

The University of Western Ontario Department of Music Performance Studies –

Course Outline – EMS Graduate

Music 9568, special topics (Early Music Studio)

2025 - 2026

Course Instructors

Joseph Lanza – director - jlanza@uwo.ca

Borys Medicky – historic keyboards and chamber music MB 216 - bmedicky@uwo.ca

Seohyang Oh – TA (teaching assistant) - soh242@uwo.ca

Course Description

A study of the styles of music composed mostly before c1800, through coaching sessions, rehearsal, and performance. Instrumentalists will make use of copies of period instruments. We explore approaches to performance which are reasonably close to those of the time a composition was initially performed. Students taking the course for ensemble credit should expect to contribute up to four hours of performance/rehearsal time each week. Students taking a half course credit will contribute up to two hours per week over both terms (or, very exceptionally, four hours per week over a single term.) Students registering in early music as two half-course credits will be expected to contribute up to four hours per week of /rehearsal time in both fall and winter terms.

While it is the student's choice regarding Full credit, ensemble credit or half credit courses, we do recommend full course or ensemble credit when possible: the challenges of historic performance on a period instrument are more effectively addressed with a 4 hour per week emersion.

Much of the music we will consider in the course does not of itself yield comprehensive information about approaches to performance (especially for the inexperienced), neither has it acquired reasonably 'fixed' performing traditions, such as those that one finds in much of the conventional world of modern instrument music making. Part of our rehearsal time will sometimes seem more 'exploratory' than 'goal-driven'. Students will be encouraged to share in the explorations we will make, and to engage their intellectual capacities every bit as much as their musical talents. In many cases we will find ourselves making some decisions about performance without having all the pieces of information we would like to possess.

Course schedule

Class time information will be shared with students in person at the beginning of the Fall term.

Dress rehearsals and concerts may not occur on class days. Please make a note of the performance schedule which will be provided to you. Please contact the TA, Borys or myself regarding any issues you may have regarding attendance for class times as well as other special events ASAP. Borys and I will try to make accommodations where necessary if you notify us promptly. Otherwise, all students will be required to be present for dress rehearsals and concerts, as well as the Western/Tafelmusik residency, regardless of EMS class scheduling. Punctuality is especially important in historic performance: period instruments and gut strings are especially sensitive to room climate. Tuning at the beginning of class is actually when our sessions begin, not “the first downbeat.”

Course Materials

The EMS will provide instruments to you from our instrument bank. These instruments are well made modern era replicas of instruments from the 17 and 18th centuries. String and wind players will be able to borrow instruments for the school year. Keyboard players will have preferred access to the Ems suite of rooms, where our keyboard instruments are kept. Stings will be provided for bowed instruments. Students who borrow EMS instruments are personally responsible for their safe keeping.

Music parts, or files for iPads when available will be provided by the EMS.

Graduate Course Learning Objectives

Student experience with period instruments and historic performance may range from none to considerable. In light of this, progress will be evaluated to a considerable extent on an individual basis. Student participation is the most important metric of this evaluation: preparation of music being studied, investigation of historic practices, close attention and participation during discussion of the music are key elements of this participation. The EMS will seek to foster a collective energy and “esprit de corps” in all of our ensembles. However, students will not be judged in comparison to one another, but by their individual effort and progress.

With the above outlined personal participation, students can expect to acquire a range of new instrumental skills as well as what will likely be a new perspective on music making.

Enrolment Restrictions

Enrolment in these courses are restricted to graduate students in Music, as well as any student who has obtained special permission from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student’s home program.

Evaluation

Students will be assessed on their preparation for, and contributions to coaching sessions, rehearsals, and performances – participation, then, is a key component. Coaching sessions and rehearsals are not intended to provide time for practice. Students are expected to gain mastery over assigned repertoire on their own time.

Unexcused absences from coaching sessions, rehearsals, or performances will be reflected in course grades.

Students are responsible for finding out about new information, markings, etc., resulting from any missed coaching sessions and rehearsals as soon as possible.

Grading: A=80-100%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, F=00-59%

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, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf Note especially that plagiarism is a major scholastic offence. Students are expected to write all assignments in their own words. If you take an idea from another author, you must acknowledge this by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: 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.

Health and Wellness Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Early Music Studio studies and makes reference to 17th and 18th century treatises and uses music editions which are either critically edited or ones which are devoid of alteration by later editors. The use of AI to obtain such materials is not a good idea.

Other important points:

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays (other than statutory 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. <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/img/3754-2024-Diversity-Calendar-PDF.pdf>

Electronic Devices in Classrooms: The EMS is a performance course. In-class use of electronic devices other than for instructor-approved in-class uses is considered an undesirable behavior as it would be in the professional performance world. Allowances will be made when students are monitoring their device for critically important messages: please inform professors or TA's when this is the case.

Important Practical Information: and Policies

The EMS has a limited number of stands; students may be required to bring stands to rehearsals.

Punctuality for rehearsals is very important. Tuning for string instruments in particular is a critical issue in historical performance. Please arrive early enough to be ready to play, with your instrument ready for tuning at the beginning rehearsal. Use of binders for music is required; no loose pages. Concert dress is all black, unless otherwise decided by consensus.

The use of EMS rooms and keys -The TA will have keys to the EMS rooms. First priority will be practice access for keyboard students, then other EMS students, for practicing of period instruments only. Sharing of keys with non-EMS students or use of the space for modern instrument practicing without special permission from myself or the TA will result in loss of key privileges.

The equitable access to EMS rooms for practice and rehearsal is monitored by the TA, using an on-line sign up system. Joe and Borys also have manager status of this system.

Storage of instruments, other than bass, theorbo and keyboard instruments, will be at the responsibility and discretion of individual students.

EMS Dress Rehearsals, Concert Dates and Other Important Events

A hard copy schedule of all EMS events will be shared with you in person at the beginning of the Fall term.

