

18th-Century Counterpoint

MUTH 3420/5420

Section 2: MWF 12:00-12:50; MUS 2006

UNT College of Music
Division of Music History, Theory, and Ethnomusicology
Fall 2015 Semester: August 24 – December 11

Instructor:

Benjamin Dobbs, Ph.D.
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Office: MUS 1002
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Office Hours: M/W 2:00-3:00
T/Th 9:30-11:00

Course Description & Objectives

Students will learn to analyze and compose music in the style of the high and late Baroque period (ca. 1680-1750). In particular, the course will focus on understanding and imitating the contrapuntal technique of composers such as J.S. Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Purcell, Rameau, Buxtehude, Corelli, et al. Recognizing the value of historical pedagogical methods, students will read excerpts from music-theoretical texts by composer-theorists of the eighteenth century including Kirnberger, Mattheson, and Rameau.

Class activities will include:

- Discussion and demonstration of new concepts
- Preparation and discussion of assigned readings and analyses
- Composition of short pieces as a group
- Group critique of students' assignments

Your mastery of eighteenth-century counterpoint will be demonstrated through the following activities:

- Participation in discussion
- Completion of homework assignments based on exercises from the textbook
- Daily and/or weekly short composition assignments
- Large composition projects

The best way to contact the instructor (with the exception of in-person during office hours) is always by email (Benjamin.Dobbs@unt.edu). Emails will generally be answered within 24 hours (often much sooner), but emails received after 5 pm may not be returned until the next day. You may also call Dr. Dobbs's office phone (940.369.5943); voice-mail messages to this number are routed to Dr. Dobbs's email. You should use the email address assigned to you by UNT; however, if you wish to use another email address, you should have your student email forwarded to your alternate address (this is done at ams.unt.edu). Dr. Dobbs will always send sensitive information (updates on your grade, notices about absences, etc.) to your official UNT email address.

Course Requirements

Eligibility:

Students enrolled in MUTH 3420 must have passed MUTH 2400 and MUTH 2410 (Theory III and Aural Skills III), both with a grade of C or better. If you are unsure whether or not you meet these requirements, see Dr. Dobbs immediately.

Materials:

- Pencil with erasers, notebook, and staff paper
- Printed copies of all scores, readings, and handouts
- A "commonplace" book
- Required Texts:

- Peter Schubert and Christoph Neidhöfer. *Baroque Counterpoint*. Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006.
- J.S. Bach. *The Well-Tempered Clavier: Books I and II*. Dover Edition, 1983/1984.
- Additional texts for your reference on reserve in the music library (you do not need to purchase these):
 - Kent Kennan. *Counterpoint Based on Eighteenth-Century Practice*. 1999
 - Robert Gauldin. *A Practical Approach to Eighteenth-Century Counterpoint*. 1995.

Attendance:

- Class attendance is mandatory and monitored according to the following schedule:
 - 0-3 unexcused absences: No questions asked
 - 4 unexcused absences: Final grade lowered 1 letter grade (if A; then B)
 - 5 unexcused absences: Final grade lowered 2 letter grades (if A, then C)
 - 6th unexcused absence: Withdrawn (WF)
- Upon the fifth unexcused absence, notification will be sent via email from the instructor to the student stating that upon the sixth absence the student will be withdrawn from class with a grade of WF through the registrar's office for non-attendance.
- Only university sanctioned absences, which include university events and religious observances, are excused. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of excused absences by an official email or by bringing an official letter before the absence. Do not assume that the instructor will receive a list of students excused for an event.
- Absence due to illness may be excused with proper documentation at the discretion of the instructor. In case of illness resulting in missed class(es) or assignments contact the instructor via email (Benjamin.Dobbs@unt.edu) immediately.
- If students are absent (excused or unexcused), it is their responsibility to complete assignments and to turn them in on or before the day that they are due.
- Classes will begin promptly. If students are late, this may count toward absence at the discretion of the instructor. Homework assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class. If students are late, they risk losing points on those assignments.

Class Expectations

- Come to class prepared and on time.
- Have all required texts and materials for each class.
- Electronic devices are allowed during regular class sessions, but the instructor reserves the right to revoke this privilege if devices become distracting. Electronic devices of any sort are strictly prohibited during exams. Students found with an electronic device out (whether on or off, being used or not) during an exam will, without exception, receive an automatic zero.
- Behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at: www.unt.edu/csrr.

