



# Southern Methodist University

## Meadows School of the Arts, Division of Music

### **MUTH 6300, Analysis of Contemporary Music (3 units), Fall 2008**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:20 p.m., OFAC 2030

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](mailto: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 advanced music theory, including terms, symbols, practices, and conventions of Western music. The conceptual focus of the course is on approaches to music normative to the 20th-21st centuries. This study is required to facilitate performance as well as theoretical knowledge and provide practical application of such knowledge to the study and teaching 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 contemporary music as discussed in class
- Classify elements and structures in a given piece of contemporary music using appropriate terminology
- Modify a given element intelligently, e.g. changing a scalar type or rhythmic dimension
- Analyze a piece of music globally on a level appropriate to the student's theoretical expertise
- Create a system of analysis appropriate to the student's professional requirements for contemporary music literature
- Evaluate the music of others according to the contemporary music styles 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**

- Detailed analysis of recent music written in a variety of styles and using diverse techniques. The course will also explore early 20th-century antecedents of more recent music. Analysis and discussion will be supported by readings from theoretical articles and composers' writings.
- Undergraduate music theory knowledge (diatonic harmony, chromatic harmony, form terminology, rhythm and meter analysis, etc.) is assumed. **N.B.** This class is not a repeat of previous courses. It may be beneficial for you to review earlier material on your own.
- **Prerequisite:** Successful completion of the theory portions of the Music Graduate Profile Examination or Graduate Theory Review.

#### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS, AND POLICIES

##### 1. MUTH Departmental Attendance and Participation Policy (Upper Division Courses)

- Attendance will be taken (as per SMU Drug and Alcohol awareness policies) each class period and a record retained.
- Prompt attendance is vital. Absences and tardies will affect your grade as follows:
  - Attendance will be taken by the instructor at the beginning of each class.
  - If a student arrives late, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the instructor counts them as tardy and not absent. Attendance records will be posted periodically on the course website.
  - 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

Kostka, Stefan. *Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music*, 3rd ed.

Music paper (available at course website), pencils and erasers

WWW access via lab or personal PC/Mac -- courses.smu.edu & drfeezell.com/musictheory

## 3. Assessments and Assignments

There will be homework and quizzes, an “experiences” log, one (1) mid-term exam, an analysis project, and one (1) final exam. Method of grading will be as follows:

- 10% Attendance/participation (see #1 above)
- 15% Homework/quizzes (approximately one assignment per week)
- 30% Experience log (see below under grades for grading rubric)
- 15% Midterm examination (**Tuesday, October 7**)
- 10% Analysis final project and paper (**Presentations November 4 – 13**)
- 20% Cumulative final examination (**Tues, December 9, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.**)

## 4. Grades

- “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 for the Experience Log:** A major component of the course is a log (in the form of an Excel spreadsheet template provided by the instructor) documenting the student’s interaction with art music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
  - **POINT REQUIREMENTS:**
    - A student will be required to earn 175 points in total.
    - To avoid a five-point grade deduction (for each deadline), the student must earn at least 50 points by October 1 and an additional 50 points by November 1. The remaining points must be documented by November 21 at midnight.
    - **All points will be documented and confirmed through the Excel template provided.** Each student must email their Excel template by midnight on the date due to avoid the penalty.
  - **POINT VALUES (per movement, not per piece):**
    - Examining a score and providing analytical commentary: 1 pt
    - Listening to a recording and providing analytical commentary: 1 pt
    - Reading an article or chapter from the reading list, and citing key points: 3 pts
    - Attending a lecture on contemporary music or a visiting composer’s master class: 10 points total per event
    - Attending a live performance: 3 pts for each movement (In addition to your Excel file, you must turn in a copy of the program.)
    - Performing in public: 4 points each movement (You cannot also take credit for listening to your own performance. In addition to your Excel file, you must turn in a copy of the program.)
  - **GRADING:**
    - 70%: Did the student earn the correct number of points? NOTE: Incorrectly formatted entries or insubstantial comments will not be counted.
    - 10%: Does the experience log evidence variety in terms of type of experience, composers, and styles?
    - 10%: Do the comments in the log make correct use of terminology from the course? Do they include appropriate analytical insights?
    - 10%: Are the comments well-written with correct English?
  - **OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**
    - All point values are considered per movement, not per piece.
    - **DO NOT** examine pieces you already know. Instead, all of your “experiences” should be with new works if at all possible.
    - Except as approved **IN ADVANCE** by the professor, jazz and other forms of popular music will **not** be eligible for points. The reason for this exclusion is that the purpose of the experience log is to practice using the terms and concepts introduced during the course. (It is not intended as a value judgment against the excluded genres.)

