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MUSI 280.01: Composition II

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Composition II MUSI 280
University of Montana

Dr. Emilie LeBel
emilie.lebel@umontana.edu
Office: Room 203
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9am to 10am
Class times: TR 8:00 - 8:50 PM, Room 205

Course description:

A continuation of *Composition I*, this course explores the craft of contemporary art music composition through the creation of original musical works, and techniques and repertoire from the past century. Students will gain knowledge of a broad range of repertoire, aesthetics, and compositional techniques.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the fundamentals of contemporary art music composition
- To develop one's own compositional voice and artistic interests
- To develop knowledge of a broad range of contemporary art music repertoire
- To gain experience thinking critically about contemporary music
- To gain experience effectively communicating about contemporary music

Required materials:

- Manuscript paper, pencils, eraser, and a ruler
- Listening assignments, readings, and additional materials will be posted on-line or handed out during class

Additional / suggested resources:

- Adler, Samuel. *The Study of Orchestration*
- Heussenstamm, George. *The Norton Manual of Music Notation*

General expectations:

- Regular attendance and active participation in weekly class activities Active participation in weekly lesson activities by showing up prepared with composition work, and/or other materials to review
- Provide paper scores for each of your weekly lessons, so that you we can mark up your work, ***please do bring not simply bring in your scores on your laptop***
- Reviewing any listening and reading assignments that are assigned, so that you are able to participate in class discussions and activities
- Attendance at concerts and special events related to the composition program is ***mandatory*** (see course schedule and take note of dates)
- You are responsible for checking your email regularly for updates / communications
- All assignments are to be handed-in on their due date at the beginning of class

Evaluation:

- 10%: Participation and professionalism
- 10%: Weekly preparation of composition work for class
- 15%: composition project progress work (3 @ 5%)
- 3 composition projects:
 - 15%: Composition #1
 - 20%: Composition #2
 - 30%: Final Composition Project

Grading:

Students will formulate a written work-plan that details their three planned projects and goals for the semester. This should be prepared during the week of the semester, and handed in during the second week of classes to Dr. LeBel. Your three projects will entail writing for chamber ensembles, with the final project being the largest in scope. Pieces should be 5-10 minutes in length.

Compositions will be graded taking into account efforts to incorporate knowledge acquired from course materials, and instructor feedback. Grading for composition assignments will be assessed taking into account:

Work /effort /ambition
Creativity / risk-taking
Technical / mechanics
Structure

Attendance is mandatory. **Excessive absences and late arrivals will be reflected in your final grade.**

Assignment submission:

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due date, or they are considered late (no exceptions!)
- Late projects will be subject to a penalty of 2% per day (or partial day) of the week (including weekends)
- **All composition progress work and weekly composition work must be hand-written** using a ruler and a sharp ~~pen~~ pencil on paper, single-sided
- Final versions of compositions can be created using computer engraving software, or may be handwritten

Attendance, professionalism and participation:

Attendance and participation in all classes is required, and excessive absences will be reflected in your final grade. Attendance at concerts and special events related to the composition program is **mandatory** (see course outline for important dates). The following rubric gives a general indication of expectations:

- 9-10% - No problems with attendance; Very strong evidence of professionalism and participation
- 7-8.99% - No problems with attendance; Strong evidence of professionalism and participation
- 5-6.99% - Minor problems with attendance, lack of professionalism and/or participation
- below 5% - Major problems with attendance, lack of professionalism and/or participation

Weekly preparation of composition work for class:

Classes will run in a similar fashion to private lessons. Each week we will look at the composition work that each student is undertaking during our class time together. This requires students to be continually working on, and making progress with, their composition work. Students are expected to come to class each week prepared with new progress on their composition projects to share with the class.

Assignments:

Students will complete three composition assignments for this class. The components for these pieces will be discussed and agreed upon with Dr. LeBel. Progress work for each assignment has a separate grade, and will allow the student to receive additional feedback before handing in their completed composition.

Laptop policy:

I do not permit the use of laptop computers, cell phones, tablets, etc. during the lecture and discussion portions of the class. Our department is very interested in technology and its artistic and academic applications, but laptops are not appropriate for taking notes in this class, and we wish to avoid the potential for distraction to both laptop users and nearby students. Additionally, students may not use cellular phones during class. If you disrupt class by using these devices, you will be asked to leave class for the day.

Academic honesty:

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the “Student Conduct Code” available here: http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

We take violations very seriously and they will be noted on student disciplinary records. We will not tolerate any dishonesty or plagiarism. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with me before you complete any relevant requirements of the course.

Disability services:

If you are a student with a disability who will require reasonable program modifications in this course, please meet with Disability Services for Students in Lommasson 154 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services arrange to meet with me during my office hours to discuss reasonable modifications that may be necessary. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umt.edu/disability>.

Course Schedule & Important Dates:

- Week 1: August 29

- Week 2: September 5

Labour Day - no classes on September 5

- Week 3: September 12

Progress work #1 due Monday September 12

- Week 4: September 19

Dr. LeBel is away September 22-27

- Week 5: September 26

Dr. LeBel is away September 22-27 – no classes on Monday, work will be assigned.

Composition #1 due Wednesday September 28

- Week 6: October 3

- Week 7: October 10

- Week 8: October 17

Progress work #2 due Monday October 17

- Week 9: October 24

- Week 10: October 31

To be confirmed - Dr. LeBel is away October 28-November 1 - no class on Tuesday, work will be assigned.

Composition #2 due Wednesday November 2

- Week 11: November 7

Election Day and Veterans Day - no classes November 8 and November 11

***New Music Missoula Concert – Thursday November 10th*

- Week 12: November 14

- Week 13: November 21

American Thanksgiving - no classes November 23-27

Progress work #3 due Monday November 21

- Week 14: November 28

- Week 15: December 5

Last week of classes!

Composition #3 due Monday December 5

- Exam Week: December 12

No classes or exams for this class!

