

University of Utah \* School of Music  
**MUSC 2570: Composition Seminar (3-credit)**  
Fall 2015 \* T,Th 10:45a-12:05p\* DGH 306

Instructor: Dr. Luke Dahn

Office: DGH 430

Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30pm, Wednesday 10:30-11:45am (or by appt.)

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### REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Staff paper (a notebook, or download some here: <http://www.musicshnaf.com/>)
2. Pencils. Compositional assignments should always be done in pencil. **No pens!**
3. Creativity and hard work.

### CATALOGUE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Building compositional techniques from small projects to larger ones for undergraduate music majors.

### FULLER COURSE DESCRIPTION

MUS2570 is an introductory composition course intended to provide students basic compositional techniques through guided compositional projects. MUSC 2570 is taught in the Fall and Spring semesters, but each semester focuses on different material.

This Fall we will focus on common-practice composition techniques in preparation for the Spring MUSC2570 course, which will focus on modern and contemporary composition techniques. We will study compositions by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, and others in order to learn compositional strategies from the great masters.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will...

- complete six composition projects utilizing a variety of instruments
- develop basic compositional techniques in tonal idioms
- develop an understanding of how various instrument groups are used well
- produce high quality scores of their compositions using neat, accurate and clear notation
- be involved in performing and arranging performances of their own compositions and those of their peers

### COURSE WORK

#### **Six Composition Projects** (60% of overall grade (10% each))

Each student will complete six composition projects through the semester. These six are a melodic composition, a waltz, a character piece, a song (voice), a composition in 4-5 parts, and a sonata exposition. These projects will be graded on four basic criteria: adherence to required parameters of the project (Did you complete the project and follow project requirements?), idiomatic writing (Is it well-written for instruments/voices involved?), score presentation (Is the score neat, clear, and properly notated?), and creativity (Is there evidence that you put time into the project? Did you incorporate feedback?).

#### **In-Class Progress / Participation** (25% of overall grade)

In addition to compositional projects, other short assignments (readings, score study and other exercises) will at times be assigned. It is important that you come prepared for class each day. For most classes, we will also spend time looking at composition projects in progress. It is very important that you are engaged during this process, as I will frequently ask for feedback from the class. Without this engagement and feedback, a crucial element to the collaborative compositional process is missing.

I will give a bi-weekly in-class grade for every student. The average of these weekly grades will make up 25% of the overall course grade.

Note: We may on occasion use class time for 15-minute individual lessons.

#### **Final Concert** (15% of overall grade)

The most valuable experience a young composer can have is having his/her compositions performed. It's through the collaboration with performers and through the performance experience that true learning happens (What worked well? What didn't work well (or didn't work at all)?)

To that end, the final exam in this course consists of a class concert featuring works composed in this class. Each student composer must have three of his/her compositions performed to receive full credit. (More than three compositions may be performed if program space permits.) The grade for this final concert will also be affected by poor preparation resulting from the student composer's negligence.

### GRADE BREAKDOWN

60% Composition Projects (10% each)  
25% In-class work (Progress on projects; class attendance and engagement; completion of additional assignments)  
15% Final Concert  
**100%**

### GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE—MUSC 2570

(Subject to change with advance notice)

**Week 1** Aug 25 & 27

Course Introduction; Project 1 – Melodic Compositions

**Week 2** Sep 1 & 3

**Project 1 DUE on Thurs;** Project 2 Introduction– Short Waltzes (Schubert waltzes) (Melody + Harmony)

**Week 3** Sep 8 & 10

Waltzes (cont.)

**Week 4** Sep 13 & 15

**Project 2 DUE on Thurs;** Project 3 Introduction – Character Pieces (Schumann & Chopin) (Accompanimental variety)

**Week 5** Sep 22 & 24

Character Pieces

**Week 6** Sep 30 & Oct 1 (*No Class Thursday – College Assembly*)

**Project 3 DUE on Tues;** Project 4 Introduction – Songs (Schubert & Schumann Lieder) (Text-Setting)

**Week 7** Oct 6 & 8

Songs (cont.)

*FALL BREAK – Week of October 12*

**Week 8** Oct 20 & 22

**Project 4 DUE Thurs;** Project 5 Introduction – Composition in 4-5 parts (Student's choice: choral, string quartet, brass quintet, woodwind quintet, or any other mixed combination (latter must be approved by the instructor))

**Week 9** Oct 27 & 29

Composition in 4-5 parts (cont.)

**Week 10** Nov 3 & 5

Composition in 4-5 parts (cont.)

**Week 11** Nov 10 & 12 (On Thursday, I'm gone to the SCI national conference)

**Project 5 DUE Tues;** Project 6 Introduction – Sonata Exposition

**Week 12** Nov 17 & 19

Sonatas (cont.)

**Week 13** Nov 24 & 26 (*No Class Thursday – Thanksgiving*)

Sonatas (cont.)

**Week 14** Dec 1 & 3

**Project 6 DUE Thurs**

**Week 15** Dec 8 & 10

Concert Preparation

**FINAL CONCERT: Date & Time TBD**

## UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS

### ADA Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

### Faculty and Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. Faculty...must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 6-316. Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 6-400.

### Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

### Accommodations Policy

Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

### Wellness Statement

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness; [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu); 801-581-7776.

### Incompletes policy

(I) Incomplete grade. Given for work not completed due to circumstances beyond your control. You must be passing the course and have completed at least 80% of the required coursework. Arrangements must be made between you and the instructor concerning the completion of the work. You may not retake a course without paying tuition. If you attend class during a subsequent term, in an effort to complete the coursework, you must register for the course. Once the work has been completed, the instructor submits the grade to the Registrar's Office. The "I" will change to an "E" if a new grade is not reported within one year. A written agreement between the student and the instructor may specify the grade to be given if the work is not completed within one year. Copies of the agreement are kept by the instructor and the academic department.

### O. Attendance Requirements (<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.html>)

1. The University expects regular attendance at all class meetings. Instructors must communicate any particular attendance requirements of the course to students in writing on or before the first class meeting. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with and satisfying the entire range of academic objectives and requirements as defined by the instructor.
2. Students absent from class to participate in officially sanctioned University activities (e.g., band, debate, student government, intercollegiate athletics) or religious obligations, or with instructor's approval, shall be permitted to make up both assignments and examinations. The University expects its departments and programs that take students away from class meetings to schedule such events in a way that will minimize hindrance of the student's orderly completion of course requirements. Such units *must* provide a written statement to the students describing the activity and stating as precisely as possible the dates of the required absence. The involved students *must* deliver this documentation to their instructors before the absence.
3. Except in cases of sudden illness or emergency, students shall, in advance of the absence, arrange with the instructor to make up assignments (see policy on assignments in #4 of the course evaluation section above).
4. Unexpected University facility closures due to weather, emergency or disaster may occur from time to time. Students may be required to complete coursework missed due to these or other class cancellations; however, instructors requiring mandatory make-up sessions may not penalize students if they are unable to attend due to time conflicts, etc.

### Non-Contract Note

*"The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification."*