

Music Design for All Majors

Professor: Brendan Sweeney • brendansweeneymusic@gmail.com • Office Hour: R Period 8/ by appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory course for all undergraduate students that teaches the basic principles of music composition and introduces students to the wide world of contemporary music. This is a required course for all undergraduate music majors following in sequence after Music Theory III.

Required Materials

- Staff Paper and Pencil
- Access to a computer and Notation Software (this class will use MuseScore, but students who are fluent in and have access to Sibelius and Finale may use those)
- Access to a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), (recommend REAPER7 or Ableton Live)
- For certain class sessions, you will need your principal instrument (these dates are listed in the calendar)

Supplemental Materials

These materials are not required to succeed in this course, but are highly recommended for those looking to further their study of composition and those looking to apply what they learn in class in future endeavors.

- “Behind Bars” by Elaine Gould; comprehensive guidance on music notation.
- “The Study of Orchestration” by Samuel Adler; industry standard guide to orchestration, recommend 8th edition and later.
- “Sweet Anticipation” by David Huron; psychology of emotions and expectations in music.
- “Music Composition” by Alan Belkin; a conventional resource for creating concert music from a venerated composer and educator.

Course Objectives

Through this course students will create 2 pieces of music, the length, purpose, instrumentation, and presentation of which will all be decided by them. Students will discuss fundamental concepts of creating music and music perception, as well as learning the basics of orchestration and digital music creation. Students will learn about several prominent voices in contemporary music as well as create their own report on five works from five different creators that resonated with them.

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Key Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate practical knowledge of the creative process behind writing a piece of music by designing two pieces of music falling within their personal creative interests.
- Students will develop a framework for how to think critically on and discuss new music.
- Students will be able to explain how intention and purpose guide the creation of new music and inform a composer's perception of their own work.
- Students will be able to identify professional composers currently working in the field and their aesthetic viewpoints.

Assessment/grading

Participation - 20%

- Participation is equal parts attendance and contribution in class discussions. Students are expected to speak at least once on average in every class. Students are expected to complete experiments for that week to discuss in class. All Experiments will be submitted through canvas as a completion check.

Piece 1/ Solo Piece - 20%

- If you are doing an electronic composition, this is the work that will be workshopped in the first half of the semester. If you are doing an acoustic composition this is a work for a solo instrumentalist of your choosing. The final piece should show implementation of feedback from previous workshopping sessions/additional prose explaining your decisions on implementing or not implementing feedback.

Piece 2/ Small chamber piece - 20%

- If you are doing an electronic composition, this is the work that will be workshopped in the second half of the semester and you will be required to utilize 2 or more processes. If you are doing an acoustic composition this is a work for a small chamber instrument set of your choosing. The final piece should show implementation of feedback from previous workshopping sessions/additional prose explaining your decisions on implementing or not implementing feedback.

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Final Exam - 20%

- This exam will happen on the assigned time slot by the University. (our last week of class will be used for the composition showcase!) This exam will consist of material covered in lectures and workshops as well as essay questions that will require you to demonstrate comprehension of course concepts. A Study guide will be released 2 weeks prior to the end of the semester, and there will be voluntary review sessions with the professor and/or a TA to go over the test material. An oral version of the exam will be available upon request!

Artist Report - 20%

- Your final project will be a report on five living artists and five of their works that you connect with personally. These may be self-described composers, artists, music or content creators that are in some manner professional musicians. Only two of the artists in your report may be artists that we cover in class. The report should include in equal parts 1) a bio of their artistic career in your own words, 2) a description of the selected work and the background of its creation and premiere, and 3) some prose indicating what you appreciate about the work and why it resonates with you. You should plan a minimum of 100 words per subsection (i.e. minimum 300 words per artist, 1500 total minimum words per paper)

University Grading Policy

Final grades will be awarded within the guidelines of the university grading policy, available to read [here](#).

University Attendance Policy

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students cannot participate in classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The

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Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors. If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and they have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory. The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Illness

If a student is absent from classes or examinations because of illness, they should contact their instructors. Students should contact their college by the deadline to drop a course for medical reasons. Students can petition the [Dean of Students Office](#) to drop a course for medical reasons. The university's policy regarding [medical excuse](#) from classes is maintained by the Student Health Care Center. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.

COVID-19 / Mask Policy

Students that present symptoms of COVID-19 are asked to refrain from attending class until they can provide results of a negative PCR or antibody test. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students who have to miss class due to potential exposure. Students will abide by any mask policy handed down by the university at large and are expected to act in good conscience in regards to the health and safety of their peers. Masks are available in the Music Building front office at no cost.

Twelve Day Rule

Students who participate in university-sponsored athletic or scholarly activities are permitted to be absent 12 scholastic days per semester without penalty. A scholastic day is any day on which regular class work is scheduled as defined in the approved university calendar.

