

**MUSTH 101: Music Theory Fundamentals (Section 003)****Mr. Stephen Gomez****Music Department, Hunter College, CUNY**

Fall 2021

3 Units

Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:10 am–9:25 am

Hunter North Building Room #407

**Instructor Information**

sg5495@hunter.cuny.edu • Office hours: Tuesdays 11 am–12 pm (or by appointment) Hunter North Room #403 • Zoom meeting room ID 966 793 5024 • Link to course Spotify playlist: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1ZP6kEWfNc9ZCmODVrN8b9?si=ec1637145d1a4f2f>

**Student Learning Objectives**

- 1) Identify and apply principles of pitch, rhythm, meter, major and minor scales, keys and key signatures, intervals, and triads and seventh chords
- 2) Recognize and analyze various musical parameters in a musical performance
- 3) Compose a melody for a given chord progression
- 4) Harmonize a simple melody

**Course Description**

This course provides students with little or no prior musical experience with a basic yet thorough understanding of the elements of Western music theory, including but not limited to: the concept and notation of pitch; the concepts and notation of rhythm and meter; melody; harmony; and some aspects of musical style. The topics are relevant not only to classical repertoires from ca. 1750–1900, but also to many 20-century genres, including jazz, blues, rock, and other popular-music forms. The knowledge gained in the course will solidify essential skills that will be necessary for further studies in the field, but it is also hoped that these concepts will positively transform how the student listens to, conceptualizes, composes, and generally engages with music.

**Required Materials**

- Joseph N. Straus, *Elements of Music*, 4th edition (Oxford University Press, 2021)
  - PLEASE BRING TO CLASS EVERY DAY
- Music staff paper (can be downloaded for free at <https://www.blanksheetmusic.net>)
- Pencil and eraser (if you do not have easy access to printing, then a tablet with stylus will work, but it is recommend that you try to do work on hard paper with pencil)
- Piano or keyboard (this can take the form of a real piano or keyboard *or* a keyboard app; GarageBand has a suitable electronic keyboard)

**Grading Breakdown**

- Homework Assignments—35%
- Midterm—15%
- Final—15%
- Composition Project—20%
- Class Preparation and Participation—15%

## Homework Assignments

Homework assignments are probably the single most important aspect of this course in terms of earning a good grade and content/skill acquisition. They will be regularly assigned (basically one assignment due per class meeting) and mostly taken from the assignments in the Straus textbook. Homework assignments are due by the beginning of each class period via hard copy hand. In order to earn credit for an assignment, you have to attend class for the period on which the assignment is due. Two (2) homework assignments—the two lowest grades—will be dropped from your course grade at the end of the semester. Assignments related to the final composition project are not eligible to be dropped.

Homework assignments turned in after the start of the class period on which they are due will be docked seven percent (7%) per day (class day, not real day) that they are not turned in. After five (5) class days, the assignment will automatically receive a '0.' Once graded and returned, you may *resubmit* any assignment that was initially turned in on time to correct your answers and receive a higher grade.

## Midterm and Final

The midterm and final are the only two “tests” in this class and will be given in take-home format, distributed about one week before they are due. The midterm (due 10/22) will cover all the lessons from the first half of the semester and the final (due 12/17) is cumulative. Unlike homework assignments, the midterm and final will *not* be accepted late, and are *not* eligible to be resubmitted for an improved grade.

## Composition Project

A capstone project with that combines the various skills and concepts we will learn over the course of the semester. Final composition due by the end of the day (11:59 pm) on the last day of the semester, Tuesday 12/21, but complete and turn it in earlier if possible. More details about this project will come after the midterm, but for now, you can look forward to this as a chance to get creative and apply the skills learned in this class into your own musical product!

## Attendance and Classroom Policies

Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. You are allowed two (2) unexcused absences over the course of the semester, no questions asked. Beyond these, you are expected to attend every class meeting. If you have to miss class, please email me as soon as you're sure you can't make it. The key here is honest and timely communication. You are expected to be at class on time, ready to participate. If you show up to a class more than ten minutes late, your attendance/participation grade for the day will be negatively affected. I will start class promptly at 8:10 am each meeting.

Please work with me and your classmates to create a classroom environment in which two aspects are of primary importance: 1) respect, and 2) learning. I do not mandate that you put your phones away or turn them off, but, as adults, it is your responsibility to be respectful with the use of cellphones and other electronics. As per Hunter College policy, all individuals must wear a mask at all times while on campus.

## CUNY Statement on Academic Integrity/Academic Dishonesty

Website: <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and/or expulsion.

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The college is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

### **Hunter College Counseling and Wellness Services**

Website: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/cws/counselingservices/welcome>

Statement from the Hunter College Counseling Services site: “Effective March 16th, 2020, Counseling Services will be operating remotely until further notice. Please call our main number at 212-772-4901 or email [personalcounseling@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:personalcounseling@hunter.cuny.edu) in order to speak to a counselor.”

