

MUSIC IN HISTORY (MUSIC 10)

(Syllabus updated 8-05)

Class meets in CA 113 MW 10 a.m.- 11:25 p.m.

Joseph Byrd (josephbyrd@cox.net)
839-4080 (telephone/answering machine)

You may email me, or call me at that number, for anything except to notify me of absences. Please do not call my campus voice mail; I don't check it for messages. In emergencies, the Division office number is 476-4559.

I am not a tenured faculty member, and as such I do not keep regular office hours for student consultation. However, I am perfectly willing to meet with you at a mutually convenient time. The best way to arrange a meeting with me is after class is over, or by email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION. This course focuses both on developing an understanding of the technical aspects of music, and an awareness of the role music has played in Western history and culture from the middle ages to the 20th Century, including the arts, sociology, and economics.

You must have a copy of Dr. Ed Macan's **Music Appreciation handbook**; I will require that every student show me his/her copy when I take roll on Monday, August 30. Virtually everything on the exams will be taken from the handbook. However, there will be extra credit, based on material I cover in the lectures. In effect, each test will have a possible 120-130 points.

At the beginning of the term, we will work to develop a musical vocabulary sophisticated enough to recognize and discuss the elements of music. The first exam will be on that material.

This goal accomplished, we will trace the ways in which the various musical elements have been manifested in music from the Middle Ages through the Twentieth Century, and consider what qualities distinguish the music of each historical period. We will highlight key aspects of different types of performance. Identifying musical styles will be an important part of our course of study.

We will also consider the social role of music in Western culture, as well as its relation to religion, politics, economics, philosophy, and technology.

Finally, throughout the course, we will grapple with the question of significance in music.

GRADING. There will be four exams, worth 10% each 40%

There will be a two-page, single-spaced term paper,
consisting of a biography or extended discussion of a composer, musician, or
other significant person related to music in the eras we study - or, with my
advice and consent, on some other topic of pertinence to this class
(See requirements in the handbook) 15%

There will be a review of a CD or live concert relevant to the nature of this course 10%

(if in doubt, discuss it with me)

Participation (how you are perceived re attendance and involvement) 10%

Final Exam 25%

This session has 29 meetings. Class attendance is so important that I am reluctant to fail someone who has been present the whole term; on the other hand, I am equally reluctant to give a high grade to someone who has missed more than two sessions. To be blunt, Don't Miss Class. In addition to the deduction from your "participation," any class you miss is material you won't know. You should know that if I think you have missed more than is wise, I'll drop you if I can. I hate to fail students. I love to drop students I think are destined to fail. On the other hand, I would be very happy if you all make A's. I don't grade on a curve, and my survey classes usually have 25-30 students who get A's or B's. They don't get them by not coming to class.

Final grades are letter grades, with no plus or minus. In terms of percentages/letter grades, I am not fancy: 90 or above is an A, 80 or above, a B, etc. If you are "on the cusp," I'll usually give you the higher grade: an 89 will likely be an A.

LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS. There is a set of 4 60-minute Listening Tapes that are crucial to this course. The tapes are keyed to your textbook. It is important that during the first two weeks of this course, you take 4 blank C-60 cassettes to the Music Library to have the listening assignments recorded on them. (It may be possible to have CDs recorded; we will discuss that in class.) When I play music in class, it will be to illustrate something; but when I play music from the listening tapes, it is guaranteed to be music you will be tested on. I will let you know what is potentially test material (i.e., on the Listening Tapes), and what is simply "background."

It is therefore critical that you give your full attention to the listening. Talking to your neighbor, dozing off, or any other sign that you are not fully attentive, will be grounds for your being dismissed from the class. If listening to this music will bore you, or cause you to become sleepy, you should not be in the class. Please take this seriously, because I do.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS. There are 1) a review of a relevant CD or concert, and 2) a term paper. Both should be about 3 double-spaced pages. The review should reflect knowledge you have acquired over the course of this class, applied to a body of music, and using appropriate terminology. The term paper is to be a biographical sketch of someone relevant to the class. Both papers require standard academic documentation and references. They must include all the Internet sources you have consulted, plus at least two books, which must be listed in appropriate citation format. [If you don't know what this means, go to the LAC and find out; it will affect your grade for those assignments.] I don't exactly deduct for misspellings, but they don't help. They, together with poor grammar and sentence construction, can conspire to lower your score. The Internet is a tool, not a substitute for work; any plagiarism will get a "zero" for the paper.

ERRATA. I almost never give "Incompletes." They open a can of worms, requiring extra work and time for both teacher and student, and in any event they are rarely accepted by the College; they also require serious medical or other documentation. So avoid the matter: be in class, do the work.