

# Music Theory 1

MUSC 1301

Dr. Geyer

Fall 2017

8:50–9:40 MWF

Humanities 234

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Course Description:** An initial study of music fundamentals, theory, literature, score reading, and SATB part writing. MUSC 1401 must be taken concurrently. Students complete assignments by using traditional methods and by using the tools of music technology.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student must demonstrate...

1. knowledge and understandings of the elements of music (duration, intensity, pitch, and timbre).
  2. the ability to write notation following proper manuscript procedures using traditional methods and the tools of music technology.
  3. an understanding of and the ability to write and use staves, clefs, note symbols, rest symbols, grand staff, accidentals, intervals, harmonic series, meter, rhythm, pulse, meter signatures, division and subdivision of beat, and tempo.
  4. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose tetrachords, scales, circle of fourths/ fifths, and key signatures.
  5. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose melody and form, including periods, phrases, motives, double periods, contour, repetition, and two- and three-part forms.
  6. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose textures, including monophony, polyphony, and homophony.
  7. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose harmony, including major, minor, diminished triads in root position and in first and second inversion.
  8. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose four-part writing, including doubling, spacing, and voice leading.
  9. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose functional harmony, including tonic-dominant and tonic-subdominant progressions; authentic (perfect and imperfect), plagal, half, deceptive, and Phrygian cadences.
  10. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose dominant seventh chords, chord qualities, figured bass, inversions, resolutions, function of the chord in tonal harmony.
  11. an understanding of and the ability to analyze and compose nonharmonic tones, including passing tones (unaccented, accented, consecutive), neighboring tones (upper and lower), changing tones (double auxiliary), pedal points, appoggiatura, escape tones, anticipation, suspension, and retardation.
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**Dr. Geyer's Particular Course Description:** Our course blends the study of music literacy (reading and writing) with a survey of music theory scholarship. The three components (UTheory, readings, and class time) are all crucial components of your learning.

- We'll learn *music literacy* mostly from the website [www.UTheory.com](http://www.UTheory.com). Computer study is perfect for music literacy because (1) it requires a great deal of repetitive practice and (2) there is almost always a straightforward and objectively correct answer.
- We'll learn about *music theory scholarship* from a course pack that I wrote this summer, *just for you!* (You're welcome.) The readings are usually 2–3 pages per assignment, and there are reading guides to help us make sure that you understand.
- Our class time will be spent on active learning: exploration, experimentation, skills practice, discussion, music-making, analysis, reinforcement, and anything else we can think of.

**Skills:** The best way to learn is to develop new skills, and we'll focus on the following areas:

- Music literacy: reading and writing music
- Mindfulness: time management, efficiency, and self-awareness, to help you get a good start to your career, both as a student and as a professional.
- Reading and Writing: (English) reading and writing skills, to help you assess other people's claims, make your own claims, and support your claims. Much of the information that the human race has compiled is in written form, and the skill of careful reading will help you continue to learn for the rest of your life.

### Required Materials:

- Course pack, available at the book store (\$13.68)
- Subscription to [www.UTheory.com](http://www.UTheory.com) (\$5.99 per month for 3–4 months)
- A listening subscription service *or* a budget for buying digital music (\$20–30)
- A medium-sized 3-ring binder; staff paper and lined paper; pencils and erasers<sup>1</sup>

**Preferred Materials:** I'd like to use technology interactively in class. If you don't have a smartphone, please let me know! If you do have a smartphone, please download the student version of the app "Socrative."

## Work and Assessment

**UTheory:** You will develop fluency in music literacy skills through the browser app, "UTheory." You'll register at the beginning of the semester on our class page—look for an announcement in CourseDen.

UTheory has video lessons, skills practice, and checkpoints. The most effective approach to learning is to practice every day, and I've set up UTheory with due dates to keep you on track. However, this learning is up to you: do what works with your learning style and schedule.

These skills are crucial to your success as a student and professional. You therefore must demonstrate fluency in order to pass this course. Please pay close attention to these *strict grading policies* for the UTheory part of the course:

- There are four checkpoints, each worth 7.5% of your grade (30% total).
- You may take each checkpoint up to five times to improve your score.
- To get credit for a checkpoint, you must complete it by the date listed on the schedule below. I will record your grade directly after class on the due date.
- **To pass the class, you must achieve a score of 85% or greater on each of these checkpoints. You will not pass the course if you have less than 85% on any checkpoint.**
- You may work to improve your checkpoint grades until November 27. You will not get credit in your semester grade for grade improvements after the individual checkpoint due dates, but you may work to reach the 85% passing threshold in each checkpoint.

UTheory lessons and skills practice are not graded; you may skip them if you know the material, or repeat them as much as you'd like. Keep in mind that it is common to be over-confident if you do well at the beginning, so be careful to take this seriously and *keep up with the checkpoints!*

**Readings, Reading Guides, Quizzes.** This course is a *flipped classroom*: readings introduce the course's basic knowledge outside of class so we can use class time for active learning. In other words, I provide my lecture notes through the course pack readings instead of standing in front of you and talking.

Homework assignments and quizzes (announced and unannounced) will assess your preparation for class. Quizzes and non-UTheory homework will be averaged for 35% of your grade.

You'll have to do some homework assignments yourself, especially at the beginning, when they are reading-heavy. Later on, though, we'll have many more nuts-and-bolts kinds of assignments.

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<sup>1</sup> The total should cost you *way* less than a standard textbook! Yay!

For those, I have opened a CourseDen discussion and I encourage you to post questions and help each other answer them.

I encourage you work with peers on nuts-and-bolts homework (I'll let you know which those are), with four conditions. First, work with no more than two other people on any assignment. Second, each student completes their own work; teamwork is for consultation or checking completed answers, not for copying answers. Third, write all group member names on your paper. Finally, and most importantly: *make group work a learning experience, not a short-cut*. Remember: if you provide anyone with an answer, you're robbing them of the opportunity to learn on their own!

