

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DON WRIGHT FACULTY of MUSIC
DEPARTMENT of MUSIC RESEARCH and COMPOSITION**

**MU1629a 2023-2024
INTRODUCTION to COMPOSITION
Fall Term
Instructor: Dr. Eugene Astapov**

Office Location & Contact: TBA
Office hours: by appointment

Course Prerequisites: None, but restricted to students enrolled in the Don Wright Faculty of Music.

Please note that prerequisites are no longer automatically checked prior to course registration. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they have the specified prerequisites. Unless you either have the requisites for this course or special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description: Introduction to the elementary components of compositional technique involving pitch and contrapuntal relationships, harmonic interactions, rhythmic properties, texture, timbre, architecture and basics of orchestration. Topic discussions will involve a survey of musical examples drawn from the 20th and 21st century literature, as well as modern texts on compositional, contrapuntal and harmonic technique and their manipulation.

Course Outcomes: Students can expect to gain the understanding of basic compositional concepts and become acquainted with the elements of an individual musical language. Students will be introduced to the appropriate compositional vocabulary and become familiar with the skills and abilities of describing musical material. They will learn to manage compositional tools and apply them to the creation of their own short-scale compositions and learn how to notate their music and organize musical matter.

Assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late assignments will be accepted up to one week past the deadline with a 5% penalty each day. Assignments will not be accepted one week past the deadline. This policy will be **strictly** enforced. Only medical emergencies will be considered as a valid excuse.

Academic Offences: Any infraction on academic honesty and plagiarism will **not** be tolerated. With the ubiquitous use of AI and ChatGPT, the course instructor will be on the lookout for any work completed by students through the use of dishonest means. The objective of this course is to help students develop their own artistic voice, language and vocabulary – skills only obtainable through hard work and academic integrity. Suspected plagiarism and/or use of virtual assistance will be immediately flagged and forwarded to the appropriate academic integrity committee.

Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Required Course Materials:

- A minimum of 12-stave high-grade manuscript paper.
- Pencils.
- Erasers.
- Binder to collect handouts and course materials.
- A method of taking a scan of your work to upload to the instructor (Genius Scan is an excellent free app).
- A method of viewing online instruction and joining Zoom meetings.

Although assignments may be submitted in PDF format, some will be accepted in hand-written form only.

Recommended Reference Texts:

- Notation and Rudiments: Barbara Wharram, *Elementary Rudiments of Music*, Second Edition, The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Orchestration: Samuel Adler, *The Study of Orchestration*, Third Edition, New York: Norton. ISBN 039397572X.
- Literature: J. Peter Burkholder & Claude V. Palisca, *Norton Anthology of Western Music, Volume 2: Classic to Twentieth Century*, New York, W. W. Norton & Co. ISBN 0-393-92562-5 (pbk.).
- Composition: Arnold Schoenberg (edited by Gerald Strang & Leonard Stein), *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Belmont Music Publishers.

Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, Alphonse Leduc, Éditions Musicales. ISBN 2-85689-058-X.

Evaluation: Evaluation of assignments will be based upon the following criteria:

- **Coherency**: how well the students express their musical ideas and organizes material. This can include but no be limited to pitch material, harmony, rhythm, texture & counterpoint.
- **Notation**: how clearly the student expresses their ideas through the use of notation.
- **Orchestration**: how well the student is able to use orchestration tools when writing for individual instruments and ensemble.
- **Vocabulary**: how well the student understood and implemented course material.

Grading Scale: A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

- A+: One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level.
- A: Superior work which is clearly above average.
- B: Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory.
- C: Competent work, meeting requirements.
- D: Fair work, minimally acceptable.
- F: Fail.

Grade Distribution:

Assignments:

- Assignment 1: Rudiments exercises and hand-writing (5%), due September 18th.
- Assignment 2: Creation of Musical Ideas (5%), due September 25th.
- Assignment 3: Enhancing Musical Patterns and First Composition Creation (10%), due October 2nd.
- Assignment 4: Practical Application of Musical Ideas and Second Composition Creation (10%), due October 23rd.
- Assignment 5: Testing Public Speaking Skills and Oral Coherency – Online Group Presentations (10%), November 6&8.
- Assignment 6: Building Musical Vocabulary and Eloquence – a concert review paper (10%), due November 15th.
- Reading Sessions/Presentations: Presentation of Final Composition Drafts, including score and parts – November 27&29, December 4&6 (20%).
- Final: Third and Final Composition Creation showcasing skills and tools learned throughout the course with publisher-ready score and detailed programme notes (30%), due December 8. Please note it is a course requirement that the final assignment is performed in class. You may choose to participate in the performance yourself, ask your classmates or find players within the school.

Examinations & Attendance: Students shall be allowed a maximum of 2 unexcused absences, provided all of their work is submitted on time. Unexcused absences beyond that will result in a penalty of 5% deducted from the final grade each subsequent time the student is absent. Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Compulsory First Year Exam Exemption: The Dean's office has granted this course an exemption from the Senate policy that requires each first-year course (1000-1999) to administer a common, compulsory, final examination scheduled during the examination period worth not less than 30% of the final grade.

MUSIC 1629A: Introduction to Composition Timetable:

Week of September 11

- Notation.
- Intervals.
- Chords.
- Scales.
- Time.
- Reference texts include Barbara Wharram, *Elementary Rudiments of Music*, Second Edition, The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited: Chapters 1-5 & 7.

