

Music Appreciation

Course Description:

This ten-week, three-credit course is intended as a broad survey of music intended to familiarize students with a wide range of concepts and themes in music. Music Appreciation aims to examine how music is working, that is, what music is for and what music does, hopefully enriching students' understanding of how they appreciate and understand music.

This class is presented in four units:

1. Music Philosophy and Aesthetics
2. Music and Culture
3. Music and Religion
4. Music and Politics

Required Texts:

Selected readings as assigned in the schedule below.

Assignments:

Listening Quizzes (10%): Each unit, students will be tested on their ability to recognize selected pieces of music discussed in class, as well as relevant information pertaining to those pieces.

Participation and Engagement (20%): Students will be assessed on their classroom participation, their willingness to engage with critical topics, and their professionalism. Students will gain points for being present and on time, as well as showing they have thought critically on each of the readings. Students will lose points for poor classroom behavior and general dispiritedness regarding readings and discussion. Students are expected to remain engaged, relevant, and civilized.

Writing Assessment (30%): In the style of 19th century criticism, students must complete a 2000 word analysis on a piece of music of their choosing. Papers must answer the question: what is this music doing and how? Students will participate in one peer-review session where they will present their theses and working material in groups of three or four. Students will submit drafts in two stages: the first a presentation of the main subject matter and argumentation (about 1500 words) after which they are expected to complete revisions as assigned, and the second a completed document for grading.

An **A paper** answers the presented question, shows a clear understanding of topics and concepts presented in the course, and engages with said topics at a high level. It has coherent argumentation and few grammatical mistakes. A **B paper** answers the presented question with appropriate (but not outstanding) engagement with critical topics. A **C paper** does the bare minimum; it answers the question, but not well, and mentions critical topics, but does not relate them to their chosen piece. A **D paper** does not meet the minimum requirements of a C paper. Students will only receive an **F** if they fail to turn the paper in.

Midterm and Final Exams (20% each): Students will complete cumulative exams concerning the topics discussed. Students will be examined on their ability to understand and explain key concepts in music as well as give relevant musical examples.

Schedule:

Introduction to Music Scholarship

Week 1:

Monday: Introduction and Syllabus and Library and Online Resources

Wednesday: How to Read Music Scholarship

Friday: Writing about Music – Music Criticism in the 19th Century

Read: E.T.A. Hoffman

Unit 1: Music Philosophy and Aesthetics

Week 2:

Monday: What is Music? What makes music good?

Read: Buker “Music and Aesthetics.” In *A Humanistic Approach to Music in Appreciation: Music and Living from Practical to Aesthetic*. 184-87.

Wednesday: Kitsch

Read: [Kitsch and the Modern Predicament](#)

Friday: Valuation in Music?

Read: Weber “Musical idealism and the crisis of the old order,” in *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste*

Listen: Beethoven *Symphony No. 7*

Week 3:

Monday: Challenging Music

[Can you conceptualize beauty without ugliness?]

Listen: John Cage 4’33”

Listen: Mozart *Symphony 40*

Listen: Schoenberg *Pierrot lunaire*

Wednesday: Ethics in Music

Read: Buker 180-82

Listen: Wagner *Tristan und Isolde*

Listen: Carl Orff *Carmina Burana*

Listen: J.S. Bach *St. Matthew Passion*

Friday: Listening Quiz #1

Unit 2: Music and Culture

Week 4:

Monday: Nationalism, Exoticism, and Cultural Appropriation

Listen: Puccini *Madama Butterfly*

Listen: Smetana *Moldau*

Watch: Selections from Disney's *Coco* and *Pocahontas*

Wednesday: Opera and Theatre

Fabian: "Theater and Anthropology, Theatricality and Culture"

Watch: Selected scenes from Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*

Friday: Performance Practice

Read: Historically-Informed Practice

Week 5:

Monday: Black Music in the Americas

Listen: Jazz and Blues

Wednesday: Music and Women, Queer Music

Listen: Cecile Chaminade *Concertino Opus. 108*

Listen: Schubert

Friday: Listening Quiz #2

Unit 3: Music and Religiosity

Week 6:

Monday: Music in Church History

Read: Buker 110-33

Listen: Handel's *Messiah*

Listen: *A Mighty Fortress*

Listen: Gregorian Chant

Listen: Mass Ordinary

Wednesday: Music as Religion

Read: [Why is Music a Religious Experience?](#)

Listen: Contemporary Christian Music

Friday: Midterm

Week 7:

Monday: Social Conditioning in Music

Wednesday: Peer Review Day

Friday: Listening Quiz #3

Unit 4: Music and Politics

Week 8:

Monday: Music as Propaganda

Read: Perris “Music as Propoganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People’s Republic of China.”

Read: Hall “The Personal Tragedy in Paul Hindemith’s *Mathis der Maler*”

Listen: Hindemith *Mathis der Maler*

Wednesday: Protest Music

Read: “[Butterfly Flow: Tupac, Kendrick Lamar, and the Resurrection of New Black Godz](#)”

Listen: Selections from Kendrick Lamar’s *To Pimp a Butterfly*

Friday: Music and War – Sonic Violence

Read: Selections from Cheng’s *Just Vibrations*

Read: Selections from Ritter and Daughtry’s *Music in the Post-911 World*

Week 9:

Monday: Music as Social Justice

Read: [Music as Social Justice Resources Project](#)

Read: [Music + Social Justice at Yale](#)

Wednesday: Music as Reparation

Read: Selections from Cheng’s *Just Vibrations*

Friday: Listening Quiz #4

Week 10:

Monday and Wednesday: No class. Sign up for a required meeting with the instructor and review for final.

Friday: **Writing Assignments** due. Final during university scheduled time.