

University of Utah \* School of Music  
**MUSC 3550: 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup>-Century Techniques (3-credit)**  
Fall 2015 \* Room: DGH 410  
Section 001: MWF 8:35a-9:25a

Instructor: Dr. Luke Dahn

Office: DGH 430

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

Email: [luke.dahn@utah.edu](mailto:luke.dahn@utah.edu) (preferred contact)

Office phone: 801-585-3720

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Roig-Francoli, Miguel. *Understanding Post-Tonal Music*. (McGraw Hill, 2008). ISBN: 978-0-07-293624-7
2. Roig-Francoli, Miguel. *Anthology of Post-Tonal Music*. (McGraw Hill, 2008). ISBN: 978-0-07-332502-6
3. Staff paper (a notebook, or download some here: <http://www.musicshnaf.com/>)
4. Pencils! Please do all analysis and compositional assignments in pencil.
5. A notebook or binder for note-taking.

### CATALOGUE COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers diverse topics in music theory relevant to the study of 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> Century concert music. Topics may include Modernism, Neo-Classicism, Post-Modernism, chromatic and atonal voice leading, harmonic function based on symmetrical divisions of the octave, music at the limits of tonality, pitch-class set theory with the emphasis on transpositional equivalence and inversive symmetry, pitch-centricity, and twelve-tone/serial procedures. The course may also cover musical practices prevalent since 1950 including minimalism, aleatoric procedures, and other techniques.

**Prerequisites:** "C" or better in MUSC 3540 and MUSC 2140.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will...

- develop a better understanding of music from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries
- develop a better understanding of the historical and philosophical context out of which modern music arose
- be better equipped to thoroughly analyze modern music
- be better equipped to interpret modern music and to give accurate, thoughtful, and persuasive performances of modern music
- gain experience utilizing the techniques studied in compositional projects

### COURSE WORK

**Homework assignments** (30% of overall grade)

You will be given weekly homework assignments, and all assignments must be turned in on time. Late assignments will likely not be accepted, and if they are, they will receive a grade penalty. Some assignments will come from the textbook chapter exercises while others will come from separate handouts. On occasion, we will work through homework problems in class, but we will only do this as long as I sense that everyone is coming to class well prepared.

**Two Exams** (30% of overall grade (15% each))

There will be two scheduled exams, each of which will likely contain both a take-home portion and an in-class portion. Take-home portions typically involve more open-ended analysis questions while in-class portions will involve exercises similar to those done in homework assignments.

**Two Projects** (20% of overall grade (10% each))

As a class we will discuss which two of the following three options will be assigned.

Option #1: Twelve-Tone Composition Project (DUE week 10)

Each student will compose a 12-tone Invention for two instruments or for piano. For this composition, the composer must create a tone-row matrix first. Further instruction on this assignment will be given at the beginning of Week 9. Compositions will be played during the November 9 class.

Option #2: Group Percussion Composition Projects (DUE week 13)

In groups of about 3, students will compose a rhythmic composition for percussion using only found “household” items as instruments. Groups must incorporate various rhythmic concepts discussed in Chapter 10. Clear details will be given later. Each group must record their composition with all group members participating in the performance. (We may create a fun competition out of the project!) Compositions must be notated and turned in.

Option #3: Analysis Paper (DUE end of semester)

Each student will write an analysis paper (8-10 pages) on a 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century piece focusing on the compositional techniques used by the composer, making sure to incorporate topics and analytical techniques discussed in the course.

**Concert Reports.** (10% of overall grade)

Attend two concerts of new music and write a report for each concert. Report forms will be provided and will require you to document details about the concert venue, short biographical details about the composers on the program (which may need to be researched later), details about what you heard referencing any topics discussed in class, and your personal response to the music.

