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Syllabus: Pedagogy of Music Theory

Jennifer Snodgrass

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MUS 5602: Music Theory Pedagogy

Hayes School of Music, Appalachian State University, Spring 2020

Monday/Wednesday 9-9:50

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Jennifer Snodgrass

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OFFICE HOURS:

Course Description:

A study of teaching techniques and current research in the field of music theory pedagogy. Students will be asked to review current texts, software, and teaching styles. Students will be expected to design and implement ideas through teaching demonstrations and curriculum development.

Required Materials:

Bain, Ken. *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Rogers, Michael. *Teaching Approaches in Music Theory: An Overview of Pedagogical Philosophies*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 2004.

Snodgrass, Jennifer. *Teaching Music Theory: New Voices and Approaches*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Optional Materials:

Lumsden, Rachel and Jeffrey Swinkin, ed. *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2018.

Evaluation:

Class Assignments and Reading

Responses.....	20%
Review of Pedagogy Journal Article (4).....	15%
Teaching Observations (3).....	15%
Online/Live Teaching Video (2).....	15%
Podcast.....	15%
Final Exam: Outline of a One Year Theory Sequence	20%

Scale:	100-93 = A	86-83 = B	76-73 = C	66-63 = D
	92-90 = A-	82-80 = B-	72-70 = C-	62-60 = D-
	89-87 = B+	79-77 = C+	69-67 = D+	59-0 = F

The Academic Integrity Code: Appalachian State University's Academic Integrity Code is designed to create an atmosphere of trust, respect, fairness, honesty, and responsibility. The Academic Integrity Code outlines "user-friendly" procedures and mechanisms for resolving alleged violations of academic integrity. The Academic Integrity Code is the

result of cooperation among Appalachian's faculty, students, and administrators, and promotes a campus dialogue about academic integrity. All members of the Appalachian State University community are responsible for promoting an ethical learning environment.

Students attending Appalachian State University agree to abide by the following Code:

- Students will not lie, cheat, or steal to gain academic advantage.
- Students will oppose every instance of academic dishonesty.

Students with Disabilities: Appalachian State University is committed to providing an inclusive experience, accessible learning environments and equal opportunity to individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Individuals needing reasonable accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Resources (828.262.3056 or odr.appstate.edu).

IMPORTANT DATES

August 31	Teaching Philosophy
September 9	What is Music Theory and Why Do We Study It?
October 5	Review of Pedagogy Journal Article #1-2
October 26	Review of Pedagogy Journal Article #3-4
November 9	Teaching Observations 1-3
November 9	Teaching Video
November 16	Assessment Tool (Homework Assignment or Test)
November 23	Cover letter, CV and Revised Teaching Philosophy
December 4	Final Podcast Due
December 7	Final Curriculum Outline due at 5 pm

OUTLINE OF CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 (August 17)

Knowing Your Why/Effective Teaching

Guest Speaker: Elizabeth West Marvin

Reading

- Snodgrass, 1-14, 295-296
- Elizabeth West Marvin, "What I Know Now" from *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory*

Friday Response

- Bain, pages 1-21

Week 2 (August 24)

Characteristics of an effective teacher/Teaching Philosophy/Myers Brigg

Guest Speaker: Lisa Runner

Reading

- Snodgrass, 289-296
- Roig-Francolí, Miguel. “Some Basic Principles of Good Teaching.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy Online*. Resources, General Pedagogy

Friday Response

- Jenkins, Rob. “What Makes a Good Teacher.” *Chronicle of Higher Education*. May 31, 2016.
<http://chronicle.com/article/What-Makes-a-Good-Teacher-/236657>
- Jenkins, Rob. “The Four Properties of Powerful Teachers.” *Chronicle of Higher Education*. March 16, 2015.
<http://chronicle.com/article/The-4-Properties-of-Powerful/228483/>

Week 3 (August 31)

The Classroom Environment and the undergraduate/SoundTrap

Reading

- Snodgrass, 50-71, 256-272

Friday Response

- Bain, 98-134

Week 4 (September 7)

What is music theory and why is it important for each musician to master the subject?

