

# COMMERCIAL MUSIC THEORY AND COMPOSITION

MUS 21341  
Kent State University at Stark  
Fall 2011

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## IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, August 29	Classes Begin
Monday, September 5	Labor Day No Classes, Offices Closed
August 29 – September 11	Schedule Adjustment – No Late Registration Fee Assessed. Courses may not be added or P/F, audit or credit hour options be changed after Sept.13
Week of October 10	Schedule Midterm Individuals
Monday, October 10	Midterm – Written
Wednesday, October 12	Midterm Composition Presentations
Oct. 18	MIDTERM GRADES POSTED Available using FlashFAST in FlashLine/Student Tools
Sunday, November 6	Last day to Withdraw from Classes
Friday Nov. 11	Veterans Day No Classes, Offices Closed
Nov. 24 (noon) - 28	Thanksgiving Holiday No Classes beginning at noon on Nov. 26, Offices Closed Nov. 27-28.
Wednesday, December 7	Final
Dec. 10	Classes End
Dec. 12 – 17	Final Exam Week
Finals Week	Schedule Final Individual
Monday, December 14TH at 3.30 pm	Final Exam Period, Project Presentation
Dec. 23	Final Grades Available using FlashFAST in FlashLine/Student Tools

## OBJECTIVES

The study and application of Jazz theory and practice through analysis, composition. and aural skills.

Main Topics covered will be:

- Scales: Review of Major/Minor and Modal Scales – Popular music scales: Blues – Pentatonic – Jazz minor
- Rhythm: Swing, Latin, Rock, Pop and Ethnic rhythmic patterns
- Motivic Development, Guide tones, Melody construction
- Harmony: tonal harmonic progressions, harmonization, reharmonization
- Modal Harmony
- Blues and Song Form
- Analysis of popular music: Standard American songs, Jazz, Rock and Pop
- Composition in Popular Styles
- Lead sheet creation and transcription
- Aural Skills:
  - Scales

- Chords
- Rhythm
- Melody
- Chord Progressions

### **TEXT BOOKS**

WWW Page: <http://www.personal.kent.edu/~sbirch/>

### **MATERIALS**

- Staff paper, pencil
- A good set of headphones (closed ear if possible) with a mini jack for the computer lab.
- A good size flash drive
- A three-ring binder to store this syllabus and all class materials

### **GENERAL**

- All assignments and tests must be written neatly in pencil
- All assignments, tests, handouts must be kept in a three-ring binder in chronological order
- Check the web page and your email address on a daily basis
- All assignments must be turned in on time
- You are responsible for backing up your projects
- Check the web page and your email address often
- Turn off cell phones before class – If your cell phone rings during class you are required to transcribe the melody and turn it in. If your phone does not play a melody you will need to learn Happy Birthday with solfege syllables and sing it at your next individual.

**!!!!CHECK THE WEB PAGE OFTEN FOR THE UP TO DATE SCHEDULE!!!!**

## **STUDENT OBLIGATIONS**

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Students will be expected to participate actively in class and will be often called upon to accomplish tasks in front of the class

#### **Every Week**

- Read, STUDY the assigned analysis readings
- Analyze the assigned pieces
- Be prepared to discuss the topics and works in class
- Realize the assigned exercises in Sibelius

#### **Daily**

- Go over the material done in class
- Practice solfege and ear training materials
- Practice keyboard drills

Assigned homework

## **EVALUATION**

### **ATTENDANCE**

You are allowed 2 unexcused absences per semester.

Each tardy (showing up after class starts) will count as ½ an absence

**Each tardy of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence**

According to the "3342-3-06 Administrative policy regarding class attendance and class absence" the university only accepts as valid excuses:

1. Certified serious illness.
2. Certified Death of an immediate family member (spouse, grandparents, parents, siblings).
3. Sanctioned KSU activity to which you must participate.
4. Religious holiday (Must be declared to the instructor at the beginning of the semester.)

Each additional unexcused absence will result in having 5% taken off your final grade.

### **HOMEWORK**

- Homework will be assigned in class and posted on the Theory web page
- Most assignments will be graded
- Late assignments will lose 10% each class period after the due date for a maximum of 50%
- Homework more than one week late will not be accepted

### **MIDTERM PROJECT**

Set one of the Blues Lyrics for Voice, piano and or Guitar, Bass and drums

Requirements:

1. Notated vocal part with lyrics and chord symbols
  - a. Notated Bass part with chord symbols
  - b. Better: notated piano/guitar and chord symbols
  - c. Minimum: Chord symbols with notated rhythms
  - d. Notate at least one measure of the drum part and indicate where fills and hits are
2. Prepare Parts:
  - a. Lead sheet: melody and chord symbols
  - b. Bass part
  - c. Piano/Guitar with lead sheet
  - d. Drum with lead sheet
3. Performed live during the Midterm Composition time
4. Grade will be based upon:
  - a. Quality and effectiveness of composition
  - b. Following the requirements
  - c. Quality of the performance