**Attendance & Class work** (10% of overall grade)

Technically, I do keep an attendance log. However, I will be giving a weekly grade to each student based on attendance, preparedness and engagement in class. The average of these weekly grades will make up 10% of the overall course grade.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 30%         | Homework Assignments  |
| 30%         | Two Exams (15% each)  |
| 20%         | Two Projects (10% each): The class as a whole will determine which two projects will be required<br>Option #1: Twelve-Tone Composition (DUE week 10)<br>Option #2: Group Percussion Compositions (DUE Week 13)<br>Option #3: Analysis paper (DUE end of semester) |
| 10%         | Two Concert Reports   |
| 10%         | Attendance & Participation  |
| <b>100%</b> |   |

**Grade Scale:** A 100-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-63; D- 62-60; E 59-0

**OTHER COURSE POLICIES**

1. No laptops in class. Laptops are distracting for students using them, for students around them, and for the instructor. Plus, many studies have shown that humans do not multi-task well (just one: <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/multitasking-confronting-students-with-the-facts/>), including one study showing that laptops directly lead to lower grades (Sana, Faria, Tina Weston, and Nicholas Cepeda. “Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers.” *Computers & Education*, Vol. 62, March 2013, pp.24-31).
2. Please communicate! If you have a disability, an illness, a question, a concern, a lack of understanding of a concept, a word of encouragement, please let me know. I have an “open door” policy at all times. The best ways to contact me are stopping by during my office hours and email.

## GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE—MUSC 3550

(Subject to change with advance notice)

### Week 1

Aug 24 Setting the Historical Context  
Aug 26 Debussy  
Aug 28 Chapter 1 – Pitch Centricity & Motivic Cells (Debussy); R-F pp.5-24

### Week 2

Aug 31 R-F pp.24-32  
Sep 2 Chapter 2 – Pitch Centricity & Symmetry (Bartok); R-F pp.37-47  
Sep 4 R-F pp.47-58

### Week 3

Sep 7 *LABOR DAY – No class*  
Sep 9 Chapter 3 – Introduction to Set Theory; R-F pp.69-82  
Sep 11 R-F pp.82-89

### Week 4

Sep 14 R-F pp.89-92  
Sep 16 R-F pp.92-100  
Sep 18

### Week 5

Sep 21 Chapter 4 – Analyzing Atonal Music; R-F pp.105-11  
Sep 23 R-F pp.111-20  
Sep 25 R-F pp.120-26

### Week 6

Sep 29 Chapters 5 – Drawing on (and Reinterpreting) the Past; R-F pp.129-35  
Sep 31 R-F pp.135-42  
Oct 2

### Week 7

Oct 5 Chapter 6 – ...And Inventing the Future (“Ultramodernism”); R-F pp.145-56  
Oct 7  
Oct 9 **Midterm Exam**

*FALL BREAK – Week of October 12*

### Week 8

Oct 19 Chapter 7 – Twelve-Tone I: An Introduction; R-F pp.159-164  
Oct 21 R-F pp.164-69  
Oct 23 R-F pp.169-73

### Week 9

Oct 26 R-F pp.173-78  
Oct 28 Chapter 8 – Twelve-Tone II; pp.182-87  
Oct 30 COVER FOR INES (Webern); pp.187-95

### Week 10

Nov 2 R-F pp.195-201  
Nov 4 R-F pp.201-05  
Nov 6 **Twelve-Tone Composition Projects DUE**

### Week 11

Nov 9 Chapter 9 – Serialism Since 1945; R-F pp.220-26

Nov 11 R-F pp.226-33  
Nov 13 R-F pp.233-41 (Gone to SCI Conference – Prof. Thiebaut will fill in.)

#### Week 12

Nov 16 Chapter 10 – Expanding the Limits of Temporality; R-F pp.245-53  
Nov 18 R-F pp.253-64  
Nov 20 R-F pp.264-71

#### Week 13

Nov 23 Chapter 11 – Aleatory, Sound Mass, and Beyond; R-F pp.280-97  
Nov 25 **Group Percussion Compositions DUE**  
Nov 27 *THANKSGIVING BREAK – No Class*

#### Week 14

Nov 30 Chapter 13 – Simplifying Means; R-F pp.321-29  
Dec 2 R-F pp.329-37  
Dec 4

#### Week 15

Dec 7 Chapter 14 – Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; R-F pp.340-47  
Dec 9 R-F pp.353-57  
Dec 11 Reading Day

### Section 001 FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 17, 8:00-10:00am

## 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."*