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Open Educational Resources for Undergraduate Music Theory

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OER for Undergraduate Music Theory – Introduction and Suggested Sequence

by Kyle Gullings | www.kylegullings.com

Link to folder: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B0laoIMCvmzxU3JZaWQ0WWho3QXc>

INTRODUCTION

Included in this collection are some resources I use in my undergraduate music theory classes. I believe that educational resources should be shared widely for the benefit of society. I encourage others to use, share, edit, and build upon these materials, and to contact me to inform me about any such uses.

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Please include the following attribution anywhere the materials are posted:

Created by composer and educator Kyle Gullings, <http://www.kylegullings.com>.

While inherently modular, editable, and adaptable to multiple theoretical and curricular approaches, these materials are designed to align with the topics found in the free online “text”book Open Music Theory (<http://openmusictheory.com>). OMT is built on resources authored by Kris Shaffer, Bryn Hughes, and Brian Moseley, edited by Kris Shaffer and Robin Wharton, and published by Hybrid Pedagogy Publishing (<http://www.hybridpedagogy.org/#publishing>).

The complete collection contains 109 documents, including:

- 73 worksheets (35 unique topical worksheets, 1, 2, or 3 versions of each [usually 2], to allow for both practice and graded assignments)
- 16 larger projects (12 literature analysis, and 4 original composition)
- 16 exams (8 unique topical exams, 2 versions of each, to allow for both practice and graded exams)
- 4 syllabi

All documents are presented in PDF format. Additionally, to encourage remixing, they are also given in their original formats – either DOCX (Word), or MUSX (Finale notation) with accompanying XML (digital sheet music interchange and distribution format). Again, please feel free to use, share, edit, and build upon these materials, and contact me to inform me about any such uses.

In some cases (indicated by highlighting below), I have omitted audio links, scores, and/or lyrics from these materials, due to copyright restrictions. In these cases, instructors are encouraged to seek out and include the specified works, or alternate works of their choosing, for educational use.

On the following pages you will find a **Suggested Sequence** for organizing the materials into a four-semester undergraduate written music theory sequence.

(continued)



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SUGGESTED SEQUENCE

The following list demonstrates one possible organization of the various materials in the collection, using a four-semester undergraduate written music theory sequence:

MUSIC THEORY I

Worksheets

- Scales
- Key Signatures
- Intervals
- Triads and Seventh Chords
- Cantus Firmus
- First-species Counterpoint
- Second-species Counterpoint
- Intro to Bass Figurations
- Intro to Roman Numerals
- Realizing a Figured Bass, Roman Numerals, and Harmonic Function
- Intro to Harmonic Functions

Projects (Analysis and Composition)

- Analysis Project – Great Music, and How It Works (Reflective Writing, Introduction to Analysis, Musical Parameters for Analysis, Student-selected Music)
- Analysis Project – Interval Study (Written Melodic Interval Identification) [Audio example not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Analysis Project – Franz Schubert's An die Natur, No. 183 (Diatonic Roman Numeral Analysis) [Audio example not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Composition Project – Story Time [“The Three Little Pigs”] (Diatonic Roman Numerals, Harmonic Functions, Realizing a Figured Bass)

Exams

- Exam 1 [Midterm] (Key Signatures, Scales, Intervals, Triads and Seventh Chords, Cantus Firmus, First-species Counterpoint, Second-species Counterpoint)
- Exam 2 [Final] (Second-species Counterpoint, Figured Bass, Roman Numerals, Harmonic Functions)

Syllabus

- Sample Syllabus – Music Theory I

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- Classical Cadence Types
- Phrase Functions and Theme Types
- Harmonic Syntax – The Idealized Phrase & Prolongation
- Analysis as Narrative (Intro to Analytical Writing about Music)
- Pop/Rock Progressions
- Melodic Keyboard-style Voice-leading & Schemata
- Third-species Counterpoint

Projects (Analysis and Composition)

- Analysis Project – A Study in Contrasts [Chopin] (Lead Sheet Symbols, Roman Numeral Analysis (Extra Credit), Diatonic vs. Chromatic Harmonies, Short Analytical Writing)
- Analysis Project – Capturing the Structure of Music (Group Project, Video Project, Re-composition, Online Discussion Board, Cadences, Phrase Functions, Classical Theme Types) [Literature examples not included. Instructor must select and distribute a different Classical theme type excerpt for each group.]
- Analysis Project – The Shape of Music around You (Popular Music Forms, Student-selected Music, Online Discussion Board, Peer Comments)
- Composition Project – Harmonic Progressions and Form in Pop Songs (Popular Music Forms, Pop/Rock Progressions, Cadence Types, Text-setting (optional))

