

Theory II: Musical Structures (MUSC 204)

Winter 2021 Course Information

Course Meeting Times: MWF 1a

Office: WCC M208 (by the elevators); x4397

Instructor: Justin London

Hrs: Tues. 1:30-3:00; Wed. 10-11:30

Note: Online vs. Face-to-Face meetings will vary; see Moodle page for details

Required Texts and Materials

Lecture notes, mp3 recordings, scores, and reading PDFs are all on the course Moodle Page .

What is Music 204 About?

Theory II is, as its title says, about musical structures: how to describe, analyze, and think about them. As such, we will look at pitch and timbre (the “musical” aspects of sound), rhythm, melody, harmony, and form. Each class meeting engages a particular question or problem: How many notes do you need to write a melody? What is syncopation? What is special about triads? (and so on). The class covers a wide and eclectic musical repertoire, from Beethoven and Bach to African Drum Patterns and the Beach Boys. We will also draw on a broad range of disciplines and perspectives, including acoustics, psychology, mathematics, and statistics, as well as traditional music theory.

What Music 204 is Not About

Music 204 is not about "the rules" of harmony or counterpoint; it is not a class in musical analysis (though some pieces will be analyzed along the way). Only a few homework assignments will involve worksheets or chord labeling; most will involve looking at a problem, along with a piece (or pieces) of music that illustrates that problem, and thinking and writing about it. The the aim is not to learn the grammar and syntax of any particular musical style, as would be the case in a traditional harmony-based course. Rather, our goal is to unpack the constituent elements of a musical passage or piece to see what general principles are at work in it, and then to describe their workings in clear, precise language.

Assignments and Assessment

In Music 204 there are 18 homework assignments; the attached assignment roster gives a brief description of each, along with its assignment and due date. About half of these assignments involve short writing assignments, ranging from one sentence to two pages. Several will involve group work (groups of 2 – 4 students). Any and all writing assignments may be revised, and revision is encouraged. All homework is due at the beginning of class on its due date; you are responsible for getting homework to me in cases of absence. Our classes are largely discussion based, as our "answer" to the day's question will emerge from our collective struggle with it.

Your grade will be comprised of the following elements:

Homework	40%
One-sentence essays	15%
Midterm Essay	10%
Final Essay	15%
End-of-Term Project	10%
Class Participation	10%

The midterm and final will both be take-home tests, where you will be free to use your notes and other resources in writing your answers, as well as be able to take the time edit your prose before turning in your essays. In these and other writing assignments, you will of course (a) follow Carleton's guidelines for academic honesty, and (b) properly acknowledge and cite any and all sources you have used/quote from in your research and writing. A copy of the Music department's guidelines for citing sources and document formatting is in the Course Google Drive.

