

*"The mind is a fire to be kindled, not a vessel to be filled."
— Plutarch*

GEN_MUS 175-0 Special Topics in Music: Music & Mind

Northwestern University—Winter, 2003
MWF 2:00 – 2:50 p.m., MAB 125

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course description: An introduction to the processes involved in listening to and understanding music. Students will gain an understanding of how music is perceived, remembered, and performed. The course will focus on how music may be studied from a psychological frame of reference, including issues related to culture, sociology, physiology, psychoacoustics, and individual experience. No prior experience is required either in music or in psychology; all necessary concepts and required vocabulary will be introduced in course readings and/or classroom discussions.

Statement of Course Objectives:

This course will provide the student an opportunity to ...

- ✓ gain an understanding of the processes involved in listening to and understanding music
- ✓ differentiate the process of "LISTENING" from simply "hearing" when participating in the musical experience
- ✓ acquire a musical vocabulary that will enable concise, intellectual discussion about the topic
- ✓ realize (and appreciate) the many different ways to approach the study of music, e.g., anthropological, sociological, physiological, psychoacoustical, experiential, etc.
- ✓ gain experience in communicating with others about music, clearly expressing one's own opinions & beliefs
- ✓ apply newly-acquired knowledge about music to unfamiliar contexts
- ✓ utilize specific musical examples to illustrate the various concepts presented and discussed in class
- ✓ acquire a clearer understanding of one's own current musical preferences and the basis for this selection
- ✓ accept the dynamic nature of musical style, realizing that music of tomorrow may require a re-thinking & reformulation of concepts, beliefs, and preferences held today
- ✓ stimulate an appreciation for the ways in which a multidisciplinary approach to the study of music—or any area of study for that matter—can enhance our understanding of the field

Required texts:

MBE - Jourdain, R. (1998). Music, the Brain, and Ecstasy: How Music Captures Our Imagination. NY: Avon Books (available at Norris Bookstore).

Course Reader: students will be required to read & comprehend a series of articles related to recent research in the field. These articles have been collected into a course reader that can be purchased at Quartet Copies. These readings form an essential part of the course content and are required of every student.

Additional Requirements:

- ✓ All students will be required to utilize Blackboard for class assignments and virtual "discussions" outside of class. Point a web browser to <http://courses.northwestern.edu>, then click on "Login" and provide your NUNet UserName & Password. Electronic communication will also be used to contact the instructor and/or other students.

Schedule of Assignments (subject to change)¹:

Week One

Review Course Requirements
Introduce Topics
*Lipscomb & Hodges (1996)
*Lipscomb (1996)

Week Two

1/13 – RAT #1 – MBE Ch. 1 & 2

Week Three

1/20 – no class (MLK)
*Seashore (1938), Ch. 1-3
*Bregman (1993)

Week Four

1/27 – RAT #2 – MBE Ch. 3, 4, & 5
1/31 – no class

Week Five

*Dowling (1994)
*Lerdahl & Jackendoff (1983), Ch. 1 & 2

Week Six

2/10 – RAT #3 – MBE Ch. 6 & 7
Final Presentation Topics Due

Week Seven

*Coker (1978), Ch. 1 & 2
*Berliner (1994), Ch. 4
*Ashley & Trilsbeek (in press)

Week Eight

2/24 – RAT #4 – MBE Ch. 8, 9, & 10

Week Nine

*Sacks (1970), Intro & Ch. 1
*Meyer (1956), Ch. 1

Week Nine

*Blacking (1976), Ch. 1
*Lipscomb & Kendall (1994)

Week Ten

Oral Presentations of Final Project
3/10 – Written Version of Final Project
Due

Additional Readings: For each reading assignment except the chapters in the Jourdain text (MBE), each student is required to write a 2-paragraph "reflection" to be posted to an appropriate forum of the Blackboard Discussion List *prior to the Friday class meeting of the week referenced in the course schedule above*. The posting must clearly communicate two things: a) a basic understanding of the content of the reading (paragraph 1) and b) the student's individual response to or thoughts about that topic, relating to past personal experience and/or other topically related resources (paragraph 2). Evidence of the latter may come, at times, in the form of a question posed to the rest of the class. Every student will be required to respond (using the "reply" method) to a minimum of *three* of these questions during the course of the semester. This virtual discussion is a graded component of the semester total. All postings that are submitted *complete and on time* will receive a grade of 100%. Any posting submitted after the due date will automatically receive a grade of 75%. **[No posting** will receive credit if posted more than two class periods following its due date.] Incomplete submissions will receive a grade of 50% or less, depending on the amount completed.

