

CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS
MUSC 1030:01 Written Theory I

Semester/Year: Fall 2015

Lecture Hours: 3.0

Lab Hours:

Credit Hours: 3.0

Class Time: 9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

Days: M/W/F

Room: MU 210

Instructor's Name: Nathan Baker

Office Phone: 268-2538

Email: nbaker@caspercollege.edu

Office Location/Hours: MU 210; office hours posted on door (walk-ins are also welcome)

Course Description: This course will cover the fundamentals of music including notation, pitch and rhythmic nomenclature, clefs, accidentals, intervals and scales; basic chord types; figured bass; cadences; nonharmonic tones; melodic structure including the phrase, sequence, and motive; two-part writing and four-part writing. Required for all music majors.

Statement of Prerequisites: None

Goal: To master fundamental musical elements, structures, and processes while developing a personal understanding of how and why musicians in the extended common practice have chosen to use these particular elements, structures, and processes.

Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and write pitches on the treble clef;
2. Identify and write pitches on the bass clef;
3. Identify and write pitches on C clefs (e.g. alto/tenor clefs);
4. Identify, write, and use standard simple meters;
5. Count and create rhythms in simple meter using takadimi syllables;
6. Identify, write, and use standard compound meters;
7. Count and create rhythms in compound meter using tavakididama syllables;
8. Identify and write major key signatures on the treble, alto, and bass staves;
9. Identify, write, and use major scales;
10. Associate scale degrees with solfege syllables;
11. Identify and write minor key signatures on the treble, alto, and bass staves;
12. Identify, write, and use minor scales (natural, harmonic, and melodic);
13. Identify and use scales and modes linked via parallel and relative relationships;
14. Identify, write, and use the diatonic modes;
15. Identify, write, and use major pentatonic scales;
16. Identify, write, and use chromatic scales;
17. Identify, write, and use simple intervals;
18. Differentiate between consonant and dissonant intervals;
19. Identify, write, and use major, minor, augmented, and diminished triads;
20. Identify, write, and use major, minor, dominant, half-diminished, and fully-diminished seventh chords;
21. Analyze and use motives and musical forces in a simple melody;

22. Identify, write, and use basic Renaissance-style counterpoint.

In addition to the above learning outcomes, the course also requires students to demonstrate personal responsibility via the following behavioral outcomes:

- A. Be on time to class;
- B. Regularly practice course material and submit assigned work on time.

This course satisfies the following general education outcome(s):

- 3. Solve problems using critical thinking and creativity.

Methodology: Mastery of the above outcomes will be developed through a combination of textbook reading; in-class lectures, demonstrations, and discussions that encourage critical and creative thinking; opportunities to practice the material; and constant individual feedback.

- Textbook Reading: Students will be introduced to a given week's topic of learning by reading a portion of the textbook (usually a chapter) most weekends.
- In-Class Lectures, Demonstrations, and Discussions: Much of what I do in class will be offering explanations of and alternative perspectives on the introductory material presented in the text; presenting newer developments in and approaches to music theory not contained in your textbook; and particularly asking you questions to stimulate discussions that will challenge and expand your understanding both of how music usually works and other ways that it might work. I expect you to be an *active* participant in the learning process, and *especially* to ask questions anytime you feel that you don't understand what is going on.
- Opportunities to Practice the Material: Some exercises and drills will be worked through together in class, additional exercises and projects will be assigned as homework (to be handed in at the beginning of the class period they are due), and you will have the opportunity to master fundamental skills using Oxford's online Music Theory Skill Builder. These homework exercises are entirely for *your* benefit—just as you wouldn't expect to get much better at playing your instrument or singing if you didn't practice it daily, failure to practice “doing theory” will inhibit your mastery of it.
- Constant Individual Feedback: It is absolutely essential that you and I both remain current on the state of your educational development. To this end, you will do your homework as often as is currently possible (and late is better than never).

Evaluation Criteria: As musicians, we are acquainted with a very practical level of evaluation: at any given concert, a musician can give a great performance, a decent performance, a bad performance, or (in rare and unfortunate cases of extreme individual unpreparedness) no performance at all; as musicians, we all strive for every performance to be *perfect*.

You should bring this same attitude to this class—strive for perfect mastery of each outcome. To help you demonstrate said mastery, basic mastery of the outcomes will be evaluated via Oxford's online Music Theory Skill Builder. You may take each quiz as many times as you wish (and can even come to my office to discuss or practice for a quiz). To pass off satisfactory mastery of an outcome, a perfect score on one quiz pertaining to that objective is required (so by the end of the semester you will have

ideally passed all of the different mastery quizzes—so study hard and try not to fall too far behind!).

You will have an opportunity to demonstrate your complete mastery of the outcomes through in-class improvisation and assigned composition projects. You are welcome to stop by my office to practice improvisation or bring drafts of compositions and receive feedback to help you develop an end product that meets our standards. While I do not mind you working together on your practice/reinforcement homework assignments, it *is* expected that the compositions will represent your *own* work and not a group effort.

