

Music 296 Syllabus

Music 296, Music Theory 4 (3 credits)
Section 2: MWF 9:00-9:50 a.m. E353
Section 4: MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m. E371

Professor: Dr. Neil Thornock
Office hours: MW 11:00; knock or by appointment, E-579A HFAC
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Course Description and Objectives

I have two primary objectives for you in this course: the first is to help you learn to love a broader range of music created since 1900, and the second is to help you understand some of the basic techniques used in creating and/or understanding this music.

Prerequisites

You must have passed Music 293, 295, and 297 with a C- or higher to enroll for this course.

Materials

Music 296 Course Packet
IMPORTANT: see <http://neilthornock.net/296/296-CD.html> for accompanying audio tracks
Paper/pencils/etc.
Staff paper

Grading

You have two options for succeeding in this course.

	Option A w/ attendance	Option B w/out attendance
Assignments	20%	15%
Participation	15%	10%
Listening Reports	15%	10%
Quizzes	10%	5%
Compositions 1-4	40%	30%
Midterm/Final	----	30%

Option A:

I will record your attendance and grade you in accordance with the attendance policy (see below). You will not have to take either the midterm or the final.

Option B:

I will not record your attendance; instead, you must take a midterm and a final. The midterm will be given during a 50-minute class period. The final will be during the scheduled final time; it will not be cumulative.

Assignments

Assignments are available online at <http://www.neilthornock.net/courses/296.html>. Each completed assignment receives a passing grade. I may ask you to redo an assignment if you do not understand the concept; usually you will receive credit for both attempts. Partially completed assignments will receive no credit.

Participation

You earn the participation grade in the following ways:

1. Contributing to a distraction-free environment:
 - Cell phones turned completely off for the entire class.
 - No food or drink.
 - Conversation kept on-topic.
2. Active participation in group work. Learning is best accomplished as a community, so some of the class time this term will be spent working in groups or pairs. I expect each person to contribute whatever you have to offer – if you understand a topic well, take time to teach your struggling classmate. If you do not yet understand a topic, ask those with whom you work for clarification.
3. Respect and kindness toward everyone.

At the end of the semester, you will assign yourself a 1-10 grade for participation with a brief (two- or three-sentence) explanation. The participation grade is due by email by the end of finals week.

Listening Reports

Listening reports are due weekly by Friday before class. They will not receive credit if turned in late. Each week you will listen to music written after 1900. See the attached Listening Lists to choose a composer to listen to for each assignment. You should listen to at least 10 minutes of music. This may be one piece, a selection of pieces or movements, or a portion of a larger work.

To get credit for listening reports, follow these guidelines:

Listening reports must be turned in on time.

Listening reports will be accepted via email only.

The email must not be a reply to a previous email – it must be a new “conversation.”

The required subject line is “296 LR [your name]”.

The write-up must be in the body of the email.

The write-up will consist of one or two paragraphs answering (briefly!) the following questions:

1. What are the most characteristic features of this music (what do you most remember when it’s over)?
2. Briefly describe duration (rhythm, meter, etc.), timbre, texture, dynamic, and pitch. Which are most important?
3. What is your personal/subjective response to the music?

IMPORTANT NOTE: I don’t read all of these. I read a sampling each week and will respond on occasion. If you have questions, concerns, or comments which are not directly related to the listening report, send a separate email.

Quizzes

We will have a handful of small, focused quizzes throughout the semester. They are intended to take about 10 minutes or less. The quizzes will be at the beginning of class and will be timed. I will drop your lowest score. In order for you to make up a quiz, your absence must be excused.

Composition Projects

You will display your knowledge of techniques discussed in class through composition projects. You will receive a sheet describing the composition project for each unit.

Exams

For those who wish to opt out of the attendance policy, there will instead be a midterm and a final. The midterm will take place during class and will consist of materials covered in the first two units (set class theory and post-impressionistic techniques). The final will be during the final time and will consist of materials covered in the latter two units (twelve-tone technique and aleatoric music).

