

# MUSIC 112: Exploring Music

Fall 2011, TTh 2+ (plus one 50-minute section TBD)

Valentine Lecturer Jacob Cooper  
Music Room 8, 542-5316  
jmcooper@amherst.edu  
Office hours: by appointment

Graduate Assistant: Benjamin Cohen  
Music Room 3, 542-8505  
bbcohen11@amherst.edu

## **Prerequisite / Course Placement:**

This class is designed for students who (a) have already taken Music 111 (previously Music 11), or (b) are already familiar with musical notation and have several years of formal training in performance on an instrument or voice, but have not had extensive training in music theory. If you excelled in AP Theory in high school or have played piano seriously for many years, it may be possible for you to enter Music 241 (previously Music 31) without taking Music 112. To help us evaluate your level, please take the theory placement exam as soon as possible and discuss your music theory options with me and Professor David Schneider (Music Dept. Chair). The exam is available at [www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/music/theoryexam](http://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/music/theoryexam).

## **Goals:**

In Music 112 we will aim to solidify concepts you are already familiar with: reading bass and treble clefs, major and minor scales and key signatures, simple and compound meters, intervals, and the construction of chords. We will then turn to idiomatic construction and harmonization of melodies, short compositions in a variety of set forms, and analytical listening in a number of styles. Throughout, we will continue to work on basic keyboard skills, ear-training, and sight-singing.

## **Course Requirements:**

Two midterm exams will be administered during the semester, along with periodic quizzes. I will also meet with each of you individually for three Practicum Exams, which will cover singing, ear-training, and keyboard skills. You are expected to develop these skills on a daily basis throughout the semester—frequent, short periods of work are more effective than one or two longer periods of work within a week.

Your final project will consist of writing a full and original work in the blues, jazz, or pop style, to be presented (via either recording or live performance) in a class-wide concert during finals period. Smaller compositions will be assigned throughout the semester, tentatively including:

- A harmonized 16-bar antecedent / consequent melody
- A Theme and Variations
- A portion of a Minuet
- A 12-bar Blues

Homework—including these compositions—will be assigned and collected at each class.

In addition to the two class meetings per week, you will be assigned to a section taught by Graduate Assistant Ben Cohen. In section, you will primarily work on singing, ear-training, and keyboard skills. Your section grade (10% of your overall class grade) will be based on attendance and personal improvement. Sections begin in week 2; individual meetings for placement in section will take place in the first week (sign-up sheet to follow).

## Course Materials

There is no textbook for this class. You are asked only to purchase the following:

- A bound book of music manuscript paper for taking notes, available at Hastings (45 South Pleasant St.). For assignments, you can also opt to print out loose staff paper free of charge at <http://blanksheetmusic.net>.
- A three-ring binder for class handouts (there will be many).

## Practice Rooms

As an enrolled student in this course, you may obtain a practice room key by visiting Suzette Farnham, Music Department Coordinator, between 9:30 am and 11:30 am during the first two weeks of classes. Obtaining a key requires a \$25 deposit. There are two practice rooms with pianos in Arms that are open and don't require keys, but you are strongly encouraged to obtain a key in order to have access to all rooms.

## Attendance, Late Assignment Policy

It is essential that you learn the material for the course incrementally as the semester progresses. Regular class attendance and punctuality is crucial, and unexcused absences or lateness will adversely affect your grade. If a situation (such as a religious holiday or family emergency) arises and you will need to miss a class, please contact me as soon as possible so we can work out a reasonable solution. You are responsible for turning in *all* assignments on time, even if you have to be absent. *Late assignments will not be accepted.*

## Laptop, Phone Policy

As notes will most effectively be taken by hand in a manuscript book or directly on handouts, laptops and tablets are not permitted during class. Please also refrain from using cell phones for any purpose.

## Music at Amherst series

There is no better way to "explore music" than to hear (and see) it live. We are fortunate to have a number of great concerts scheduled in the Music at Amherst series this semester (see attached), and you are required to attend at least two of the five, providing casual written reactions to each. (If you have intractable conflicts and cannot attend at least two, you must let me know before the end of add/drop period, and we will come up with a reasonable alternative.) We will also on occasion discuss the concert repertoire in advance of the performance.

## Grading Breakdown

2 Midterms	30% (total)
Assignments (including compositions) and Quizzes	30%
3 Practicum Exams	15% (total)
Final Project	15%
Section	10%

**Weekly Class Schedule**  
(subject to change)

<u>Week 1</u> (Sept. 6, 8)	Preliminaries; Review of Scales and Key Signatures.
<u>Week 2</u> (Sept. 13, 15)	Review of Intervals; Antecedent / Consequent Pairs.
<u>Week 3</u> (Sept. 20, 22)	Basic Harmonization.
<u>Week 4</u> (Sept. 27, 29)	Harmonization, cont'd.; Exploration of Minor.
<u>Week 5</u> (Oct. 4, 6)	Catch Up / Review. <b>Midterm I.</b>
<u>Week 6</u> (Oct. 13 only)	Theme and Variations.
<u>Week 7</u> (Oct. 18, 20)	Theme and Variations, cont'd.; Applied Chords. <b>Practicum Exam I.</b>
<u>Week 8</u> (Oct. 25, 27)	Modulation; The Minuet.
<u>Week 9</u> (Nov. 1, 3)	Modulation, cont'd.; The Minuet, cont'd.; Other Classical Forms.
<u>Week 10</u> (Nov. 8, 10)	Introduction to Sonata Form.
<u>Week 11</u> (Nov. 15, 17)	Catch Up / Review. <b>Midterm II.</b>
THANKSGIVING BREAK	Turkey.
<u>Week 12</u> (Nov. 29, Dec. 1)	The Blues. <b>Practicum Exam II.</b>
<u>Week 13</u> (Dec. 6, 8)	Jazz; "Popular" Music.
<u>Week 14</u> (Dec. 13 only)	Blues / Jazz / Popular Music, cont'd.
<u>Exam Period</u> (Date TBD)	<b>Final Project and Concert; Practicum Exam III.</b>