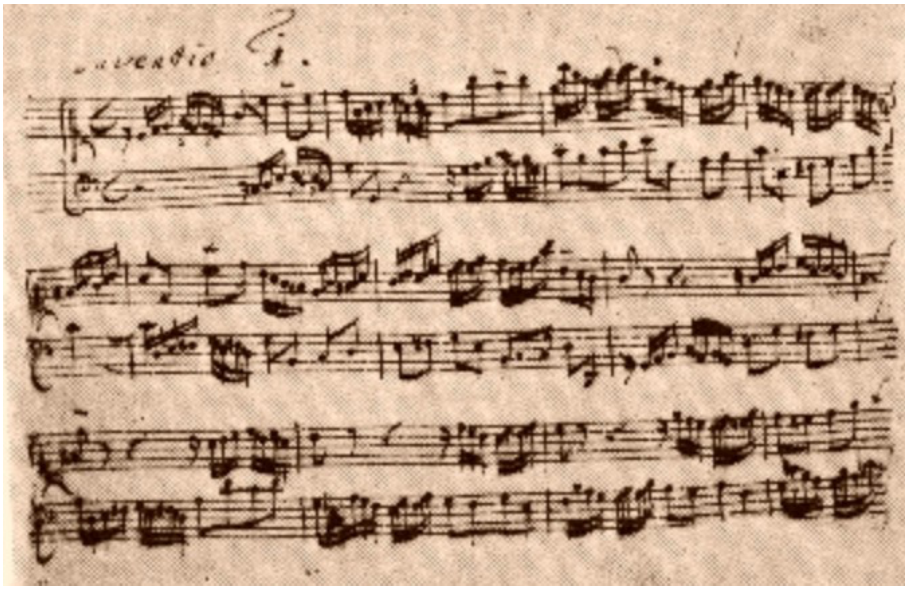

MUTH 5420/3420 18th-Century Counterpoint
Fall 2026 David Schwarz Instructor david.schwarz@unt.edu
Office MU 104 hours: MW 11–noon
Class Room MU 290: MWF 10:10 to 11:00 a.m.

Course Description

In this class we will study the art of 18th Century Music with an emphasis on the music of J. S. Bach. Our study will lead to composition and analysis; you will write short, graded compositional and analytical studies that embody the principles under discussion.You will also compose a final project—a three part fugue for keyboard in the style of J. S. Bach. To study both dimensions of the course and its music, we shall work in detail through our text: Robert Gauldin's *A Practical Approach to Eighteenth Century Counterpoint*. See a complete list of assignments under "Modules."

Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absence will lower your final grade one point. Absences are excused for all UNT COM activities, emergencies, illnesses, and circumstances beyond your control.

My Policy on AI

We all (I assume) use AI from time to time. I use it—simply typing in a question to which I wish to receive an objective, fact-based response into my browser's URL . For example, right now I wanted to know the name for the space on a computer where we type in a URL and I asked Google. The answer: "You write a URL in the address bar of a web browser like Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, or Safari. [1, 2, 3]." Cool. Thank you Google. Now uses such as this are totally fine in your work. Even, however, Googling simple requests such as this might require a footnote. In this case, I received information from an external source and that can be documented. So let me start over:

We all (I assume) use AI from time to time. I use it—simply typing in a question to which I wish to receive an objective, fact-based response into my browser's address bar. (in a footnote): https://www.google.com/search?q=where+do+you+write+a+URL+in+a+computer&rlz=1C5GCEM_en&oq=where+do+you+write+a+URL+in+a+computer&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOTI

HCAEQIRigATIHCAIQIRigATIHCAMQIRigAdIBCTE0MDUzajBqN6gCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&source=chrome.ob&ie=UTF-8 accessed July 23, 2026.

Is this ridiculously tedious? Yes. Is it absolutely necessary? Not in such simple cases. But I want you to be rigorous and meticulous documenting the distinction between information you get from an algorithm and ideas from your heads, experiences, and thoughts.

Communication Expectations

Please communicate with me via the Canvas email feature; I'll check email several times each teaching day (and often as well on days during the week when I don't teach); on the weekends I shall check email Sunday evenings after 6 p.m.

Course Structure

You will do short, written work for 40 of our classes. Work must be handed in produced in MUSESCORE always at 10:00 a.m. of a given class day. I will accept late work for official UNT COM activities and for life events that require your attention.

Course Requirements

Daily Assignments 40 @ 2 points each: 80%
Final Composition 20 points: 20%
For Grading Criteria for your final project, see the final assignment under 12/02/2026 in "Modules"

Course Prerequisites

Completion of MUTH 2400 and MUTH 2410 with a grade of C or better. In order to be successful in this course you must:

- Devote at least 3 hours of work to the course each day not counting our class meetings.
- Use a robust internet connection and computer to communicate with colleagues as well as study and upload assignments.
- Download and learn Musescore

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, you will have mastered the musical style of eighteenth-century music through daily analytical and compositional written work focusing on contrapuntal procedures in Bach's Two-Part Inventions, Sinfonias (three-part inventions) and three-part fugues. Our work (both analytical and compositional) will focus on

- the relationship between consonance and dissonance in eighteenth-century music, both melodically and harmonically
- sequences (with an emphasis on marking beginning and ending delimiters; the technique of transposition; and (if broken) both where and the musical effect of, the "jumping off" point
- dominant and tonic complexes (understood as supported by simple, underlying prolongation by means of a single bass not (scale degree 5 for the dominant; scale degree 1 for the tonic) supporting more complex surface motions how key areas are established and how they relate to one another
- how to achieve clear, directed harmonic and melodic motion through the application of voice-leading analysis

Please Note: do not schedule your end of semester jury against a regularly scheduled class.

Teaching Philosophy—my responsibilities and yours

I believe in making this course interesting, relevant, culturally sensitive to equity and diversity, and thorough in terms of teaching you professional level mastery of the techniques of music analysis and composition. It is my responsibility to provide you with clear, concise, and competent materials for each day's work within each module; these include pdf scores and links to YouTube videos of the music discussed on a given day. I will mark your work submitted to canvas on the day submitted. It is your responsibility to do each day's work thoroughly, to communicate concerns that you have via the Canvas email feature, to participate actively in discussion boards, to submit assignments on time, to consider my written comments on papers, and to respond to them following the return of each written assignment.

Course Technology & Skills

To successfully engage with the materials of this course you will need

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Mastery of music notation software Musescore

My Policy on Plagiarism

You may ask a fellow member of class what they think about your work before you hand it in; that person must not write anything on your work but communicate their impressions aurally. Such consultations need not be disclosed. Any other assistance or taking material, undocumented from a published source or AI application constitutes plagiarism; if found and documented, I will initiate disciplinary action.

UNT RESOURCES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY See LINK: https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003

STUDENT BEHAVIORSee: Student Code of Conduct
Link: https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT
See: Eagle Connect LINK: https://eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA STATEMENT
See: ODA LINK: https://disability.unt.edu

Health and Safety Information
Students can access information about health and safety at: https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness

Registration Information for Students

Registration Information See Link: https://registrar.unt.edu/students

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Undergraduates See: Financial Aid LINK: http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDSSee: FERPA Link: http://ferpa.unt.edu/

COUNSELING AND TESTING See: Counseling and Testing Link: http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services.

For more information on mental health issues, please visit: See: Mental Health Issues Link: https://speakout.unt.edu.

ADD/DROP POLICY

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar for additional add/drop Information.

STUDENT RESOURCES See: Student Resources Link: https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources

CARE TEAM See: Care Team Link: https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team