### **FINAL PROJECT**

Compose a song with lyrics. The song will be performed during the final exam period

Parameters:

1. NOT in BLUES FORM
2. choose either:
  - a. AABA, American song form, with some type of expansion. For example:
    - i. AABA BA
    - ii. intro AABA coda
    - iii. Some other combination
  - b. Verse Chorus with a bridge. For example
    - i. VVCVCBC
3. Lyrics can be original or borrowed. If they are borrowed they should be in the public domain.
4. Minimum orchestration: Voice, Piano, guitar, bass and drums
5. Form must be clearly indicated and all sections labeled
6. Include chord symbols (C7, Am, Dm7b5 ect) and Roman Numerals/modulations
7. Notated - Create a score and a set of parts for each performer. For the minimum orchestration you would need to create:
  - a. Piano/vocal score for the pianist and singer
  - b. Guitar/vocal part
  - c. Bass/vocal part
  - d. Drum/Vocal part
8. Notate rhythm section with chord symbols and melody with lyrics
9. The piece will be performed during the Final Exam Period
10. Grade will be based upon:
  - a. Quality and effectiveness of composition

- b. Following the requirements
- c. Quality of the performance

### **MIDTERM and FINAL**

Written tests that will cover the theoretical material covered in class. The Final will be comprehensive.

### **PAPER/PRESENTATIONS**

Each student will give a 15 minute presentation on a paper they have written on a popular song of their choice.

The paper will include

1. Background on the song: date composed, date performed/recorded
2. Information of the composer, lyricist, performer, recording
3. Recording of the song
4. Score of the song: published or transcription – If a score is not available you must at least write out a lead sheet with chords melody and lyrics. In order to help with the transcription, you might be able to find online a MIDI file of the song, a lyric sheet with chords, the guitar tabs. If you find a published score make sure to find out if the score is in the same key. Also point out errors and differences in the score. If there are different scores try to find the one that matches the recording you will be using.
5. An analysis of the piece. The analysis will include discussions of:
  - a. Meter, tempo
  - b. Key, scales
  - c. Genre
  - d. Chordal analysis – guitar chords, roman numerals
  - e. form analysis
  - f. possible compositional procedure
  - g. the relationship between lyrics and music

The presentation will last 15 minutes and must include:

1. Distribution of a copy of the paper to each classmate at least one class time before the presentation
2. Listening to the song following the score
3. discussion of the analysis of the piece

### **GRADE SO FAR**

After the Midterm and before the Final a form summarizing all of the “grades so far” will be handed out in class. If you have any questions about your grade please contact me out of class.

### **MAKEUP EXAMS**

Make-up exams are highly discouraged. Do not assume that absence from an exam or a quiz will result in an automatic make-up. Acceptable proof must be presented to the professor and all make-ups will be subject to special restrictions of time and place.

EVALUATION	
Theory	
Homework	30%
Midterm Quiz	10%
Midterm Project	10%
Final Quiz	10%
Final Project	10%
Paper Presentations	10%
Ear Training 30%	
Midterm Quiz (Individual and Written)	10%
Final Quiz (Individual and Written)	10%

GRADING SYSTEM	
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D+	68-69
D	60-67

### **RECITAL ATTENDANCE**

For all music majors (Bachelor of Arts, Music Performance, Music Education and Music Technology) the graduation requirement is a total of 84 concerts. Music Majors should attend 12 concerts per semester in order to stay on track for graduation. All on-campus music concerts advertised in the Cultural Flash and the Fall 2011 Recital/Concert List are automatically approved. YOU MUST TURN IN YOUR SIGNED CONCERT ATTENDANCE FORM AT YOUR JURY.

- a) You may only include three concerts in which you perform as stated on the reverse side of the Recital Card.
- b) Off - campus concerts must be approved by either your applied teacher or by Dr. Birch, Professor Kramer, Professor Seeds or Dr. Vaccaro.
- c) Only one musical theatre production is allowed.
- d) A maximum of three concerts at college or professional level at the OMEA State Convention will be allowed.
- e) Music Technology Majors may attend popular music concerts of a professional nature but must have proof of attendance (ticket, program etc)
- f) Music Technology majors may attend other concerts if they write a one-page report describing the setup, the equipment used and its application. These reports need to be turned in to either Dr. Birch or Dr. Vaccaro.
- g) No High School productions or concerts, including those at the OMEA Convention will be allowed.
- h) Recital or concert programs must be handed in and recorded on the Recital Attendance card within TWO WEEKS of the concert. Programs received after two weeks may not be considered valid.

### **MUSIC CONVOCATION**

1. Music Student Convocation will be held on Thursdays from 12:00 - 12:25 pm in room FA101. Convocation is mandatory for all music majors taking applied music. All students must perform during convocation as a soloist or ensemble once a year. The performance may also serve as the audition for the Student Recital. The applied instructor will assist with the preparation for the performance. Original compositions and "electronic materials" are acceptable with permission from the instructor.
2. Attendance will be taken each week by a student worker or one of the music faculty. Issues regarding attendance should be discussed with your applied teacher at your lesson or during office hours.