Course Evaluation

Listening to Your Work:

It is imperative that you listen to and aurally evaluate the results each assignment before you hand it in. Your ears are remarkable instruments that have been, and are continuing to be, finely tuned throughout the course of your musical training to recognize "good" music. You know what the music of Bach, Handel, and Vivaldi sounds like. Listen to your own work: sing it, play it on an instrument, or play it back through your computer. Does it sound like the music of Baroque composers? Does it sound bad? If something sounds off, it probably is. Hearing your work can let

you know if an assignment might need a little more attention. Above all, you should never turn in an assignment without first having heard it. Additionally, listen to as much Baroque music as you can get your hands on; this will help to improve your ears and attune them to 18th-c. style.

Grading:

- Grades will come from short assignments, composition projects, and in-class participation.
- There will be no formal exams.
- Final grades will be determined according to the following break-down:
 - Short assignments: 50%
 - Composition projects: 40% (10%, 10%, 20%)
 - Participation: 10%
- * Because there are no exams, it is vital that students turn in all homework. Failure to turn in more than three short assignments or failure to turn in one large project will result in an automatic grade of WF or F for the semester.
- Students enrolled in MUTH 5420 (i.e., graduate students) will be required to write brief introductory/analytical essays (2-4 pages) to accompany each of the larger composition projects. The essays will be graded as part of the project. Instructions for writing the essays will be given when the assignments are made, and students are encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss their essays prior to submitting them.
- Letter grades will be assigned according to the UNT Standard Percentage Scale.
 - A = 90% - 100%
 - B = 80% - 89%
 - C = 70% - 79%
 - D = 60% - 69%
 - F = 0% - 59%
- * Grades of X9.5 will be rounded up. Grades of X9.4999 will not be rounded up.

Late Work:

Homework is due in class on the date for which it is assigned. Assignments will be accepted at the latest in the next class period after the it was originally due, but a full letter grade (10%) will be deducted from all late work. An assignment will not be accepted for credit if the instructor has already gone over it with the class; this includes any assignments that are discussed on the same day on which they are submitted. Late work may be excused if you contact the instructor before the assignment is due. All decisions regarding late work are at the discretion of the instructor; if you think you may be eligible for credit for a late assignment, see the instructor as soon as possible. Do not simply fail to turn in late work, as doing so may eliminate any points for which you may unknowingly have been eligible.

Plagiarism:

The overarching goal of this course is to learn to write your own music in the Baroque style. Much of the work for the course will consist of individual, original compositions. You may confer with your classmates, tutors, and the instructor on the generalities of a given assignment or on the specifics of a certain contrapuntal concept or technique; however, you are prohibited from consulting anyone other than Dr. Dobbs about actual homework assignments. Copying others' work, including a fellow student's or a composer's, constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and cases will be dealt with according to the University Code of Conduct (see below).

Grades of Incomplete and Withdrawal:

An incomplete, or "I" grade, is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a semester and only if a student: 1) is passing the course, 2) has justifiable reason why the work cannot be completed on schedule, and 3) arranges with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements, as required and listed by the instructor on the grade sheet. All specified work must be completed within the allotted time (not to exceed one year) in order to avoid the recording of a failing grade for the course. A grade of incomplete is reserved for extraordinary circumstances (normally a serious illness or death in the family at or

near the end of the semester). Please contact me as soon as possible if a problem arises. Dropping the course with an automatic grade of W is possible through October 2; doing so with a grade of W or WF is possible through November 2. For more information, please visit: <http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes>.

Extra Help:

If you find yourself struggling to keep up, or receiving lower-than-desirable grades, ask yourself the following questions: Am I present and on time for every class session? Am I turning in all of my work on time? Am I allotting sufficient time to complete homework and projects outside of class? If the answer is no to any of these questions, try addressing that issue. If the answer is yes to all of them, then you should see the instructor for suggestions on how to improve and maximize the results of your efforts. Most of all, seek help sooner rather than later; issues seldom get better on their own.

General University Business

Dropping the Course:

- August 28: Last day to change schedule (student initiated)
- September 7: Last day to drop (student initiated)
- October 2: Last day to drop with an automatic W (instructor signature needed)
- November 2: Last day to drop with a W or WF (instructor signature needed)
- November 20: Last day for instructor to drop students for non-attendance with a WF

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress:

- Undergraduates:
 - A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.
 - If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit <http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.
- Graduates:
 - A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.
 - If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit <http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the University Policy and Procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of "F" in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. You will find the policy and procedures at: <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>.

Office of Disability Accommodation:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

University Code of Conduct:

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty (cheating/plagiarism.) If you engage in academic dishonesty related to this class, you will receive a failing grade on the test or assignment and a failing grade in the course. In addition, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action. Please refer to <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct> for more information.

