

BEGINNING COMPOSITION I (MUCP 1180)— CLASS COMPOSITION I (MUCP 3080)

Spring 2012

class meetings: M 11:00-11:50 am (MUSIC NOW)—Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theater (MEIT, MU 1001)
 WF 11:00-11:50 am — MEIT (Tramte) & MU 221 (Robin)

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Course website: <http://www.courses.unt.edu/jklein/1180-3080>

Blackboard (for journals, concert review, and grades): <https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct>

UNT Libraries (for online audio): <https://audioreserves.library.unt.edu>

SYLLABUS

RECOMMENDED TEXTS (on reserve):

Cope, David. *Techniques of the Contemporary Composer*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1997.

Kostka, Stefan. *Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1997.

Ross, Alex. *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*. New York: Picador, 2007.

*Stone, Kurt. *Music Notation in the Twentieth Century*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1980.

**Composition majors continuing in the program will be expected to purchase this text.*

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES:

All students enrolled in MUCP 1180 *must fulfill the following pre-requisite requirements:*

- Admission to the College of Music;
- Enrollment in or completion of Theory I (MUTH 1400) and Aural Skills I (MUTH 1410).

All students enrolled in MUCP 3090 *must fulfill the following pre-requisite requirements:*

- Admission to the College of Music;
- Successful completion of all core MUTH courses (i.e., Theory I-IV and Aural Skills I-IV).

Students who do not meet the above requirements must make an appointment with the course instructor immediately or risk being *dropped from the course*.

Students enrolled in MUCP 1180 who have passed Theory I-IV and Aural Skills I-IV may wish to enroll in MUCP 3080 instead of 1180. The courses meet concurrently and have the same requirements, though they differ as follows:

- MUCP 3080 is 3 credit hours; MUCP 1180 is 2 credit hours;
- As a 3000-level course, MUCP 3080 may be applied toward advanced elective credits (e.g., for the Bachelor of Arts degree), whereas MUCP 1180 may not.

Please contact course instructor for more information; any changes must be made by the twelfth day of classes.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

General

The purpose of this course is to explore a variety of compositional techniques, repertoire, concepts, and aesthetics from the recent past, and to provide students interested in composition with the basic tools needed to compose effectively in contemporary idioms. Because music history and theory curricula focus primarily on music from the “common practice” era (c.1600-1900), this course supplements that material by focusing on music composed since 1900. Thus, it serves as an important foundation for the study of contemporary composition at the undergraduate level.

MUCP 1180 is required for all prospective undergraduate composition majors, and is also offered as an elective course for qualified non-composition majors (including BA students). MUCP 3080 fulfills a composition requirement for undergraduate theory and jazz arranging majors. Given the variety of students enrolled, the course attempts to achieve the following goals:

- To provide a broad foundation for future composition majors, enabling them to effectively practice their craft in a variety of contexts.
- To provide theory and jazz arranging majors with compositional experiences outside of those they are more familiar with in their respective degree programs.
- To provide non-composition majors with the tools necessary to understand and appreciate a wide variety of contemporary musical idioms and aesthetic perspectives.

The material covered in this course is critical to the understanding of current compositional trends; as a result, the amount of work required may be considered quite significant by many students.

Prospective composition majors who do not feel up to this challenge should seriously consider pursuing another major. Although MUCP 1180 may be taken concurrently with Theory I and Aural Skills I (MUTH 1400/1410), students who have little or no previous experience in theory and/or composition may find the material beyond their grasp at present. It is recommended that those students either consider another major or defer enrollment in this course until completing additional semesters of Theory and Aural Skills.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should attain the following skills:

- Understanding of a broader definition of the term “music” through exposure to contemporary musical idioms.
- Strategies for listening to unfamiliar music, with an understanding of the appropriate cultural, historical, theoretical, and aesthetic contexts.
- Development of critical thinking skills and the ability to assess “quality” in a wide variety of music.
- Recognition and application of various melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and structural materials.
- The ability to create short but cohesive and effective musical compositions, drawing upon a wide range of techniques and stylistic approaches.

Class meetings

The class meets three days each week and consists of three interrelated components:

- **Lecture:** includes intensive explorations of repertoire, techniques, concepts, and aesthetics presented in the listening, score study, and reading assignments. These topics set the context for the guided composition projects assigned throughout the semester.
- **Laboratory:** focuses primarily on the technical aspects of the composition projects and general compositional issues. Projects are read (performed) and discussed during the lab sessions and topics from the listening, score study, and reading assignments may be further explored through group discussions.
- **Departmental (MUSIC NOW):** These weekly meetings are attended by all of the composition students from entering freshmen to doctoral candidates. Because of the diversity of experience represented by the students in attendance, MUSIC NOW presentations may range from introductory-level to very advanced topics, and subjects run the gamut from commercial to avant-garde experimental music. These presentations are intended to expose students to current musical practices and issues, thus supplementing the more historical material covered in the lecture portion of the course. MUSIC NOW presentations include lectures, demonstrations, panel discussions, video presentations, and performances featuring guest artists, faculty, students, and alumni.

