

Syllabus

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course title: MUSIC APPRECIATION

Course number: MUSI 1003

Course discipline: Music

Course description: This course is an introduction to the concepts and history of Western European musical traditions. During the semester we will study the basic terms used in the art form, research a brief overview past 1500 years of music history, listen to recorded and live examples, and begin learning to analyze and describe sound in words.

Course date: Tuesday, January 17, 2006 through Monday, May 8, 2006

INSTRUCTOR INFO

Name: DR. STEVE COOPER

Email: scooper@nwacc.edu

Office location: BH 2310

Phone: (479)619-4261

Biography: Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music Degrees from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas; Doctor of Musical Arts from University of North Texas in Denton, Texas; Compositions published by G. Schirmer, Woodbridge Press, G.I.A., Yeldon Rhodes, Trigram Music, Eldridge Music Publishing, others; Teaching experience in Australia, Texas, and Arkansas.

POLICIES

Introduction: ASSIGNMENTS DUE in my Inbox by NOON on the specified dates. LATE PENALTY--Letter grade for each day late. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS due Friday by noon approximately every two weeks (except for the last few topics). DISCUSSIONS are mandatory--visit the Discussion page and make at least two substantive comments on each topic. CHAT with your classmates to discuss assignments and topics of interest is encouraged.

Additional information: LIVE PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE--You will each be required to attend at least eight live performances of classical music during the term. These must be college/university or professional level concerts--no high school or church concerts will satisfy this requirement. See the assignment for CONCERT ATTENDANCE for more details.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE

Lesson: Attending Live Performances

Date: Monday, May 8, 2006

Objectives or Goals: LIVE PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE--You will each be required to attend at least eight live performances of classical music during the term. These must be college/university or professional level concerts--no high school or church concerts will satisfy this requirement.

Assignments: WITHIN ONE WEEK OF ATTENDING THE CONCERT, send the instructor your response to the concert by answering the following: 1. Name of the event? 2. Location and date? 3. Composers that were performed? 4. Which piece did you like best, and why? 5. Which piece did you like the least, and why? 6. What was the most interesting feature of the event? (NOTE--Check BROADWAY assignment in SYLLABUS--one of your recitals must be a Broadway musical, but you may attend it at any time DURING THIS SEMESTER.) (NOTE--Deadline for attendance credit is Monday, 8 May, 2006. No late credits will be accepted.)

GRADING

: MAIN TOPICS/LESSONS will account for 70% of your course grade. (8 lessons at 10% each, with the lowest grade from the 8 to be dropped.) CONCERT ATTENDANCE is 30% of your final grade. (NOTE--You must attend all eight to receive ANY credit. Attending 7 does not earn 7/8 of 30% but rather 0%. 8 is a minimum.) ALSO NOTE: Attendance at our NWACC concerts counts as 2 credits for each performance! Studying live music is critical to comprehending serious music. If this requirement is a problem, contact the instructor immediately for help in finding a different course.

INTRO LESSON

Lesson: 1st E-MAIL TO INSTRUCTOR

Date: Friday, January 20, 2006

Objectives or Goals: Get Acquainted

Topics: Your Music

Assignments: 1. Send the instructor an e-mail with 1-3 sentences of your musical background and answers to the following questions: a. Did you participate in school musical ensembles? List them. b. Your favorite singer or group? c. The last cd you bought/downloaded/listened to? d. What is your current opinion of "classical music"?

ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

Date: Friday, February 3, 2006

Objectives or Goals: INTRO TO THE ELEMENTS AND TERMS OF MUSIC

Topics: WRITING ABOUT SOUND (Note: This is our first attempt at describing music with words. DO NOT STRESS over this assignment. We're looking for a baseline, a point at which we can begin improving our listening/analyzing/describing skills.)

Readings: The first 10 text chapters dealing with the elements of music.

Assignments: 1. Write a 1-3 sentence definition--in your own words rather than the author's--of the following terms: pitch, dynamics, melody, accompaniment, form, harmony, rhythm, text. 2. Listen to the cd recording of Chopin's Prelude in C Minor for Piano, Op. 28, No. 20 and give a 1-3 sentence description of the composer's use in this piece of dynamics, melody, and rhythm. 4. How would you describe the form (or shape, or order of events) of this piece? 5. E-mail your response to the instructor by noon on the due date shown above.

MEDIEVAL/RENAISSANCE

Lesson: 500-1400ad

Date: Friday, February 17, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To begin our study of the history of Western European music history.

Topics: The music of Hildegard and Josquin Desprez.

Readings: Part II in the text--THE MIDDLE AGES AND RENAISSANCE

Assignments: 1. Listen to the "O successor" by Hildegard--as many times as necessary--and write a paragraph in which you describe the sound of this piece of music. (If you were explaining the piece to someone who didn't get to hear it, how would you describe the sound/shape/style/elements?). 2. Listen to Josquin Desprez's "Ave Maria" and follow the same instructions as for the Hildegard piece. 3. Write one more paragraph in which you compare these two pieces, listing their similarities and differences. 4. Make sure your responses are in the instructor's inbox by noon on the due date.

