

MUS-904: Music Theory: The Foundation of Great Music (Great Courses Series)

Independent Study Online Course Syllabus

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Course Description

Music has a phenomenal power to move, transport, and delight us. Across numerous styles and forms, great music expresses the inexpressible, speaks across time and cultures, and galvanizes audiences across the world. And the more we understand about music, the more we appreciate it, and a knowledge of music theory is the best place to start.

Music may be the most abstract of the arts, but it has a highly organized structure. This structure allows for both its form and its meaning. In fact, the great expressive capacity of music and its ability to captivate us and to deeply communicate is rooted in its organized structure and how that structure is used creatively by composers, as well as by performers.

The Inner Structure of Musical Expression

A clear knowledge of the theory of music offers you insight into how a musical narrative is created and how music communicates, how music uses time and moves through time, how the tension, release, and resolution of musical harmony play an essential role in the expressive power of music, the diversity of musical styles, and how rhythmic structure influences the effect the music has on us.

In this course, you will explore the essential elements of musical form, structure, and composition, such as tonality, rhythm and meter, counterpoint, harmony, musical narrative, and playing the score.

Enjoy Literacy in the Language of Music

Throughout the course, you will learn to read and understand the written score, see how musical tones are written down in the form of notes, study how rhythm and meter work in music, how the key element of musical harmony functions, how a musical score is performed, and much more. With highly valuable insights for both listeners and instrumentalists, these 18 engaging lessons will teach you to become literate in the language of music.

Music Theory: The Foundation of Great Music offers you an adventure in listening, a richly insightful inquiry that will deepen your appreciation and enjoyment of one of our world's most sublime art forms. Assignments address the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and National Art Standards (NAS).

Note: Course guidebook is included with the cost of the course.

Required Texts and Course Materials

Course Guidebook: Atkinson, S. (2021). Music Theory: The Foundation of Great Music. The Teaching Company.

Online Resources: Relevant online resources that support the course content and encourage further investigation will be available throughout the course assignments. Active hyperlinks are utilized throughout the course and will link to the appropriate information when clicked. These include videos, podcasts, worksheets, online activities, journal articles and other resources.

Canvas: This course will be delivered totally online. Canvas is a web-based learning management system (LMS) that provides students access to online resources, documents, videos, assignments, quizzes, forums, etc. Canvas is easy to learn and has a user-friendly interface.

Course Dates

Self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year, from the date of registration, to complete assignments. Students may complete assignments in no less than three weeks for a 3-unit course (one week per unit).

National Standards Addressed in This Course

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

(<http://www.nbpts.org/standards-five-core-propositions/>)

First published in 1989 and updated in 2016, [What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do](#) articulates the National Board's Five Core Propositions for teaching. The Five Core Propositions - comparable to medicine's Hippocratic Oath — set forth the profession's vision for accomplished teaching. Together, the propositions form the basis of all National Board Standards and the foundation for National Board Certification. Course assignments have been designed so students can demonstrate excellence against these professional teaching standards whenever possible.

- Proposition 1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning
- Proposition 2: Teachers know the subject they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
- Proposition 3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
- Proposition 4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
- Proposition 5: Teachers are members of learning communities

National Art Standards <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

National Core Arts Standards (dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts): A process that guides educators in providing a unified quality arts education for students in Pre-K through high school.

Continuing Education Student Learning Outcomes (CE-SLO)

CE-SLO 1	Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use.
CE-SLO 2	Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
CE-SLO 3	Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement.
CE-SLO 4	Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting.
CE-SLO 5	Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field.
CE-SLO 6	Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (C-SLO)

Student Learning Outcomes for This Course By the end of this course student will be able to:		National Standards Addressed*	CE-SLO Addressed**
C-SLO 1	Understand the importance of learning music theory.	CR1, PR7	CE 1
C-SLO 2	Identify the different parts of the musical staff.	CR1, PR7	CE 1, CE 2
C-SLO 3	Read notes on the treble clef and bass clef.	CR 1-2, PR 7-8	CE 2
C-SLO 4	Understand the circle of fifths.	CR 1, PR 9	CE 2-CE 4
C-SLO 5	Distinguish between major and minor keys.	RE 7-9	CE 3, CE 4
C-SLO 6	Analyze musical rhythm.	RE 7-9, CN 11	CE 4, CE 6
C-SLO 7	Understand the basics of musical harmony.	RE 7-9, CN 11	CE 4, CE 6
C-SLO 8	Apply music theory concepts to the analysis of musical pieces.	RE 7-9, CN 11	CE 2 – CE 6