Guest Speaker: Poundie Burstein

Reading

- Rogers 1-30
- Burstein, Poundie. “The Practice of Music Theory, and Music Theory Versus Practice” Chapter 1 of *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory*
- Snodgrass, 29-31

Friday Response

- Student responses to “What is Music Theory”

Week 5 (September 14)

Thoughts on curriculum: Integration, Diversity, and Creativity

Guest Speaker: Phillip Ewell

Reading

- Snodgrass, 15-49
- Music Theory’s White Racial Frame
<https://musictheoryswhiteracialframe.wordpress.com/>
- Jenkins, J. Daniel “Reforming the Undergraduate Core Curriculum Through the Integration of Public Music Theory” *Engaging Students* Vol. 7, 2019.

- Grant, Aaron and Owen Belcher. “Reforming the Undergraduate Core Curriculum Through the Integration of Public Music Theory” *Engaging Students* Vol. 7, 2019.
- Optional: Chattah, Juan, Melissa Hoag, Steve Laitz, Elizabeth Sayrs, and Jennifer Snodgrass. “Integration, Diversity, and Creativity: Reflections on the Manifesto from the College Music Society.” *Symposium* Volume 57, 2016.

Friday Response

- De Clerq, Trevor, “A Music Theory Curriculum for the 99%” *Engaging Students* Vol. 7, 2019.
- <http://musicschoolcentral.com/one-nyc-music-school-changing-future-music-education/>

Week 6 (September 21)

Fundamentals/Live Video Teaching

Guest Speaker: Susan Piagentini

Reading

- Rogers 33-71
- Snodgrass, 125-142

Friday Response

- Teaching Video Reflection

Week 7 (September 28)

Analysis (Diatonic/Chromatic Chords and Part Writing)/Live Video Teaching

Reading

- Rogers 74-99
- Snodgrass, 142-178
- Follet, Diane. “Tales from the Classroom: Why Do We Part Write?” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy Online* 1 (2013).

Friday Response

- Reddick, Carissa. “Teaching Analysis of Chromatic Chords Through Chord Quality.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy Online* 2 (2013).

Week 8 (October 5)

Live Teaching Video/Pedagogy of Aural Skills, Overview

Reading

- Snodgrass, 190-227

Friday Response

- Chenette, Timothy “Taking Aural Skills Beyond Sight Singing and Dictation” *Engaging Students* Vol. 7, 2019.

Week 9 (October 12)

Approaches in Rhythmic Reading

Guest Speaker: Richard Hoffman

Reading

- Rogers 143-149
- Hoffman, Richard, William Pelto, and John. W. White. “Takadimi: A Beat Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 10 (1996).

Friday Response

- Interview with Erik Lynch

Week 10 (October 19)

Approaches in Harmonic/Melodic Dictation

Reading

- Rogers 110-126
- Telesco, Paula. “Teaching Elementary Aural Skills: How Current Brain Research Might Help.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 27 (2013).
- Jemian, Rebecca. “Ho Hey, Having Some Say in Contextual Listening.” *Engaging Students*. Vol. 5. 2017.

Friday Response

- Watch interviews with Gonzales and Karpinski to prepare for next week.

Week 11 (October 26)

Sight Singing

Guest Speaker: Jena Root

Reading

- Snodgrass, 223-225 (Review)
- Rogers 126-138
- Smith, Timothy A. “A Comparison of Pedagogical Resources in Solmization Systems.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 5 (1991).

Friday Response

- Hannon, Andrew. “Helping Non-Singers Overcome Fear and Anxiety in Aural Skills.” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy Online* 5 (2015).

Week 12 (November 2)

Teaching Music Theory and Aural Skills on the High School Level

Guest Speakers: Melissa Hoag

Reading

- Snodgrass, 91-124

Friday Response

- Video with Alex Alberti and Frank Doyle

Week 13 (November 9)

Assessment/Technology/Developing Podcast

Reading

- Bain 151-178
- Snodgrass, 228-255
- Perry, David. "Why I'm Saying Goodbye to In Class Tests" *Chronicle of Higher Education*. May 24, 2016. <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/1410-why-i-m-saying-goodbye-to-in-class-tests>
- Gooblar, David. "We Should Give Students More Tests. Seriously." <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/315-we-should-give-students-more-tests-seriously>

Friday Response

- Bakker, Sara. "Creating Measurable Learning Objectives" *Engaging Students*. Vol. 7. 2019.
- Video with Rachel Mann

Week 14 (November 16)

