WESTERN UNIVERSITY, CANADA  
Don Wright Faculty of Music

MUSIC 3953A: The Harpsichord: Playing Technique and Accompaniment Practices

Mondays, 9:30-12:30 in MB 210

Instructor: Dr. Borys Medicky  
Email: bmedicky@uwo.ca  
Office: MB216, office hours on Mondays by appointment

Prerequisites
No academic prerequisites are required. Prior experience with the harpsichord is not required, but keyboard proficiency is expected of all students.

Course Description
This course introduces students to the harpsichord and teaches the fundamentals of playing the instrument. We will explore the repertoire, technique, and performance practices associated with Baroque keyboard music composed between c.1600 and 1770. The primary goal of this class is to provide students with a solid foundation in solo playing and basso continuo accompaniment. Classes will typically consist of a demonstration or lecture, followed by a practical portion, in which students will have an opportunity to try at the keyboard what has been discussed. Some classes may be structured as a studio class or masterclass where students will play for each other and discuss the music as a group. There will be performing, reading and listening components for this class. Reading/listening assignments will be posted on the class OWL site.

3 harpsichords are available for individual practice in MB 208, 210 and 216. These rooms can be booked online using a unique reservation system maintained by the instructors of this class and the Early Music Studio (EMS). Further details will be given via email to class members.

No classes held
Thanksgiving: Monday October 10  
Reading week: October 31-November 6

Evaluation
Attendance and participation: 50%  
Performance: 30%  
Final exam: 20%

Course Materials
There is no textbook for this course and most of the work is practical. There will be some required readings and listening for the class. Handouts and assignments will either be distributed in class or made available online.
**Attendance and participation** are crucial in this course. You will not be able to learn the required material if you are not present and/or do not participate in the practical aspect of the course.

**Performances** will take place at the end of the semester. You will perform a solo piece and a short continuo piece with a singer or instrumentalist (one movement from a sonata, or one song/aria, for example). You will be graded on your use of harpsichord technique, the quality of your continuo realization and the effectiveness of your performance practice decisions.

The **final exam** will take place during the examination period in December. It will cover everything we have learned throughout the semester. Students will sign up for an individual time slot and sit the exam one person at a time.

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**Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work (≥10%)**: Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website for further details regarding requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

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

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

**Academic Consideration for Missing Work (<10%)**: In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade (i.e. two or fewer assignments) due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean’s office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean’s office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.
**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

**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.**

**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

**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.


**Contingency Plan:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered 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 assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

**Examinations & Attendance:** Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the
department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

**Electronic Devices in Classrooms**: The in-class use of electronic devices (other than for instructor-approved in-class uses) is expressly prohibited. Students found guilty of disrupting the class with electronic devices will be asked to leave the class and may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

**Plagiarism Detection Software Usage**: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([https://www.turnitin.com/](https://www.turnitin.com/)).

**Online Etiquette**: Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please observe the following general considerations of “netiquette”:
- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. 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.