[More Info](#)

The student or student's advisor must notify the instructor as early as possible prior to the anticipated absence to allow ample time for accommodations. Instructors must be flexible and not penalize students when rescheduling during-term and final exams, class assignments, and other required activities and must follow the UF Attendance Policy herein and UF Examination Policies. As noted in the UF Examination Policies, during-term exams should be rescheduled no

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later than before the end of the semester, while final exams no later than 90 days after the originally scheduled exam time. However, instructors are encouraged to reschedule final and during-term exams, assignments, and other activities as soon as possible after the last day of the absence and must not penalize the student in any way.

[More Info](#)

A group's schedule that requires absence of more than 12 scholastic days should be adjusted so that no student is absent from campus more than 12 scholastic days. Students who previously have been warned in writing by their instructor about the impact of absences on their individual class performance should not incur additional absences, even if they have not been absent 12 scholastic days. The student is responsible to maintain satisfactory academic performance and attendance.

Religious Holidays

At the University of Florida, students and faculty work together to allow students the opportunity to observe the holy days of their faith. A student should inform the faculty member of the religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance, with tests or examinations, or with other class activities prior to the class or occurrence of that test or activity. The faculty member is then obligated to accommodate that particular student's religious observances. Because students represent a myriad of cultures and many faiths, the University of Florida is not able to assure that scheduled academic activities do not conflict with the holy days of all religious groups. Accordingly, individual students should make their need for an excused absence known in advance of the scheduled activities.

The Florida Board of Education and state law govern university policy regarding observance of religious holidays.

The following guidelines apply:

- Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith.
- Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
- Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

If a faculty member is informed of or is aware that a significant number of students are likely to be absent from class because of a religious observance, the faculty member should not schedule a major exam or other academic event at that time.

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A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence. Furthermore, a student who believes that they have been unreasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the student grievance procedure.

Reasonable Accommodations for differently-abled students

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click [here](#) to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Online Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Academic Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click [here](#) to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1)

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for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

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UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

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Course Outline

Week 1

Wed Jan 5th - Introductions, syllabus overview, lecture and discussion: why do we make music?

Week 2

Mon Jan 10 - lecture and discussion: Expectation, Intentions, and principles of design. experiment 1 assigned

Wed Jan 12 - Share experiment 1 with class. Presentation on writing process: Facing a blank page. Follow-up activity.

Week 3

Wed Jan 19 - lecture and discussion: Rhythm, experiment 2. Video essay to watch at home (writing process: Inspiration and research) and then online discussion board. **Bring primary instruments to class.**

Week 4

Mon Jan 24 - lecture and discussion: Silence and Proportion. experiment 3 assigned.

Wed Jan 26 - Share experiment 3 with class. Presentation on writing process: generating raw material. Follow-up activity.

Week 5

Mon Jan 31 - Lecture and discussion: Pitch, Harmony, and Polyphony. experiment 4 assigned.

Wed Feb 2 - Experiment 4 uploaded to canvas by class time. Individual appointments to look at piece 1.

Week 6

Mon Feb 7 - Lecture and discussion: Dynamics. experiment 5 assigned.

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Wed Feb 9 - Share experiment 5 with class. Presentation on writing process: Creating Structure. Follow-up activity.

Week 7

Mon Feb 14 - Lecture and discussion: Articulation and Envelopes.
Experiment 6 assigned.

Wed Feb 16 - Share experiment 6 with class. Presentation on writing process: Editing. Follow-up activity.

Week 8

Mon Feb 21 - Lecture and discussion: Timbre. Aesthetic talk: Ravel and other master of timbre, **Piece 1 due!**

Wed Feb 23 - Presentation on writing process: Rehearsal Preparation and Process. Follow-up activity.

Week 9

Mon Feb 28 - Lecture and discussion: writing for voice, experiment 7 assigned.

Wed Mar 2 - Share experiment 7 with class. Aesthetics talk: European Modernism. (Maybe do modern opera instead?)

Week 10

Mon 7 - Wed 9 *SPRING BREAK*****

Week 11

Mon 14 - Lecture and discussion: writing for stringed instruments, experiment 8 assigned.

Wed 16 - Share experiment 8 with class.

Aesthetics talk: John Cage - aleatory, improvisatory, and chance music.

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Week 12

Mon 21 - Lecture and discussion: writing for percussion, experiment 9 assigned.

Wed 23 - share experiment 9 with class. aesthetics talk: minimalism.

Week 13

Mon Mar 28 - Lecture and discussion: writing for woodwinds. experiment 10 assigned.

Wed Mar 30 - Experiment 10 uploaded to canvas by class time. Individual appointments to look at piece 2.

Week 14

Mon Apr 4 -lecture and discussion: writing for Brass instruments, experiment 11 assigned.

Wed Apr 6 - Experiment 11 shared in class. aesthetics talk: Present Day Standouts.

Week 15

Mon Apr 11 - lecture and discussion: electronic techniques, experiment 12 assigned.

Wed Apr 13 - share experiment 12 with class. aesthetics talk: Performerless music, overview of electronic music through today.

Week 16

Piece 2 due!

Mon Apr 18 - showcase 1

Wed Apr 20 - showcase 2

Fri Apr 22 - Non-Mandatory Review Session for Final Exam

Week of Apr 23 - 29

Final exam at assigned time