

Department: Music

Course No: 191

Credits: 3

Title: Music Appreciation

Contact: Glenn Stanley

Content Area: CA1-Arts and Humanities

Catalog Copy: MUSI 191 Music Appreciation. Either Semester. Three credits. No previous training is required. Not appropriate for students who have previously passed MUSI 193 or 194. Not intended for students with previous musical experience. An approach toward intelligent listening, illustrated by recordings.

Course Information: 1. Provide the following information about the course :

- a. A brief (2-3 sentences) course description that includes course goals and objectives. Music 191 introduces students to the elements of music (melody, harmony, rhythm, form, etc.) and offers a chronological survey of music in the “Western Art” tradition. The chronology begins with Gregorian Chant and culminates in the music of the late twentieth century, including American Jazz and popular music.
- b. Course requirements: Specify exam formats, nature and scope of weekly reading assignments, nature and scope of writing assignments, problem sets, etc. This is a large lecture class with minimum enrollments of 125. The Mid-term and Final Examinations consist of multiple-choice questions, with questions about musical elements, composers’ lives, cultural and aesthetic background and pieces studied, including listening questions. Weekly assignments are taken from the course text book and comprise 30-40 pages, including listening assignments. Students are expected to read and listen in advance of the class in which the material will be discussed. Because the classes are large and there is only one T.A. assigned to the class, it is currently impossible to assign a paper or other written exercise
- c. List the major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered. Within the general goals and objectives, there are two major themes. 1) Students develop listening skills that promote enhanced understanding and appreciation of music. This is undertaken through the detailed study of individual pieces e.g. a Vivaldi Violin Concerto, an excerpt from a Mozart opera, or the Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue. 2) Students study the individual pieces in the cultural and socio-political context in which they were composed and first received. Students do not learn music as an autonomous art but as a product of and reaction to a culture. The textbook includes detailed discussion of these aspects, e.g. church institutions, romanticism, nationalism, technology.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed: A. Become articulate;

B. Acquire intellectual breadth and versatility;

Students study a subject about which the great majority has little or no experience, thus 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 historically phases of musical and general culture. Students master concepts, technical vocabulary and analytical skills in this new area.

C. Acquire critical judgement;

D. Acquire moral sensitivity;

E. Acquire awareness of their era and society;

The last several classes are devoted to twentieth-century American music, including popular musics, which are studied with respect to more general patterns in American society and culture.

F. Acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience; and

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 would broaden their awareness of this important aspect of human culture and experience. Moreover, because of the broad chronology of the course, a great diversity of musical styles and forms are explored in diverse and changing cultural contexts.

G. Acquire a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge.

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: A. Investigations and historical/critical analyses of human experience;

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

B. Inquiries into philosophical and/or political theory;

C. Investigations into the modes of symbolic representation;

D. Comprehension and appreciation of written, graphic and/or performance art forms;

Music is a performance art. Live performance is integrated into the course.

E. Creation or “re-creation” of artistic works culminating in individual or group publication, production or performance. Three-credit courses in this category must be supplemented by written or oral analysis/criticism.

Role of Grad Students: Graduate assistants assist the instructor in establishing the curriculum, writing and grading exams, setting up and using equipment. Assistants teach several times during the semester and discuss their teaching with the instructor. Assistants also have regular office hours and meet with students.