

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

## Spring 2010

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 295

instructor: Joseph Klein  
 e-mail: joseph.klein@unt.edu  
 office: MU 2005

teaching assistant: Da Jeong (Juliana) Choi  
 e-mail: dajeong\_choi@yahoo.com  
 teaching assistant: Josh Harris  
 e-mail: harris.jk@gmail.com  
 TA office: Bain 215

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.

### SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (on reserve):

Dallin, Leon. *Techniques of Twentieth Century Composition*. Dubuque, Iowa, W.C. Brown Co., 1974.

Donato, Anthony. *Preparing Musical Manuscript*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977; 1963.

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*:

1. Admission to the College of Music;
2. Successful completion of the Theory Placement Examination;
3. Enrollment in or completion of Theory I (MUTH 1400) and Aural Skills I (MUTH 1410).

Students who do not meet *all* of the above requirements *will be 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, but with the following differences:

1. MUCP 3080 is 3 credit hours; MUCP 1180 is 2 credit hours;
2. 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 (1750-1900), this course supplements that material by focusing on music composed since 1900. Thus, it serves as an important foundation for the study of composition at the undergraduate level. The course is required for all undergraduate composition majors (MUCP 1180) as well as theory and jazz studies majors (MUCP 3080), but is also open to qualified undergraduate and graduate students in all areas of music.

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 it is intended for this course to 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.

### **Class meetings**

The class includes three components, meeting three days per week:

1. Lectures: 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.
2. Laboratories: 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.
3. Departmentals (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 video presentations, lectures, demonstrations, panel discussions, 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 (not including those 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 *in good standing* who wish to submit extra credit work should discuss this with the course instructor; options include attendance at additional division events and/or an extra concert review. Such extra credit work *will not be accepted in lieu of regular assignments*.

## HANDOUTS:

The following handouts are available on the course website; make sure you have *downloaded* and *read **all*** of them *by the end of the first week of classes*:

- |                   |                   |                                       |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Course Syllabus | • Course Readings | • Preliminary Survey                  |
| • Repertoire List | • Survival Guide  | • Concert Review & Journal Guidelines |
| • Class CD List   | • Terminology     | • Composition Project Guidelines      |

## 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 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.

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 comment on 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 20:** LECTURE—MU 287

- Course introduction
- READING: Cope — Chapter 1; Vores — “Musical Literacy”; Copland — “How We Listen”
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers

### **January 22:** LAB—MEIT

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

### 2 **January 25:** MUSIC NOW

#### **January 27:** LECTURE

- Listening to music; basics of composition
- READING: Stucky — “Listening to Contemporary Music”; Slonimsky — “Introduction”
- LISTENING: Debussy — *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*; Stravinsky — *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Bartók — String Quartet No. 4

**January 29:** LAB

- Project #1 —discussion

**3 February 1:** MUSIC NOW

**February 3:** LECTURE

- Composing a melody
- READING: Dallin — Chapter 2
- LISTENING: Britten—*Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*; Shostakovich—Symphony No. 5
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #2 (text setting with tonal melody)

**February 5:** LAB

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

**4 February 8:** LECTURE

- Impressionism, Exoticism; New melodic resources I
- READING: Cope — Chapter 3
- LISTENING: Debussy—*Voiles*; Stravinsky — Octet; Ravel — *Ma Mère l'Oye* (suite)

**February 10:** MUSIC NOW— Guest composer **Libby Larsen**

**February 12:** LAB

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

**5 February 15:** 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 17:** LECTURE

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

**February 19:** LAB

- Project #3—discussion

**6 February 22:** LECTURE

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

**February 24:** MUSIC NOW — Guest composer **Michael Colgrass**

**February 26: LAB**

- Project #3—readings

**7 March 1: MUSIC NOW**

**March 3: 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 5: LAB**

- Project #4—discussion

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

**March 8: MUSIC NOW** — Guest composer **Pauline Oliveros**

**March 10: LECTURE**

- Nationalism, Primitivism, Neoclassicism
- READING: Cope — Chapter 2; Stucky — “New Music and the Masterpiece Syndrome”;
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers

**March 12: LAB**

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

**Week of March 15: SPRING BREAK**

**9 March 22: LECTURE**

- Polytonality
- READING: Ives — “Postface to *114 Songs*”
- LISTENING: Milhaud — *Saudades do Brasil* (Book I); Stravinsky — *Petrouchka*; Ives — *Three Places in New England*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5 (polytonal study)
- DUE: Project #4 (harmonic variations)

**March 24: LAB**

- Project #5—discussion

**March 26: MUSIC NOW** — Panel discussion with composers **Claude Baker** and **Libby Larsen**, saxophonist **Eugene Rousseau**, and conductor **David Itkin**

**10 March 29: MUSIC NOW**

***March 30: last day to withdraw from course with a grade of W!***

**March 31: LECTURE**

- Free atonality; Expressionism
- READING: Schoenberg — “Heart and Brain in Music”; Berg — “What is Atonality?”
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — *Pierrot Lunaire* (excerpts); Berg — *Wozzeck* (Act III);  
Webern — *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 10;

**April 2: LAB**

- Project #5—readings

**11 April 5: MUSIC NOW — Guest composer Harvey Sollberger**

**April 7: LECTURE**

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

**April 9: LAB**

- Project #6a—discussion
- DUE: Project #5 (harmonic variations)

**12 April 12: MUSIC NOW**

**April 14: LECTURE**

- Influences of dodecaphony
- READING: Stravinsky — “About Music Today”
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*; Copland — *Inscape*
- DUE: Journal entries (Section III)
- ASSIGNMENT: Final Project

**April 16: LAB**

- Project #6b—discussion
- DUE: Project #6a (matrix)

**13 April 19: MUSIC NOW**

**April 21: LECTURE**

- Integral (total) serialism
- READING: Boulez — “Schönberg 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*

**April 23: 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 26:** MUSIC NOW

**April 28:** LECTURE

- Reactions to serialism: a return to tonality
- READING: Rochberg — “Reflections on the Renewal of Music”
- LISTENING: Rochberg — String Quartet No. 3; Pärt — *Magnificat*
- DUE: Project #6b (12-tone study)

**April 30:** LAB

- Final projects; Final Project Information sheets reviewed and returned

**15** **May 3:** 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*
- DUE: Concert Review

**May 5:** LECTURE

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

**May 7:** NO CLASS MEETING

- *ASSIGNMENT: Complete SETE online class evaluation*

**16** **Friday, May 14—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!*