The regular meeting schedule is departmental (MUSIC NOW) on Mondays, lecture on Wednesdays, and laboratory on Fridays; however, this schedule may change in order to accommodate guest artists featured on MUSIC NOW (see schedule below for details).

ASSIGNMENTS:

Weekly assignments include guided **composition projects, listening and score study, readings** pertaining to contemporary music, and an online **journal**. Students are also required to submit a **concert review** of one of the three composition division events they are required to attend for this course. Guidelines for each of these assignments are included on the course website, and on the Blackboard site. *You are responsible for following these guidelines*, so please make sure you have read this information carefully. *It is important that these assignments are done in a timely manner*, as this material will be discussed during class meetings. Listening and score study materials are available on the *fourth floor of the Willis Library*: recordings are on reserve in the audio library, and are also available online at <https://audioreserves.library.unt.edu> (log in with EUID and password and select this course). Scores are available on carrel 433; you may remove them temporarily, but they are to be returned immediately after use. Reading assignments, as well as the project assignments, lecture materials, and other course information may be obtained from the course website: <http://www.courses.unt.edu/jklein/1180-3080>.

Examinations

You will note that *there are no examinations* for this course. However, students planning to continue in the composition program *will be tested on the content of MUCP 1180-1190 (3080-3090)* at the **Freshman Barrier Examination** prior to enrollment in MUCP 2180; refer to <http://music.unt.edu/comp/students/policies-procedures#undergrad/FBE> for details.

PORTFOLIO:

Students in this class—particularly those planning to continue as composition majors—are encouraged to maintain a course portfolio, which will contain the following:

- Composition project materials: an ample supply of lined staff paper, notebook paper, graph paper, and plain paper is recommended.

- Copies of reading materials, course handouts, and score examples: these may be used to prepare for the Freshman Barrier Examination and for reference during future academic work.
- Completed composition projects: prospective composition majors may wish to include these in the subsequent composition portfolio, which will be reviewed at critical points throughout the degree program (e.g., composition jury, senior recital hearing).

ATTENDANCE:

Since there is much material to cover during the course of the semester, punctuality is crucial; to this end, chronic tardiness will be considered in the attendance portion of the grade (for the purpose of grading, 3 late arrivals = 1 absence). *Students with more than **four** unexcused absences* (or the equivalent) *are subject to failure at the instructor's discretion*. Students are also expected to attend *at least three* concerts within the Division of Composition Studies (this is in addition to any concerts presented during MUSIC NOW). An attendance record will be available to sign at all composition division events including MUSIC NOW; *do not forget to sign this sheet in order to receive attendance credit!*

GRADING:

Final grades will be based upon *composition projects*, *supplementary assignments* (including *journals* and *concert reviews*), and *attendance/class participation* (including concert attendance) and distributed as follows:

- Composition projects (45%):
 - projects 1-6 (@ 5% ea.) 30%
 - final project/reading 15%
- Supplementary assignments (30%):
 - journals 25%
 - concert review 5%
- Attendance/participation: 25%

Students may keep track of their progress by viewing their grades on Blackboard (<https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct>). Please inform the course instructor or teaching assistant immediately if you notice any discrepancies or missing grades.

HANDOUTS:

The following handouts will be distributed on the first day of class, and are available on the course website; make sure you have reviewed these materials by the end of the first week of classes:

- Course Syllabus • Course Survival Guide • Preliminary Survey • Preliminary Assignment

Additionally, a list of scores and recordings and assigned readings are available for download on the course website.

NOTES:

The College of Music complies with the **Americans with Disabilities Act** in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like to request accommodation, please contact the instructor of this course as soon as possible.

The **UNT Code of Student Conduct** provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty and disruptive behavior in the classroom. Further information, including consequences for unacceptable behavior, may be found at http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html.

The **Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness** (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to students at the end of the semester, providing a chance to evaluate this course; further instructions will be provided at that time. *You are strongly encouraged to complete this online survey prior to the end of the semester.*

SCHEDULE (*subject to change*):

1 January 18: LECTURE—MU 287

- Course introduction
- READING: Copland — “How We Listen”; Stucky — “Listening to Contemporary Music”;
- LISTENING: Corigliano — Symphony No. 1; Pärt — *Magnificat*; Ferneyhough — *La chûte d'Icare*
- ASSIGNMENT: Review all course handouts prior to next class meeting

January 20: LAB—MEIT

- Preliminary assignment: survey, study groups
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #1 (notation/transposition study)

2 January 23: MUSIC NOW —Composer Per Boland

January 25: LECTURE

- Listening to music
- Project #1 —discussion
- READING: Slonimsky — “Introduction”
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers

January 27: MUSIC NOW —Composer Christopher Moore

3 January 30: MUSIC NOW— Composer Panayiotis Kokoras

February 1:

- Composing a melody
- Project #2—discussion; schedule readings
- DUE: Project #1 (notation/transposition study)
- READING: Dallin — Chapter 2; Gann — “Killers in the Audience”
- LISTENING: Britten—*Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*; Shostakovich—Symphony No. 5
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #2 (text setting with tonal melody)

