

MUCP 2200, Sophomore Seminar

Wednesdays, 11:00-11:50 AM, MU 230

Instructor: Jon Nelson jon.nelson@unt.edu

Graduate Teaching Fellows:

Agustin Alonso: AgustinAlonso@my.unt.edu

Colin Stokes: ColinStokes@my.unt.edu

Shahrzad Talebi: shahrzadtalebi@my.unt.edu

Nelson Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00-11:00 AM, MU 108

Course Objectives This class includes a survey of contemporary repertoire, discussion of compositional techniques, and professional development for composers. Sophomore Seminar students must be concurrently enrolled in MUCP 2080, 2180, or 2190.

Attendance In addition to attending the Wednesday seminar sessions, students are expected to attend Music Now and participate in lessons with the Graduate Teaching Fellows, Agustin Alonso, Colin Stokes and Shahrzad Talebi. Attendance is expected and factors into the class participation component of the grade. Out of courtesy to others, please make every effort to arrive at class on time. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out about any missed materials. More than two unexcused absences will result in the final grade being docked one full letter grade.

Grading

40% Class Participation (attendance, discussion, journals, assignments)

15% Composition Project 1—Variations

15% Composition Project 2—Modernism/Complexity

30% Composition Final Project—TBD in consultation with lesson instructor

- Assignments and Projects will be graded in a timely manner, typically within two weeks of the due date)

Class Participation Students are expected to come to class prepared, having completed the required reading and listening assignments. Please follow along in the composition scores while listening. Assignments listed for a class date must be completed before the class begins.

Journal Entries Students will keep a journal and write an entry for each listening assignment in Canvas. For each composition, provide the following:

- 1) Composer and work title
- 2) What did you find most interesting about the composition
- 3) What did you find most challenging about the composition
- 4) How did this work challenge or reinforce your own compositional thinking
- 5) What compositional technique did you discover in this work
- 6) Describe the formal structure of this composition

Composition Projects For each composition project, please provide a PDF score (posted in Canvas) as well as a MIDI or audio mockup of your work.

Composition Project 1 Students will compose a set of 3 variations on a theme for either a solo instrument or duo of your choice. Push yourselves to explore variations that are as different as possible. Each variation should focus on a particular variation technique (style, figuration, registration, texture, tempo, harmonization, manipulation of motivic, harmonic, or rhythmic content, etc.). The theme upon which you will base your variations is Bartok's *Mikrokosmos* No. 126: Change of Time. You are responsible for either perform yourself or find performers to present your variations live during class on September 17th.

Composition Project 2 Students will write a 1-2 minute composition for a solo or duo of your choice that utilizes a post-tonal pitch organization, complex rhythmic devices, and challenges your ideas about musical structure. While a MIDI mockup will provide some aural feedback, working with a live performer is more beneficial if possible. Consequently, I will provide extra credit for students who present a live reading of their work during the October 15th class.

Final Composition Project Students will compose a 5-7 minute composition for any number of instruments determined in consultation with your private instructor. This composition should meet one of the composition portfolio requirements (see the composition handbook found at <https://myunt.sharepoint.com/sites/unt-composition/SitePages/Handbook.aspx#undergraduates>). Students will present a short presentation about their composition during the regular class period on December 3rd (2-3 minute, like an elevator pitch/program note). This composition will be read and recorded in the MEIT on December 3rd between 5:00 and 7:00 PM. For the final project, you must secure musicians for the recording session, create and distribute professional-looking parts and scores to the musicians, design a rehearsal schedule, and book rehearsal spaces. Students will also prepare and present a 5-minute (maximum) PowerPoint presentation about their compositions during class on December 3.

Schedule (Detailed class schedule with all assignments is found on Canvas)

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|---------------------------|--|
| WEEK: | Fall 2025 (see Canvas for details) |
| 20-Aug | Overview/Syllabus |
| 27-Aug | Variation |
| 3-Sep | Repetition, Variation, Transformation, Form |
| 10-Sep | Cognition and Perception, Concepts of Time |
| 17-Sep | Project 1 (Variations—solo/duo) |
| 24-Sep | more 12-tone and set theory |
| 1-Oct | tuplets and rhythmic structures |
| 8-Oct | Carter |
| 15-Oct | Project 2 (Complexity/Modernism—solo/duo) |
| 22-Oct | Sound Mass Composition, Micropolyphony |
| 29-Oct | Polystylism and Borrowing (collage, quotation, and allusion) |
| 5-Nov | Algorithmic, Generative, and Multimodal Composition |
| 12-Nov | Becoming a Professional Composer |
| 19-Nov | Final Drafts Due, individual meetings |
| 26-Nov | Thanksgiving Break |
| 3-Dec | Final Project Oral Presentations |
| 3-Dec, 5:00-7:00 | Final Project Reading Session |
| 8-Dec, 10:30-12:30 | Final Exam Time—Reading Session Feedback |

Other Important Dates:

- Friday, August 22: last day to add a course
- Friday, August 29: last day to drop a course
- Friday, November 7: last day to withdraw from a course

For more details, see: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a

paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

LINK: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student 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 Dean of Students 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 classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

See: [Eagle Connect](#)

LINK: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.

See: [ODA](#)

LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

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

See: [Registration Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Academic Calendar, Fall 2025

See: [Fall 2025 Registration Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Final Exam Schedule, Fall 2025

See above

Financial Aid and 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 hours registered. 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.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

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. 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 before doing so.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

LINK: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are

encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

See: [FERPA](#)

Link: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

COUNSELING AND TESTING

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

See: [Counseling and Testing](#)

Link: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Resources](#)

Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>

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 (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

Drop Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

See: [Student Resources](#)

Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

CARE TEAM

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

See: [Care Team](#)

Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>