3. Attendance policy:  
 1 - 2 absences = no penalty  
 3 absences = applied grade lowered 1/2 letter grade  
 4 absences = applied grade lowered 1 letter grade  
 5 absences = applied grade lowered 1+1/2 letter grade  
 6 absences = applied grade lowered 2 letter grade  
 7 or more absences = applied grade lowered 3 letter grades
4. There will be 11 convocations this semester. Music majors will sign up for solo or ensemble performances during their assigned semester. Last names A-L will perform Fall Semester, M-Z, Spring semester. Ensembles may have cross-overs between semesters. THE SIGN UP SHEET WILL BE ON THE APPLIED MUSIC BULLETIN BOARD. If the music major does not perform during the fall or spring semester, the spring applied music grade will be lowered one letter grade.

Date	Week	
Thursday, September 01, 2011	1	Orientation
Thursday, September 08, 2011	2	Advisor presentation
Thursday, September 15, 2011	3	No Convocation
Thursday, September 22, 2011	4	Performance 1
Thursday, September 29, 2011	5	Performance 2
Thursday, October 06, 2011	6	Performance 3
Thursday, October 13, 2011	7	Midterms - No Convocation
Thursday, October 20, 2011	8	Dorian Wallace Performance
Thursday, October 27, 2011	9	Performance 4
Thursday, November 03, 2011	10	Performance 5
Thursday, November 10, 2011	11	Performance 6
Thursday, November 17, 2011	12	Performance 7
Thursday, November 24, 2011	13	Thanksgiving - No Convocation
Thursday, December 01, 2011	14	Performance 8
Thursday, December 08, 2011	15	No Convocation
Thursday, December 15, 2011	16	Finals Week - No Convocation

### **WITHDRAWAL**

If you are considering withdrawing from this course, please consult with a staff member in the Student Services Office, 134 Main Hall. Withdrawal from a course can affect financial aid, student status, or progress within your major. For withdrawal deadlines, please refer to

[http://www.registrars.kent.edu/home/TermUpdate/sche\\_adj.htm](http://www.registrars.kent.edu/home/TermUpdate/sche_adj.htm).

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense. Cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the work or for the entire course. Repeat offenses result in dismissal from the University. University guidelines require that all infractions be reported to the Student Conduct Officer on our campus.

## **CONDUCT**

Student and faculty behavior at the Stark Campus is governed by the guidelines set forth in the "Student Affairs Information Bulletin: Digest of Rules and Regulations." Consult this document for the Student Code of Conduct and other applicable policies and procedures.

The "Kent State University Undergraduate Catalog" should be consulted for information on grievance procedures, statement of non-discrimination, and additional information on official policies.

Your instructor may use software to identify portions of papers which have been copied from websites.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Kent State University recognizes its responsibility for creating an institutional atmosphere in which students with disabilities can succeed. In accordance with University Policy Subpart E...104.44, if you have a documented disability, you may request accommodations to obtain equal access in this class. Please contact the disability coordinator on campus, Amanda Weyant in Student Accessibility Services, located in the Student Success Center, lower level of the Campus Center, phone (330) 244-5047, or [aweyant1@kent.edu](mailto:aweyant1@kent.edu). After your eligibility for accommodations is determined, you will be given a letter which, when presented to instructors, will help us know best how to assist you.

## **CLASSES CANCELED – CAMPUS CLOSINGS**

Announcements of class cancellations and/or campus closings will be made on the campus home page. In the case of an emergency, weather-related or otherwise, please check the web page at [stark.kent.edu](http://stark.kent.edu) for information on the buildings and times of the closing. While information may be broadcast by radio and television, this should be confirmed by the web page, which is the official announcement of the campus and which will be the information used to determine issues related to student attendance, rescheduling of tests, and other concerns.

## **STARK SECURITY NUMBER**

Kent State Stark encourages students to include the Stark security number in their cell phone list: that number is (330)-705-0430.

## **FLASHLINE**

If you need help logging into FlashLine, please contact the Kent helpdesk 672-help or [helpdesk@kent.edu](mailto:helpdesk@kent.edu).

## **CAMPUS NETWORK**

If you have difficulties logging into the Stark Campus network, contact [helpdesk-stark@kent.edu](mailto:helpdesk-stark@kent.edu) or 244-3490.

## **RECYCLING**

KSU Stark Campus recycles. Recycling saves energy, which is currently generated by expensive and vanishing fossil fuels. Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours! Please take a few seconds to separate your trash. Aluminum cans and plastic and glass bottles may be placed in the blue recycling bins, and all types of paper may be placed in the blue recycling trash cans. All other waste may be placed in the black, brown or gray trash cans.