February 3: MUSIC NOW— Composer Susan Botti

4 February 6:

- Impressionism, Exoticism; New melodic resources I
- LISTENING: Debussy—*Voiles*; Ravel — *Ma Mère l'Oye* (suite); Scriabin — Piano Sonata No. 6
- DUE: Journal entries (Section I)

February 8:

- Project #2—readings (individual meetings)

February 10: (with 1190/3090 class)

- Structure, form, and process

5 February 13:

- New melodic resources II
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #3 (melodic variations)
- DUE: Project #2 (text setting with tonal melody)

February 15:

- Project #3—discussion
- READING: Bartók — “The Problem with the New Music”; Messiaen — *Technique of my Musical Language* (excerpts)
- LISTENING: Bartók — *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celeste*; Messiaen — *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*

February 17: MUSIC NOW — Composer **Jay Alan Walls**

6 February 20: MUSIC NOW — Guest composers from Sichuan Conservatory (Chengdu, China)

February 22:

- Microtonality
- READING: Partch — “Author’s Preface”
- LISTENING: Ives — *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces*; Partch — *Barstow*

February 24:

- Project #3—readings

7 February 27: MUSIC NOW — Composer **Paul Wilson**

February 29:

- New harmonic resources
- READING: Hindemith — “Musical Inspiration”
- LISTENING: Debussy — *Sarabande*; Hindemith — *Kammermusik*; Cowell — *Tides of Manaunaun*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #4 (harmonic variations)
- DUE: Project #3 (melodic variations)

March 2:

- Project #4—discussion

8 Week of March 5: Individual student meetings (*required*); schedule TBA

March 5: MUSIC NOW

March 7: LECTURE

- Primitivism, Neoclassicism, Nationalism
- READING: Select one article each by two different authors at newmusicbox.org
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Octet; Bartók — String Quartet No. 4
- DUE: Journal entries (Section II)

March 9: LAB

- Project #4—readings

9 March 12:

- Polytonality
- READING: Stucky — “New Music and the Masterpiece Syndrome”;
- LISTENING: Milhaud — *Saudades do Brasil* (Book I); Stravinsky — *Petrouchka*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5 (polytonal study)
- DUE: Project #4 (harmonic variations)

March 14: MUSIC NOW — guest artists from **Zeitgeist**

March 16:

- Project #5—discussion

Week of March 19: SPRING BREAK

10 March 26: MUSIC NOW

March 27: *last day to withdraw from course with a grade of W!*

March 28:

- Free atonality I
- READING: Select one article each by two different authors at newmusicbox.org
- LISTENING: Select one work each by two UNT faculty composers

March 30:

- Project #5—readings

11 April 2:

- Free atonality II; Expressionism
- READING: Schoenberg — “Heart and Brain in Music”; Berg — “What is Atonality?”
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — *Pierrot Lunaire* (Nos. 1, 5, 7, 8, 16, 17, 21); Berg — *Wozzeck* (Act III); Webern — *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 10
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #6a (12-tone matrix)
- DUE: Project #5 (harmonic variations)

April 4: MUSIC NOW — guest guitarist **Stefan Östersjö**

April 6: LAB

- Project #6a—discussion

12 April 9:

- Dodecaphony
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — *Variations for Orchestra*; Berg — *Violin Concerto*; Webern — *Concerto*, Op. 24;
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #6b (12-tone study); Final Project

April 11:

- Project #6b—discussion
- DUE: Project #6a (matrix); Journal entries (Section III)

April 13: MUSIC NOW — guest composer **Steven Bryant**

13 April 16: MUSIC NOW

April 18:

- Influences of dodecaphony; Integral (total) serialism I
- READING: Stravinsky — “About Music Today”
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*; Copland — *Inscape*

April 20:

- Project #6b—readings
- DUE: Final Project Information sheet

14 NOTE: This is the last week of concerts at the UNT College of Music for the semester!

April 23: MUSIC NOW

April 25:

- Integral (total) serialism II
- READING: Boulez — “Schoenberg is Dead”; Babbitt — “The Composer as Specialist”
- LISTENING: Babbitt — *Three Compositions for Piano*; Messiaen — *Modes de valeurs et d’intensités*; Boulez — *Le marteau sans maître*
- DUE: Project #6b (12-tone study)

April 27:

- Final projects; Final Project Information sheets reviewed and returned

15 April 30: (with 1180/3080 class)

- Postmodernism
- READING: Zappa — *The Real Frank Zappa Book* (excerpts)
- LISTENING: Zappa — *The Yellow Shark* [album] (excerpts); Zorn — *Road Runner*; Wolfe — *Tell Me Everything*

May 2:

- Concluding discussions
- DUE: Journal entries (Section IV); Concert Review

May 4: NO CLASS MEETING (optional Final Project Readings — extra credit attendance!)

- **ASSIGNMENT: Complete SETE online class evaluation**
- **NOTE: This is the last day to turn in any late homework!**

16 Wednesday, May 9—9:30 AM-12:30 PM, MEIT (Final Examination Time*)

- Final Project Readings (combined 1180/3080 and 1190/3090)
- DUE: Final project

* *NOTE: This session will start one hour earlier than the posted final exam time, as there will be many projects to read. Please plan on staying for at least two hours of the reading session!*