

# MUS1649A: Studies in Music Theory I

Fall 2021 / Don Wright Faculty of Music / Western University

Instructor: Dr. [Jonathan De Souza](#)

Email: [jdesou22@uwo.ca](mailto:jdesou22@uwo.ca)

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30–12:30 (TC 218 and online via OWL/Zoom)

## 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: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30–11:20 (TC 141)

Tutorials:

|             |              |        |                   |  |
|-------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|--|
| Section 002 | Thurs., 1:30 | TC 203 | Jonathan De Souza | <a href="mailto:jdesou22@uwo.ca">jdesou22@uwo.ca</a> |
| Section 003 | Thurs., 2:30 | TC 202 | Carlos Verdam     | <a href="mailto:cverdam@uwo.ca">cverdam@uwo.ca</a>   |
| Section 005 | Fri., 9:30   | TC 204 | Elisabeth Roberts | <a href="mailto:erober69@uwo.ca">erober69@uwo.ca</a> |
| Section 006 | Fri., 10:30  | TC 204 | Forest Muran      | <a href="mailto:fanthon@uwo.ca">fanthon@uwo.ca</a>   |
| Section 007 | Fri., 10:30  | TC 201 | Peter Trigg       | <a href="mailto:ptrigg@uwo.ca">ptrigg@uwo.ca</a>     |

## Materials

The course's OWL site ([owl.uwo.ca](http://owl.uwo.ca)) will host videos, supplementary readings, and other materials. 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.

All of our assignments will be submitted through [Harmonia \(https://harmonia.illiadsoftware.com/\)](https://harmonia.illiadsoftware.com/). I will also share additional exercises in this app, which will let you practice music theory with immediate feedback. After September 22, 2021, you will need a license to access course content on Harmonia. The twelve-week non-renewable course license costs \$23.95 USD. Specific instructions for setting up Harmonia are available on OWL.

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 is 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/>).

I regularly use iClicker polls in lectures, and if you want to participate, you'll need a device. Any WiFi-enabled device—a laptop, tablet, or smartphone—will work. For more information on clickers at Western, see [presswestern.uwo.ca/students.html](http://presswestern.uwo.ca/students.html).

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 making notes (pun intended) in lectures and 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, and they must be submitted by the following Tuesday at 10:30 am. (For example, the assignment for Week 1 is due before the first lecture in 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 8). These quizzes will be graded on a pass / fail basis, with at least 90% required for a pass.

The *midterm exam* and *final exam* will include analysis of brief excerpts, composition exercises, and short-answer questions. The midterm will be a take-home exam, available on Monday, October 25 and due by Sunday, October 31 at 11:55 pm. The final exam will be three hours long, during the Exam Period (December 10–21). (Please do not make holiday travel plans until the exam date has been announced!)

These elements will combine in your final grade as follows:

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| Assignments  | 25% |
| Quizzes      | 20% |
| Midterm exam | 20% |
| Final exam   | 35% |

### **Quiz Topics**

1. Syllabus (*opens September 8, closes September 21*)
2. Key signatures (*opens September 8*)
3. Intervals (*opens September 13*)
4. Triads (*opens September 20*)
5. Scale degrees (*opens September 27*)
6. Seventh chords (*opens October 4*)
7. Inversions of V7 (*opens October 12*)

Quizzes 2–7 will automatically close at 11:55 pm on Wednesday, December 8 (the last day of classes).

### **Policies/Expectations**

#### *Accessibility*

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.)

### *Communication*

If you have general questions about course content, assignments, and so on, please post them on the OWL Forums. For individual issues, please contact me or your tutorial leader through OWL Messages. If OWL isn't working, email me at [jdesou22@uwo.ca](mailto:jdesou22@uwo.ca). I aim to reply to messages within 24 hours from Monday to Friday and within 48 hours on weekends and holidays.

I'm also happy to meet with you, and this is often the best way for me to help you with any course-related problems. I will hold "Office Hours"—that is, regularly scheduled times when you can just drop in without making an appointment—on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. You can stop by my office (TC 218, around the corner from the main office) or drop in virtually using OWL's Zoom function. We can also set up individual appointments at other times. Just send me a message, and we'll find a suitable date and time.

### *Attendance*

We expect you to participate in this course, regularly attending lectures and tutorials. You should go to 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.

### **University Policies**

i) **Course Prerequisites:** Demonstrated competence in theory rudiments or Music 0601A/B. 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. 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](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](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

*Special Note for COVID-19–Related Situations*

As a guideline, if a student has been contacted by the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) to self-quarantine due to a COVID-19–related situation, then the Self-Reported Absence system

is not to be used to report this absence or to request an academic accommodation. The student should contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as they are notified.

In general, students are advised to not self-determine when to self-isolate. Unless directed by the MLHU students should go about their business as usual. But if a student chooses to self-isolate due to a suspected COVID-19–related situation while waiting to receive direction from the MLHU then the student is directed to contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as possible for further direction on receiving accommodation consideration.

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](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](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) **Contingency Plan:** 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.

## MUS1649A / Fall 2021 Schedule

| <b>Dates</b> | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Reading</b>              | <b>Due</b>       |
|--------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Sept 9       | 0. Introduction   | Ch. 1 (3–25; 49–57)         |                  |
| Sept 14/16   | 1. Intervals  | Ch. 1 (27–41), 2 (78–96)    |                  |
| Sept 21/23   | 2. Triads   | Ch. 3 (107–16), 2 (97–105)  | A. 1/Quiz 1      |
| Sept 22      | <i>Free access to Harmonia ends (course license required after this date)</i> |                             |                  |
| Sept 28/30   | 3. Tonality   | Ch. 3 (117–21, 130–36), 4–5 | Assignment 2     |
| Oct 5/7      | 4. Seventh Chords   | Ch. 3 (123–26), 6           | Assignment 3     |
| Oct 12/14    | 5. Contrapuntal Expansions  | Ch. 7–8                     | Assignment 4     |
| Oct 19/21    | 6. Predominants   | Ch. 9–10, 23 (554–57)       | Assignment 5     |
| Oct 26/28    | 7. Six-Fours and Tonic Subs   | Ch. 11–14                   | Assignment 6     |
| Oct 31       |   |                             | Midterm Exam     |
| Nov 1–7      | <i>Reading Week</i>   |                             |                  |
| Nov 9/11     | 8. Themes   | Supplement                  |                  |
| Nov 12       | <i>Last day to drop a first-term half course without academic penalty</i>     |                             |                  |
| Nov 16/18    | 9. Tonicization   | Ch. 18 (435–48)             | Assignment 7     |
| Nov 23/25    | 10. Modulation  | Ch. 19 (461–73)             | Assignment 8     |
| Nov 30/Dec 2 | 11. Binary Forms  | Ch. 20 (483–89)             | Assignment 9     |
| Dec 7        | 12. Conclusion  |                             | Assignment 10    |
| Dec 8        | <i>Fall/Winter Term classes end</i>   |                             | Quizzes 2–7      |
| Dec 9        | <i>Study Day</i>  |                             |                  |
| Dec 10–21    | <i>Exam Period</i>  |                             | Final Exam (TBA) |