

BEGINNING COMPOSITION I (MUCP 1180)

SYLLABUS — Fall 2017

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 or MU 295

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Blackboard: <https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct>

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

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).

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 3090 instead of 1180. The courses meet concurrently and have the same requirements, though they differ as follows:

- MUCP 3090 is 3 credit hours; MUCP 1180 is 2 credit hours;
- Much of the material in MUCP 1180 will have been covered in Theory IV, whereas MUCP 3090 covers mostly new material;
- 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). 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:

- The ability to create short but cohesive and effective musical compositions, drawing upon a wide range of techniques and stylistic approaches.
- Broadening one's definition of the term "music" through exposure to contemporary musical idioms.
- Developing strategies for listening to unfamiliar music, with an understanding of the appropriate cultural, historical, theoretical, and aesthetic contexts.
- Developing critical thinking skills and the ability to assess "quality" in a variety of music.
- Recognizing and applying various melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and structural materials.

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 as follows: 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:

Regular assignments include guided **composition projects**, **listening** and **score study**, **readings** pertaining to contemporary music, and posting your reflections on the assigned works on a **discussion board**.

Guidelines for each of these assignments are included on the course Blackboard website

(<https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct>). *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. Most of the listening and score study materials are available on YouTube; however materials not available online may be found on the *fourth floor of the Willis Library* or on the UNT library website (<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 Blackboard website: <https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct>.

Examinations

There will be three online **quizzes** on repertoire and terminology covered during the course of the semester; these will be short, multiple-choice exams that are to be taken on Blackboard by the end of the day Sunday on those weeks that the quiz is administered (see schedule below for details). Note that *there is no final examination* for this course. Students planning to continue in the composition program *will be tested comprehensively on the content of MUCP 1180-1190* at the **Freshman Barrier Examination** prior to enrollment in MUCP 2180; refer to <http://composition.music.unt.edu/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:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings (including weekly Music Now events) as well as all events presented within the Division of Composition Studies. Events are listed on the Composition Division website (<http://composition.music.unt.edu/calendar>); *make a note of these events at the beginning of the semester and plan your schedule accordingly*. 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!*

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.*

GRADING:

Final grades will be based upon *composition projects, discussion boards, quizzes, and attendance/class participation* (which includes concert attendance) and distributed as follows:

- Composition projects (40%):
 - Projects 1-5 (5% ea.) 25%
 - Final project/reading 15%
- Discussion boards (9 @ 3% ea.): 27%
- Quizzes (3 @ 3% ea.): 9%
- Attendance/participation: 24%

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
- Preliminary Survey
- Notation Exercise

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

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

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; you are expected to check your UNT email account on a regular basis (or have those messages auto-forwarded to your personal email address) in order to keep apprised of course-related information. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu.

Academic Dishonesty: Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, 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.

Acceptable 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 classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Disabilities: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation

(ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at disability.unt.edu. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress: An undergraduate 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 registered hours per term. 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. 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. Please visit <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It is recommended that you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.

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 Blackboard 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 at the following link: essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT): Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will be made available April 18 – May 1 to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. For the spring 2016 semester you will receive an email on April 18 (12:01 a.m.) from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete your survey. Once you complete the survey you will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

SCHEDULE (*subject to change*):

1 August 28: MUSIC NOW

- Introductory meeting and CEMI open house

August 30: LECTURE—MU 287

- Course introduction; Listening to music
- LISTENING: Britten—*Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*; Shostakovich—Symphony No. 5
- READING: Copland — “How We Listen”; Gould — *Behind Bars*, Ch. 1
- ASSIGNMENT: Notation Exercise

September 1: LAB (combined sections)—MEIT

- Divide into study groups
- Discuss Notation Exercise
- DUE: Preliminary Survey

2 September 4: NO CLASS (Labor Day)

September 6: LECTURE—MU 287

- Composing a melody
- LISTENING: Schnittke — Concerto Grosso No. 3 (excerpts: II. Toccata; III. Recitativo); Schwanter — *...And the Mountains Rising Nowhere*; Ferneyhough— *La chute d'Icare*
- READING: Dallin — Chapter 2; Stucky — “Listening to Contemporary Music”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody); Discussion Board #1 (Weeks 1-2)

September 8: LAB—MEIT

- Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody)—discussion; schedule readings (individual meetings)

3 September 11: MUSIC NOW

September 13: LECTURE

- Basics of composition
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers
- READING: Slonimsky — “Introduction”
- DUE: Project #1 pre-compositional sketches, for review by TA in class

September 15: LAB

- Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody)—readings (individual meetings)

4 September 18: LECTURE

- New melodic resources I; Impressionism, Exoticism
- LISTENING: Debussy— *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*; Voiles; Ravel — *Ma Mère l'Oye* (suite)
- READING: Gann — “What Composers Talk About”; Service — “Five Myths About Contemporary Classical Music”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #2 (melodic variations); Discussion Board #2 (Week 3-4)
- DUE: Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody)

September 20: LAB

- Project #2 (melodic variations)—discussion

September 22: MUSIC NOW — Guest composer Ethan Wickman

5 September 25: MUSIC NOW— Composer-in-Residence Bruce Broughton

September 27: LECTURE

- New melodic resources II
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers
- READING: Select one article each by three different authors at newmusicbox.org
- ASSIGNMENT: Online Quiz #1 (Blackboard)
- DUE: Project #2 pre-compositional sketches, for review by TA in class

