Fall 2026 Syllabus, rev.
16th-c. Counterpoint
MUTH 3410-1/5410-1
MWF, 1220-110, Rm. 288

Instructor: Stephen Slottow

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Office hours: **MW 115-215**. Other times by appointment. If possible, contact me beforehand if you plan to come by.

Class mode: In-person only**.**

Prerequisites: MUTH 2400 (Th3) and 2410 (ET3), both with a grade of C or better.

Materials: Required text: Salzer, Felix and Carl Schachter, *Counterpoint in Composition*. New York: Columbia U.P, 1989. Bring to every class.

Assorted handouts. All handouts will be posted on the Canvas Documents module, and most will also be distributed in class. Keep track of these and bring the current ones to each class. The guidelines and example sheets for each species are especially important, since they codify the rules for each species.

Music paper and pencil, or notation program on a computer/tablet/phone.

Access to Canvas is required.

Course description and objectives: This course focuses on writing *species* (also called *strict*) counterpoint in two and three voices (as opposed to *free composition*), organized as follows: 1st though 5th species, each in two and three voices, followed by (given time) combined species in three parts. Species counterpoint originally used the church modes, but was later adapted to major/minor tonality by the 18th-c. theorist Johann Albrechsberger; most subsequent treatments, including that of Felix Salzer/Carl Schachter (our text), follow suit, as will we. Species counterpoint, although highly restricted, forms a basic background structure for the usages of free tonal composition.

We may also look at Beethoven's counterpoint exercises for his teacher Joseph Haydn, Mozart's counterpoint exercises for his student Thomas Attwood and read in sources such as Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum* and Heinrich Schenker's *Counterpoint*. However, this is predominantly a writing course.

Short written assignments will be due approximately every other class. Most of what we do will be writing counterpoint—as a class, in small groups, and individually. Student homework (unattributed) will sometimes be put on the board for group appraisal and critique. It is important that you are able to

☞HEAR☜

what you write--it is of little value to put notes on paper without knowing how they sound. If you can accurately hear your counterpoints internally, well and good, but usually people can do this only imperfectly. Skill improves with practice. Try your best to hear internally, especially when you must write without reference to an instrument or voice (as in tests or small-group writing). Otherwise, always *PLAY* your counterpoints before turning them in. Although music has a visual component, it is obviously an aural art.

Assignment Protocols

Every assignment must (1) contain your **name** and the **due date** at the top of the page, and (2) be written or printed clearly and legibly. Scan your homework and submit in Canvas. The best scanning software I have found is **Adobe Scan** (phone app). Save the scan as a PDF (not JPEG or other format). If for some reason, you cannot send it in Canvas, you may email it to me as an attachment, but please do so only as a last resort.

Scan/photograph your HW from above, pointing the camera directly down, so the image doesn't slant off the page. **Common faults**: posting photos that are (1) too dark, (2) have a shadow falling across them, (3) are not centered, or especially (4) are too small to read or mark up. In such cases, I will send your HW back to be redone.

My usual grading procedure is to mark up HW directly in Canvas. I usually comment extensively, compiling a numbered list of faults, comments, and suggestions. For instance: #3 might be "although labeled a PT, it's NOT a PT"; #19 might be "illegal 6/4 chord," etc. The comment keys change for each HW, but involve a lot of repetition, since people tend to make the same mistakes repeatedly. In general, if a student ignores my comments and simply repeats the same faults *ad infinitum*, I deduct more and more from the grade.

I do not use a metric for grading HW. Metrics don't work for counterpoint—there are too many contextual variables. I play through each assignment, comment in detail, and assign what seems to me a fair grade.

Grading:	Homework	70% (two lowest HW grades dropped)
	Midterm	10%
	Final Exam	20%

Late work: Assignments are due at the class period on the assigned date. Late assignments will be graded down a full letter grade and accepted no later than one class after the due date. Excuses for late homework will be considered only if you contact me before or on the date the homework is due, or at the latest by the very next class session. Whether I accept your excuse is up to me. After that time period, no excuse will be considered unless you tell me why it was not possible to contact me before. However, if you **DO** have an excuse for late homework, don't neglect to tell me what it is, on the assumption that I won't accept it. Leave that decision to me.

Return of student work

I will return student work within two class days after it is received.

Absences:

Excused: Absences are excused for illness, natural disasters, transportation problems beyond your control, and official College of Music musical activities. For the latter,

!☞YOU☜!

are responsible for informing me—don't assume that I'll get an email with a list of excused

students. Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't. If you feel that an absence for any other reason should be excused, discuss it with me; don't assume that I will or won't accept it: leave that decision to me. For all excused absences I must be informed at the latest by the next class session.

