

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

Spring 2011

class meetings: M 11:00-11:50 am (MUSIC NOW)—Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theater (MEIT, MU 1001)
 W 11:00-11:50 am (lecture)—MU 287
 F 11:00-11:50 am (laboratory)—MEIT & MU 116

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

SYLLABUS

REQUIRED TEXT:

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

RECOMMENDED TEXTS (on reserve):

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

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

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

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES:

All students enrolled in this course *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).

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 Dr. Klein 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. 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:

- Acceptance 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: This component is taught by Dr. Klein and 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: This component is taught by the teaching assistants(s), and 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 a **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 supplementary handouts (see list below); *you are responsible for following these guidelines*, so please make sure you have this information. *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; scores are on carrel 433 (and are to be returned immediately after use). Reading assignments (other than those from the required texts), 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.*

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 in a relatively short period of time, 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%

HANDOUTS:

The following handouts are available on the course website; make sure you have *hard copies in your possession* and that you have *read **all*** of them *by the end of the first week of classes*:

- Course Syllabus
- Survival Guide
- Concert Review & Journal Guidelines
- Scores/Recordings
- Terminology
- Composition Project Guidelines
- Course Readings
- Preliminary Survey

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 19: LECTURE—MU 287

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

January 21: LAB—MEIT

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

2 January 24: MUSIC NOW — Guest composer William Bolcom

January 26: LECTURE

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

January 28: LAB

- Project #1—discussion

3 January 30: MUSIC NOW—Guest artists Konstantinos Karathanasis & Ricardo Coelho de Souza

February 2: LECTURE

- Composing a melody
- 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 4: LAB

- Project #2—discussion; schedule readings
- DUE: Project #1 (notation/transposition study)

4 February 7: LECTURE

- Impressionism, Exoticism; New melodic resources I
- READING: Cope — Chapter 3
- LISTENING: Debussy—*Voiles*; Ravel — *Ma Mère l'Oye* (suite); Scriabin — Piano Sonata No. 6

February 9: MUSIC NOW— Guest composer Julia Wolfe

February 11: LAB

- Project #2—readings (individual meetings)
- DUE: Journal entries (Section I)

5 February 14: LECTURE (with 1190/3090 class)

- Structure, form, and process
- 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 16: LECTURE

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

February 18: LAB

- Project #3—discussion

6 February 21: MUSIC NOW

February 23: LECTURE

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

February 25: LAB

- Project #3—readings

7 February 25: MUSIC NOW

March 2: LECTURE

- New harmonic resources
- READING: Cope — Chapters 4 & 5; Hindemith — “Musical Inspiration”
- LISTENING: Debussy—*Sarabande*; Hindemith—*Kammermusik*; Cowell—*Tides of Manaunaun*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #4 (harmonic variations)
- DUE: Project #3 (melodic variations)

March 4: LAB

- Project #4—discussion

8 Week of March 7: Individual student meetings (*required*); schedule TBA

March 7: MUSIC NOW

March 9: LECTURE

- Primitivism, Neoclassicism, Nationalism
- READING: Select one article each by three different authors at newmusicbox.org
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Octet; Bartók — String Quartet No. 4

March 11: LAB

- Project #4—readings
- DUE: Journal entries (Section II)

Week of March 14: SPRING BREAK

9 March 21: LECTURE

- Polytonality
- READING: Cope — Chapter 2; 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 23: LAB

- Project #5—discussion

March 25: MUSIC NOW — iARTA guest artists **Paul Demarinis** and **David Dunn**

10 March 28: MUSIC NOW

March 29: last day to withdraw from course with a grade of W!

March 30: LECTURE

- 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

April 1: LAB

- Project #5—readings

11 April 4: MUSIC NOW

April 6: LECTURE

- 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 8: LAB

- Project #6a—discussion

12 April 11: MUSIC NOW

April 13: LECTURE

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

April 15: LAB

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

13 April 18: MUSIC NOW

April 20: LECTURE

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

April 22: LAB

- 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 25: MUSIC NOW

April 27: LECTURE

- 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 29: LAB

- Final projects; Final Project Information sheets reviewed and returned

15 May 2: LECTURE (with 1190/3090 class)

- Postmodernism
- READING: Cope — Chapter 21; Zappa — *The Real Frank Zappa Book* (excerpts)
- LISTENING: Zappa — *The Yellow Shark* [album] (excerpts); Zorn — *Road Runner*; Wolfe — *Tell Me Everything*

May 4: LECTURE

- Concluding discussions
- DUE: Journal entries (Section IV); Concert Review
- **NOTE: This is the last day to turn in any late homework!**

May 6: NO CLASS MEETING

- **ASSIGNMENT: Complete SETE online class evaluation**

16 Monday, 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!**