- **Pieces must have been composed in or after 1900 to receive credit.**
- **Pieces composed in or after 1980 will receive a 50% bonus.** For instance, listening to a recording of a piece written in or after 1980 is worth 1.5 points.
- A complete listing of pieces mentioned in the textbook is available on the course website. **However, this list of options is not meant to be exhaustive.** Students are encouraged to explore the wider world of contemporary “art” music and discover their own taste.
- Performing a piece by a student composer **IS ELIGIBLE** for post-1980 points.
- GRADUATE STUDENTS must read at least 15 items from the reading list as part of their experience log.
- **SAMPLE LOG FULFILLING 152 points (graduates need 175 points):**
  - Listening to recordings of 17 movements from pieces written after 1980, and examining the scores: **51 points**
  - Listening to 10 movements from pieces written 1900-1979, and examining the scores: **20 points**
  - Reading 7 articles or chapters from the reading list: **21 points**
  - Performing a 6 movement piece written after 1980: **36 points**
  - Attending live performance(s) of 8 movements written 1900-1979: **24 points**
- **Final project presentation:** The student will present for approximately 20 minutes. The presentation shall consist of an analysis of one movement from a work composed after 1950, including an analyzed score handout and recording or performance of the movement. In addition, the student will hand in a short (4-6 pages) paper summarizing their analysis.
- **Grading rubric for papers:** The rubric below will apply to all papers throughout the course. Additionally, points may be deducted for late work. Citations, if any, should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed., as described at [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org). (You may use either humanities style or author-date style.)
  - **Grammar/Spelling/Punctuation (20 points):** Does the paper utilize correct grammar? Are there fragments or run-on sentences in the paper? Is the paper correctly punctuated? Are there any misspelled words in the paper?
  - **Formatting (including citations) (10 points):** Is there a cover page? Is the bibliography page correctly formatted? Are there page numbers in the upper right corner of each page except the title page?
  - **Historical context (10 points):** Does the paper provide a BRIEF (1-3 paragraphs max) historical context for the piece? Is the historical discussion excessively lengthy?
  - **Quality of theoretical analysis (30 points):** Are the included musical examples analyzed correctly? Is the harmonic analysis correct and clear? Does the analysis take into account all relevant musical parameters (timbre, dynamics, texture, rhythm, register, pitch structure, motive, etc.)?
  - **Application to performance practice (10 points):** Does the paper make a compelling connection with performance practice?
  - **Logical flow of ideas (10 points):** Does each paragraph logically follow from the previous one? Is there a compelling flow of ideas from start to finish? Does the paper develop a single thesis in a coherent manner?
  - **Overall quality of the writing (10 points):** Is the paper well-written? Do the sentences capture the reader’s attention? Is the writing concise? Is the paper comprised of well-considered content, or does it include a great deal of filler?
- **Grading rubric for oral presentations:**
  - **Preparation of materials (10 points):** Was a special analyzed score copy and/or handout provided for all members of the class? Was an appropriate performance or recording provided?
  - **Correctness of analysis (30 points):** Is the analysis correct and complete? Does the presenter include and explain appropriate analytical terminology?
  - **Depth of analysis (20 points):** Does the presenter discuss aspects of progression in all relevant musical parameters? Does the presentation reflect only a surface understanding of the music, or does it reflect a deeper understanding?
  - **Quality of class discussion (30 points):** Does the presenter ask thought-provoking questions? Is the class engaged in the discussion?

- **Relevance to performance practice (10 points):** Is there meaningful discussion of the relationship between performance and analysis?
- 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](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 is subject to change, and any announcements on Blackboard will supersede the tentative schedule.

## VII. WEEKLY NOTES AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. Standard Operating Procedure:

- Instructor takes roll at start of hour
- Word of the Day
- Instructor collects assigned homework (if due)
- Instructor returns corrected homework from previous class (if any) and takes questions
- 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:** Introduction; Chapters 1 and 2 (late tonality and scalar constructions)
- Week 2:** Chapter 3 (chords and simultaneities)
- Week 3:** Chapters 3 and 4 (melody and voice leading)
- Week 4:** Chapters 5 and 6 (harmonic progression, pitch-centricity, and rhythm)
- Week 5:** Chapter 7 (Form); Messiaen conference

**Week 6:** Review for midterm

**Week 7: Midterm Exam over Chapters 1-7;** Chapter 8 (allusions)

**Week 8: Fall Break;** Chapter 8 cont.

**Week 9:** Chapters 9 and 10 (atonality and classical serialism)

**Week 10:** Chapters 11 and 12 (timbre and texture in acoustic and electronic music)

**Week 11:** Final project presentations

**Week 12:** Final project presentations (if needed)

**Week 13:** Chapters 13 and 14 (integral serialism, chance music)

**Week 14:** Chapter 15 (minimalism and post-minimalism)

**Week 15: Review / final discussion**

**3. How to Succeed in this Course:**

- Do the homework the day of the class, not the night before it is due!
- Analyze every piece assigned as though it were an exam
- 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](http://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](mailto: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**

A list of reserve reading options for the experiences log is available at the course website at [courses.smu.edu](http://courses.smu.edu) under the "Course Documents" section.

**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.*