

Music 9545B: Pedagogy of Music Theory

Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University
Winter 2016 / Mondays, 9:30am–12:30pm / TC 310

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Overview

This course explores music theory teaching at the university level. It is, above all, a practical course—emphasizing mock teaching, the creation of pedagogical materials, peer and self-assessment, and other hands-on activities. Nonetheless, we cannot properly understand the teaching of theory without a theory of teaching. So, we will also engage with current research in theory pedagogy, with the history of music theory, and with ideas from cognitive psychologists, philosophers, and educators in other fields (such as mathematics, physics, languages, or athletics). This course, then, is not just an opportunity for us to grow as teachers. It is also an opportunity to critically reflect on music theory itself.

Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Design effective learning outcomes, lesson plans, and course materials
- Clearly demonstrate core music theory concepts and musicianship skills
- Evaluate various pedagogical approaches in music theory

Materials

Readings will be posted on OWL or available on reserve at the music library.

Please bring manuscript paper and pencils to class. For certain activities, you will also need a portable electronic device (a laptop, tablet, or smartphone). Finally, you will need access to notation software (such as Sibelius, Finale, MuseScore, or Lilypond).

Evaluation

Every week, I will ask you to *prepare* something before class: for example, a brief response to a scholarly paper, a rubric, an opening statement for a debate, or a music-analytical example. Each preparatory exercise will fill approximately one page, and you will either upload it to OWL or bring it to class. (You may be excused from these exercises on weeks when you are doing mock teaching.)

You will do two *mock teaching* sessions. In these fifty-minute sessions, you will teach the rest of the class about a pre-arranged topic. You will submit a detailed lesson plan with a related

homework assignment or test, and will complete a self-assessment afterward.

Finally, you will create a teaching *portfolio*, which will include a statement of teaching philosophy, and other related materials. Some materials from the preparatory exercises and mock teaching may be revised or expanded for the portfolio. The contents of each student's portfolio will be decided in consultation with the professor, and there will be opportunities for feedback before the final submission.

These elements will combine in your final grade as follows:

Preparation	30%	
Mock teaching	40%	(2 × 20%)
Portfolio	30%	

Statement on Health and Wellness

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing a graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding, such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic offence, as found at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

Music 9545B: Tentative Schedule

Because of mock teaching sessions, the schedule will depend on the participants in the course. We will plan for mock-teaching sessions—and adjust the schedule if needed—in our first meeting. Also, these topics may be subject to change, based on students' interests.

Date	Topic/Reading
Jan 4	<p><i>What Do We Learn When We Learn Music Theory?</i> Roger Graybill, “Thinking ‘in’ and ‘about’ Music: Implications for the Theory Curriculum,” <i>Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy</i> [ES] 2 (2014). Anna Sfard, “On Two Metaphors for Learning and the Dangers of Choosing Just One,” <i>Educational Researcher</i> 27 (1998): 4–13.</p>
Jan 11	<p><i>Listening, Remembering, Writing</i> Kate Covington and Charles H. Lord, “Epistemology and Procedure in Aural Training: In Search of a Unification of Music Cognitive Theory with Its Applications,” <i>Music Theory Spectrum</i> 16 (1994): 159–70. Gary S. Karpinski, “Melodic Dictation,” in <i>Aural Skills Acquisition: Listening, Reading, and Performing Skills in College-Level Musicians</i> (Oxford, 2000), 62–110.</p>
Jan 18	<p><i>Objectives and Assessment</i> Deborah Rifkin and Philip Stoecker, “A Revised Taxonomy for Music Learning,” <i>Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy</i> [JMTP] 25 (2011): 155–90. Janet Bourne, “CAT Got Your Tongue? Adapting Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) for the Music Classroom,” <i>ES</i> 2 (2014).</p>
Jan 25	<p><i>Theorizing at the Keyboard</i> Michael R. Callahan, “Teaching and Learning Undergraduate Music Theory at the Keyboard: Challenges, Solutions, and Impacts,” <i>Music Theory Online</i> [MTO] 21 (2015). Robert O. Gjerdingen, Excerpts from “<i>Partimento, que me veux-tu?</i>” <i>Journal of Music Theory</i> 51 (2007): 85–135. Giorgio Sanguinetti, Excerpts from <i>The Art of Partimento: History, Theory, and Practice</i> (Oxford, 2012).</p>

- Feb 1 *Harmonic Hearing*
 Hubert Dreyfus, Excerpt from “Intelligence without Representation,” *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 1 (2002): 367–83.
 David Huron, Excerpt from *Sweet Expectation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (MIT, 2006).
 Brian Edward Jarvis, “Hearing Harmony Holistically: Statistical Learning and Harmonic Dictation,” *ES* 3 (2015).
- Feb 8 *The Great Solmization Debate*
- Feb 15 **Reading week** (No class)
- Feb 22 *Talking about Teaching*
 Peter Schubert, “Global Perspective on Music Theory Pedagogy,” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy [JMTP]* 25 (2011): 217–33.
- Feb 29 *Learning Together*
 Lawrence M. Zbikowski and Charles K. Long, “Cooperative Learning in the Music Theory Classroom,” *JMTP* 8 (1994): 135–57.
 Christopher Segall, “You, Y’all, We: A Framework for Cooperative Learning,” *ES* 3 (2015).
- Mar 7 *Problem-Based Learning*
 Matthew Bribitzer-Stull, “Contention in the Classroom: Encouraging Debate and Alternate Readings in the Undergraduate Theory Class,” *JMTP* 17 (2003): 21–45.
 Philip Duker, Kris Shaffer, and Daniel Stevens, “Problem-Based Learning in Music: A Guide for Instructors,” *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy [ES]* 2 (2014).
- Mar 14 *Music Theory Textbook Smackdown*
- Mar 21 *Teaching Technologies*
 Philip Duker, Anna Gawboy, Bryn Hughes, and Kris Shaffer, “Hacking the Music Theory Classroom: Standards-Based Grading, Just-in-Time Teaching, and the Inverted Class,” *MTO* 21 (2015).

- Mar 28 *Accessibility*
Jon Kochavi, "How Do You Hear That? Autism, Blindness, and Teaching Music Theory," *MTO* 15 (2009).
Bruce W. Quaglia, "Planning for Student Variability: Universal Design for Learning in the Music Theory Classroom and Curriculum," *MTO* 21 (2015).
- Apr 4 *Conclusions*
Lawrence M. Zbikowski, Excerpts from *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis* (Oxford, 2002).
- Apr 22 **Portfolio submission deadline**