Countdown for Course Preparation, developing syllabus, choosing materials

Reading

- Textbook Review
- Snodgrass 71-90
- Rogers 166-177
- Review of syllabi posted on ASULearn and on Blog

Friday Response

- Individual Meetings to Discuss Class Outlines

Week 15 (November 23)

Professional Development (CV and cover letter, mock interviews)

Reading

- Snodgrass, 274-285
- Videos with Nicole Biamonte and Patricia Burt

Review of Pedagogy Journal Article

For this assignment, you are asked to choose several articles from a scholarly journal that is of relevance to area of your interest music theory. The article must pertain to the field of music theory pedagogy and be current and up to date (post 2010 unless discussed with me). Use the bibliographies given in the back of your texts as your guide and/or look for relevant articles in *College Music Symposium*, *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* (print or online), *Engaging Students* or *Journal of Research in Music Education*.

After reading the article carefully, write up a one to two-page summary of the main ideas presented in the article, concluding with how you might be able to implement some of the conclusions and suggestions in your own teaching.

Teaching Observations

During the course of the semester, you will observe three theory/ aural skills courses. I encourage you to observe three different teaching styles. You must clear your visit with the instructor before your planned visit. After your observation, you will be asked to write up a summary of the lecture. It is not important to focus on the content itself, but the delivery of the content. In your observation summary, feel free to discuss both the positive and negative facets of the teaching style. What worked and what seemed to create a challenge for the students? Your remarks and discussion will be held in confidence and not be shared with other members of the faculty.

Live Video Teaching-Written Theory

During weeks 6-8, you will be asked to teach live within our zoom session and we will be your class. You can choose any written theory topic that you like, from fundamentals all the way to chromatic harmony and form. Plan to teach for 12 minutes during this session and plan to share your screen, integrate audio (recording or live), and ask questions of us as a class. This will be recorded and you will be asked to write up a response to your teaching.

Offline Video Teaching

Following our discussions on aural skills and sight singing, you will be asked to create an 8 to 10-minute video on any aural skills topic that you choose. Topics include sight singing, contextual listening, melodic and harmonic dictation, how to identify intervals...anything you choose, but the topic must include a significant element of aural skills. This video should be uploaded to YouTube as an unlisted link.

Podcast

Towards the end of the semester, we will break out into groups of two or three based on pedagogical interest. Using SoundTrap, as a group you will record a podcast where you talk about important topics in the field. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- The changing curriculum in music theory
- How to best incorporate literacy on the high school level
- Integration of new repertoire into the music theory/aural skills classroom
- How to make the aural skills classroom and engaging experience
- The role of improvisation in the aural skills classroom
- How to integrate meaningful technology into the classroom
- How COVID-19 has impacted the teaching of music theory and aural skills

I would expect that the podcast would be at least 10-15 minutes long, with each member of the group contributing their opinions and thoughts. One student could certainly be the moderator, but

questions and discussion should be created by all members of the group. The podcast should be uploaded to ASULearn as a .mp3 and if the group was willing, uploaded to Spotify.

Final Exam: Outline of a Semester Long Theory/Aural Skills Curriculum

Design a semester long theory and/or aural skills curriculum for your ideal program (this could be for either an AP high school class, the freshmen level, or sophomore level college classes).

Your outline should include the following:

- An overview of topics to be presented and course goals for the semester
- A detailed syllabus for the course
- Specific assignments listed in the syllabus (composition projects, collaborative projects, research papers)
- An example of 2 assessment at each level (four assessments total)
- Your textbook choice and rationale for this choice (1 page)
- Technology used (if any) and rationale for this choice (1 page)

You will also include a cover letter, CV, and a sample job description for the school to which you are applying. This will be discussed further in class.

GENERAL CLASS POLICIES

1. Attendance and class participation are expected. Absences may be excused due to documented illness, official university business, or family emergencies. In such cases, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of the reason for the absence by the next class meeting and to make up any missed work within two days of the student's return to class.
2. The overall format of this course is one of exploration and evaluation in order to better ourselves as educators, no matter our specific field in music. We will learn together as we share ideas, concerns, and observations. Respect one another in every sense of the word. Recognize and be respectful of other people's thoughts and feelings.
3. The key to getting the most out of this course is your participation, your ability to give up past preconceptions, your willingness to abandon egos at the door, and your overall dedication!!