¹ Specific due dates for assignments and exam dates are available in the "Calendar" module of Blackboard. Any changes to the schedule will be reflected in this calendar, available at all times. Reading assignments marked with an asterisk (*) are contained in the Course Reader available at Quartet Copies (full citations for these resources are provided on the final page of this syllabus).

Grading:

Grades will be determined by scores in two major performance areas: **Individual Performance** and **Group Performance**. Grading Weights are provided below.

<u>Grade Weights</u>	<u>Grade Weights</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Individual Performance	<u>Within Area</u>	of <u>Total Grade</u>
		55%
Individual Assignments (reflection postings)	30%	
Class Participation (attendance)	20%	
<i>Individual</i> Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs)	10%	
Final Project (written)	<u>40%</u>	
	100%	
 Group Performance		 45%
Assignments & Class Participation	30%	
<i>Group</i> Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs) ²	25%	
Final Group Presentation (oral)	20%	
"Helping Behavior" (evaluated by peers)	<u>25%</u>	
	100%	
		<hr/> 100%

Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs)

In addition to the Final Project, **four** short multiple-choice Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs) will be given during the quarter ... one at the **beginning** of each unit of study. The RAT consists of three separate steps: an individual test, a group test, and an appeals process. The same RATs will be taken first by individual students, then in groups. Only students who receive **a score of 50% or better** on their individual RAT test will receive the grade for the group test. On group exams and projects, all group members will receive the same score. A handout describing the Appeals Process will be available online.

"Helping" Behavior:

During the final week of class, each individual will rate the helpfulness of all of the **other** members of their group. Individual Helping Behavior scores will be the average of the points received from other members of their group. An example of this procedure follows, assuming a group consisting of six members:

Since group members do not provide a rating for her/himself, each individual must assign a total of 50 points to the other five members in their group: number of group members minus 1, then multiply by the average score or $(6 - 1) \times 10 = 50$. Raters must differentiate some in their ratings ... this means that each rater would have to give at least one score of 11 or higher—with a **maximum of 15**—and at least one score of 9 or lower. A student's Helping Behavior score will be the average of the peer evaluations received from other members of her/his group; an average score of 11 or more will result in a grade of 100% for this portion of the grade, while lower average scores will receive a percentage equal to the evaluation score average $\times 10$ minus 10 points; e.g., a student earning an average evaluation score of 10.3 from her/his peers would receive 93% ...

$$(10.3 \times 10) - 10 = 93$$

The Helping Behavior scores will produce differences in grades only **within** groups. As a result, group members can't help everyone in their group get an A by giving them a high peer evaluation score. The only way for everyone in a group to earn an A is by doing an outstanding job on the individual **and** group tests & projects.

² Only students who receive a score of 50% or better on the Individual RAT test will receive the grade for the Group test.

Determination of Final Grades:

The final grades will be determined as follows:

1. a raw total score will be computed for each student in both major performance areas
 - a) in the Individual Performance area, this will be a weighted combination of the sum of the Individual Assignments (30%), attendance (20%), individual Readiness Assessment Test scores (10%), and the Final Project grade (40%);
 - b) in the Group Performance area, this will be determined by the group assignments & class participation (30%), scores on the group RATs (25%), the Final Group Presentation (20%); and the Helping Behavior score (25%);
2. Students' total scores will be computed by multiplying the raw scores in each area by the grade "weight" provided ... 55% for Individual Performance & 45% for Group Performance
3. Course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

92.01 – 100	= A	78 – 79.99	= C+
90 – 92	= A-	72.01 – 77.99	= C
88 – 89.9	= B+	70 – 72	= C-
82.01 – 87.99	= B	60 – 69.99	= D
80 – 82	= B-	< 60	= F

