

DUE DATE:

Thursday, Feb. 14, in class. Late papers may be accepted with a deduction. NOTE: This new date differs from the syllabus.

WEIGHT:

This assignment will be worth 10% of your final course grade.

LENGTH:

While length is not the primary grading consideration, the successful paper will typically run 3-6 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt, 1" margins), excluding the cover page and bibliography, but including brief musical examples. In addition, an analyzed score of the complete movement may prove beneficial as supporting evidence, but is not required and will not count toward the page total. N.B.: It is highly feasible to get an A with a 3-page paper. Quality is more important than quantity! Only use the additional pages if your thesis demands it.

SUBSTANCE:

The substance of your paper will be an analytical discussion covering one of the Brahms movements listed in the course schedule, i.e., Brahms Op. 118, movements 1 to 6.

Your paper will naturally reflect our class discussions, but it should also reflect your own thinking and perspectives. I prefer to give you some latitude as to your particular approach, since part of my goal is to encourage you to internalize and personalize the analytical process. However, some of the questions you might want to consider include:

- What is the role of motive in the movement? You might choose to trace the development of an important motive or motive(s) throughout.
- What are some particularly important considerations from a performance standpoint? What clues does Brahms provide in the score to guide the performer to a deeper understanding of the piece?
- Is there a tension between motivic development and form?
- How is rhythm developed throughout the piece? Does this process have performance ramifications?

The length of the paper assigned is insufficient for an adequate analysis of a single movement. Therefore, you will have to choose what aspects of analysis you want to include. Successful essays will follow a logical train of thought and provide clear evidence of a personal analytical struggle with the movement. Begin with a thesis, then outline a series of points to support that thesis. LISTENING with the score is vital – recordings are available on-campus in the library and at smu.classical.com.

GRADING RUBRIC:

The grading rubric for papers is included in the syllabus on pages 3 and 4. Note, however, that I am NOT expecting a complete harmonic analysis for the shorter papers, although you may wish to analyze particular sections to support your points. "Historical context" may also be rather limited given the scope of the paper. Furthermore, a bibliography is only required if you consult other sources. Such consultation is encouraged but not required for this particular assignment.