September 29: LAB

- Project #2 (melodic variations)—readings

6 October 2: MUSIC NOW

October 4: LECTURE

- New harmonic resources I
- LISTENING: Debussy — *Sarabande*; Hindemith — *Kammermusik*; Cowell — *Tides of Manaunaun*
- READING: Hindemith — “Musical Inspiration”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #3 (harmonic variations); Discussion Board #3 (Week 6)
- DUE: Project #2 (melodic variations)

October 6: LAB

- Project #3 (harmonic variations)—discussion

7 October 9: MUSIC NOW— Guest Composer Tom Cipullo

October 11: LECTURE

- Primitivism, Neoclassicism, Nationalism
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Octet; Bartók — String Quartet No. 4
- READING: Bartók — “The Problem with the New Music”
- DUE: Project #3 pre-compositional sketches, for review by TA in class

October 13: LAB

- Project #3 (harmonic variations)—readings

8 October 16: MUSIC NOW

October 18: LECTURE

- Polytonality
- LISTENING: Milhaud — *Saudades do Brasil* (Book I); Stravinsky — *Petrouchka*
- READING: Stravinsky — from *Poetics of Music*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #4 (polytonal study; Discussion Board #4 (Weeks 7-8)
- DUE: Project #3 (harmonic variations)

October 20: LAB

- Project #4 (polytonal study)—discussion

9 October 23: LECTURE — MU 287 (combined with MUCP 1190/3090)

- Structure, form, and process
- LISTENING: Bartók — *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celeste*; Messiaen — *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*
- READING: Messiaen — *Technique of my Musical Language* (excerpts)
- ASSIGNMENT: Discussion Board #5 (Week 9)

October 25: LECTURE

- Free atonality I
- DUE: Project #4 pre-compositional sketches, for review by TA in class

October 27: LAB

- Project #4 (polytonal study)—readings

10 Week of October 30: Individual student meetings (*required*); schedule TBA

October 30: LECTURE

- Free atonality II; Expressionism
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — *Pierrot Lunaire* (Nos. 1, 5, 7, 8, 16, 17, 21); Berg — *Wozzeck* (Act III); Webern — *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 10
- READING: Schoenberg — “Heart and Brain in Music”; Berg — “What is Atonality?”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5a (12-tone matrix); Online Quiz #2 (Blackboard)

November 1: LAB

- Project #5a (12-tone matrix)—discussion
- DUE: Project #4 (polytonal study)

November 3: MUSIC NOW — Guest Composer Robert Beaser

11 November 6: MUSIC NOW

- *Last day to withdraw from course with a grade of W!*

November 8: LECTURE

- Dodecaphony
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — Variations for Orchestra; Berg — Violin Concerto; Webern — Concerto, Op. 24
- READING: Ross — “Why Do We Hate Modern Classical Music?”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5b (12-tone study); Discussion Board #6 (Weeks 10-11)
- DUE: Project #5a (12-tone matrix)

November 10: LAB

- Project #5b (12-tone study)—discussion
- ASSIGNMENT: Final Project

12 November 13: MUSIC NOW

November 15: LECTURE

- Influences of serialism
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *Requiem Canticles*; Copland — *Inscape*
- READING: Stravinsky — “About Music Today”
- DUE: Project #5b pre-compositional sketches, for review by TA in class

November 17: LAB

- Project #5b (12-tone study)—readings
- DUE: Final Project Proposal

13 November 20: LECTURE

- Integral (total) serialism I
- LISTENING: Babbitt — *Three Compositions for Piano*; Messiaen — *Modes de valeurs et d'intensités*; Boulez — *Le marteau sans maître*
- READING: Boulez — “Schoenberg is Dead”; Babbitt — “The Composer as Specialist”
- ASSIGNMENT: Discussion Board #7 (Weeks 12-13)

November 22: LAB

- Approved Final Project Proposals returned
- DUE: Project #5b (12-tone study)

November 24: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Day)

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

November 27: MUSIC NOW

November 29: LECTURE

- Principles of Acoustics; Microtonality
- LISTENING: Ives — *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces*; Partch — *Barstow*
- READING: Partch — “Author’s Preface”
- ASSIGNMENT: Discussion Board #8 (Week 14)

December 1: LAB

- Final Project—discussion
- DUE: Final Project pre-compositional sketches

15 December 4: LECTURE — MU 287 (combined with MUCP 1190/3090)

- Explorations in timbre and texture
- LISTENING: Varèse — *Intégrales*; Ligeti — *Atmospheres*; Penderecki — *Threnody*
- READING: Ligeti — “Ligeti [interviews] Ligeti”
- ASSIGNMENT: Online Quiz #3 (Blackboard); Discussion Board #9 (Week 15)

December 6: LECTURE — MU 287 (combined with MUCP 1190/3090)

- Concluding discussions

December 8: READING DAY

- Optional Final Project readings in MEIT (TBA); *attendance extra credit*
- **NOTE: This is the last day to submit any pending assignments!**

16 Monday, December 11—9:30 AM-12:30 PM, MEIT (Final Examination Time*)

- Final Project Readings
- 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!**