

CONTEMPORARY MATERIALS & TECHNIQUES I (MUCP 1180)

SYLLABUS — Fall 2020

class meetings: M 11:00 am - 12:20 pm (MUSIC NOW)—Zoom
 W 11:00-11:50 am (lecture)—Recital Hall (Klein)/Zoom
 F 11:00-11:50 am (labs)—Recital Hall (Reed), MEIT, MU 1001 (Smith),
 MA113 (Yasarlar)/Zoom

course instructor: Dr. Joseph Klein
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NOTE: Office hours will be posted on the respective instructors' office doors and posted on Canvas by the second week of classes.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Gould, Elaine. *Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*. London: Faber Music, 2011.
Other recommended texts are included in the Course Readings sheet, which is posted on Canvas.

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 in the spring semester instead of 1180 in the fall. Please contact course instructor for more information.

COURSE STRUCTURE:**General:**

The purpose of this course is to explore a variety of compositional techniques, concepts, and aesthetics from the concert music repertoire of the recent past, and to apply them within guided composition projects, thus providing students interested in composition with the basic tools needed to compose effectively in contemporary concert music idioms. Because music history and theory curricula focus primarily on music from the “common practice” era in Western Art Music (c.1600-1900), this course supplements that material by focusing on concert 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 within the concert music tradition.

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 music theory and/or composition may find the material beyond their grasp at present. In those cases, it is recommended that 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 within the practice of contemporary concert music.
- Broadening one's understanding of the term "music" through exposure to a variety of 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:** Taught by the primary course instructor, these comprise 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:** Taught by the teaching assistants, these focus primarily on the technical aspects of the composition projects and general compositional issues. Projects are workshopped (read) and discussed during the lab sessions, and topics from the listening, score study, and reading assignments may be further explored through small group discussions.
- **Departmental (MUSIC NOW):** These weekly meetings are scheduled on Mondays at 11:00 am – 12:20 pm, and are attended by all of the composition students active in the program (from entering freshmen to doctoral candidates, including non-composition majors). 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 this course. MUSIC NOW presentations include lectures, demonstrations, panel discussions, video presentations, and performances featuring guest artists, faculty, students, and alumni. *NOTE: During the fall 2020 semester, Music Now will meet every other week over Zoom; please refer to the schedule below and the online Composition Division calendar for details.*

CANVAS:

The course syllabus will be posted on Canvas by the first class day, and project guidelines will be posted at appropriate times during the semester. These and other materials are available on the course **Canvas site**, and may be downloaded throughout the semester. Make sure you have explored the Canvas site by the end of the first week of class, and that you are familiar with all of the resources that are available there—including listening and reading assignments, weekly logs, lecture slides, quizzes, terminology, and other information.

Additionally, all students enrolled in the course will be expected to complete the online **Preliminary Survey** by the lab meeting at the end of the first week. This survey will not only provide important advisory information for the course instructors, but will include information regarding available performing forces for the lab workshop sessions throughout the semester. Students will be able to access names, instruments, and email contacts for all of the students enrolled in class, which may be used as a resource for project workshops, as well as the final project presentation.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Weekly Assignments:

Regular assignments include the following:

- Guided **composition projects**
- **Listening/score study**
- **Readings** (articles, book chapters) pertaining to contemporary music
- **Weekly log** postings, documenting your observations on the assigned works and readings.

Guidelines for each of these assignments are included on the course Canvas website. *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 online (YouTube, Soundcloud, etc.), which are linked from Canvas. Reading assignments—as well as the project assignments, lecture materials, and other course information—may be obtained from the course Canvas website. *Please carefully read the grading rubric for each assignment prior to submission.*

Final Project:

The **final project** is a 3- to 5-minute composition for up to five performers, which is either an elaboration/development of one of the previous composition projects, or an entirely new composition that *applies at least two of the contemporary techniques covered in class*. All students who are planning to major in composition are expected to present their work during the final examination time.

NOTE: Students missing more than one composition project grade, those who have not had projects read previously in class, and/or those whose projected course grade is below 70% will not be eligible to have their final projects read. Because the University will transition to completely remote instruction following Thanksgiving break due to ongoing COVID-19 protocols, final projects will not be read in class, but will be presented via Zoom during the final examination time. Students must plan accordingly as to how their works will be presented (e.g., live performance via Zoom, recorded performance, multi-tracked recording, etc.). MIDI realizations, while discouraged, may be considered in exceptional cases.

