

Syllabus
MUS 2140: Music in Western Culture
3.0 Credits
Wright State University

Dr. Christopher Chaffee
Office: M371 Creative Arts Center
937.775.2132
Christopher.Chaffee@wright.edu

Course Objectives:

This is an introductory survey of Western Classical Music. You will become acquainted with the basic elements of music and develop listening skills that employ a descriptive vocabulary, examine how music functions within society, and gain new perspective on your own culture by comparing your experience with people from other times.

This class is part of the WSU Core Curriculum, therefore must meet certain University Learning Objectives. These are:

- a) communicate effectively, especially in writing
- b) apply methods of inquiry to the arts
- c) demonstrate global and multicultural competence

This class is designed to meet the criterion for element four. These learning outcomes are:

4. Arts/Humanities <i>Tools for analysis and appreciation of the arts, philosophy, and religious thought</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Critically analyze significant creative, literary, philosophical or religious worksb. Understand and discuss the complex blend of imaginative vision, socio-cultural context, ethical values, and aesthetic judgment in creative, philosophical or religious worksc. Recognize, evaluate and respond to creative, philosophical or religious worksa. Develop appropriate and ethical applications of knowledge in the humanities or the arts
--	--

Required Text:

The Enjoyment of Music. 10th ed., Machlis and Forney, This book comes with a CD set. Learning is also based on lectures, online resources, and streaming audio examples available on reserve from the WSU library.

Grading:

5 Quizzes X 10% each = 50%
Concert Report or Instrument Building Project and Presentation = 25%
Listening and Reflection Journal = 25%

Attendance Policy:

I expect students to attend all class sessions, but I do not monitor attendance. **However, given the intensity of each session, and the amount of material covered, it is not a good idea to miss any class meetings.** Please take the time to communicate with me about any issues you may have. If you must miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes or assignment information from your classmates, and you are still required to meet all course deadlines.

Class Policies:

- No late assignments are accepted. Unless specified, I do not accept assignments by email or email attachment.
- All quizzes may include multiple choice, short answer, and listening identification.
- **I do not tolerate plagiarism.** This includes both copying work from your classmates and from outside sources. If you turn in something that is not your own work, or you fail to cite the employed source, you will receive an F (failing grade) for that assignment.
- **No make up quizzes are given. Missing for illness must be documented.**

Success in this class:

- This class covers a wide range of topics. Quizzes cover everything covered in class and internet reading assignments. Take notes on everything, including video examples.
- Listening is a vital part of this experience. When preparing for each quiz, be sure to listen to the relevant audio examples. You may find that you need to listen to selections more than once.

Course Schedule:

Part I

Week 1	The Elements of Music/Definitions/Common Vocabulary (Unit I)
Week 2	Musical Instruments and Ensembles, The Materials of Music (Unit II)
Week 3	Medieval and Renaissance Music (Unit III and IV)
Week 4	The Organization of Sound/Acoustics/Composition (Unit V)
Week 5	The Materials of Form/Musical Analysis/Art and Music (Unit IX)

Part II

- Week 6 Classical Period/Chamber Music/Symphony/Concerto/Opera (Unit XIV)
- Week 7 The Romantic Period/Art and Culture/ Piano Music/Choral Music (Unit XX)
- Week 8 Neo-Classic Era/Choral and Dramatic Music/ Post-Romanticism (Unit XXI)
- Week 9 Impressionism and Early 20th Century/Ballet/Music and Women (Unit XIX)

Part III

- Week 10 Nationalism/European Tradition/American Music (Unit XXIII)
- Week 11 Early 20th Century Opera and the Revitalization of Rhythm
- Week 12 Popular Music/ Jazz/Swing/Musical Theater/Rock (Unit XXIV)
- Week 13 World Music/Modern Virtuosity/Improvisation/Film Music
- Week 14 Technology and Music/Modern Musical Trends of Minimalism (Unit XXV)
- Week 15 Post Minimalism/New Directions/Electronic Instruments/Recording Techniques
In class presentations due

Course Projects and Assignments

Final Project: You may select one of the options below. Please read the following directions carefully before you begin.

Concert Report

This project is in two parts. First, you will attend a concert and write a 4-5 page report based on the questions below. Second, during the last week of classes, you will summarize your report in a five-minute presentation and share your experience with the class. The report is due at this time. **You are required to type your paper. Double spaced only, please- 4-5 pages of text (2000 words), not including title page.**

I will not give you a list of concerts that “count” for this assignment. I want you to find a concert that is outside of your everyday experience. Check the local papers, do some internet searching, and make note of any concerts I announce in class. If you look carefully, you will discover a wide range of music from many different styles in southwest Ohio. I realize that some concerts require ticket fees- remember to use your student ID for discounts!