Assignment 1 distributed on September 11.

Week of September 18

Assignment 1 collected on September 18.

- The birth of musical idea. Reference scores include, but not limited to G. Ligeti (1923-2006): *Musica Ricercata*; S. Reich (b. 1936): *Piano Phase*; P. Glass (b. 1937): *Music in Fifths*; M. Monk (b. 1942): *Change*. A. R. Thomas (b. 1964): *Traces*. D. Rakowski (b. 1958): *Blue Horizon*. A. Pärt (b. 1935): *Pari intervallo*.
- Reference texts include Arnold Schoenberg (edited by Gerald Strang & Leonard Stein), *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Belmont Music Publishers: Chapters I-VIII. Philip Lasser, *An Inquiry into the Contrapuntal Fabric of Music, Volume I*, Russell Editions: Part I.

Assignment 2 distributed on September 18.

Week of September 25

Assignment 2 collected on September 25.

- Enhancing the musical pattern. Reference scores include, but not limited to A. Ginastera (1916-1983): *Piano Sonata no. 1*. Terry Riley (b. 1935): *In C*. A. R. Thomas (b. 1964): *Dancing Helix Rituals*. P. Boulez (1925-2016): *Douze Notations*. G. Scelsi (1905-1988): *Preludi, No. XV*. A. Louie (b. 1949): *Small Beautiful Things*.
- Reference texts include Paul Hindemith, *The Craft of Musical Composition, Book 1*, Fourth Edition, Schott: Chapter II. Arnold Schoenberg (edited by Gerald Strang & Leonard Stein), *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Belmont Music Publishers: Chapters IX-XII.

Assignment 3 distributed on September 25.

Week of October 2

Assignment 3 collected on October 2.

- Discussion of complex instrumental combinations, instrumentation, musical nuance and vocabulary. Reference scores include, but not limited to P. Boulez (1925-2016): *Dérive*. I. M. Lindberg (b. 1958): *Piano Trio*. J. Tower (b. 1938): *For Daniel*. B. Sheng (b. 1955): *Clearwater Rhapsody*. S. Ran (b. 1949): *Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory, String Quartet no. 3*.
- Reference texts include Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, Alphonse Leduc, Éditions Musicales: Chapter XIII.

Assignment 4 distributed on October 4.

Week of October 9

Thanksgiving Holiday, NO CLASS on OCTOBER 9. Group lessons #1 on October 11.

Week of October 16

- Practical application of music ideas and introduction to orchestration. Reference scores include, but not limited to E. Astapov (b. 1988): *Hear My Voice*. C. Debussy (1862-1918). I. Stravinsky (1882-1971): *The Rite of Spring*. A. Schnittke (1934-1998): *Piano Quintet & In Memoriam*. A. Norman (b. 1979): *Sustain*.
- Reference texts include Samuel Adler, *The Study of Orchestration*, Third Edition, New York: Norton.

Week of October 23

NO CLASS on OCTOBER 23. Group lessons #2 on October 25.

Assignment 4 due on October 23 at 10:30 AM electronically.

Assignment 5 distributed on October 25.

Week of October 30

Fall Reading Week, NO CLASSES

Week of November 6

Assignment 5 due.

- Online group presentations.

Assignment 6 distributed on November 8.

Week of November 13

Assignment 6 collected on November 15.

- Modes.
- Harmony.
- Counterpoint.
- Extended techniques.
- Experimentation.
- Multimedia.
- Reference Scores include, but not limited to A. Schoenberg (1874-1951): *Pierrot Lunaire*. I. Stravinsky (1882-1971): *Symphony of Psalms, mvt. I*. O. Messiaen (1908-1992): *Quartet for the End of Time, mvt. I*. K. Penderecki (1933-2022): *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima*. C. Rouse (1949-2019): *Gorgon*. S. Gubaidulina (b. 1931): *In Tempus Praesens, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*. C. Vivier (1948-1983): *Orion*. C. McPhee (1900-1964): *Tabuh-Tabuhan*.
- Reference texts include J. Peter Burkholder & Claude V. Palisca, *Norton Anthology of Western Music, Volume 2: Classic to Twentieth Century*, New York, W. W. Norton & Co: Chapters 141, 146, 160 & 165.

Final assignment distributed on November 15.

Week of November 20

Group lessons #3.

Week of November 27

Reading sessions.

Week of December 4

Reading sessions.

*Final assignment is **due** electronically on **December 8 at 12:00 PM**. The assignment must include a publisher-ready score, a set of parts and a 2-page description on how the composition relates to the course material.*

Statement on Electronic Devices:

All cellphones are to be silenced and stored during the lectures. Tablet devices are permitted for score viewing and annotation. Personal computers are permitted only for study and note-taking purposes with the exception of online lectures. The use of social media, chatting applications, TikTok, as well as any kind of recording devices and/or applications is **strictly** prohibited and will not be tolerated during class time. Students found guilty of disrupting the class with electronic

devices will be asked to leave the class and may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work (≥10%): Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website for further details regarding requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

Academic Consideration for Missing Work (<10%): In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade (i.e. two or fewer assignments) due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

Mental Health & Wellness: Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar. <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Contingency Plan: Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID- 19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

Plagiarism Detection Software Usage: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Dr. E. Astapov, September 2023.