BAROQUE/CLASSICAL PERIODS

Date: Friday, March 3, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To compare the styles of these periods with the earlier musical styles.

Topics: The music of Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven.

Readings: Parts III and IV in the text.

Assignments: 1. After reading the Baroque chapters (yes, I know it's a lot of pages), pick any three Baroque selections from the cds, listen to them, and briefly compare their general styles to the styles of the Medieval and Renaissance selections you wrote about last week. 2. After reading the Classical Period chapters, again choose any three cd selections and compare them to the Baroque music you chose. You should begin to be more and more fluent in the use of the element-terms you studied during the first weeks of the semester.

ROMANTIC PERIOD/TWENTIETH CENTURY

Date: Friday, March 17, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To discover the major changes in style evidenced in the past 200 years.

Topics: The music of Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Berlioz, Wagner, Copland, Schoenber, Bartok, Ives, Gershwin, others.

Readings: Parts V and VI in the text

Assignments: 1. Listen to the cd selections from the Romantic and Modern periods. 2. After reading the Romantic period chapters, write a test--as if you were the instructor--that asks one question ABOUT AN IMPORTANT POINT from each of those Romantic chapters. 3. Post your test on the Discussion page of the class's website. 4. Select one of the other tests posted there and answer the questions. 5. E-mail your answers for correcting to the person who posted the test. 6. If someone selects your test, please correct their answers and return the test to the sender. (I'll be checking the Discussion pages for your tests. DO THEM EARLY--this will give you more time to answer and correct yours.) 7. Pick one cd selection from the Twentieth Century and

briefly describe your SUBJECTIVE reaction to the piece. (What is your initial reaction? How does it make you feel? What is your opinion of the value of the work?)

NONWESTERN MUSIC

Date: Friday, March 31, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To begin comparing "our" music to the music of nonwestern cultures.

Topics: Ethnic/folk styles

Readings: Part VII in the text.

Assignments: 1. Listen to the cd selections in the Nonwestern music. 2. How many connections can you find among these pieces? Write a brief comparison paragraph discussing these similarities.

POP/COMMERCIAL MUSIC

Lesson: YOUR Music

Date: Friday, April 14, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To compare our work in classical styles to music with which you may be more familiar.

Topics: Pop/Rock/Jazz/Country/Whatever

Assignments: 1. Pick a well-known piece of the styles just listed--one that this instructor might be familiar with--and analyze the elements of music used in the piece. This should be as detailed an analysis as possible--listen LOTS of times. 2. Describe the form--the verses, choruses, bridge, etc. 3. List every change you notice in the volume, melody, accompaniment, instrumentation, harmony, and rhythm. 4. Decide which of these changes you just listed are most important, and create a one-page chart of those points (probably organized around the form), a chart that could easily be copied onto a transparency. 5. Submit that chart in WORD or EXCEL to the instructor for evaluation.

BROADWAY

Date: Friday, December 2, 2005

Objectives or Goals: To view a live Broadway musical.

Readings: Review the text chapters on Broadway musicals.

Assignments: 1. At some time during the term, attend a live Broadway-style musical. FOR THIS CONCERT ONLY the rule requiring college or professional-level performance is suspended. A high school or community theatre musical would suffice. 2. Write approximately one page of your OBJECTIVE description of the event and then give your SUBJECTIVE response to the experience.

NEA

Lesson: The National Endowment for the Arts

Date: Friday, April 28, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To familiarize yourself with this arts agency.

Readings: General research (web or hard sources) on the NEA

Assignments: After researching the agency, submit your answers to the following questions: 1. What is the purpose of the NEA? 2. What is the current annual budget? 3. How much will each of us pay in taxes this year to support the NEA? 4. Do you think this is enough? Too much? About right? 5. Why? Explain your opinion. 6. Visit the Discussion page on this topic with at least two substantive comments.

WRAPUP--FINAL SESSION

Lesson: Looking Back

Date: Friday, May 5, 2006

Objectives or Goals: To assess any changes in knowledge/opinions resulting from your semester's work.

Assignments: After studying Western European musical traditions for a semester, has your opinion of this art form changed? Write a brief description of your current opinion of the value of classical music.

EXTRA CREDIT

Lesson: EXTRA CONCERT CREDIT

Date: Thursday, December 8, 2005

Objectives or Goals: To encourage you to attend more live concerts.

Assignments: You are required to earn 8 concert credits during the term, but you may get extra credit by attending extra concerts beyond the 8 credits. You'll be given a tenth of a point (on a 4 point system) on your final grade for each concert beyond the 8.