Each extended feedback opportunity (homework and capstone projects) will be scored as follows: 4, complete level of mastery; 3, satisfactory level of mastery; 2, rudimentary level of mastery; 1, lack of mastery.

Behavioral outcomes will be assessed as follows:

- A: 4: no unexcused absences or tardiness; 3: no unexcused absences, occasional tardiness; 2: occasional unexcused absences and tardiness; 1. Frequent unexcused absences and tardiness.
- B: 4: all assignments submitted on time; 3: 80% or more of all assignments submitted on time; 2: 50% or more of all assignments submitted on time; 1: fewer than 50% of all assignments submitted on time.

The final exam will consist of an individually-scheduled half-hour oral exam during which you meet with me in my office and have one last chance to pass off any outcomes you have not satisfied by that point; no evaluation of an outcome will take place after the final oral exam.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- A: Complete mastery of all learning outcomes and earn a 4 in both behavioral outcomes.
- B: Complete mastery of at least eleven learning outcomes, satisfactory mastery of the rest, and earn at least a 3 in both behavioral outcomes.
- C: Satisfactory mastery of all learning outcomes, and earn at least a 2 in both behavioral outcomes.
- D: Satisfactory mastery of at least eleven learning outcomes, rudimentary mastery of the rest (note that any learning outcomes not satisfied will be carried over and must be satisfied to score at least a D in MUSC 1045), and earn at least a 2 in both behavioral outcomes.
- F: Failure to satisfactorily master at least eleven learning outcomes and/or earn at least a 2 in both behavioral outcomes.

Casper College may collect samples of student work demonstrating achievement of the above general education outcome(s). Any personally identifying information will be removed from student work.

Required Text, Readings, and Materials: Contemporary Musicianship by Jennifer Sterling Snodgrass, packaged with Music Theory Skill Builder (Oxford, ISBN: 978-0-19-026846-6). You will, of course, also need a pencil and blank staff paper (free staff paper can be printed from the website www.blanksheetmusic.net).

Class Policies: I run my classroom via two general rules:

1. **Be Respectful:** Treat your professor and colleagues with courtesy and respect, and don't do anything that disrupts the learning environment.
2. **Be Responsible:** Attend class (after all, you're still paying for me to teach you whether or not you show up), pay attention, ask questions and come to my office when you don't quite understand something, and always do your very best work on your assignments. As new adults experiencing the "real world" for the first time, I recognize that you may encounter unexpected difficulties that interfere with the educational process; at my discretion, I will often be flexible in arranging appropriate accommodations with you (such as excusing an absence or accepting a late assignment) IF and ONLY IF you are responsible enough to promptly communicate me should something come up.

Last Date to Change to Audit Status or to Withdraw with a W Grade: November 12

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Please refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code for information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a Casper College Student.

Chain of Command: If you have any problems with this class, you should first contact the instructor to attempt to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the solution offered by the instructor, you should then take the matter through the appropriate chain of command starting with the Department Head/Program Director, the Dean, and lastly the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Academic Dishonesty: (Cheating & Plagiarism) Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct for more information on this topic.

Official Means of Communication: Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student's assigned Casper College email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly.

ADA Accommodations Policy: If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. See me privately after class, or during my office hours. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college's Disability Services Counselor located in the Gateway Building, Room 344, (307) 268-2557, bheuer@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping students request and use appropriate accommodations.

Calendar or schedule indicating course content: The following is an anticipated schedule of weekly readings (remember, read the chapter BEFORE the start of the week!); the actual rate of progression may very likely vary as I see fit.

Week:

1. 8/24-8/28: Entrance Exam / Introduction; Pitch Notation: Ch. 1 pp. 1-7
2. 8/31-9/4: Rhythmic Notation: Ch. 1 pp. 7-14
3. 9/7-9/11: Major Scales and Key Signatures: Ch. 2
(no class Monday 9/7)
4. 9/14-9/18: Minor Scales and Key Signatures: Ch. 3
5. 9/21-9/25: Other Scales and Modes
6. 9/28-10/2: Intervals: Ch. 4
7. 10/5-10/9: Triads: Ch. 5
8. 10/12-10/16: Seventh Chords: Ch. 6
9. 10/19-10/23: Motives, Musical Forces, and Melody
(no class Monday 10/19)
10. 10/26-10/30: Introduction to Counterpoint
(no class Friday 10/30)
11. 11/2-11/6: First Species
(no class Friday 11/6)
12. 11/9-11/13: Second Species
13. 11/16-11/20: Fourth Species
14. 11/23-11/27: Catch-Up
(no class Wednesday 11/25 or Friday 11/27)
15. 11/30-12/4: Mixed Species and Canon
16. 12/7-11: Three-Voice Counterpoint; Summary/Review
17. 12/14-18: Individual Oral Final Exams; End of Term