

MUS1649A: Studies in Music Theory I

Fall 2020 / Don Wright Faculty of Music / Western University

Instructor: Dr. Jonathan De Souza

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 (online via OWL/Zoom)

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Overview and Outcomes

Why do certain notes sound good together? Why do some chords feel stable or predictable, while others feel tense or surprising? And how does harmony relate to melody, rhythm, or other musical features? This course explores such questions, introducing principles of tonal harmony and voice leading. It examines functional relationships among notes and chords in a key, and how they are combined in musical phrases. We'll study these concepts in Western art music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in various genres of popular music.

By the end of this course, you'll know how to generate basic musical building blocks (e.g., intervals and chords) and represent them in multiple ways. More importantly, you'll learn how to compose and analyze diatonic tonal music. For example, you'll be able to create a four-part harmonization for a melody or bass line, and you'll be able to explain harmony and phrase structure in short pieces of classical and popular music. You'll also start to understand how musical phrases are organized into larger formal units.

Organization

Lectures: Delivered asynchronously via OWL

Tutorials (in person):

Section 002	Thurs., 1:30	TC 141	Jonathan De Souza	jdesou22@uwo.ca
Section 003	Thurs., 2:30	TC 141	Kate McDonald	kthoma83@uwo.ca
Section 005	Fri., 9:30	TC 141	Kennedy Kimber-Johnson	kkimberj@uwo.ca
Section 006	Fri., 10:30	TC 141	Sonja Dass	sdass2@uwo.ca
Section 007	Fri., 10:30	TC 100	Vanessa McCart	vmccart@uwo.ca

Materials

Videos, supplementary readings, and other materials will be available on the course's OWL site (owl.uwo.ca). Much of this material has been created specifically for students in this course, and I'd ask that you do not repost it online or share it publicly without permission. Please check OWL regularly for updates.

You'll need to purchase a license for Harmonia (\$23.95 USD, see <https://harmonia.illiacsoftware.com/>). This app will help you practice music theory, with immediate feedback. Most of our assignments will also be submitted through Harmonia.

Our textbook is the fourth edition of *The Complete Musician: An Integrated Approach to Tonal Theory, Analysis, and Listening* by Steven G. Laitz (Oxford University Press, 2016). This text and its associated workbooks will be used throughout various theory and musicianship courses at Western. It will be available at the Book Store. Note that the textbook's companion website includes many audio examples and practice exercises (see <http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199347094/stu/>).

Finally, you will need some kind of notation software. I recommend the free and open-source program MuseScore (<https://musescore.org/en>), but you can use another program, if you like. (I also suggest that you get some staff paper, pencils, and a good eraser. They'll be useful for taking notes at home and in tutorials.)

Evaluation

Most weeks, there will be a homework *assignment*, involving exercises and analysis related to the week's material. You will complete assignments using Harmonia (or sometimes notation software), and they must be submitted by the following Tuesday at noon. (For example, the assignment for Week 1 is due near the beginning of Week 2.) Your lowest assignment score will not factor into your final grade.

Quizzes are short, timed exercises, designed to assess skills that are central to the course. These quizzes will be completed online in OWL, and you may retake each one as many times as you like. (Because these quizzes are timed, students with disabilities who require extra time will have access to accommodated versions.) All quizzes will be available in the first half of the term (for dates and topics, see below). Note, however, that you may not take the quizzes after the end of classes (i.e., after December 9). These

quizzes will be graded on a pass / fail basis, with at least 90% required for a pass.

The *midterm exam* will include technical exercises, short-answer questions, and / or analysis of brief excerpts. It will be a take-home exam, due on Sunday, November 1 at midnight.

A *final project* will combine part-writing and analysis. The entire project will be due one week after the last day of classes (December 16), but you will submit and receive feedback on parts of it during the latter part of the term. Detailed project guidelines will be available after Reading Week.

