

MUS 700

Music Bibliography and Research Methods

aka "How to write a research paper," aka "What is research anyway?"

Instructor: Samuel Teeple (steeple@gradcenter.cuny.edu)

Mondays 4:40pm – 7:30pm (the scheduled session will include a half-hour break)

Meetings will be hosted on Zoom: <https://gc-cuny-edu.zoom.us/j/87259998432>

Office hours by appointment via Zoom

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scholars,

including music scholars, are regularly judged by their ability to negotiate the medium of the written word; this includes the ability to research, to read critically, to write coherently and to observe the forms and conventions of academic prose. To newcomers the process and conventions of academic

scholarship can seem opaque and intimidating, as can the task of finding and judging the existing literature. This class is designed to provide students with the tools and techniques that will allow them to navigate this new terrain. We will develop knowledge of and familiarity with the standard reference and research tools, especially in their online formats. Students will learn appropriate research techniques for their discipline and area(s) of scholarly interest, incorporating both primary and secondary sources. The course includes a condensed topography of musicology and music theory, surveying the most recent issues of the flagship journals. By the end of the semester, students should understand their own work in relationship to the discipline as a whole. Throughout the semester we will consider the process of music research, the forms of musical evidence (both musical and historical) and the practice and mechanics of scholarly writing.

Because this is a graduate-level seminar that relies heavily on group discussion, students are expected to attend all classes.

Required Texts

Lynda Barry, *What It Is* (Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2008).

Laurie J. Sampsel, *Music Research: A Handbook*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[Referred to as Sampsel in course schedule]

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, various years). [Referred to as *Craft of Research* in course schedule]

Other readings will be used but need not be purchased; you can find these online through the library.

Accessibility Statement

Students with disabilities or other conditions requiring academic accommodation should register with and provide documentation to the Special Service Office and bring a letter to the instructor during the first week of classes indicating the need for accommodation, and of what type. For more information about services available to Queens College students, contact Dr. Mirian Detres-Hickey, Special Services Office: mdetres@yahoo.com

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may seriously impact your academic performance, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can explore options that may help you meet the requirements of this course.

Academic Integrity

Original work is a crucial component of a university education; plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. All sources must be properly cited, including online resources. Ignorance is not an adequate excuse for mistakes that concern the appropriation of the intellectual work of others. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and/or expulsion.

The full university statement on Academic Dishonesty, including the penalties for such behavior, can be found in the Queens College CUNY Bulletin, pp. 61-63; the full text is available online:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/academics/documents/115980.pdf>

Late Work

Deadlines are a necessary evil for every academic. In this class especially, the scaffolded nature of the research paper (meaning that each small part builds progressively from the last) requires firm due dates for written assignments, as does my ability to give prompt and detailed feedback.

In the **rare** case that you need an extension, please contact me well in advance of the due date and explain your difficulties (barring any private or medical information). If a last-minute crisis prevents you from completion, please submit your current work along with an explanation of what is missing. Please keep in mind that feedback on late work may be delayed or less extensive in scope.

Grade Breakdown and Explanation

Participation, ongoing and in-class assignments: 50%

Research paper: 50%

“Participation” → Attending class meetings, completing assigned readings, regularly engaging in class discussion

“Ongoing and in-class assignments” → Completing small assignments given in class like writing prompts or group activities, leading discussion on two articles throughout the semester

“Research paper” → The end goal of this course; includes not only the final paper, but also smaller components due throughout the semester

- Research Topic (Due 09/13)
- Preliminary Bibliography (Due 10/04)
- Thesis Statement (Due 10/25)
- Detailed Outline (Due 11/08)
- Full Draft (Due 11/22)
- Paper Presentation (Due 12/19)

Assignments are due before class as .docx files and should be submitted to the class **Dropbox**, where you can also access readings not available through the library, course documents, and any important materials used in class: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iph97yy8a7k1irg/AABVk2b48UTOnwM7z4-rQKGHa?dl=0>

As a CUNY student, you have access to 15 GB of Dropbox storage. Visit this webpage to learn more: <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/dropbox/trainingresources/>

Class Schedule

Meeting 1: August 30

Make sure to order/get access to the three required texts for this course as soon as possible (listed above). You'll need your own copies of the texts by Meeting 3.

