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MUS 459.01: Composition IV

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The University Of Montana

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U 71827-70531 MUSIC 159-459 COMPOSITION

Prof. Williams, Rm. 106, x4471

Class Requirements:

1. All students are required at least 2 completed **compositions** per semester. The works may take any of a great number of forms and styles, but must be performable in the classroom setting. It is advisable that these works be written for members of the class or music students able to perform at a regular class-meeting time.

2. All students must keep a **notebook** that will include entries from in-class discussions, collected examples of various musical concepts, experimental rhythms, melodic and harmonic sketches, scales (traditional, synthetic and original) and a list of compositional techniques , i.e. sequencing, planing, invertible counterpoint, etc.. Notebooks will be handed in at the end of the semester.

3. All students are required to create a **listening list** to accompany and expand the list attached. IMS (and the Mansfield Library) should be your primary centers for research. Entries in you personal lists should be kept in the notebook and made in the following format:

<u>Composer Name</u>	<u>Title of Work</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
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“Remarks” will include important information regarding the composer, the style of the piece(s), interesting notational concepts if non-traditional , instrumentation, and any personal observations.

It must be emphasized that this kind of activity will assist the beginning composer in a number of ways in the immediate future: it will function as a very useful launching pad for course work in theory and history; it will expand your knowledge of contemporary music; it will excite your imagination; it will stretch your creative horizons, and, if done well, it will be a wonderful resource in future years.

4. **Attendance Policy:** Unexcused absences will be noted and so entered in the Great Book. Two absences will be mysteriously overlooked, more than two means the final grade will suffer.

5. **Grading** will be based on compositions presented, quality/clarity of score, notebooks, tests, participation in discussions and attendance record.

-SEE REVERSE FOR SCHEDULE OF COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENTS -

NOTE TO COMPOSITION MAJORS: During the course of study, composition students will write for a broad range of instruments: strings, woodwinds, brass, keyboard (including piano, organ, synthesizer and computer), percussion, and voice. Works for solo instrument or voice, duets, trios, quartets, brass choir, vocal ensembles of all sizes, chamber winds, chamber orchestra, and, in some cases, full band or orchestra, are very much a part of the composer's

world at this institution .

With this in mind, the following is a possible schedule for composition majors :

MUS159 (TTH)

- a. Works for solo instrument(s) or voice - to include a composition for the composer's own instrument to be performed on his/her UDRP.
- b. Duets and Trios (any combination of instruments and voices)

MUS259 (TTH)

- a. Continuation of types listed above.
- b. Single movement works for quartets, quintets, sextets...
- c. Works for mixed choir, men's chorus, women's chorus...

MUS359 (TBA)

- a. Multi-movement works; continuation of types listed above.
- b. Works including computer-generated sounds with live performers (may include instrumentalists, vocalists, dancers, readers, other multi-media concepts).
- c. Initial planning (sketching) stages for a "large ensemble" work to be presented on the senior recital (required of all composition majors).

MUS459 (TBA)

During this culminating year of study the composer will prepare final scores, rehearse and give public performance of original music totaling 40-50 minutes.

Compositions to be included in this recital will be the large- ensemble work, other new works and selected works from previous years.

MUS159 CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

1. Write an 8- to 16-measure piece utilizing two contrasting rhythms. The form and substance of the sketch are left to the composer.
2. Compose a short piece utilizing a scale from the list given in class or an original "synthetic scale." Concentrate on melodic material.
3. Compose a short, unaccompanied solo for your own instrument . If your applied instrument is piano, write a two-part invention-type piece, NOT a progression of chords, please.
4. Compose a short piece for two voices. Pay close attention to setting of text (accented syllables on accented beats).

5. Read chapters 1-16 in **MUSIC NOTATION** by Gardner Read.

-Other assignments will be made in class-

MUS259 CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

1. Continue with short assignments as directed above.
2. Begin sketches for single movement works : Trios , 4tets, 5tets, etc..
Be prepared to share your ideas in class. Have performers ready to present at a regularly scheduled class meeting time.
3. Write a piece for accompanied (piano and/or instruments) for solo voice or instrument. May be two or three short movements designed to experiment with contrasting technical concepts for the players. Remember to write playable music, remaining within fairly conservative ranges for your performers.
4. Read chapters 1-12 in **TECHNIQUES OF THE CONTEMPORARY COMPOSER** by David Cope.