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 Canvas 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 the online Composition Student Handbook (<https://composition.music.unt.edu/composition-handbook#B-04>) for details.

Notation:

All composition projects are to be *copied by hand*, properly formatted, legible, and conforming to proper notational conventions (refer to Gould's *Behind Bars*). However, those students who wish to use computer notation on their final project may be approved to do so after completing a special project demonstrating their skills with an approved music notation software (preferably Finale, Sibelius, or Dorico). This project is optional, and required only of students who request to use notation software for the final project. This notation project may be submitted at any time during the semester; however, permission to use notation software will not be granted until an acceptable project has been submitted and approved by the instructors.

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: in addition to being useful for reference, prospective composition majors may wish to develop the more substantial projects for their subsequent composition portfolio, which will be reviewed at critical points throughout the degree program (e.g., composition jury, final portfolio review hearing).

Students are encouraged to compose for a variety of instruments/voices and ensembles, as a diverse portfolio is required of all composition majors.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

Class will be taught in a blended format, with some meetings presented face-to-face (as well as synchronous remote) and others presented exclusively as synchronous remote. Students are expected to attend all class meetings (either remotely or in-person, including bi-weekly Music Now events) as well as *at least three* of the live-streamed events sponsored by 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.* Attendance will be taken by Zoom for the Music Now meetings; attendance procedures for live-streamed events will be posted on Canvas early in the semester.

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 be dropped from the course or failed at the instructor's discretion.*

Participation is critical in this class, and will be reflected in the final course grade. Students are expected to be adequately prepared to have their projects workshopped in the labs (as assigned) and to regularly perform in their classmates' projects. Additionally, students will be expected to participate in class discussions, such as critiquing student projects during the workshops.

Important note for Fall 2020: *While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact the instructor or your lab TA if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with your instructors **prior to being absent** so that we may determine how best to accommodate your situation and whether or not an excused absence is warranted.*

GRADING:

Projects:

Composition projects will be graded on the following criteria:

- **Effectiveness** in applying procedures according to the assignment; includes submission of pre-composition work for review by TA.
- Overall **musicality**, including use of expressive markings, dynamics, phrasing, articulations, and sensitivity to instrumental/vocal ranges and capabilities
- Proper musical **notation**, including rhythms, pitches, and correct transpositions—score and parts.
- **Presentation**: manuscript and score layout, including spacing, margins, correct size paper, and overall neatness (score and parts). This also applies to presentation of the electronic files that are uploaded to Canvas—e.g., clear scans/photos, properly formatted and organized, and compiled into a single document.
- Insights provided in accompanying **commentary/analysis**. These should be technically substantive and thorough, and must address any specific questions raised in the project guidelines.
- **Preparation** of projects that are read or workshopped in class.

A grading rubric will be provided for each project in Canvas, with specific weightings for each of the above criteria.

Weekly Logs:

Logs are graded on a 10-point scale, with roughly the following letter grade equivalents:

8-10 pts. = A 7-8 pts. = B 4-5 pts. = C 2-3 pts. = D 0-1 pts. = F

Grading is based on the following criteria:

- General **engagement with the material**—specifically in relation to the class lecture that week. This means you should focus your discussion primarily on technical issues related to composition rather than expressive or extra-musical references.
- An **ability to write about music** in a cogent way. This includes how you work examples into an argument—most effectively by identifying an example clearly (e.g., with a time stamp or measure number), describing in adequate detail how the given passage is significant, and succinctly explaining why.
- **Writing style**. This includes how you organize your comments and how effectively you are able to communicate your point.
- A clear **understanding of the material**, as demonstrated in the substance of your comments.

A more detailed grading rubric will be provided in Canvas.

Cumulative:

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

- Composition projects (40%):
 - Projects 1-5 (5% ea.): 25%
 - Final project: 15%
- Weekly logs (15): 25%
- Quizzes (3): 10%
- Attendance: 15%
(including concert attendance)
- Participation: 10%

Students may keep track of their progress by viewing their grades on Canvas. Please inform the course instructor or teaching assistant immediately if you notice any discrepancies or missing grades.

