

## CLASS PIANO (MUSIC 25A/B/C/D)

(Syllabus updated 8 - 04)

Class meets in CA 104 @ M W 9:00 – 9:55 a.m., M 6 - 8:05 p.m. or T Th 2:00 – 2:55 pm

Ed Macan, Ph.D.

(Office: CA 118, Phone: 476-4321, Office hours: M/W 2 – 3 p.m., T/TH 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., F 1 – 2 p.m.)

**TEXTS:** Palmer, Willard, Morton Manus, Amanda Lethco. *Alfred's Basic Adult Piano Course, Level One*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., 1983. (This text will be used for all 25A and most 25B students.)

Belá Bartók. *Mikrokosmos*, volume 1. London: Boosey & Hawkes. (This text will not be used by Music 25A students.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.** As this is a course that contains beginning, intermediate, and advanced students, the objectives will vary according to the level of the student. During the course of the semester, beginning students will become familiar with the keyboard; with the basic mechanics of rhythm and counting; with basic fingering technique; with reading music notation in both the treble and bass clefs; with playing hands alone and together; with simple theoretical concepts; and with basic elements of interpretation--tempo, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing. Intermediate and advanced students will be expected to master the use of the damper pedal; to become familiar with more intricate two-hand literature that emphasizes independence of the hands; to play in less familiar keys; and to develop greater subtlety in matters of interpretation. There will be some classroom instruction; I will place particular emphasis on keyboard duet and ensemble pieces, as it is important for beginning musicians to learn to play with other musicians. I will also spend time listening to individual students. It is my goal to hear every student once a week, although with large classes that is not always possible; at any rate, I maintain a rotation, hearing every student in turn and then starting the rotation over. Students in 25B/C/D will largely move at their own pace; students in 25A will begin the same material together, but will have increasing opportunity to move at their own pace as the semester progresses.

**GRADING.** Grading will be a composite of several factors. One important factor will be **attendance**. I will take role at the beginning of each class; if you have not arrived by the time I complete taking role, you will be considered absent for the day, and your absence will be considered unexcused. If you know you will be tardy on a particular day and don't want to be marked down, notify me in advance of class. Also, if you leave class early, you will be considered absent: please be aware you are often cheating yourself by leaving early, because if it is your turn in the rotation on a particular day and you're gone, you will be skipped over until the next time the rotation goes around. Every four absences has the potential to lower your final grade by one letter grade.

Another factor in grading will be **progress**. I will be looking both at **quantity**--how much material you cover during the course of the semester--and **quality**--how well you master the material you have covered. Ideally, you want to strike a balance. All quantity and no quality is not good: there is no point of covering the whole book if you are not really mastering the pieces that you play. I would much rather you play fewer pieces but fully master the pieces you do play. On the other hand, all quality and no quantity is not so good either: learning a small amount of material perfectly but not doing anything else may indicate over-limited ambitions. A key element here is practice: without regular practice, improvement is not going to happen, and you should *not* plan to do all your practice during the two hours per week we meet in class. If you really plan to improve, plan to put at least one to two hours of week outside of class into practicing the piano. Regular practice is the key! It is much better to practice twenty minutes a session, three times a week, than to put in one two hour session every other week.

A third element in grading will be your **participation in performances**. We will have three recitals: in mid-semester, in the final week of class, and on finals day. For 25A students, the expectation is three pieces; for 25B/C/D students, who are likely to be playing longer pieces, the expectations may vary (depending on the length of the piece). I understand some students suffer from stage fright, so a less-than-stellar performance at the recital will not negatively impact a student's grade if the student has been working consistently throughout the semester. However, if a student performs poorly because he/she has not regularly attended class and/or has shown signs of not regularly practicing, the recital performance will be a consideration in factoring the student's final grade. Keep in mind that the more you play in front of people, the easier it becomes. Since a major function of our class recitals is for me

to check your progress (see the “quantity and quality” section above), I request that you play only music that you have studied with me in class this semester at our recitals.

**NOTE:** There are nine practice rooms available in the Creative Arts Building from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays, and from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday. They are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Take advantage of them! Please do not put food, beverages or beverage containers, either full or empty, on any of the practice room pianos or any of the electronic keyboards in CA 104. Please do not write on keyboards. Concerning the keyboards in CA 104, please remove and insert headphone jacks *gently* into the keyboards.

**NOTE:** Your continued enrollment in this class after the end of the second week of the semester indicates that you have read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the terms of this syllabus. Please be aware that after the third week of the semester I take no further responsibility for dropping you from the class roll if you stop coming to class. It will be your responsibility to fill out the appropriate petition at Admissions and Records to be permitted to drop the class late. Ordinarily I will sign such a petition, but it is solely your responsibility to initiate this action. Please be aware that in accordance with college policy, incompletes will be given only in highly unusual circumstances, most often for unforeseeable medical emergencies. An extensive work load, academic or otherwise, will not be considered sufficient cause to grant an incomplete.