

MUSIC 111: Introduction to Music

Fall 2011, MWF 11 am (plus one 50-minute section TBD)

Valentine Lecturer Jacob Cooper
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Office hours: by appointment

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Brief Course Description:

This course is intended for students with little or no background in music who would like to develop a theoretical and practical understanding of how music works. As a prerequisite to many other Music Department offerings, the course helps students grasp musical elements such as pitch, melody, rhythm, meter, and basic harmony. The music analyzed and performed will draw from the Western tonal tradition as well as a variety of other musical traditions. Assignments will include exercises in music notation and music theory, basic composition, and preparation of music for classroom performance and individual sessions.

Course Requirements:

Three written exams will be administered throughout the semester, in addition to a cumulative final exam and periodic quizzes. I will also meet with each of you individually for three Practicum Exams, which will cover singing, ear-training, and keyboard skills. You are expected to develop these skills on a daily basis throughout the semester—frequent, short periods of work are more effective than one or two longer periods of work within a week. Don't worry if you can't sing or play the piano at all at this point—progress is more important than aptitude in itself.

Homework will be assigned for each class. It is essential that all assignments be completed on time (see "Late Assignment Policy" below), but after the first few class meetings these assignments will only be collected from a third of the class (randomly selected on the day they are due) each time. Any student who performs poorly on a quiz or exam, however, will then be required to submit all previous assignments for my review.

In addition to the three class meetings per week, you will be assigned to a section taught by Graduate Assistant Julie Moorman. In section, you will primarily work on singing, ear-training, and keyboard skills. Your section grade (10% of your overall class grade) will be based on attendance and personal improvement. Sections begin in week 2.

Course Placement:

There are no prerequisites for this course. During the first week of class, I will meet with each of you individually to determine if this course is a good fit for you (sign-up sheet to follow). Students with musical experience are encouraged to take the self-administered music theory placement exam as soon as possible and discuss their music theory options with me and Professor David Schneider (Music Dept. Chair). The exam is available at:

www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/music/theoryexam

Required Course Materials:

- Course text: *Rudiments of Music, 4th Edition*, by Robert W. Ottman and Frank Mainous (Prentice Hall, 2007)
- A bound book of music manuscript paper for class notes and assignments

The Ottman text is available at Amherst Books (8 Main St.). A book of manuscript paper can be purchased at Hastings (45 South Pleasant St.). For assignments outside of the textbook, you can also opt to print out loose staff paper free of charge at <http://blanksheetmusic.net>.

Practice Rooms

As an enrolled student in this course, you may obtain a practice room key by visiting Suzette Farnham, Music Department Coordinator, between 9:30 am and 11:30 am during the first two weeks of classes. Obtaining a key requires a \$25 deposit. There are two practice rooms with pianos in Arms that are open and don't require keys, but you are strongly encouraged to obtain a key in order to have access to all rooms.

Attendance, Late Assignment Policy

It is essential that you learn the material for the course incrementally as the semester progresses. Regular class attendance and punctuality is crucial, and unexcused absences or lateness will adversely affect your grade. If a situation (such as a religious holiday or family emergency) arises and you will need to miss a class, please contact me as soon as possible so we can work out a reasonable solution.

You are responsible for completing *all* assignments on time, even if you have to be absent. (An absence will necessarily mean your work is collected.) Late assignments will not be accepted.

Laptop, Phone Policy

As notes will most effectively be taken by hand in a manuscript book, laptops and tablets are not permitted during class. Please also refrain from using cell phones for any purpose.

Grading Breakdown:

Exams I, II, III	30% (total)
Final Exam	20%
Assignments and Quizzes	25%
Practicum Exams I, II, III	15% (total)
Section	10%

Weekly Class Schedule
(subject to change)

<u>Week 1</u> (Sept. 7, 9)	Course overview; Pitch Notation.
<u>Week 2</u> (Sept. 12, 14, 16)	The Keyboard; Rhythm. <i>Sections begin.</i>
<u>Week 3</u> (Sept. 19, 21, 23)	Rhythm and Meter.
<u>Week 4</u> (Sep. 26, 28, 30)	Rhythm and Meter, cont'd. Exam I. Major Scales and Key Signatures.
<u>Week 5</u> (Oct. 3, 5, 7)	Major Scales and Key Signatures, cont'd. Practicum I.
<u>Week 6</u> (Oct. 12, 14)	Minor Scales and Key Signatures.
<u>Week 7</u> (Oct. 17, 19, 21)	More on Scales and Key Signatures.
<u>Week 8</u> (Oct. 24, 26, 28)	Intervals. Exam II.
<u>Week 9</u> (Oct. 31, Nov. 2, 4)	Intervals, cont'd.
<u>Week 10</u> (Nov. 7, 9, 11)	Triads and other chords. Practicum II.
<u>Week 11</u> (Nov. 14, 16, 18)	Introduction to Basic Harmony. Exam III.
THANKSGIVING BREAK	Turkey.
<u>Week 12</u> (Nov. 28, 30, Dec. 2)	Basic Harmony, cont'd.
<u>Week 13</u> (Dec. 5, 7, 9)	Special Topics, TBD.
<u>Week 14</u> (Dec. 12, 14)	Loose Ends; Review.
<u>Exam Period</u> (Date TBD)	Practicum III; Final Exam.