Off: September 6

Meeting 2: September 13

During the week prior, do some preliminary reading and choose the topic of your research project. At this point, the topic will be relatively general but should evidence some narrowing towards a specific focus—for example, Viennese symphonic music during Mozart's lifetime, rather than orchestral music;

or women musicians in South American convents during the seventeenth century, rather than women performers. You should also read the assigned readings: PDFs of the Cook and Sampsel will be available on Dropbox and the Cheng can be found as an online resource through the library.

Introduction and Chapter 2 from William Cheng, *Just Vibrations: The Purpose of Sounding Good* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016).

Excerpts from Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Chapters 1, 15 and Appendix D from Laurie J. Sampsel, *Music Research: A Handbook*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Research Topic Due

Meeting 3: September 20

You should have your own copies of the Sampsel and Barry by this point. In addition to completing this week's reading, you should be working on your preliminary bibliography for your research paper; bring a copy to class with you, though the bibliography itself is not due until next week.

Lynda Barry, *What It Is* (Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2008) [full book]

Sampsel, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and Appendix B

Meeting 4: September 27

In addition to the Sampsel and Booth (which you should own), the Vikram is available on Dropbox, and the remainder are available through an internet search or through the library catalogue. I have chosen a variety of different writing genres, and our discussion will focus as much or more on the writing style than on the content. Ask yourself: who is the audience for this piece? What is the purpose of the writing (to review, report, critique, inform, educate, argue, contextualize)? What authority does the author have, and how is that demonstrated? Does the author provide facts, opinions, or both? Which other authors are mentioned in the text and how? I encourage you to take notes on your reading, both by underlining and commenting directly on the page, and by summarizing the content elsewhere.

Sampsel, Chapters 6 and 7

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, various years) "Thinking in Print," and "Connecting with Your Reader," pp. 9-27.

Vikram Seth, excerpt from *An Equal Music* (London, 1999).

Andrew dell'Antonio, "Bromantic Singing: Madrigals and Authenticity," theavidlistener.com (November 9, 2015), <https://theavidlistenerblogcom.wordpress.com/2020/07/27/bromantic-singing-madrigals-and-authenticity/>

Alex Ross, "Italianate Ardor, Beyond Puccini," *The New Yorker* (July 25, 2016), <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/07/25/puccini-and-mascagni-at-bard-summerscape>

Ellen Exner, "' . . . Those who would dedicate themselves to music': A Dispatch From the Front Lines," [musicologynow.ams-net.org](https://musicologynow.ams-net.org/those-who-would-dedicate-themselves-to-music-a-dispatch-from-the-front-lines/) (April 21, 2016), <https://musicologynow.org/those-who-would-dedicate-themselves-to-music-a-dispatch-from-the-front-lines/>

Alex Ross, "When Music is Violence," *The New Yorker* (July 4, 2016), <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/07/04/when-music-is-violence>

Sherrie Tucker, "Where is the Jazz in Jazzercise?" *Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 19 (2015): 18-26.

Melina Esse, "Encountering the Improvisatrice in Italian Opera," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66, no.3 (2013): 709-770.

Meeting 5: October 4

The preliminary bibliography is due before class—remember that your bibliography should represent the most important and influential work on your topic, as well as the most recent approaches. Make sure to have the document handy so that we can work with our bibliographies in class. You also need to read all of the following readings (again, take notes; be ready to summarize the arguments and points of each author; ask yourself what the purpose of each piece is and whom they are writing for).

Craft of Research, "From Problems to Sources," pp.68-82.

Stanley Boorman, "The Musical Text," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 403-423.

Jesse McCarthy, "Notes on Trap: A world where everything is always dripping," *n+1*, Fall 2018, <https://www.nplusonemag.com/issue-32/essays/notes-on-trap/>

Christopher Small, "Prelude: Music and Musicking," *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan, 1998), 1-18.