* Please refer to the section on **National Standards Addressed in This Course**

** Please refer to the section on **Continuing Education Student Learning Outcomes**

Topics, Assignments, and Activities

Module Title	Module Assignments and Activities	Points Possible
Welcome Module	- Welcome Video - Course Syllabus - Introduce Yourself Forum	
Module 1 – Reading Musical Messages	- Watch Videos 1, 2, 3 - Read Guidebook Lectures 1, 2, 3 1.1 Knowledge Check: Reading Musical Messages 1.2 Reflective Forum: Reading Musical Messages 1.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Module 2 – One Sign for Each Sound and Silence	- Watch Videos 4, 5, 6 - Read Guidebook Lectures 4, 5, 6 2.1 Knowledge Check: One Sign for Each Sound and Silence 2.2 Reflective Forum: One Sign for Each Sound and Silence 2.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Module 3 – The Rhythms and Your Feelings	- Watch Videos 7, 8, 9 - Read Guidebook Lectures 7, 8, 9 3.1 Knowledge Check: The Rhythms and Your Feelings 3.2 Reflective Forum: The Rhythms and Your Feelings 3.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Module 4 – Harmony of the Musical Heart	- Watch Videos 10, 11, 12 - Read Guidebook Lectures 10, 11, 12 4.1 Knowledge Check: Harmony of the Musical Heart 4.2 Reflective Forum: Harmony of the Musical Heart 4.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Module 5 – How Music Moves You to the Finale	- Watch Videos 13, 14, 15 - Read Guidebook Lectures 13, 14, 15 5.1 Knowledge Check: How Music Moves You to the Finale 5.2 Reflective Forum: How Music Moves You to the Finale 5.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Module 6 – Creating Meaning Beyond the Musical Message	- Watch Videos 16, 17, 18 - Read Guidebook Lectures 16, 17, 18 6.1 Knowledge Check: Creating Meaning Beyond the Musical Message 6.2 Reflective Forum: Creating Meaning Beyond the Musical Message 6.3 Application: Presentation, Lesson Plan, or Choice	10 pts 15 pts 30 pts
Course Wrap-up – Grading and Evaluation	- Final Reflection Forum - Course Evaluation - Course Completion Checklist - Grade Request / Transcript Request	
	TOTAL POINTS	330 points

Grading Policies, Rubrics, and Requirements for Assignments

Grading Policies

- Assignments will be graded per criteria presented in the course rubrics.
- A = 90-100% and B = 80-89%, (anything below 80% will not receive credit.)
- The discernment between an A or a B letter grade is at the discretion of the instructor based on the quality of work submitted (see course rubrics).
- Coursework falling below a B grade will be returned with further instructions.
- All assignments must be completed to receive a grade and are expected to reflect the quality that teacher-training institutions require of professional educators. If completed assignments do not meet this standard, students will be notified with further instructions from the instructor.

Grading Rubrics

Grade	Percent	Description	Rubric
A	90-100%	Excellent	Meets all course / assignment requirements with significant evidence of subject mastery and demonstration of excellent graduate level professional development scholarship.
B	80-89%	Very Good	Adequately meets criteria for all course/assignment requirements - demonstrates subject competency with very good graduate level professional development scholarship.
NC	Below 80%	Unacceptable	Does not meet the minimum criteria for all course/assignment requirements and demonstrated little, if any, evidence of acceptable graduate level professional development scholarship.

Writing Requirements

- **Superior:** Writing is clear, succinct, and reflects graduate level expectations. Clearly addresses all parts of the writing task. Maintains a consistent point of view and organizational structure. Includes relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- **Standard:** Writing is acceptable with very few mistakes in grammar and spelling. Addresses most parts of the writing task. Maintains a mostly consistent point of view and organizational structure. Includes mostly relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- **Sub-standard:** Writing contains noticeable mistakes in grammar and spelling. Does not address all parts of the writing task. Lacks a consistent point of view and organizational structure. May include marginally relevant facts, details, and explanations.

Lesson Plan Requirements

- **Superior:** Instructional goals and objectives clearly stated. Instructional strategies appropriate for learning outcome(s). Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is clearly delineated and authentic. All materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson clearly listed.
- **Standard:** Instructional goals and objectives are stated but are not easy to understand. Some instructional strategies are appropriate for learning outcome(s). Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is present. Most materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson are listed.
- **Sub-standard:** Instructional goals and objectives are not stated. Learners cannot tell what is expected of them. Instructional strategies are missing or strategies used are inappropriate.

Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is missing. Materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson are missing.

Instructor/Student Contact Information

Throughout the course participants will be communicating with the instructor and their classmates on a regular basis using asynchronous posting forums. Students are provided with instructor contact information in the event they want to make email or phone contact. In addition, students are encouraged to email or phone the instructor at any time. Students will also receive feedback on the required assignments as they are submitted.

Forums

Participation is an important expectation of this course and all online courses. Online forums promote reflection and analysis while allowing students to appreciate and evaluate positions that others express. Forum postings are open to be viewed by all students in the course, so do not post sensitive or personal information about your students. While students may not be engaging with the same students throughout this course, they will be expected to offer comments, questions, and replies to the forum questions whenever possible. The faculty role in the forums is that of an observer and facilitator.

Coursework Hours

Based on the Carnegie Unit standard, a unit of graduate credit measures academic credit based on the number of hours the student is engaged in learning. This includes all time spent on the course: reading the textbook, watching videos, listening to audio lessons, researching topics, writing papers, creating projects, developing lesson plans, posting to discussion boards, etc. Coursework offered for FPU Continuing Education graduate credit adheres to 45 hours per semester unit for the 900-level courses. Therefore, a student will spend approximately 135 hours on a typical 3-unit course.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations in their academic work in all classes. In order to receive assistance, the student with a disability must provide the Academic Support Center with documentation, which describes the specific disability. The documentation must be from a qualified professional in the area of the disability (i.e. psychologist, physician or educational diagnostician). Once documentation is on file, arrangements for reasonable accommodations can be made. For more information and for downloadable forms, please go to <https://www.fresno.edu/departments/disability-access-education>.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled per the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue and Handbook - <https://handbook.fresno.edu/graduate/academic-policies>

Technology Requirements

To successfully complete the course requirements, course participants will need Internet access, can send and receive email, know how to manage simple files in a word processing program, and have a basic understanding of the Internet. Please remember that the instructor is not able to offer technical support. If you need technical support, please contact your Internet Service Provider.

Getting Help with Canvas: If you need help with Canvas, please contact the FPU Help Desk by phone: (559) 453-3410 or email: helpdesk@fresno.edu. Help is available Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Final Course Grade and Transcripts

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to logon to the Continuing Education website (<https://ce.fresno.edu/my-account>) and “Request Final Grade”. Once the instructor receives the requests and submits the grade online, students may log back in to view their Final Grade Report or order transcripts online. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted. For more information, see the Continuing Education Policies and Procedures at <https://ce.fresno.edu/ce-policies-and-procedures>.

University Policies and Procedures

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the information presented in the Academic Catalog and for knowing and observing all policies and procedures related to their participation in the university community. A summary of university policies may be found on the university website at <https://www.fresno.edu/departments/registrars-office/academic-catalogs>.

Fresno Pacific University Student Learning Outcomes (FPU-SLO)

FPU-SLO 1	Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication: Students will <i>exhibit</i> clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically <i>evaluate</i> content and delivery components.
FPU-SLO 2	Written Communication: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> proficient written communication by <i>articulating</i> a clear focus, <i>synthesizing</i> arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to <i>inform</i> and <i>persuade</i> others.
FPU-SLO 3	Content Knowledge: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
FPU-SLO 4	Reflection: Students will <i>reflect</i> on their personal and professional growth and <i>provide evidence</i> of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement.
FPU-SLO 5	Critical Thinking: Students will <i>apply</i> critical thinking competencies by <i>generating</i> probing questions, <i>recognizing</i> underlying assumptions, <i>interpreting</i> and <i>evaluating</i> relevant information, and <i>applying</i> their understandings to new situations.
FPU-SLO 6	Moral Reasoning: Students will <i>identify</i> and <i>apply</i> moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and <i>articulate</i> the norms and principles underlying a Christian worldview.
FPU-SLO 7	Service: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> service and reconciliation as a way of leadership.

FPU-SLO 8	Cultural and Global Perspective: Students will <i>identify</i> personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to <i>evaluate</i> complex systems.
FPU-SLO 9	Quantitative Reasoning: Students will accurately <i>compute</i> calculations and symbolic operations and <i>explain</i> their use in a field of study.
FPU-SLO 10	Information Literacy: Students will <i>identify</i> information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, <i>explain</i> how that information is organized, <i>identify</i> the best sources of information for a given enquiry, <i>locate</i> and critically <i>evaluate</i> sources, and accurately and effectively <i>share</i> that information.