

Department: Music

Course No: 193

Credits: 3

Title: Introduction to Music History I

Contact: Glenn Stanley

Content Area: CA1-Arts and Humanities

Catalog Copy: MUSI 193. Introduction to Music History I. First semester. Three credits. Music history in relation to other arts from the early Christian Period to the mid-eighteenth century. No prerequisites for enrollment. Some background in music fundamentals or performance is recommended.

Course Information:

a. Music 193 is the first semester of a two-semester chronological sequence in music history. The course begins in the early Christian period and concludes circa 1750. Major composers, genres, and musical styles are covered in the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. A cultural-historical approach complements the more strictly technical investigation of the music. It focuses on developments in the related arts and literature, philosophy, religion, and politics and how they shape artistic expression and musical institutions.

b. Course requirements: The mid-term and final examinations include multiple-choice, short-answer and essay questions on technical and historical matters. Listening questions (multiple-choice and short answer) test the student's knowledge and understanding of the repertory studied. The writing assignments include either one lengthy research paper (10-15 pages) or several shorter assignments, possibly including a concert report. Reading and listening assignments for every class are based on a textbook and occasional additional sources. Music 193 is typically a small class (15-25 students) and the pedagogical approach stresses a balance of formal lecture and discussion. Students are expected to prepare the material in advance of the class and participate in discussion.

c. Within the general goals and objectives, there are two major themes:

1) Students develop listening skills that promote enhanced understanding and appreciation of music. Students acquire substantial knowledge of historical musical genres, forms, and styles through detailed study of individual pieces. Students acquire substantial knowledge of musical institutions and musical thought.

2) Students study the individual pieces in the cultural and socio-political context in which they were composed and first performed and received. Students do not learn music as an autonomous

art, but rather as a product of and reaction to a culture. The textbook and the additional readings include detailed discussion of these aspects, e.g. romanticism, nationalism, technology.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed: Although the students taking Music 193 have some technical knowledge of music and performance experience, the great majority of them has little or no historical knowledge: this course serves as an introduction to music history, broadening their intellectual horizons. The chronological approach and coverage of music in Western and Eastern Europe and music in the Americas expose them to many different historical phases of musical and general culture. Students master concepts, technical vocabulary and analytical skills in this new area. Students will become more aware of cultural relativism in value judgments about music -- e.g. changing notions of beauty and ugliness, distinctions between purportedly 'high' and 'low' culture -- in terms both of historical change and of different contemporary populations; they will also learn to notice and critique the way music is used to sway their opinions in advertising, political broadcasting etc. As stated in the answer to question B., most of the students know little about the tradition of art music in Europe and the New World and their exposure to it broadens their awareness of this historically influential aspect of human culture and experience. Moreover, because of the chronological breadth of the course, a wide range of musical styles and forms is explored in diverse and changing cultural contexts. The skills developed in critical listening to 'classical' music can be taken from the classroom and applied to any music; thus the skills acquired in the course contribute over the long term to their engagement with all kinds of music.

CA1 Criteria: As specified in the answers to question 1, the course introduces students to one of the major manifestations of human experience. Moreover, it considers music in a broader cultural context, thus emphasizing music's 'embeddedness' in more general patterns of human activity and ensuring that music is approached from an "artistic-humanistic" perspective. Music is a symbolic art, in that it has the ability to symbolize ideas, emotions, objects, and natural phenomena. Moreover, music depends on symbolic notation to record imagined sounds and rhythms that must be brought to life in performance. Music is a performance art. Live performance is integrated into the course.

Role of Grad Students: Music 193 is currently taught by a graduate student in the Ph.D. program under the close supervision of the music-history faculty. In the future members of the music-history faculty may sometimes teach the course, depending on our other commitments. (All three music-history professors are currently teaching gen-ed and gen-ed honors courses: Music 191, Music 191H, Music 105H.)