Unexcused: You are also allowed four *unexcused* absences. Every additional unexcused absence deducts 1 point from the final course grade (100 points total). I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. If you arrive after I've taken attendance, it's your responsibility to make sure you are marked as present before you leave the class room. otherwise, you'll be marked absent. In cases of disputes, I go by my records, but contact me if you think I've made a mistake. Unexcused absences will be listed on Canvas (Grades). Canvas doesn't include them in your class average; I do that when I calculate final grades. Equally, if you're unsure whether I marked you present, check with me on your way out of class, or soon afterwards. **If you miss a class, you are still responsible for submitting the assigned homework on time and for knowing what was covered in class.**

Juries: Don't schedule your end-of-semester jury against a regularly scheduled class. Doing so will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Student email addresses

I will send all student email to official UNT student addresses, which end with "unt.edu" or "myunt.edu" after the @ sign. If you habitually use a different email address (gmail, hotmail, yahoo, etc.), you need to also check your UNT address or set up automatic forwarding.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices in class such as phones, tablets, and laptops is prohibited unless the student is using them as a legitimate component of class--for instance, to read virtual class materials, photograph the blackboard, or write counterpoint. When in doubt, I may check. If you're bored, don't check email or cruise the web.

Plagiarism: Since the course grade is largely based on individual homework assignments, it is essential that those assignments represent your own work and not someone else's. Plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the policies set out at https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003. You may discuss general coursework issues with friends (e.g., ask a question about voice-leading procedures) but may not copy another student's assignment or work collaboratively to complete an assignment. As a general guideline, feel free to talk about the assignment before you start writing; but once you begin to write, all work must be your own. Occasionally I notice obvious instances of plagiarism, and then I have to do something about them, which is annoying to all concerned.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), 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.
See: Academic Integrity
LINK: https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003

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 classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.
See: Student Code of Conduct
Link: 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. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.
See: Eagle Connect
LINK: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA STATEMENT
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.
See: ODA
LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

Health and Safety Information
Students can access information about health and safety at:
https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness

Registration Information for Students
See: Registration Information
Link: https://registrar.unt.edu/students

Academic Calendar, Spring 2025
See: Spring 2025 Academic Calendar
Link: https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-academic-calendar.html

Final Exam Schedule, Spring 2025
See above

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress
Undergraduates
A 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 hours registered. 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.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

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. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.
See: Financial Aid
LINK: http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap

Graduates
A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. 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. It is recommended you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.
See: Financial Aid
LINK: http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap

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 Canvas 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.
See: FERPA
Link: http://ferpa.unt.edu/

COUNSELING AND TESTING
UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:
See: Counseling and Testing
Link: http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:
See: Mental Health Resources
Link: https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources

ADD/DROP POLICY
Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to

begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

Drop Information: https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-academic-calendar.html

STUDENT RESOURCES
The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:
See: Student Resources
Link: https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources

CARE TEAM
The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.
See: Care Team
Link: https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team

Class Schedule (subject to change)

Fall 2026

August

Week 1
M 17 Course description. On species counterpoint. Fux.
W 19 On species counterpoint, Fux, cont. Cantus firmus
F 21 Cantus firmus, cont.

Week 2
M 24 1st species, 2 voices
W 26 1st species, 2 voices
F 28 1st species, 2 voices

Week 3
M 31 Labor Day (no class)

September

W 2 2nd species, 2 voices
F 4 2nd species, 2 voices

Week 4
M 7 2nd species, 2 voices
W 9 3rd species, 2 voices
F 11 3rd species, 2 voices

Week5
M 14 3rd species, 2 voices 4th species, 2 voices
W 16 4th species, 2 voices
F 18 4th species, 2 voices

Week6
M 21 4th species, 2 voices 5th species, 2 voices
W 23 5th species, 2 voices
F 25 5th species, 2 voices

Week7
M 28 5th species, 2 voices
W 30 **MIDTERM (canvas)**

October
F 2 (Semester midpoint) 1st species, 3 voices.
Week8
M 5 1st species, 3 voices
W 7 1st species, 3 voices
F 9 1st species, 3 voices

Week9
M 12 2nd species, 3 voices
W 14 2nd species, 3 voices
F 16 2nd species, 3 voices

Week10
M 19 3rd species, 3 voices
W 21 3rd species, 3 voices
F 23 3rd species, 3 voices

Week11
M 26 4th species, 3 voices
W 28 4th species, 3 voices
F 30 4th species, 3 voices

Week12
November
M 2 4th species, 3 voices
W 4 4th species, 3 voices
F 6 5th species, 3 voices

Week13
M 9 5th species, 3 voices
W 11 5th species, 3 voices
F 13 5th species, 3 voices

Week14
M 16 3 voices, combined species
W 18 3 voices, combined species
F 20 3 voices, combined species

Week15
M 23 Thanksgiving Break
W 25 Thanksgiving Break
F 27 Thanksgiving Break

Week16
M 30 3 voices, combined species
December
W 3 Prefinals day (last regular day of class)
F 4 Reading day (no class)

Week17/Final Exams
M 8
W 10 Final exam (Canvas)
F 12

Week18
M 14 Grades due