Final Project & Presentation: During the early part of the quarter, each individual will select a topic of interest relevant to the course content. The student will be responsible for researching this topic, using a variety of sources beyond the required course readings. The Final Project will consist of an 8- to 10-page written document describing this area of interest, the current state of research related to that topic, and providing a list of at least three questions that would provide interesting directions for future research. All group members will be responsible for remaining apprised of the topics selected by other members of the group. During the final week of class, each group will give a 15-minute oral presentation that will communicate their collective understanding of the field of music psychology ("Music & Mind"), as evidenced by an integrative synopsis of each Final Project topic selected by individual members the group. The presentation should be well-organized and each member of the group must actively participate in its preparation. A handout containing the specific requirements for the individual Final Project and the Final Group Presentation will be provided online. Students will also be responsible for evaluating presentations given by other groups in the class (a graded assignment).

Discussion List Contributions: In addition to the required "reflection" postings, students are encouraged to contribute to online discussions in the Discussion List area of Blackboard (the "Main" forum). Only topical postings should be submitted (informal communication not related to the course should be carried out using student-to-student email). Each student is responsible for checking "Discussion Board" postings and incoming email at least every other day and for reading all posted messages. Email will be the primary means of communication used by the professor outside of class. To access these communication tools, simply point your internet browser to <http://courses.northwestern.edu>, then click on "Login." After providing your UserName & Password, click on the GEN_MUS 175-0 link, select the "Communication" button on the left side of the course web page, and select "Discussion Board" from the options presented. For assistance in using Blackboard, contact the support staff at: blackboard@northwestern.edu.

Attendance: MANDATORY!! The consequences of being absent are two-fold. First, the instructor will take roll in class. Absences in excess of 2 will lower your final grade by 5 points for each additional absence, up to a maximum deduction of one letter grade. Second, other members of your group are instructed to take this matter into consideration as they provide their "Helping Behavior" rating. NOTE: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL MAKE-UPS FOR THE RATs BE GIVEN. **DO NOT** be absent on these days.

Scholastic Dishonesty: the University expects every student to maintain a high standard of individual integrity for work done. Scholastic dishonesty is a serious offence which includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test of other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another's work and the unauthorized incorporation of that work in one's own work), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing college work offered for credit). In cases of scholastic dishonesty, Dr. Lipscomb will initiate disciplinary proceedings against the student. Any student caught cheating on an exam will receive a "0." It's not worth the risk—don't do it!

Books & Articles Referenced as Reading Assignments

(contained in the Course Reader)

- Ashley, R. & Trilsbeek, P. (submitted to *Music Perception* for publication). All his Yesterdays" Aspects of musical expression in Paul McCartney's vocal recordings.
- Berliner, P. (1994). Thinking in jazz: the infinite art of improvisation. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 4]
- Blacking, J. (1976). How musical is man? Seattle, University of Washington. [Ch. 1]
- Bregman, A.S. (1993). Auditory scene analysis: Hearing in complex environments. In S McAdams & E. Bigand's (Eds.), Thinking in sound: The cognitive psychology of human audition, pp. 10-36. NY: Clarendon Press
- Coker, J. (1978). Listening to Jazz. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. [Ch. 1 & 2]
- Dowling, W. J. (1994). Melodic contour in hearing and remembering melodies. In R. Aiello & J. Sloboda's (Eds.) Musical Perceptions, 173-190. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lerdahl, F. & Jackendoff, R. (1983). A generative theory of tonal music. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. [Ch. 1 & 2]
- Lipscomb, S.D. (1996). The cognitive organization of musical sound. In D. Hodges' (Ed.), Handbook of Music Psychology, 2nd edition, pp. 133-175. San Antonio, TX: IMR Press.
- Lipscomb, S.D. (1996). Hearing and music perception. In D. Hodges' (Ed.), Handbook of Music Psychology, 2nd edition, pp. 83-132. San Antonio, TX: IMR Press.
- Lipscomb, S.D. & Kendall, R.A. (1994). Perceptual judgment of the relationship between musical and visual components in film. *Psychomusicology*, 13(1), 60-98.
- Meyer, L. (1956). Emotion and meaning in music. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 1]
- Sacks, O. (1970). The man who mistook his wife for a hat and other clinical tales. NY: Harper & Row, Publishers. [Intro & Ch. 1]
- Seashore, C.E. (1938). Psychology of Music. NY: Dover Publications. [Ch. 1-3]