

University of Utah * School of Music * Fall 2021

MUSC 2570: COMPOSITION SEMINAR I (Tonal Composition, 3 credits)

TTh 10:45am-12:05pm * Room: DGH 324

Course Modality: In-person

Instructor:

Dr. Luke Dahn * DGH 438 * Email: luke.dahn@utah.edu (preferred contact)

Office Hours: by appointment, either in person or via Zoom

Required Materials:

1. Staff paper (download some here: <http://www.musicshleaf.com/>) and pencils (no pens!).
2. There are no required textbooks. However, in lieu of textbooks, students will occasionally be asked to consult scores and materials made available in Canvas.
3. Curiosity, creativity, and hard work.

Catalog Course Description:

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

Complete Course Description & Objectives:

MUSC 2570 is an introductory composition course intended to provide students basic compositional techniques through guided compositional projects. This Fall we will focus mostly on tonal composition techniques with occasional explorations into non-tonal idioms in preparation for the Spring MUSC2571 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.

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

Prerequisite: "C" or better in MUSC 2570

COURSE WORK

Five Composition Projects (60% 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. At the end of the semester, each student will be required to upload scores of their five compositions to a shared folder.

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?)*
- *Program notes (Did you provide a program note for your piece?)*

Attendance, Project Progress, Assignments (20% 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. Students should be willing 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 may on occasion use class time for individual composition lessons or lessons in pairs.

Letter grades for assignments can be translated as follows:

A+ = 100 A = 96 A- = 92 B+ = 88 B = 85 B- = 82 C+ = 78 C = 75 C- = 72 D+ = 68 D = 65 D- = 62 F = scored at instructor's discretion

Final Concert (20% of overall grade)

Having compositions performed is where the real learning and development occurs for a composer. We will therefore have a final concert at the end of the semester. Each student is required to program at least two of the required compositions. In addition, each composer must be proactive in ensuring that their pieces are concert-ready and that program notes are submitted.

A note about performers: You absolutely *must* be proactive in finding performers to play your compositions. This is a necessary part of being a composer: it is very important to develop relationships with performers! While guest performers may be secured for Projects 1 & 2, you will want to try to secure performers for Project 3 as early in the semester as possible. Also, any student in the class who performs a composition by another classmate will receive extra credit for the Final Concert grade.

GRADE BREAKDOWN SUMMARY

60% Composition Projects (5)
 20% 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

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE–MUSC 2570

(Subject to change with advance notice)

Wk	D	Date	Syllabus
1	T	8.24	Course Introduction; Project 1 Introduction – Monophonic Compositions (Melodic Construction)
	H	8.26	Topics: Sense of direction (momentum) & Climaxes
2	T	8.31	Topics: Implied harmony, Two-part melody, Non-pitch parameters; Progress on Project 1 (all)
	H	9.2	Project 2 Introduction – Waltzes (Melody + Harmony) Topic: “Markedness” (Expected vs. Unexpected) Discussion: Exploring Composer Opportunities
3	T	9.7	Project 1 Due ; Waltzes: Analyzing Schubert Waltzes Discussion: Great Composers on Composing
	H	9.9	Progress on Project 2 (half) Topic: Dissonance & Consonance; Exploring Non-Chord Tones
4	T	9.14	Progress on Project 2 (half)
	H	9.16	Project 2 Due ; Project 3 Introduction – Songs (Text-Setting) Topics: General Text-Setting Principles, Syllabic Stress, Types of Accent
5	T	9.21	Topics: Accompaniments & Transitions
	H	9.23	Analysis: The British Masters – Vaughan Williams, Quilter, Finzi, and Britten
6	T	9.28	Progress on Project 3 (half); More Examples from the Literature
	H	9.30	Progress on Project 3 (half); Discussion: The Composing Process
7	T	10.5	TBD
	H	10.7	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 * 10/11–10/15</i>			
8	T	10.19	Instrumentation Lecture – Working with Strings
	H	10.21	Instrumentation Lecture – More Strings (Harmonics & Double-stops) Topics: Large-scale considerations, Foreground-Background
9	T	10.26	Progress on Project 4 Analysis: Models from Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky
	H	10.28	Progress on Project 4; Analysis: More Models from Debussy, Ravel, Borodin, and Elgar
10	T	11.2	Lessons in Pairs
	H	11.4	Topics: More Techniques with Multiple Voices – Heterophony, Imitation, Doublings
11	T	11.9	Progress on Project 4
	H	11.11	Topics: Endings, Editing Parts; Conceptualizing the Final Concert
12	T	11.16	Project 4 Due : Project 5 Introduction – Composition with Restrictive Parameters (Exploring new idioms)
	H	11.18	Exploring new scale constructs
13	T	11.23	Progress on Project 4; Exploring new harmonic constructs
	H	11.25	No Class – Thanksgiving Break
14	T	11.30	TBD
	H	12.2	Project 5 Due
15	T	12.7	WEEK OF FINAL CONCERT: Date & Time TBD
	H	12.9	

IMPORTANT DATES

Classes begin:	Monday, August 23	Last day to withdraw:	Friday, October 22
Last day to add & drop:	Friday, September 3	Thanksgiving break:	November 25-28
Labor Day:	Monday, September 6	Classes end:	Thursday, December 9
Fall break:	October 13-17	Final exam period:	December 13-17

UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Official COVID-19 Campus Guidelines

University leadership has urged all faculty, students, and staff to model the vaccination, testing, and masking behaviors we want to see in our campus community. These include:

- Vaccination
- Masking indoors
- If unvaccinated, getting weekly asymptomatic coronavirus testing.

Vaccination

- Get a COVID-19 vaccination if you have not already done so. Vaccination is proving highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization and death from coronavirus. Vaccination is the single best way to stop this COVID resurgence in its tracks.
- Many in the campus community already have gotten vaccinated:
 - More than 80% of U. employees
 - Over 70% of U. students
- Visit <http://mychart.med.utah.edu/>, <http://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine>, or <http://vaccines.gov/> to schedule your vaccination.

Masking

- While masks are no longer required outside of Health Sciences facilities, UTA buses and campus shuttles, CDC guidelines now call for everyone to wear face masks indoors.
 - Check the CDC website periodically for masking updates—<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>
 - Treat masks like seasonal clothing (i.e. during community surges in COVID transmission, masks are strongly encouraged indoors and in close groups outside).

Testing

- If you are not yet vaccinated, get weekly asymptomatic coronavirus tests. This is a helpful way to protect yourself and those around you because asymptomatic individuals can unknowingly spread the coronavirus to others.
 - Asymptomatic testing centers are open and convenient:
 - Online scheduling
 - Saliva test (no nasal swabs)
 - Free to all students returning to campus (required for students in University housing)
 - Results often within 24 hours
 - Visit alert.utah.edu/covid/testing
- Remember: Students must self-report if they test positive for COVID-19 via this website: <https://coronavirus.utah.edu/>.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND POLICIES

Center for Disability & Access
801-581-5020
disability.utah.edu
ADA Statement

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.

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."