COVID-19 INFORMATION:

- On June 25, 2020 the UNT community was notified of the new requirement to wear face masks at all campus locations, including in the classroom. Students who are non-compliant (with the exception of those with an approved exemption due to health or disability reasons) will be asked to leave the classroom, for the safety and well-being of others.
- Because classrooms will be used throughout the day, students are encouraged to carry their own personal supply of hand sanitizers and cleaning wipes for extra safety.
- There will be an assigned seating chart for all in-person classes, including the course lecture and lab meetings for this class. Please sit in your assigned seat each class meeting. You are encouraged to use cleaning wipes to disinfect any hard surfaces that you will be in contact with.
- Entry and exit to and from the classroom will be standardized and controlled, in order to maintain safe social distancing protocols. These will be discussed by the instructors during the first week of class.
- Students who test positive for COVID-19 should email Emergency.management@unt.edu or call the COVID hotline at (940) 369-6152.
- The official website for the UNT System response to COVID-19 is <https://www.untsystem.edu/covid-19>. The best resource for health alerts regarding COVID-19 on the UNT campus is the UNT Health and Wellness Center website on Coronavirus Updates: <https://healthalerts.unt.edu>.
- The safety and well-being of all students is a primary concern during this time; so your awareness of and adherence to these guidelines is greatly appreciated.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

In addition to the above information pertaining specifically to this course, the following links provide important information regarding general University policies. Students should familiarize themselves with these policies:

Academic Integrity: <https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final.pdf>

Student Behavior: <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. For more information, please visit eagleconnect.unt.edu/.

ODA Information: disability.unt.edu; phone: (940) 565-4323.

UNT Policy on Diversity:

[https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/04.018_PolicyStateOnDiversity.pub 8 .18 0.pdf](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/04.018_PolicyStateOnDiversity.pub%208.18.0.pdf)

2019-2020 Semester Academic Schedule (with Add/Drop Dates):

<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

Academic Calendar at a Glance, 2019-2020: <https://www.unt.edu/catalogs/2019-20/calendar>

Final Exam Schedule: <https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall>

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress (Undergraduate): <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress (Graduate): <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Retention of Student Records: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Counseling and Testing: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>; for more information on mental health issues, please visit: <https://speakout.unt.edu>.

The counselor for music students is:

Myriam Reynolds

Chestnut Hall, Suite 311

(940) 565-2741

Myriam.reynolds@unt.edu

SCHEDULE (*subject to change*):

1 August 24: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

- Introductory meeting

August 26: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- 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; Week 1 Log

August 28: LAB — combined sections (Recital Hall/Zoom)

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

2 August 31: NO CLASS

September 2: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Approaching contemporary music; composing a melody
- LISTENING: Pärt—*Fratres*; Gubaidulina—String Quartet No. 2; Ferneyhough— String Quartet No. 3 (Mvt. II)
- READING: Dallin — Chapter 2; Stucky — “Listening to Contemporary Music”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody); Week 2 Log

September 4: LAB (Zoom)

- Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody)—discussion; schedule Week 3 readings (individual meetings)

3 September 7: NO MEETING (Labor Day)

- DUE: Project #1 pre-compositional sketches

September 9: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Basics of composition
- LISTENING: Select one work each by three UNT faculty composers
- READING: Slonimsky — “Introduction”
- ASSIGNMENT: Week 3 Log

September 11: LAB (Zoom)

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

4 September 14: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

September 16: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- New melodic resources I
- LISTENING: Debussy—“Voiles”; “Pagodes”; Bartok—from *Mikrokosmos* (“Crossed Hands”; “Whole-Tone Scales”)
- READING: Gann — “What Composers Talk About”; Service — “Five Myths About Contemporary Classical Music”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #2 (melodic variations); Week 4 Log
- DUE: Project #1 (text setting with tonal melody)

September 18: LAB (Zoom)

- Project #2 (melodic variations)—discussion

5 September 21: NO MEETING

- DUE: Project #2 pre-compositional sketches

September 23: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- New melodic resources II; Impressionism, Exoticism
- LISTENING: Debussy— *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*; Ravel—*Ma Mère l'Oye* (orchestral suite)
- READING: Select one article each by three different authors at newmusicbox.org
- ASSIGNMENT: Online Quiz #1 (Canvas); Week 5 Log