Carl Dahlhaus, "Does Music History Have a 'Subject'?" in *Foundations of Music History*, trans. J.B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 44-53.

Elisabeth LeGuin, "One Bar in Eight: Debussy and the Death of Description," in *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing*, edited by Andrew dell'Antonio (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 233-251.

Preliminary Bibliography Due

Off: October 11

Meeting 6: October 18

During the two weeks between Meeting 5 and Meeting 6, you should be reading the materials from your preliminary bibliography. Come prepared to talk about the state-of-the-field in the topic you have chosen for your research assignment. For your reading this week and next you are going to read a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (aka *JAMS*) from cover to cover. The articles are too long for this to be feasible in a single week, so I have divided the material up over this class and the next. You also need to read the sections from the Booth and Sampsel listed below. For each *JAMS* article you read, I want you to extract the author's thesis—their argument, the point behind their writing. Part of the purpose of this reading (and the readings we will do over the next few weeks) is to ask yourself what counts as a legitimate thesis? What are the acceptable questions for the subdiscipline of musicology? What topics seem to interest musicologists? And how do they go about answering them?

Sampsel, Chapters 8 and 9

Craft of Research, "Engaging Sources," pp. 84-99; and "From Topics to Questions," pp.35-50.

Journal of the American Musicological Society 73, no. 3 (Fall 2020) [the first three articles: Goldberg, Platoff, Chemotti & Schiltz]

Meeting 7: October 25

As we will have discussed in the last class, your thesis statement is due today. We will also be reading through the second half of *JAMS*. Think about what the various musicology articles, colloquy, and reviews that we look at have in common, but also how they differ. What kinds of questions and problems allow this material to cohere into a discipline? What counts as a legitimate thesis? How does the genre of the various pieces of writing affect their content?

Sampsel, Chapters 10 and 11

Craft of Research, "From Questions to Problems," 51-67; and "Making Good Arguments: An Overview," pp. 108-119.

Journal of the American Musicological Society 73, no. 3 (Fall 2020) [the remainder of the issue: the Desmond article, American Music Historiography Colloquy, and all book reviews]

Thesis Statement Due

Meeting 8: November 1

The set reading includes the programs of the annual AMS and SMT conferences, both of which will be held online in the coming month. As you figure out what evidence you will need in order to support your thesis, you will need to produce a second wave of bibliographic information. This week you should begin working on an outline of your paper and trying to answer for yourself where the holes in your argument promise to be, and the corollary question, how can you plug them up? (More bibliography is almost always the answer.) The outlines are due next week.

Sampsel, Chapters 10 and 11

Craft of Research, “Warrants,” 152-170; and “Planning,” 173-186

Program and Abstracts, Annual meeting of the AMS, 11-12 and 20-21 November 2021

<https://www.amsmusicology.org/general/custom.asp?page=Chicago>

Program and Abstracts, Annual meeting of the SMT, 4-7 November 2021

<https://societymusictheory.org/meeting2021>

Meeting 9: November 8

This week, we will read an entire issue of *Music Theory Spectrum*, the flagship journal of the Society for Music Theory. As we did with the musicology readings, think about what the various music theory articles we will read have in common. What kinds of questions and problems allow this material to cohere into a discipline? What counts as a legitimate thesis? What counts as supporting evidence to buttress the author’s claims? Most importantly, though, you should be using your time to do the reading and research that is necessary for the completion of your research paper.

Craft of Research, “Making Claims,” 120-129; and “Assembling Reasons and Evidence,” 130-151.

Music Theory Spectrum Volume 43, Issue 1 (Spring 2021) [full issue, including all articles and reviews]

Detailed Outline Due

Meeting 10: November 15

This week, you will begin writing your drafts in earnest. Bring your materials to class, as we will spend at least some of the time working on them or discussing potential problems and approaches. Having hashed out for ourselves something of a definition of musicology and music theory based on what is being published in the major/flagship journals, this week we will read the “official” definitions as elaborated in *The New Grove*. I’ve also included a couple of sections from the ethnomusicology definition because it’s useful to keep in mind (even though QC doesn’t teach any ethno classes or enroll any ethno students).