Attendance

For those who wish to opt out of the exams, attendance will be required. For every absence, you will get 2 attendance points. For every tardy, you get 1 attendance point. If you arrive after the prayer, you are marked tardy. You are allowed two free absences and six free tardies, but no more than 6 attendance points. Attendance points will reduce your final percentage by the amount of attendance points accrued past 6. Thus, if you have a 90% in the class and 10 attendance points, you end up with 86%.

Listening Lists

This list does not represent all of the last century's most important composers, only a very slim representation of some of the schools of composition.

A

Béla Bartók
Harrison Birtwistle
Elliott Carter
George Crumb
Igor Stravinsky
Edgard Varèse

B

John Adams
Aaron Copland
Henry Cowell
Paul Hindemith
Darius Milhaud
Arvo Pärt

C

Milton Babbitt
Alban Berg
Pierre Boulez
Arnold Schoenberg
Anton Webern

D

John Cage
György Ligeti
Witold Lutoslawski
Olivier Messiaen
Harry Partch

Course Schedule/Assignment Log

See the website for details on the assignments (neilthornock.net/courses/296/296.html).

Certain assignments are not turned in (such as reading assignments) but are, rather, recorded here.

For the sake of consistency, record all of your assignments on this sheet: 1 for done, 0 for not done.

You only need to have *tried* to do the assignment correctly – an honest effort! – and to completion.

Starred assignments will *additionally* be turned in to me.

Date	Class Content	Assignments Due	Done?
Jan. 4	Syllabus; introduction; listening		
6	Rhythm	No. 1 (see website) Listening 1 (List A)	
9		No. 2	
11	Pitch-Class Set Theory	No. 3	
13	pp. 14-15	No. 4 Listening 2 (A)	
16	<i>Quiz 1: Prime Form</i> Webern	No. 5*	
18	Webern		
20	No class	Listening 3 (A)	
23	<i>Quiz 2: Find the Complement</i> Carter/Crumb	No. 6	
25	<i>Quiz 3: IC Vector</i> Strauss, Elektra	No. 7	
27		Composition 1 Due Listening 4 (List B)	
30	Overtones	No. 8	
Feb. 1		No. 9	
3	<i>Quiz 4: Overtone Series</i> Pandiatonicism (incl. Minimalism)	No. 10 Listening 5 (B)	
6	Barber, Knoxville		
8	Reich	No. 11*	
10	No class	Listening 6 (B)	
13	Pärt		
15	Bichord/Bitonal Harmony	No. 12	
17	Quartal Harmony	No. 13 Listening 7 (B)	
20	Monday – No class		
21	Tuesday (Monday class) Secundal Harmony	No. 14	
22	<i>Quiz 5: Post-impressionistic Tech.</i> Ives	No. 15	
24	TURN THIS PAGE IN TODAY WITH ASSIGNMENTS RECORDED	Composition 2 Due Listening 8 (List C)	

27	Messiaen	No. 16	
29	Messiaen cont.		
Mar. 2	Mid-term Exam (for Option B) No class otherwise	Listening 9 (C)	
5	Serialism	No. 17	
7	Row Permutations	No. 18	
9	Matrix	No. 19* Listening 10 (C)	
12	p. 75	No. 20*	
14	<i>Quiz 6: Row Permutations</i>		
16	Hexachordal Combinatoriality p. 76	Listening 11 (C)	
19	Symmetries p. 77		
21	pp. 79-80	No. 21*	
23	Derived rows	Listening 12 (List D)	
26	Total Serialism Babbitt		
28		Composition 3 Due	
30	Aleatory	No. 22 Listening 13 (D)	
Apr. 2		No. 23	
4	<i>Quiz 7: PRITF analysis</i>		
6	Microtonality	No. 24 Listening 14 (D)	
9			
11	TURN THIS PAGE IN TODAY WITH ASSIGNMENTS RECORDED	Composition 4 Due	

Final Exam – **Sec. 2:** Wednesday, April 18, 7 a.m. – **Sec. 4:** Monday, April 16, 7 a.m.