

University of Utah * School of Music
MUSC 2570: Composition Seminar (3-credit)
Spring 2017 * T,Th 10:45a-12:05p* DGH 306

Instructor: Dr. Luke Dahn

Office: DGH 438

Office hours: Monday & Wednesday, 9:30-11:00am or by appointment

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REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Staff paper (a notebook, or download some here: <http://www.musicshoaf.com/>)
2. Pencils. Compositional assignments should always be done in pencil. **No pens!**
3. There are no required textbooks. However, in lieu of textbooks, students will occasionally be asked to print scores and materials made available in Canvas.
4. Creativity and hard work.

CATALOGUE COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

COMPLETE 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 mostly on tonal composition techniques with occasional explorations into non-tonal idioms in preparation for the Spring MUSC2570 course, which will focus on non-tonal composition techniques. We will study compositions by composers, focusing mostly on the greats such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and many others in order to learn compositional strategies from the masters.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will...

- complete a minimum of 5 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

Five Composition Projects (50% of overall grade)

Each student will complete at least five composition projects through the semester. These five scheduled projects are a melodic composition, a waltz, a song, a composition project in 4-5 parts (i.e. string quartet, woodwind quintet, brass quintet, etc.), and a composition with restrictive parameters

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? Did you incorporate feedback?*)
- Idiomatic writing (*Is it well-written for instruments/voices involved?*)
- Score presentation (*Is the score neat, clear, and properly notated?*)
- Creativity (*Is there evidence that you put time into the project?*)

Attendance, Project Progress, Assignments (30% of overall grade)

The quality of this class will depend on the involvement of the students. Therefore, your attendance and engagement in class is vital. (Being present but not involved will not earn full attendance credit.) In addition to compositional projects, other in-class work will be required. First, students will be assigned specific days during which to present to the class the progress of his or her project. 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.

In addition, other short assignments (readings, score study and other exercises) will occasionally be assigned. I will give an in-class grade every three weeks for each student.

Note: We will on occasion use class time for individual composition lessons or lessons in pairs.

Final Concert (20% 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 during the semester. With 12 students registered for the course, however, we may need to two concerts in order to accommodate all composers since, ideally, each composer should have 3 compositions performed. In the case of two concerts, we can either have one mid-semester concert featuring projects from the first half and an end-of-semester concert featuring later projects. Or we could have two separate end-of-semester concerts dividing the class in two based on logistical considerations (instrumentation, scheduling, etc.). We will discuss further.

The grade for this final concert will also be affected by poor preparation resulting from the student composer's negligence.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

50%	Composition Projects (10% each)
30%	Attendance, Project Progress, Assignments
20%	Final Concert
100%	

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

ACADEMIC HONESTY

While I encourage students to have work-study partners and engage in discussions about homework assignments, ultimately all class work is to be completed entirely on one's own (unless explicit exceptions are granted) and must conform to the University of Utah's policies on academic honesty. These policies are explained at: <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE—MUSC 2570

(Subject to change with advance notice)

Wk	D	Date	Syllabus
1	T	8.22	Course Introduction; Project 1 Introduction – Monophonic Compositions (Melodic Construction)
	H	8.24	Topics: Sense of direction (momentum) & Climaxes
2	T	8.29	Topics: Implied harmony, Two-part melody, Non-pitch parameters; Progress on Project 1 (all)
	H	8.31	Project 2 Introduction – Waltzes (Melody + Harmony) Topic: “Markedness” (Expected vs. Unexpected) Discussion: Exploring Composer Opportunities
3	T	9.5	Project 1 Due ; Waltzes: Analyzing Schubert Waltzes Discussion: Great Composers on Composing
	H	9.7	Progress on Project 2 (half) Topic: Dissonance & Consonance; Exploring Non-Chord Tones
4	T	9.12	Progress on Project 2 (half)
	H	9.14	Project 2 Due ; Project 3 Introduction – Songs (Text-Setting) Topics: General Text-Setting Principles, Syllabic Stress, Types of Accent
5	T	9.19	Topics: Accompaniments & Transitions
	H	9.21	Analysis: The British Masters – Vaughan Williams, Quilter, Finzi, and Britten
6	T	9.26	Progress on Project 3 (half); More Examples from the Literature
	H	9.28	Progress on Project 3 (half); Discussion: The Composing Process
7	T	10.3	TBD
	H	10.5	Project 3 Due ; Project 4 Introduction – Composition in 4-5 parts (choral, string quartet, brass quintet, woodwind quintet, or any other mixed combination) Discussion: Writing Program Notes
<i>FALL BREAK * OCTOBER 8-16</i>			
8	T	10.17	Instrumentation Lecture – Working with Strings
	H	10.19	Instrumentation Lecture – More Strings (Harmonics & Double-stops) Topics: Large-scale considerations, Foreground-Background
9	T	10.24	Progress on Project 4 Analysis: Models from Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky
	H	10.26	Progress on Project 4; Analysis: More Models from Debussy, Ravel, Borodin, and Elgar
10	T	10.31	Lessons in Pairs
	H	11.2	Topics: More Techniques with Multiple Voices – Heterophony, Imitation, Doublings
11	T	11.7	Progress on Project 4
	H	11.9	Topics: Endings, Editing Parts; Conceptualizing the Final Concert
12	T	11.14	Project 4 Due : Project 5 Introduction – Composition with Restrictive Parameters (Exploring new idioms)
	H	11.16	Exploring new scale constructs
13	T	11.21	Progress on Project 4; Exploring new harmonic constructs
	H	11.23	No Class – Thanksgiving Break
14	T	11.28	TBD
	H	11.30	Project 5 Due
15	T	12.5	WEEK OF FINAL CONCERT: Date & Time TBD
	H	12.7	

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; 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.