Sampsel, Chapters 12, 13, and 14

Craft of Research, “Drafting Your Report,” 187-202; and “Introductions and Conclusions,” 233-248.

Vincent Duckles, et al., “Musicology, §I: The Nature of Musicology,” and “Musicology, §2: Disciplines of Musicology,” *Grove Music Online*.

David Carson Berry and Sherman Van Solkema, “Theory,” *Grove Music Online*.

Carole Pegg, et al., “Ethnomusicology, §I: Introduction,” “Ethnomusicology, §III: Post-1945 Developments,” and “Ethnomusicology, §IV: Contemporary Theoretical Issues,” *Grove Music Online*.

Meeting 11: November 22

This week, work on your drafts each day. Your draft should be a clean, well-formatted pass through the entire arc of your argument. It should flow from start to finish and include properly cited notes and a bibliography. Include musical examples where appropriate. At this stage, you're better off having a complete argument than worrying too much about the word limit. We have time to fix that later if necessary! There is no set reading this week so that you can devote all your time to the drafting process. Happy writing. Don't hesitate to contact me if you're having a writing crisis.

Drafts Due

Meeting 12: November 29

This week, we will perform an act of loving, respectful, and yet rigorous peer review on our colleagues' work. I will provide comments for each of you, as well, which will help you as you work on revisions during the last month of semester. Readings for this week will thus consist of the drafts written by other members of the class, as well as the last couple of chapters from *Craft of Research*. There is one further chapter on visual communication of information that hasn't been assigned. If your paper involves charts or tables, I recommend that you read that, too. Otherwise, it's less relevant to music scholarship than the more general information about writing. If you're interested in books about editing your work, I highly recommend Claire Kehrwald Cook's *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*, published by the Modern Language Association (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1985); the book is dry but incredibly informative.

Craft of Research, "Revising Your Organization and Argument," 203-212; and "Revising Style: Telling Your Story Clearly," 249-269.

All your colleagues' paper drafts

Peer Review Workshop

Meeting 13: December 6

Continue working on your papers, taking into account the feedback received in the previous week. Have a copy of your draft at hand during class to discuss your progress and troubleshoot any issues you've encountered. In consideration of the amount of time you'll be working on your papers, this week's "readings" consist of Youtube videos and podcasts that bring music research to a wider audience. As you listen and watch, consider how each creator makes their argument by asking questions like what evidence they draw upon, what audience they are speaking to, and what strengths are offered by the mediums of audio and video. Thinking against the various genres of writing that we've encountered previously (blog posts, magazine articles, academic articles, book chapters, etc.), what might be gained or lost if the content of each piece was transformed into writing?

Adam Neely, "Offbeat Triplets (the "un-performable" rhythm)," Youtube video, 6:52, May 22, 2017, <https://youtu.be/F4TyBe6AHEI>

Vox, “How the Triplet Flow Took Over Rap,” Youtube video, 9:41, September 15, 2017,
<https://youtu.be/3la8bsi4P-c>

Will Robin, host, “Diversifying Music Theory with Ellie Hisama,” interview with Ellie Hisama,
Sound Expertise (podcast), April 6, 2021, <https://soundexpertise.org/diversifying-music-theory-with-ellie-hisama/>

Christina Lee and Regina N. Bradley, hosts, “Study Hall: Hip-Hop from the Schoolhouse to the Ivy League,” *Bottom of the Map* (podcast), August 2019,
<https://www.bottomofthemap.media/listen-1>

Nate Sloan and Charlie Harding, hosts, “Vijay Iyer on why jazz has always been political,”
interview with Vijay Iyer, *Switched on Pop* (podcast), May 25, 2021,
<https://switchedonpop.com/episodes/vijay-iyer-jazz-politics>

Meeting 14: December 13

There is no set reading as I anticipate you will be reading large quantities of material for your research paper, in addition to writing, editing, and refining your prose. We will still meet and hold a seminar discussion; again, make sure to have a copy of your paper on hand.

Meeting 15: December 19

During our final meeting, we will present our final papers to the class.

Final Paper Presentations