

MUTH 5680-01 (5312), 6680-001 (4949)
Proseminar in Music Theory
Professional Writing in Music Theory
MW, 1-220pm, Rm. 290

MUTH 5550/Professional Writing in Music Theory

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Slottow

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Office: Music Building 228

Office hours MW 3-4pm. Other times by appointment. During the first two weeks, UNT has decided that office hours will be held on Zoom only (<https://unt.zoom.us/j/7352956938>). After that, they will be held both on Zoom and in person. I prefer the former, but if you need to meet in person, tell me beforehand and I will find a space (not my office) in which to meet. In any case, it is best to let me know that you are going to show up, as I may be called away from my office.

Class mode: In-person only.
UNT does not permit a course designated as in-person to be taught online except for brief periods in case of the instructor's illness or quarantine. Outside of these circumstances in-person attendance is required. I will post videos on Canvas after every class, but they do not substitute for coming to class. However, see absence policy below.

Prerequisites: Satisfactory score on the Graduate Placement Examination, or MUTH 5010 (Graduate Theory Review).

Materials:

Required:

Williams, Joseph M. and Joseph Bizup. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. 13th ed. Pearson Education, 2021

[1/17/22: on the shelf at UNT Barnes & Noble]

Cahn, Steven M. and Victor L. *Polishing Your Prose: How to Turn First Drafts into Finished Work*. New York: Columbia U.P., 2013

[1/17/22: on the shelf at UNT Barnes & Noble]

Multitudinous handouts (lovely word, isn't it?)

The monotone of the rain is beautiful,
And the sudden rise and slow relapse
Of the long multitudinous rain.

Carl Sandburg, "Monotone", 1st stanza)

)
Optional: Cook, Claire Kehrwald. *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*.
Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1985
[1/17/22: not yet on the shelf at UNT Barnes & Noble]

Other requirements:

Access to Canvas

Attendance (at least partial) at the annual meeting of the Texas Society for Music Theory (TSMT), to be held at UNT March 4-5. See <https://texasmusictheory.org/>. All sessions will be in hybrid formats, e.g., both in-person and online. Registration is required and can be paid either online (\$10, Paypal) or in person (\$20). See <https://texasmusictheory.org/2022Register.html>.

Course description and objectives:

This class will focus on music theory writing. It will consist of several strands, as follows.

1. Reading/critiquing music theory articles, book chapters, and conference presentations, noting different organizational strategies, approaches, styles, and distinctive authorial voices. We will also look (more peripherally), at examples of good writing, not necessarily about music or music theory, by such writers as Gary Snyder, Samuel Johnson, Willa Cather, Jaime D'Angulo, and Mark Twain. Good music theory writing should also be good *writing*, a point that I sometimes wonder if some music theorists have forgotten. Music theory writing is necessarily specialized and has its own vocabulary, but need not devolve into impenetrable jargon for its own sake.
2. We will investigate to some degree such "nuts and bolts" topics as grammar, sentence/paragraph structure, punctuation, and writing style. To this end we will use *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, and *Polishing Your Prose: How to Turn First Drafts into Finished Work*, working especially with the exercises. We will also read at least some chapters in *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*.
3. Another strand in the course is writing conference proposals, delivering conference presentations, and rewriting a proposal into a journal submission. After everyone has written proposals, we will constitute ourselves into a program committee and comment on them. The annual meeting of the Texas Society for Music Theory will be held at UNT March 4-5, and everyone will be expected to attend at least some sessions and report on them afterwards. See details above.
4. We will also discuss some practicalities of how to survive in the music theory world, such as networking, conferences, journals, publishing, CV writing, applying for jobs, and interviewing.

The proposal, presentation, article, readings, writing exercises, and most other elements will be read and discussed by the entire class in a seminar-style setting. Thus class participation is of key importance.

Course Objectives

To investigate techniques and strategies for professional music theory writing by (1) studying good models; (2) reviewing nuts and bolts of grammar and composition; (3) writing and critiquing conference proposals, delivering conference-style presentations, and writing an article, and (4) discussing some of the practicalities of operating as a professional music theorist.

<u>Grading:</u>	Class participation	20%
	Grammar/writing assignments	15%
	Proposal	13%
	Presentation	17%
	Written paper	35%

Absences:

Excused: Absences are excused for illness, natural disasters, transportation problems beyond your control, and official College of Music musical activities. For the latter, tell me yourself—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 by the next class session, unless I'm told why it wasn't possible to do so.

Unexcused: You are also allowed three unexcused absences. Every additional unexcused absence over three deducts 3 points from the final course grade. 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 WILL BE MARKED ABSENT. I'll post a list of unexcused absences on Canvas (under Grades). In cases of disputes, I'll go by my records. **If you miss a class, you are still responsible for submitting the assigned homework on time and for knowing what was covered in class (watch the video).**

Late work: Assignments are due at the beginning of class 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 at the very next class session. Whether I accept your excuse is up to me. After that, no excuse will be considered unless you tell me why it was not possible to contact me before. However, if you 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.

