View the course attendance record (attendance is a matter of public record, since everyone can see who comes to class; I will not list your reasons for absence on the website)
- View class contact information
- Reprint handouts and worksheets
- Find bonus handouts and links to other useful music theory sites

2. Other books and reserve readings

Due to the emphasis on hands-on skills development, there are no reserve readings for this course. However, a list of outstanding music theory books is available upon request.

3. Web sites

You are welcome to use the web to research terms and concepts. Anytime you use the web you must cite that usage. Direct quotes must be in quotation marks. Never use the web to find answers (not even to "check yourself")!

This syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and posted on the course website.