

Piano Literature, MUL6486

Graduate Seminar

School of Music, University of Florida, Spring 2026

Course Information

Instructors: Jasmin Arakawa, Evan Mitchell, and Hsiang Tu

Instructor Contact: jarakawa@arts.ufl.edu; evan.mitchell@ufl.edu; hsiangtu@ufl.edu

Meeting Time: Thursday or Friday (varies), 3:00-4:55pm

Location: Instructor's studio (MUB 346, 347, or 350)

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This graduate seminar provides an overview of keyboard literature from the early 17th century to the present day. Through examination of major works, composers, and stylistic developments, students will gain an understanding of the piano's evolving role in Western classical music. The course is organized primarily by genre and historical period, allowing students to trace the development of keyboard forms including the suite, sonata, character piece, étude, and other significant genres. Emphasis will be placed on historical context, performance practice, stylistic analysis, and technical and interpretative challenges. Additionally, this course will provide practical pedagogical methods for teaching these works, exploring effective strategies for helping students at various levels approach the various challenges.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate competent knowledge of major keyboard repertoire from the Baroque to the contemporary
- Identify and analyze stylistic characteristics of different historical periods as reflected in the idiomatic writing for the instrument
- Understand the evolution of keyboard genres and their historical contexts
- Critically evaluate performances and recordings of piano literature
- Articulate connections between historical performance practice and modern interpretation
- Develop effective pedagogical approaches for teaching repertoire from different periods and styles
- Conduct independent research on keyboard repertoire and present findings effectively

Required Materials

- Selected musical scores (to be distributed or assigned by instructors)
- Access to recordings through library databases and streaming services
- Additional readings and articles as assigned

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all class sessions is **mandatory**. This seminar depends on active participation and collaborative learning.

Each absence will result in a 5% deduction from your final grade.

Exceptions may be made only for documented emergencies or university-sanctioned activities with prior notification to the instructors.

Grading Breakdown

- **Projects and Presentations: 50%**
- **Assignments and Quizzes: 30%**
- **Class Participation: 20%**

Grading Scale

A: 93-100	A-: 90-92	B+: 87-89	B: 83-86
B-: 80-82	C+: 77-79	C: 73-76	C-: 70-72
D: 60-69	F: Below 60		

Course Components

Projects and Presentations (50%)

Students will complete projects and deliver presentations throughout the semester. These may include:

- Analytical presentations on assigned repertoire
- Lecture-recital presentations
- Research projects on specific composers, genres, or stylistic periods
- Comparative analyses of performances and interpretations
- Pedagogical demonstrations addressing teaching strategies for specific works or technical challenges

Specific assignments will be determined by each instructor based on the material being covered.

Assignments and Quizzes (30%)

Regular assignments will reinforce learning and may include:

- Listening assignments with written responses
- Reading responses and critical reviews
- Short quizzes on repertoire, composers, and stylistic characteristics
- Pedagogical reflections on teaching strategies for assigned repertoire

Class Participation (20%)

Active engagement is essential. Participation includes:

- Contributing meaningfully to class discussions
- Asking thoughtful questions
- Sharing insights from listening and score study
- Demonstrating preparation and familiarity with assigned materials

Course Outline

Unit 1: Development of Keyboard Instruments and the Baroque Period

- Evolution of early keyboard instruments: harpsichord, clavichord, and organ
- The development of idiomatic keyboard writing
- Baroque genres: suite, toccata, fugue, and variations
- Major composers and national styles: Bach, Scarlatti, Couperin, Rameau
- Performance practice, ornamentation, and articulation in Baroque keyboard music
- Pedagogical implications: teaching Baroque style, fingering, and historical performance practice

Unit 2: Development of the Keyboard Sonata Through the Early 20th Century

- Origins and evolution of sonata form and the fortepiano
- Classical sonata: Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven
- Romantic expansion of the sonata: Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, and Liszt
- National Romantic schools and the sonata tradition
- Early 20th century transformations: Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev
- Pedagogical implications: teaching sonata form, structure, and stylistic evolution

Unit 3: Character Pieces and Études from the 19th Century to the Present Day

- The Romantic character piece: nocturnes, impromptus, moments musicaux, intermezzi, ballades
- The étude as both technical study and concert piece
- National character in miniatures: mazurkas, polonaises, Spanish dances
- Impressionism and early modern approaches: Debussy, Ravel, Scriabin
- Mid-20th century to contemporary character pieces and études
- Pedagogical implications: teaching expressive miniatures, technical development, and contemporary styles

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Students are not to prepare, complete, or revise assignments using generative AI or large-language models unless specific prior authorization and guidance is given by instructor. Doing so would be a violation of the Student Honor Code.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities requiring accommodations should contact the [Disability Resource Center] and provide documentation to the instructors as early as possible in the semester.

Communication

Students are expected to check their university email regularly for course updates and announcements. Office hours and individual meeting times can be arranged with each instructor as needed.

Note

This syllabus is subject to modification at the instructors' discretion. Any changes will be announced in class and via email.

Additional Information

Information about university-wide policies and resources can be found here:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>