COVID CONSIDERATIONS

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face-covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

For the safety of yourself and everyone in class, if you are experiencing cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, or any of the other possible symptoms of COVID-19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please do not come to class. Instead, I strongly encourage you to seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider and e-mail me at your earliest convenience. Covid tests are available here:

<https://curative.com/sites/24128#9/33.2114/-97.1463>

(<https://curative.com/sites/24128#9/33.2114/-97.1463>) . If you test positive for Covid-19, please e-mail covid@unt.edu (mailto:covid@unt.edu) so that the University can conduct the necessary contact tracing. The best way to protect the entire class from Covid-19 is to receive a vaccination, if you have not yet done so. Here is a link to information on how to schedule a vaccination: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/covid-19-vaccine-information> (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/covid-19-vaccineinformation>).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Since the course grade is based largely on individual writing assignments, it is essential that those assignments represent your own work, not someone else's. Plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the policies set out at <https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/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/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf

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)

UNT Policy Statement on Diversity

UNT values diversity and individuality as part of advancing ideals of human worth, dignity and academic excellence. Diverse viewpoints enrich open discussion, foster the examination of values and exposure of biases, help educate people in rational conflict resolution and responsive leadership, and prepare us for the complexities of a pluralistic society. As such, UNT is committed to maintaining an open, welcoming atmosphere that attracts qualified students, staff, and faculty from all groups to support their success. UNT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in its application and admission process, educational programs and activities, employment policies and use of university facilities.

See: [Diversity and Inclusion](#)

Link: <https://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

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 at a Glance, Spring, 2022

See: [Academic Calendar at a Glance](#)

Link: https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/Spring_2022_Academic_Calendar.pdf

Final Exam Schedule

See: [Spring, 2022 Final Exam Schedule](#)

<https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/spring>

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 whose position includes 16 hours per week of dedicated service to students in the College of Music and the College of Visual Arts and Design. 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 issues, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Issues](#)

Link: <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

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. After the 12th class day, students must first submit a completed "Request to Drop" form to the Registrar's Office. The last day for a student to drop a class in Fall, 2021 is November 12. Information about add/drop may be found at:

See: [Drops and Withdrawals](#)

Link: <https://sfs.unt.edu/class-drop-and-withdrawal-refunds>

(Also see Academic Calendar, listed above)

STUDENT RESOURCES

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

See: [Student Resources](#)

Link: https://www.unt.edu/sites/default/files/resource_sheet.pdf

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change)

Spring 2022

Proposals, program committee, presentations.
2022

WEEK 1

January

W 19 First class day. Syllabus.

WEEK 2

M 24

Cook grammar review. Style: "A Short History of Unclear Writing." Twain: "Fennimore Cooper's Literary Offences."

W 26 Cahn sections 1-3.

WEEK 3

M 31 Cahn section 4. Style, Lesson 1/Correctness and Style. SMT/Straus "How to Write a Proposal."

February

W 2 Cahn section 7 rewrites. Parallel construction in Dr. Johnson.. Critique Burstein SMT proposal.

WEEK 4

M 7 Student research ideas, class discussion 2. Style, Lesson 1, nonsexist language.

W 9 Student research ideas, class discussion 3.. SMT guidelines for nonsexist language.

WEEK 5

M 14 Student research ideas, class discussion 4. Style Lesson 2/Actions.

W 16 Discuss Cohn on conference proposals. Read sample conference proposal 2. Style, Lesson 2/Actions, cont. Style Ex. 3.4-3.5.

WEEK 6

M 21 Cahn section 5. Discuss Herrmann on conference proposals. Read conference proposal 3.

W 23 ~~Conference proposals due.~~ Style. Discuss program committee protocols.**WEEK 7**

M 28 Conference proposals due. Cahn section 6. Read, critique proposals. Class forms program committee; ranks, comments on proposals.

March

W2 Style. Marvin, Cohn on presentation technique. Distribute proposals to students.

WEEK 8

M 7 Cahn section 8. Conference proposal rankings/comments due. TSMT impressions. Proposals.

W 9 Style. Proposals.

M 14 Spring Break

W 16 Spring Break

WEEK 9

M 21 Cahn 9. Conference presentations 1. Whiting/Knezevic.

W 23 Style. Conference presentations 2. Knowling/Sun.

WEEK 10

M 28 Cahn 10. Conference presentations 3. Truan/Swartz.

W 30 Style. Conference presentations 4. Zhou/Lu

WEEK 11**April**

M 4 Conference presentations 5. Beimer

W 6 Style.

WEEK 12

M 11 Read theory article 1 (Schachter).

W 13 Style. Read theory articles 2 (Schachter)

WEEK 13

M 18 Read theory article 3 (Lester)

W 20 Style. Read theory article 4 (Lester)

WEEK 14

M 25 Read theory articles 5 (Lewin)

W 27 Final papers due. (Lewin)

WEEK 15**May**

M 2

W 4-Th 5 Pre-finals days. Return papers with comments.

S 7 Finals 1030-1230

M 9 Finals

W 11 Finals. Revised papers due.

F 13 Finals

M16 Grades due