Exams

- Exam 3 [Midterm] (Basso Continuo Part Writing, Classical Cadence Types, Diatonic Roman Numeral Analysis, Phrase Functions, Prolongation, Classical Theme Types)
- Exam 4 [Final] (Pop/Rock Progressions, Melodic Keyboard-style Voice-leading & Schemata, Diatonic Roman Numeral Analysis, Third-species Counterpoint)

Syllabus

- Sample Syllabus – Music Theory II

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- Neapolitan 6 Chords and Augmented 6th Chords
- Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords)
- Modal Mixture (Modal Borrowing)
- Modulations in Pop Music [Lyrics, chord symbols, and links to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- External and Internal Expansions [Links to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Simple Binary and Ternary Forms [Links to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Large Forms (Sonata, Rondo, and Theme & Variations) [Links to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]

Projects (Analysis and Composition)

- Analysis Project – Analyst’s Review: Schumann’s Album for the Young, Op.68 No.6 “The Poor Orphan” (Diatonic Roman Numeral Analysis)
- Analysis Project – J.S. Bach’s Chorale No. 108, “Valet will ich dir geben,” BWV 245 (Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords))
- Analysis Project – The Case of the Wandering Keys: *Jazz Chowder* (Neapolitan 6 Chords, Augmented 6th Chords, Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords), Modal Mixture (Modal Borrowing), Common Chord Modulation, Large Forms)
- Composition Project – Simple Binary and Ternary Forms (Neapolitan 6 Chords, Augmented 6th Chords, Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords), Modal Mixture (Modal Borrowing), Common Chord Modulation, Internal and External Expansions, and Simple Binary or Ternary Forms)

Exams

- Exam 5 [Midterm] (Neapolitan 6 Chords, Augmented 6th Chords, Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords), Modal Mixture (Modal Borrowing), Modulations)
- Exam 6 [Final] (Neapolitan 6 Chords and Augmented 6th Chords, Applied Chords (Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-tone Chords), Modal Mixture (Modal Borrowing), Modulations, Simple Binary or Ternary Forms)

Syllabus

- Sample Syllabus – Music Theory III

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- New Scales – Diatonic Modes, Pentatonic, and Synthetic
- Extended Tonality – Mediants, Non-Tertian Harmonies, and Sequences
- Materials and Concepts of Atonality, 12-tone Serialism, and Total Serialism
- Mini-activity on Atonality
- Analysis of Free Atonality [Score and link to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Analysis of 12-tone Serialism [Score and link to audio not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Experimental Music – Aleatoricism, Extended Techniques, Timbre, Electronic Music
- Minimalism

Projects (Analysis and Composition)

- Analysis Project – Beyond Tonality (Intro to Non-functional Music, Online Discussion Board, Peer Comments) [Instructor selected excerpts required, due to copyright restriction.]
- Analysis Project – Schoenberg vs. Stravinsky (Post-tonal Analysis, Critical Aesthetic Essay Writing, Persuasive Writing, Sonata Form in the 20th Century, 12-tone Serialism) [Scores, audio examples, and outside readings not included, due to copyright restriction.]
- Analysis Project – What Is Good in Contemporary Classical Music? (Student-selected Music, Contemporary Classical Music Analysis, Persuasive Aesthetic Arguments, Oral Presentations)
- Composition Project (New Scales (Diatonic Modes, Pentatonic, and Synthetic), Simple Ternary Form)

Exams

- Exam 7 [Midterm] (New Scales (Diatonic Modes, Pentatonic, and Synthetic), Extended Tonality (Mediants, and Non-Tertian Harmonies), Materials and Concepts of Atonality and 12-tone Serialism, Brief Essay on Stylistic Trends from 1880-1950 (Extra Credit))
- Exam 8 [Final] (New Scales (Diatonic Modes, Pentatonic, and Synthetic), Extended Tonality (Mediants), Materials and Concepts of Atonality and 12-tone Serialism, Experimental Music (Short Essay), Minimalism)

Syllabus

- Sample Syllabus – Music Theory IV

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