These elements will combine in your final grade as follows:

Assignments	25%
Quizzes	20%
Midterm	20%
Final Project	35%

Quiz Topics

1. Key signatures (*available September 7*)
2. Intervals (*available September 14*)
3. Triads (*available September 21*)
4. Scale degrees (*available September 28*)
5. Seventh chords (*available October 5*)
6. Inversions of V7 (*available October 12*)

All quizzes automatically close at 11:55 PM on Wednesday, December 9 (the last day of classes).

Academic Success Program: Music

Please note that during first term, this course is participating in the Academic Success Program. The program runs in parallel to our course and is designed to facilitate connections with your online classmates, enhance your academic skills, and communicate tools and campus resources that can assist in your successful transition to Western. Each registered student has been placed in a group, and each group has been assigned a Peer Leader, an upper year student who has completed this course in the

past. If you haven't already heard from your Peer Leader, you can expect to hear from them in the coming days. Your active participation in weekly programming with your group and Peer Leader is encouraged; please plan to participate for 1–1.5 hours each week of first term, excluding the Fall Reading Week. Please send any questions regarding this program to your Peer Leader or ase@uwo.ca.

Policies/Expectations

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many new challenges, and we aim to be as kind and supportive as possible. We are committed to making this course accessible to all students. If we can make this course more accessible to you, please don't hesitate to contact us. Also, if you require specific accommodations, please make sure that your accommodations are active on the Accommodated Exams website (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/Accommodatedexamssignup/>). (The university's official policies related to accessibility and accommodations appear below.)

We expect you to participate in this course, completing the asynchronous online lessons before each week's tutorials. We expect you to attend and participate in tutorials, and if you need to attend remotely/virtually, please let us know. You should attend the tutorial section in which you are enrolled, and if you wish to change sections, this must be done before November 12 (the last day to drop a first-term half course without academic penalty). After that, you may switch sections only in extraordinary circumstances, and you must officially register the change with the Administrative Assistant for the Department of Music Research and Composition (TC 210). Please notify your tutorial leader in advance if you'll be absent.

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

University Policies

i) **Course Prerequisites:** Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it

will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

ii) **Grading scale:** A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

iii) **Academic Consideration for Student Absence:** Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. **Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus.**

Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. **Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.**

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/

[Academic Consideration for absences.pdf](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

iv) **Academic Consideration for Missing Work:** In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is

submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean's office, and the accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

v) **Academic Offences:** Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. 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_undergrad.pdf

vi) **Mental Health & Wellness:** Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

vii) **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

viii) **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar. <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

ix) **Compulsory First Year Exam Exemption:** The Dean's office has granted this course an exemption from the Senate policy that requires each first year course (1000-1999) to administer a common, compulsory, final examination scheduled during the examination period worth not less than 30% of the final grade.

x) **Online Etiquette:** Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

MUS1649A / Fall 2020 Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading	Due
Sept 7	0. Introduction	Ch. 1 (3–25; 49–57)	
Sept 14	1. Intervals	Ch. 1 (27–41), 2 (78–96)	
Sept 21	2. Triads	Ch. 3 (107–16), 2 (97–105)	Assignment 1
Sept 28	3. Tonality	Ch. 3 (117–21, 130–36), 4–5	Assignment 2
Oct 5	4. Seventh Chords	Ch. 3 (123–26), 6	Assignment 3
Oct 12	5. Contrapuntal Expansions	Ch. 7–8	Assignment 4
Oct 19	6. Predominants	Ch. 9–10, 23 (554–57)	Assignment 5
Oct 26	7. Six-Fours and Tonic Subs	Ch. 11–14	Assignment 6
			Midterm Exam
Nov 2	<i>Reading Week</i>		
Nov 9	8. Themes	Supplement	
Nov 12	<i>Last day to drop a first-term half course without academic penalty</i>		
Nov 16	9. Tonicization	Ch. 18 (435–48)	Assignment 7
Nov 23	10. Modulation	Ch. 19 (461–73)	Assignment 8
Nov 30	11. Binary Forms	Ch. 20 (483–89)	Assignment 9
Dec 7	12. Conclusion		Assignment 10
Dec 9	<i>Last Day of Classes</i>		
Dec 16			Final Project