September 25: LAB (Recital Hall, MEIT, MA 113/Zoom—location according to assigned TA)

- Project #2 (melodic variations)—Group A workshop

6 September 28: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

September 30: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

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

October 2: LAB (Zoom)

- Project #3 (harmonic variations)—discussion

7 October 5: NO MEETING

- DUE: Project #3 pre-compositional sketches

October 7: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Primitivism, Nationalism, Neoclassicism
- LISTENING: Stravinsky — *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Octet; Bartók — String Quartet No. 4
- READING: Bartók — “The Problem with the New Music”
- ASSIGNMENT: Week 7 Log

October 9: LAB

- Project #3 (harmonic variations)— Group B workshop

8 Week of October 12: Individual student meetings (*required*); schedule TBA

October 12: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

October 14: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Polytonality
- LISTENING: Bartók—“Harvest Song”; Milhaud — *Saudades do Brasil* (Book I); Stravinsky — *Petrouchka*
- READING: Stravinsky — from *Poetics of Music*
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #4 (polytonal study); Week 8 Log
- DUE: Project #3 (harmonic variations)

October 16: LAB (Zoom)

- Project #4 (polytonal study)—discussion

9 October 19: NO MEETING

- DUE: Project #4 pre-compositional sketches

October 21: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Free atonality; 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: Week 9 Log

October 23: LAB (Recital Hall, MEIT, MA 113/Zoom)

- Project #4 (polytonal study)—Group C workshop

10 October 26: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

October 28: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Dodecapphony
- LISTENING: Schoenberg — Variations for Orchestra; Berg — Violin Concerto; Webern — Concerto, Op. 24
- READING: Ross — “Why Do We Hate Modern Classical Music?”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5a (12-tone matrix); Online Quiz #2 (Canvas); Week 10 Log
- DUE: Project #4 (polytonal study)

October 30: LAB (Zoom)

- Project #5a (12-tone matrix)—discussion

11 November 2: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

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

November 4: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Influences of serialism
- LISTENING: Ruth Crawford Seeger—String Quartet 1931; Stravinsky — *Requiem Canticles*; Copland — *Inscape*
- READING: Stravinsky — “About Music Today”
- ASSIGNMENT: Project #5b (12-tone study); Final Project; Week 11 Log
- DUE: Project #5a (12-tone matrix)

November 6: LAB (Zoom)

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

12 November 9: NO MEETING

- DUE: Project #5b pre-compositional sketches

November 11: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- Integral (total) serialism I
- LISTENING: Babbitt — *All Set*; Messiaen — *Modes de valeurs et d'intensités*; Boulez — *Le marteau sans maître*
- READING: Boulez — “Schoenberg is Dead”; Babbitt — “The Composer as Specialist”
- ASSIGNMENT: Week 12 Log

November 13: LAB (Recital Hall, MEIT, MA 113/Zoom)

- Project #5b (12-tone study)— Group D workshop
- DUE: Final Project Proposal

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

November 16: MUSIC NOW (Zoom)

November 18: LECTURE (Recital Hall/Zoom)

- 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)
- Final Project Proposals returned
- ASSIGNMENT: Week 13 Log
- **DUE: Project #5b (12-tone study)**

November 20: LAB (Zoom)

- Final Project—discussion

14 **November 23:** LECTURE (Zoom)

- Microtonality and alternate tuning systems
- LISTENING: Ives — *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces*; Partch — *Barstow*
- READING: Partch — “Author’s Preface”
- ASSIGNMENT: Week 14 Log
- DUE: Final Project pre-compositional sketches

November 25: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

November 27: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

15 **November 30:** LECTURE (Zoom)

- Explorations in timbre and texture: sound mass
- LISTENING: Varèse — *Intégrales*; Ligeti — *Chamber Concerto*; Penderecki — *De Natura Sonoris No. 1*
- READING: Ligeti — “Ligeti [interviews] Ligeti”
- ASSIGNMENT: Online Quiz #3 (Canvas); Week 15 Log

December 2: LECTURE (Zoom)

- Concluding discussions

December 4: NO MEETING (University Reading Day)

- **NOTE: This is the last day to submit any pending assignments!**

16 **Monday, December 7—10:30 AM-12:30 PM, ZOOM** (Final Examination Time)

- Final Project Presentations (individual labs)
- DUE: Final project