MUTH 3420/5420 Course Outline Fall 2015

Unit I – Melody and Harmony

During the first part of the semester we will consider how melody and harmony work together to create counterpoint that is characteristic of the Baroque style. We will study ways in which a melody can suggest a harmonic progression, and ways in which a harmonic progression can suggest a melody. To avoid tedium in our writing, we will examine techniques for melodic and harmonic embellishment. Genres to be covered include canon, variation forms, and chorale prelude.

Unit II – Writing Imitation

Going forward, we will learn different techniques for combining voices at different time and pitch intervals. In the context of two-, three-, and four-part writing, we will study imitation at the unison/octave, at the fifth, and invertible counterpoint (in which voices exchange parts and still produce good counterpoint). Genres to be covered include trio sonatas, keyboard dances, and inventions.

Unit III – Crafting a Fugue

In the final unit of the semester, we will learn strategies for putting together all of the parts of a fugue. We will write subjects, answers, and countersubjects, learn how to use sequences, study the parts of the fugue, and finish the semester by crafting our own fugues.

MUTH 3420/5420 Course Schedule Fall 2015

UNIT I – Melody and Harmony

Week 1

Monday	8/24	Introduction to the Course	Introduction
Wednesday	8/26	Melody and Harmony	Ch. 1 and 2
Friday	8/28	Melody and Harmony	Ch. 1 and 2

Week 2

Monday	8/31	Harmonizing a Subject	Ch. 3
Wednesday	9/2	Harmonizing a Subject	Ch. 3
Friday	9/4	Figured Bass	Figured Bass

Week 3

Monday	9/7	Labor Day - No Class	
Wednesday	9/9	Melodic Embellishment	Ch. 4
Friday	9/11	Melodic Embellishment	Ch. 4

Week 4

Monday	9/14	Melodic Embellishment	Ch. 4
Wednesday	9/16	Variation Techniques	Ch. 5 (variation)
Friday	9/18	Variation Techniques	Ch. 5 (motive)

Week 5

Monday	9/21	Chorale preludes	Ch. 5 (Chorale prelude)
Wednesday	9/23	Chorale preludes	Ch. 5 (Chorale pre.)
Friday	9/25	Chorale preludes	Ch. 5 (chorale pre.)

UNIT II – Writing Imitation

Week 6

Monday	9/28	Imitation at the U/8ve	Ch. 6 (to p. 78)
Wednesday	9/30	Imitation at the U/8ve	Ch. 6 (78-86)
Friday	10/2	Imitation at the U/8ve	Ch. 6 (86-90)

Week 7

Monday	10/5	Imitation at the 5th	Ch. 7 (91-95)
Wednesday	10/7	Imitation at the 5th	Ch. 7 (95-97)
Friday	10/9	Imitation at the 5th	Ch. 7 (98-102)

Week 8

Monday	10/12	Remodulation and the 3rd Entry	Ch. 8 (103-108)
Wednesday	10/14	Remodulation and the 3rd Entry	Ch. 8 (108-120)
Friday	10/16	Remodulation and the 3rd Entry	Ch. 8

Week 9

Monday	10/19	Multiple/Invertible Counterpoint	Ch. 16 (275-280)
Wednesday	10/21	Multiple/Invertible Counterpoint	Ch. 16 (280-284)
Friday	10/23	Multiple/Invertible Counterpoint	Ch. 16 (284-296)

UNIT III – Crafting a Fugue

Week 10

Monday	10/26	Fugue Exposition	Ch. 9
Wednesday	10/28	Fugue Exposition	Ch. 9
Friday	10/30	Answers	Ch. 10

Week 11

Monday	11/2	Answers	Ch. 10
Wednesday	11/4	Sequences and Episodes	Ch. 12
Friday	11/6	Sequences and Episodes	Ch. 12

Week 12

Monday	11/9	Sequences and Episodes	Ch. 12
Wednesday	11/11	Writing a Subject	Ch. 17
Friday	11/13	Writing a Subject	Ch. 17

Week 13

		Writing a Subject	
Monday	11/16	Laying Out a Piece	Ch. 13
Wednesday	11/18	Laying Out a Piece	Ch. 13
Friday	11/20	Laying Out a Piece	Ch. 13

Week 14

Monday	11/23	Composing a Fugue	
Wednesday	11/25	Composing a Fugue	
Friday	11/26	Thanksgiving Break - No Class	

Week 15

Monday	11/30	Composing a Fugue	
Wednesday	12/2	Composing a Fugue	
Friday	12/4	Reading Day - No Class	

Projects will be due:

9/28 – Project 1: Chorale Prelude

10/26 – Project 2: Trio Sonata

12/7 – Project 3: Fugue

NOTE: This syllabus is not a contract between the instructor and the students, and is subject to change at any time based on the needs of the class as determined by the instructor.