



MUSIC 11: INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC



COURSE INFORMATION

Arms Music Center 212
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00-10:50

Assistant Professor Jeffers Engelhardt
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is intended for students with little or no background in music that would like to develop a theoretical and practical understanding of how music works. Students will be introduced to different kinds of musical notation, melodic systems, harmonies, meters, and rhythmic techniques with the goal of attaining basic competence in the performance and creation of music. The music we analyze and perform will be drawn from the Western tonal tradition as well as a variety of other musical traditions. Assignments will include notational exercises, short papers, blog contributions, and the preparation of music for classroom performance. This course serves as a prerequisite for many other Music Department offerings. Three class meetings and one lab section per week. Students with some musical experience contemplating Music 11 are encouraged to take a self-administered placement exam available on the Music Department website:

<<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/music/theoryexam>>

Students are also encouraged to discuss placement in music theory with a member of the Music Department.

This is primarily a skills class. The skills you will be learning are reading and writing music through singing and written assignments. In order to do this you will also have to learn a number of technical things about music (music theory). The only prerequisite of this class is the ability to work hard and attend every class and section. This class is designed for people who are interested in music but have little experience (or have experience with singing or playing but would like to learn the fundamentals of music theory). Don't worry about your ability to sing. Music 11 is not primarily a singing class—we sing to make learning theory easier. The only thing I require is your willingness to sing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Needless to say, preparation for, attendance at, and active participation in every class meeting and section is essential. No unexcused absences are permitted. Graded in-class work cannot be made up, no exceptions. In order for an absence to be excused due to illness or an exceptional and unavoidable personal conflict, you must be in touch with me well beforehand. An email sent after an absence is polite, but it does not excuse that absence.

The only way to learn how to read and perform music is to practice it over and over again—just like in an introductory foreign language class. The only way for me to know how you are progressing and how I can help you is to hear you sing in class and in individual meetings with me. Everyone will be expected to regularly sing in front of the class. I strongly recommend practicing with a classmate outside of class and preparing singing assignments together. Having someone check your singing or prepare group assignments with will help you improve faster (and making music together is always more fun).

You will receive a fair number of written and singing assignments for every class. Occasionally written assignments may take as long as 2 hours. It is advisable not to try to do your written assignment at the last minute—doing less at once but doing it every day will help improve your ability to write and hear music well. I also expect you to work between 20 and 30 minutes every day on your singing assignments. Overall, if you do not spread out the time for assignments over the whole week, you will not be able to improve as fast as you should. If you have problems and feel that you did poorly, you can always come to me for help. You will have frequent quizzes and exams to check whether you are learning the material. If a grade is low, you will be required to turn in your assignments for the previous week(s). Your assignments won't be graded, but missed assignments will affect your final grade.

Learning to find the notes on the keyboard can be very helpful in this early stage of learning music fundamentals. You will have to learn some basic piano exercises, scales, and simple tunes as part of your weekly assignments. There are two practice rooms that are open and don't require keys. To be able to have access to a piano whenever you have time, I would advise you to get a key to the practice rooms in the first two weeks of classes from 9:30 to 11:30 from Suzette Farnham, the Music Department Coordinator. A

\$25 deposit will be charged to your student account (this amount will be returned to your account after you hand back the key at the end of the semester).

In addition to full class meetings, there will be one section meeting per week (time to be arranged) with Graduate Assistant Hana Kommel. Sections will begin in the second week of classes. The Graduate Assistant is also an important resource should you need additional individual help. Please fill out and hand in the form about your schedule as soon as possible during the first week of classes.

In order to know how you are doing individually in class, I will meet with you occasionally for at least 10 minutes. Depending on your improvement, you might require less or more individual meetings than your classmates.

When you use laptops in class, I ask that you disable the wireless connection. I ask that you not use mobile devices in class.

If you need support or accommodation for a disability that may affect your work and participation, please speak with me as soon as possible. Please read about Amherst College's disability services as well:

<<https://www.amherst.edu/campuslife/deanstudents/disability>>

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Participation and progress: 20%
Homework: 10%
Quizzes: 20%
Exams: 40% (Midterm 15%; Final 25%)
Sections: 10%

Our work in this course will be done according to Amherst College's Statement of Intellectual Responsibility:

<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/dean_faculty/fph/policies/sir>

COURSE TEXTS (available at Amherst Books)

William Duckworth, *A Creative Approach to Music Fundamentals*, tenth edition (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Schirmer, 2010)

Bonnie C. Wade, *Thinking Musically: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture*, second edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009)

COURSE WEBSITE

<<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/courses/1011F/MUSI/MUSI-11-1011F>>

Week 1 (09.08, 09.10): Defining “music” and getting to know the basics of music

Duckworth: Introduction and Chapter 1; Practice Materials Chapter 1
Wade: Chapter 1

Week 2 (09.13, 09.15, 09.17): Rhythm I

Duckworth: Chapter 2; Practice Materials Chapter 2
Wade: Chapter 3 (pp. 73-80)

Quiz #1 (09.20) (do Focus on Skills 1 to prepare)

Week 3 (09.20, 09.22, 09.24): Rhythm II

Duckworth: Chapter 3; Practice Materials Chapter 3
Wade: Chapter 3 (pp. 80-102)

Week 4 (09.27, 09.29, 10.01): Pitch

Duckworth: Chapter 4; Practice Materials Chapter 4
Wade: Chapter 4 (pp.103-111)

Quiz #2 (10.04) (do Focus on Skills 2 to prepare)

Week 5 (10.04, 10.06, 10.08): Scale & mode I

Duckworth: Chapter 5; Practice Materials Chapter 5
Wade: Chapter 4 (pp. 111-124)

Week 6 (10.13, 10.15): Scale & mode II

Duckworth: Chapter 6; Practice Materials Chapter 6

Week 7 (10.18, 10.20, 10.22): Intervals

Duckworth: Chapter 7; Practice Materials Chapter 7
Wade: Chapter 4 (pp. 124-126)

Midterm exam (10.25) (do Focus on Skills 3 to prepare)

Week 8 (10.25, 10.27, 10.29): Scale & mode III

Duckworth: Chapter 8; Practice Materials Chapter 8

Week 9 (11.01, 11.03, 11.05): Scale & mode IV

Duckworth: Chapter 9; Practice Materials Chapter 9

Week 10 (11.08, 11.10, 11.12): Scale & mode V

Duckworth: Chapter 10; Practice Materials Chapter 10

Quiz #3 (11.15) (do Focus on Skills 4 to prepare)

Week 11 (11.15, 11.17, 11.19): Harmony I

Duckworth: Chapter 11; Practice Materials Chapter 11

Week 12: Break!

Week 13 (11.29, 12.01, 12.03): Harmony II

Duckworth: Chapter 12; Practice Materials Chapter 12
Wade: Chapter 4 (pp. 126-133)

Week 14 (12.06, 12.08, 12.10): Harmony III

Duckworth: Chapter 13; Practice Materials Chapter 13

Quiz #4 (12.13) (do Focus on Skills 5 to prepare)

Week 15 (12.13, 12.15): Creating and performing music

Duckworth: Chapter 14; Practice Materials Chapter 14
Wade: Chapter 5

Final exam (TBA)