M204 Winter 2021 Daily Syllabus

Date	Topic(s)	Class Activity	Pieces	Readings	Assignment
1.04	The parameters of music	Intro to Class; On- and Off-line aspects of the class	JML's Op. 1, no. 1.		Write a 1-sentence definition ("1SD") of "Pitch"
1.06	What is a musical sound? Definitions of Pitch & Timbre	Socratic exploration of pitch and "timbre"	Listening Example of various sounds	ANSI/ASA definitions of Pitch and Timbre	Vocal Similarity Rating (Google Form)
1.08	Measuring & describing timbre	In-class rating of sounds from homework	Various examples of singer's voices.		Read London (2001) on Meter; 1SD for "Beat"
1.11	What is a beat? What is meter? And meet the TR 808	Learning to program a drum machine		TR-8 Users Manuals; Koetting (1970) on TUBS notation	Create a "good" and a "bad" rhythm
1.13	What is a good rhythm? What is a bad rhythm?	Listening to and discussing student rhythm examples	Student Rhythm Patterns		Read Koetting on TUBS notation; Notate your rhythms
1.15	Reduced representations of rhythm	Comparison of student rhythm notations		Koetting (1970) on TUBS notation	Read Fussell on scansion and poetic feet
1.18	How do you scan a text? And: Fitting poetic and musical meter	Introduction to text scansion; Scanning Walt Whitman		Fussell (1965) on Scansion	Compose a melody for the given text using the notes given
1.20	How many notes do you need to write a good melody?	Comparison of student melodies	Student Melodies		Read Bronson (1946); 1SD of "Scale"
1.22	Melodies, Modes, and Scales	Exploring properties of various scales	Student Melodies and Sorted Melodies	Bronson (1946) on modal classification	Sort some melodies
1.25	Assessing melodic similarity	Sorting melodies in terms of scale and mode	Sorted Melodies (Course Packet)		Make an instrument that plays "Twinkle, Twinkle"
1.27	Festival of Instruments		Sharing our musical instruments		Write a technical description of your instrument; Read C & G.
1.29	What is an instrument? Oscillators, Amplifiers, and Resonators	Discussion of Campbell & Greated		Campbell & Greated (1987) on instrument classification	Read Zarlino & Helmholtz. 1SD of "Dissonance"
2.01	What are Consonance, Dissonance Toneness, and Roughness?	Plato vs. Aristotle	Sine tones, vocal notes, and distorted guitars	Zarlino (1558) on Intervals; Helmholtz (1863) on Roughness	Read Huron Chapters 3 & 4; 1SD of "Chord"
2.03	What is a chord? How to make sounds in ChucK	Fusion, Harmonicity, Toneness	Select Triads and 7th chords	Huron (2016) on "Image Formation"	Read Huron Chapter 5; Make a "good" and "bad" chords
2.05	What is a good chord? What is a bad chord?	Listen to and discuss student chord examples	Student Harmonies	Huron (2016) on "Auditory Masking"	Midterm: Why is Penderecki's <i>Threnody</i> so dissonant (or not)? Midterm Due: 2.10.21

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2.08	MIDTERM BREAK	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none, besides the midterm)
2.10	Roman Numerals and Harmonic Description.	A whirlwind review RN "analysis"	Bach Chorales, Mozart, etc., etc.		Roman Numeral Analysis Worksheet
2.12	Counting chords, and the principles of voice leading	A whirlwind review of part writing. And a little game.	A Romanesca, and others.	Review of cadence taxonomy and history.	Part Writing/Figured Bass Worksheet
2.15	What is a chord progression?	Playing around with random chord progressions	"Autumn Leaves"		Read Terefenko on the TT Sub; 1SD of "Syntax."
2.17	Harmonic Function and the Tritone Substitution	Playing around with random chord progressions	"Ipanema," "Satin Doll" "Well You Needn't"	Terefenko (2009) on the Tritone Substitution	Read Dan Harrison (2016) on the Cadence; 1SD of "Cadence"
2.19	What is a cadence? And: Why do we need four voices?	Listening to cadences old and new.	TBA	Dan Harrison (2016) on the Cadence	Listen to some Mozart and Haydn
2.22	Musical form EXPLAINED in one hour	Repetition vs. Contrast, and Variation, Rondo, Sonata	"Twinkle" variations, "Joke" quartet, and Eine kleine Nachtmusik	Musical form Handout	Hamad video & webpages on Song Schematics
2.24	Can we grasp musical form as we listen?	Listening to Schubert with a diagram.	Schubert, Phish, Beach Boys	Michael Hamad on Song Schematics	Read Poon & Schutz (2015) on Emotion and Tempo
2.26	The Expression of Musical Emotion	Discussion of Poon & Schutz	Selections from Bach's WTC book I	"Dark Star" (performance TBA)	Make a live-sketch of the Grateful Dead's "Dark Star"
3.01	Picturing and discussing improvised musical form.	Sharing our Dark Star Sketches	"Dark Star" 8-23-68		Project Phase 1: Identify & assemble an analytic corpus
3.03	In-class work session	Various techniques for tempo identification	TBA		Project Phase 2: Tempo and note-rate analysis
3.05	In-class work session	Collect & Analyze Expressive Timing Data in your Group	TBA		Project Phase 3: Testing for significance & preparing PPT
3.08	Presentations of Emotional Expression Studies	Presentations of Emotional Expression Studies	TBA		Read Cone (1977) and read Conan Doyle
3.10	The End of Theory	Brahms' Intermezzo, and second and third hearings	Brahms Intermezzo, and the Talking Heads.	Cone (1977) on Stories and Conan Doyle's <i>Speckled Band</i>	Final Exams Due Mon. 3.15.21 at 11:59 PM CST.