**Assignment Grading.** Homework assignments will be graded either as a percentage or on a rubric, indicated at the time the assignment is given. The rubric measures your command over the assignment and your demonstrated commitment to the work:

- 100%: complete command and commitment
- 90%: “almost there” except for a minor problem
- 80%: Satisfactory
- 67%: Struggling
- 0%: Incomplete or unsatisfactory

**Revision:** You may revise any assignment once; the grade for the revision will replace the original grade. If you need to revise substantially, please feel free to come to my office for a fresh copy. Quiz revisions will occur in my office.

**Exams:** The first two exams will be held on September 8 and October 11, and will be worth 10% each, for a total of 20% of your semester grade. Your final exam is December 4 at 8:00 a.m., and is worth 15% of your semester grade. You may not revise exams for a new grade.

**Summary of the grading scheme:**

|                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| UTheory Checkpoints     | 30% (4, worth 7.5% each) |
| Assignments and Quizzes | 35%                      |
| Exams 1 and 2           | 20% (10% each)           |
| Final Exam (cumulative) | 15%                      |

**Semester Grades:**

90–100%: A    80–89%: B    70–79%: C    60–69%: D    59% and under: F

**Common Language for UWG Syllabi:** For policies pertaining to all classes (including this one) please go to <https://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/>.

**Schedule (Subject to Change)**

| Date | Week | UTheory Due                           | Reading due                                   |
|------|------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 8/9  | 1    |                                       |                                               |
| 8/11 |      | piano; treble intro                   | Music Theory and Schemas                      |
| 8/14 | 2    | treble 2; rhythm 1                    | Lakoff and Johnson Chapter 1                  |
| 8/16 |      | accidentals 1; rhythm 2               | Janna Saslaw, "Forces, Containers, and Paths" |
| 8/18 |      | accidentals 2; treble ledgers; bass 1 | Rhythm                                        |
| 8/21 | 3    | bass ledgers; Checkpoint 1, first try | Meter Part I - Cognition                      |
| 8/23 |      |                                       | Meter Part II - Categorization                |

|       |    |                                           |                                                     |
|-------|----|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 8/25  |    | <b>Checkpoint 1 Due, Grade Finalized</b>  | Note values, dots, time signatures                  |
| 8/28  | 4  | H&W piano; major scales piano; writing W  | Hierarchy and Structure                             |
| 8/30  |    | Writing H; writing maj scales             | Containers and Motions                              |
| 9/1   |    | Sharp major keys; flat major keys         | Review                                              |
| 9/4   |    | LABOR DAY                                 |                                                     |
| 9/6   | 5  | Checkpoint 2, first try                   | <b>Exam 1</b>                                       |
| 9/8   |    |                                           | Greek Origin of WWHWWH                              |
| 9/11  | 6  | <b>Checkpoint 2, Due, Grade Finalized</b> | Pitch Organization Overview                         |
| 9/13  |    | Generic intervals; ascending intervals    | Tonality and the Phrase                             |
| 9/15  |    | descending intervals; tricky intervals    | Counterpoint: Cantus Firmus                         |
| 9/18  | 7  | Inversion, enharmonic, compound           | Acoustics                                           |
| 9/20  |    | Checkpoint 3 (intervals!), first try      | Consonance, Relative Motion                         |
| 9/22  |    |                                           | First species Counterpoint                          |
| 9/25  | 8  | <b>Checkpoint 3 Due, Grade Finalized</b>  | Second species Counterpoint                         |
| 9/27  |    |                                           | Counterpoint Work                                   |
| 9/29  |    |                                           | Counterpoint Work                                   |
| 10/2  | 9  |                                           | Review                                              |
| 10/4  |    |                                           | <b>Exam 2</b>                                       |
| 10/6  |    |                                           | FALL BREAK                                          |
| 10/9  | 10 | [no assignment: fall break]               |                                                     |
| 10/11 |    | Natural minor; harmonic minor             | PAC Paradigm                                        |
| 10/13 |    | melodic minor; minor key sigs             | The Functional Cycle and Prolongation               |
| 10/16 | 11 | Checkpoint 4 (minor scales!), first try   | Predominants Built on 4                             |
| 10/18 |    |                                           | Compound Cadence                                    |
| 10/20 |    | <b>Checkpoint 4 Due, Grade Finalized</b>  | Model Composition in Minor                          |
| 10/23 | 12 |                                           | Figured Bass                                        |
| 10/25 |    |                                           | The Imaginary Continuo: Composing from Figured Bass |
| 10/27 |    |                                           | Tonic Prolongation Schemas - outer voices           |
| 10/30 | 13 |                                           | Tonic Expansion - Middle Voices                     |
| 11/1  |    |                                           | Triads, Seventh Chords, Inversion                   |
| 11/3  |    |                                           | SOCIETY FOR MUSIC THEORY CONFERENCE - NO CLASS      |
| 11/6  | 14 |                                           | Seventh Chords, Parallel Comparison, Chord Quality  |
| 11/8  |    |                                           | The Roman - Function Relationship                   |
| 11/10 |    |                                           | Analysis and Application                            |
| 11/13 | 15 |                                           | Analysis and Application                            |
| 11/15 |    |                                           | Analysis and Application                            |
| 11/17 |    |                                           | Analysis and Application                            |
| 11/20 | 16 | THANKSGIVING BREAK                        |                                                     |
| 11/22 |    |                                           |                                                     |
| 11/24 |    |                                           |                                                     |
| 11/27 | 17 |                                           | Review                                              |
| 11/29 |    |                                           | Review                                              |
| 12/1  |    |                                           | Review                                              |