Services of the Counseling and Wellness Center include: “individual counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention, consultation, and referral to other services.” Counseling can help with: “adjustment to college, adjustment to a new environment, culture, or lifestyle, homesickness, conflict with others, grief and loss, difficulty in making and keeping friends, personal and/or family crises, emotional distress, feelings of inadequacy or loneliness, feeling depressed or anxious, sexual identity or orientation, and sexual harassment or assault.”

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statement**

Website: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/access/services-programs/services>

In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered students. Hunter College’s students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointment contact the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214 or call (212) 772-4857 /or VRS (646) 755-3129.

### **Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct**

Website: <http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/1a/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose ([jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu) or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry ([colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu) or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

**Class Schedule**

(subject to change; dates on which assignments and readings are listed are their DUE dates)

Date	Topic	Reading	Due
Fri., 8/27	-Lesson 1: Staff -Lesson 2: Keyboard	-pp. 2–4 -pp. 9–11	—
Tue., 8/31	-Lesson 3: Treble clef -Lesson 4: Bass clef	-pp. 17–19 -p. 27–28	-Student information sheet -Assignment #1
Fri., 9/10	-Lesson 5: Great staff	-p. 37	-Assignment #2
Tue., 9/14	-Lesson 6: Quarter, half, and whole notes -Lesson 7: Eighth notes and sixteenth notes	-pp. 52–54 -pp. 63–65	-Assignment #3
Fri., 9/17	-Lesson 8: Dots and ties -Lesson 9: Rests	-pp. 73–74 -pp. 83–84	-Assignment #4
Tue., 9/21	-Lesson 10: Duple meter -Lesson 11: Triple meter	-pp. 93–94 -pp. 101–102	-Assignment #5
Fri., 9/24	-Lesson 12: Compound meter -Lesson 13: Syncopation	-pp. 109–110 -p. 117–118	-Assignment #6
Tue., 9/28	-Lesson 14: Major scale (C major) -Lesson 15: Major scales other than C major	-pp. 132–134 -pp. 145–148	-Assignment #7
Fri., 10/1	-Lesson 16: Major keys and key signatures	-pp. 165–168	-Assignment #8
Tue., 10/5	-Lesson 17: Minor scale (A minor) -Lesson 18: Minor scales other than A minor	-pp. 185–187 -pp. 197–200	-Assignment #9
Fri., 10/8	-Lesson 19: Minor keys and key signatures	-pp. 219–222	-Assignment #10
Tue., 10/12	-Lesson 20: Harmonic and melodic minor	-pp. 235–236	-Assignment #11
Fri., 10/15	-Review for midterm	—	—
Tue., 10/19	<b>MIDTERM</b>	—	—
Fri., 10/22	-Sidebar: Lina Tabak, guest speaker on “An Introduction to Colombian Currulao Music”	—	-Midterm exam due at the start of class
Tue., 10/26	-Lesson 21: Interval size -Lesson 22: Seconds and thirds	-pp. 246–248 -pp. 253–256	—
Fri., 10/29	-Lesson 23: Sixths and sevenths -Lesson 24: Fourths and fifths, unisons and octaves	-pp. 265–268 -pp. 277–282	-Assignment #12
Tue., 11/2	-Lesson 25: Intervals in a major key -Lesson 26: Intervals in a minor key	-pp. 291–293 -pp. 305–306	-Assignment #13
Fri., 11/5	-Lesson 27: Triads	-pp. 320–322	-Assignment #14
Tue., 11/9	-Lesson 28: Triads in inversion	-pp. 335–337	-Assignment #15
Fri., 11/12	-Lesson 29: Triads in major keys -Lesson 30: Triads in minor keys	-pp. 347–348 -pp. 357–358	-Assignment #16

Date	Topic	Reading	Due
<b>Tue., 11/16</b>	-Lesson 31: Seventh chords and inversions	-pp. 365–366	-Assignment #17
<b>Fri., 11/19</b>	-Lesson 32: Tonic and dominant (I and V) -Lesson 33: Extending a harmonic progression	-pp. 382–385 -pp. 401–403	-Assignment #18
<b>Tue., 11/23</b>	-Lesson 34: Phrase and cadence	-pp. 421–424	-Assignment #19
<b>Tue., 11/30</b>	-Lesson 35: Form	-pp. 437–438	-Assignment #20
<b>Fri., 12/3</b>	-Introducing the composition project	—	-Assignment #21
<b>Tue., 12/7</b>	-Sidebar: Sam Teeple, guest speaker on “Music on the Internet” (TikTok, etc.)	—	—
<b>Fri., 12/10</b>	-Review for final & in-class work on composition project	—	—
<b>Fri., 12/17</b>	<b>FINAL</b>	—	-Final exam due via electronic submission on Blackboard by the end of the day (11:59 pm)
<b>Tue., 12/21</b>	<b>COMPOSITION PROJECT</b>	—	-Final draft of composition project due via electronic submission on Blackboard by the end of the day (11:59 pm)