Concert Report Structure:

I. Proposal

Before you attend a concert, you must get my approval. Once you have selected a concert, send me a brief proposal by email and tell me about the event- *who, what, when, where, and why you think it would be a good experience for you.*

IF YOU DO NOT SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, YOU WILL FAIL THIS PORTION OF THE COURSE.

II. Content

I will base your grade on content, use of music vocabulary, and thoroughness. Be sure to answer every question in as much detail as possible. Your answers must be in complete sentences. Provide as much information as you possibly can- take pictures (if allowed), interview other audience members, go backstage and talk to the musicians, etc.

BE SURE TO ATTACH THE PROGRAM AND TICKET STUB! If there is no program and/or ticket for your concert, provide some other form of evidence- pictures, newspaper articles, etc. If you do not provide any evidence, I may not accept your assignment.

III. Format

An effective report is more than just a list of questions and answers. Weave your information together into a narrative describing the entire experience. Avoid the passive voice, write in the first person, and insert your own personality.

IV. Questions:

1. What instruments were used in the concert? Under what classifications (chordophones etc) do they fall? If you can not find the name of the instrument, describe it using the vocabulary you have gained in the class.
2. What types (genres) of music were performed? Does the music fall under any categories discussed in class or in the text? Please describe the music you heard.
3. Was there any singing or dancing? How important was this to the music? Who were the performers? Did they wear any special costumes?
4. Where there any “composers” listed or mentioned? Was the music improvised at any point? How do you know?
5. How did the musicians interact with each other? How did they acknowledge or interact with the audience? Did this help or hinder your enjoyment of the music?
6. What feeling or mood did each movement or section of the performance seem to have?
7. What was/were the most important elements for getting the music across to you? (melody, texture, rhythm, tempo, etc.)
8. What was unique about the concert? What did you like/not like?

One final thought- this assignment is about analysis and thoughtful observation, not about criticism. Avoid writing in the tone of a newspaper or magazine music critic. I want to know what you saw/heard/felt, not what you think a group of performers do well or could do better!

INSTRUMENT BUILDING PROJECT

The basic requirement is simple: build a musical instrument that works.

You may select a musical instrument project from the internet, or you may select an instrument from any genre we have studied, or any instrument that piques your curiosity. If you select this project, you must take the following steps:

1. Write a brief proposal of your project and email it to me. Tell me what instrument you are building, and your outline or plan for completion.

IF YOU DO NOT SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, YOU WILL FAIL THIS PORTION OF THE COURSE.

2. Once your proposal is approved, obtain your raw materials and get to work!
3. You are required to do an in-class presentation with your instrument. These will take place during the last week of class.
4. Please prepare a two-page typed summary of your experience for this presentation and turn this in with your instrument. You should outline your *entire* experience- where did you get the raw materials, how did you go about building the instrument, what are some of the problems you encountered, are you confident that your instrument actually works, where is this instrument actually used, etc.

Listening and Reflection Journal

This portion of the course is designed to help you organize, reflect, and respond to the ideas we are going to cover. This is an opportunity for you to articulate your personal and intellectual reaction to the music and cultures you encounter in each class session. The purpose of this assignment is also for you to demonstrate your sense of ethical application of this new knowledge.

I will give you questions at least once a week. Questions will often be directly related to small group activities, class discussions, and listening assignments. I will provide you with feedback and the opportunity to revise your work.

Organization:

- Do not attempt to write the entire document at the last minute!
- Each entry must be at least one FULL page long (about 2-3 paragraphs.)
- The final draft must be typed, single-spaced is acceptable. If you are submitting any unusual or alternative entries, please make sure they are legible or organized for ease of reading.
- The complete journal is due at the end of the term. No exceptions.

Grading:

Each journal is assigned a letter grade, A-F.

- There are 10 total entries
- Each entry is worth 10 points
- Any missing entries will result in an automatic deduction of 10 full points
- I will not accept hand-written text entries
- Quality, clarity, and thoroughness are important.
- **Content and Style are entirely up to you. Some suggestions for alternative approaches include writing poetry, short stories, or artwork. Try to balance your entries to include several approaches.**
- If you have any questions, please email me for clarification. You may send sample entries for comments or questions at any time.
- Please avoid excessive use of profanity or colloquial expressions (e.g. “know what I’m saying?”).
- Please avoid the excessive use of negative or disparaging remarks about the course content. What you think and feel is important, but the overall point is for you to articulate your ideas in an organized and thoughtful manner.