

CONTEMPORARY MATERIALS & TECHNIQUES I (MUCP 1180)

SYLLABUS — Fall 2022

class meetings: M 11:00 am - 12:20 pm (MUSIC NOW) — MEIT (MU 1001)

W 11:00-11:50 am (lecture) — MEIT (Klein)

F 11:00-11:50 am (labs) — MEIT, MU 287

12:00-12:50 am (labs) — MEIT, MU 287

course instructor: Dr. Joseph Klein**email:** joseph.klein@unt.edu**office:** MU 2005**teaching assistant:** Mr. Ben Damann**email:** Ben.Damann@my.unt.edu**office:** MU 2001/Bain (office TBD)**teaching assistant:** Mr. Alvin Leung**email:** PakHeiLeung@my.unt.edu**office:** MU 2001/Bain (office TBD)**teaching assistant:** Mr. Patrick Reed**email:** PatrickReed2@my.unt.edu**office:** MU 2001/Bain (office TBD)**teaching assistant:** Mr. Okan Yasarlar**email:** OkanYasarlar@my.unt.edu**office:** MU 2001/Bain (office TBD)

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 and are not planning to be composition majors 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 and materials from the concert music repertoire of the recent past, contextualizing them within a larger aesthetic, historical, and cultural framework and applying 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. While the focus is on notated music within the concert repertoire, the techniques covered may be applied to other genres as well, such as music for media and various popular music idioms.

MUCP 1180 is required for all prospective undergraduate composition majors and is also offered as an elective course for qualified non-composition majors. Given the variety of students enrolled, the course attempts to achieve the following goals:

- To provide a broad foundation for future composition majors, providing practical skills and 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:

- Recognizing and applying a variety of technical and contemporary stylistic approaches through listening, score study, and guided composition exercises.
- 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 musics.
- Synthesizing and applying the material covered in the course to create a short, cohesive, and effective musical composition.

Class meetings:

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

- 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.
- 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 exercises assigned throughout the semester.
- Laboratory: Taught by the teaching assistants, these focus primarily on the technical aspects of the assigned composition exercises 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.

CANVAS:

The course syllabus will be posted on Canvas by the first lecture class day, and guidelines for the guided exercises will be posted throughout 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 contact information 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:

Regular assignments include the following:

- Guided **composition exercises**.
- Weekly **Listening/score study**, primarily from the 20th- and 21st-century concert music repertoire.
- Weekly **Readings** (articles, book chapters) pertaining to contemporary music.
- **Log posts**, documenting your observations on the previously assigned works and readings. These are assigned during the weeks between composition exercise due dates.

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 Composition:

The culminating project for this course is a 3- to 5-minute **composition** for up to five performers, which must *effectively and organically* incorporate *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; options for other students will be included in the final composition guidelines, which will be posted later in the semester.

NOTE: Students missing more than one composition exercise 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.

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. **IMPORTANT:** *Students*

planning to major in composition **must earn a grade of at least a B** in all MUCP and MUTH courses, which is a requirement of the BM Composition degree. The FBE will not be administered to students who do not meet this requirement.

Notation:

All composition exercises are to be *copied by hand*, properly formatted, legible, and conforming to proper notational conventions (refer to Gould's *Behind Bars*, which is the course textbook and will be an important resource for you in your compositional careers long after you leave UNT).

PORTFOLIO:

Students planning to continue as composition majors in the BM program are expected to maintain a composition portfolio, which includes scores, complete sets of parts, recordings, concert programs, and other related documentation. This composition portfolio will be reviewed at critical points throughout the degree program (e.g., composition jury, final portfolio review hearing). Students are also encouraged to maintain a folder of their various project sketches, which may be useful for future reference or even developed into more substantial compositions. Students in the composition program are expected to compose for a variety of instruments/voices and ensembles, as a diverse portfolio is expected of all composition majors.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings (including Music Now) as well as 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*. 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 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 composition exercises workshopped in the labs (as assigned) and to regularly perform their classmates' projects. Additionally, students will be expected to participate in class discussions, such as critiquing student projects during the workshops.

GRADING:

Composition Assignments:

Composition exercises and the final composition 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 assignment guidelines.
- **Preparation** of composition assignments that are workshopped or read in class.

A detailed grading rubric will be provided for each composition assignment 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 more detailed grading rubric will be provided in Canvas.

Cumulative:

Final grades will be based upon the *final composition project*, *composition exercises*, *weekly log posts*, *quizzes*, *attendance* (which includes attendance at five Composition Division events), and *class participation*, and are distributed as follows:

• Final Composition:	20%
• Composition Exercises (4):	20%
• Log Posts (11):	25%
• Quizzes (3):	10%
• Attendance:	15%
• 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, or if grades are not posted within 10 days of submission.

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/policy/06-003>

Student Behavior: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/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://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

2022-23 Semester Academic Schedule (with Add/Drop Dates):

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

Health and Safety Information: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Registration Information for Students: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Academic Calendar at a Glance, Fall 2022: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

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

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress: <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

Add/Drop Policy: <https://vpaa.unt.edu/advising/dropping/deadlines>

Student Resources: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

Care Team: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>