

# Aural Skills IV

MUST 2112 (21753 & 21754)

Syllabus

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The University of Texas at El Paso – Spring 2016

## Course description

Aural Skills IV is a continuation of Aural Skills III. Aural Skills III focuses on developing and improving a number of skills related to hearing, singing, and understanding tonal music. In this course, students will improve their aural skills in the following areas: intervals, chord quality, scale degree recognition & reproduction, harmonic function, phrase structure & form, rhythm, meter, sight singing, solfege, and in rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic dictation.

## Useful information

<b>Course website</b>	The course website (Blackboard) has course documents, homework, handouts, skills quizzes, and proficiency exams. It also contains useful links to helpful websites and printable staff paper.
<b>Office hours:</b>	Fox Fine Arts Center 431 11:30 – 12:30 PM on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and by appointment.
<b>Free Tutor:</b>	Free tutoring is offered for this course. See the “Tutoring” link on the course’s Blackboard page for more information.

## Required textbooks

- Rogers, Ottman, *Music for Sight Singing*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition
  - You must purchase the textbook (unless you already have it).
  - Only the 9<sup>th</sup> edition will work for this course, previous editions will not work.

*Music for Sight Singing* is a collection of sight-singing, rhythmic, and improvisation exercises. We will be using this text regularly and it needs to be brought to class each day. This text is available at the campus Bookstore or you can buy it online. You will be using it throughout Aural Skills I-IV. Additionally, contextual listening assignments will be posted on Blackboard and are a required part of this course.

### Required materials for every class

- Staff paper
- Pencil with eraser (no need for pens)
- Textbook (Rogers/Ottman, *Music for Sight Singing*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition)

### Grading

- Your overall grade for the semester will be calculated as outlined below.
  - Contextual listening assignments 10%
  - Online singing submissions 10%
  - In-class quizzes 30%
  - Barrier exam 20%
  - Final exam 30%
- Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90-100	B	80-89	C	70-79	D	60-69	F	Below 60
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- Grade updates will be provided a few times throughout the semester. Please feel free to inquire about your current average at any time.

### Homework assignments, class preparation, in-class quizzes, and proficiency quizzes

Contextual listening assignments are due every week. They are to be completed by yourself and *without* reference to a musical score. Recordings will be provided on Blackboard.

There are two quizzes associated with Thursdays. The Online Skills Quiz needs to be completed before class begins on Thursday. During class, the In-Class Skills Quiz will be given. The in-class version covers exactly the same material from the online version and its job is to assess your ability with the week's concept. The online version prepares you for the in-class version and both quizzes are required.

Completing the online version of the skills quiz, with the required minimum grade, is part of being prepared for class on Thursday. The online version can be taken as many times as necessary before the due date but the in-class version can only be taken once. If the Online Skills Quiz is not completed with the required minimum grade, the student will be marked as unprepared for class. See the section on being prepared for class to learn how this impacts your grade.

### Proficiency Quizzes

Weekly Proficiency Quizzes are assigned each week to develop mastery of core concepts. These quizzes are all online and can be found on the course Blackboard site. Each quiz can be taken as many times as necessary before the due date. Only the highest score ever recorded will count towards your grade so you are encouraged to take them again if you would like more practice (doing so will

not change your grade if you have already passed the quiz once). Because these are proficiency quizzes, each quiz is timed and there is a minimum grade required to pass. There will be multiple Proficiency Quizzes due each week. All quizzes are due before the start of class each Tuesday. The quizzes themselves are considered required practice and are not strictly worth points. However, they must all be completed each week, before the due date, at the specified level of proficiency otherwise the student will be marked as unprepared for class. See the section on being prepared for class to learn how this impacts your grade.

## Barrier Exam

During Week 11 (March 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>), the Aural Skills Barrier Exam will be administered. This exam is dictation-based and covers all material from Aural Skills I through week 10 of this course, though its primary emphasis will be on fundamental materials from the first three semesters of the aural-skills sequence. The purpose of the barrier exam is to ensure that students have mastered and retained fundamental, foundational material throughout the four-semester, aural-skills sequence, and are ready for upper-level music courses.

The barrier exam needs to be passed with a grade of 70% or higher in order to pass the class. A score of less than 70% but greater than or equal to 60% on this exam will result in an overall course grade of D. A score of below 60% on this exam will result in an overall course grade of F.

## Online submission of each week's prepared melodies

Every other week, selected melodies and rhythms from *Music for Sight Singing* are assigned. These items need to be prepared outside of class. Students will record themselves singing all assigned melodies & rhythms and submit their recordings online via Blackboard following the instructions below:

### Submission requirements

- Always sing with solfege syllables
  - Observe chromatic inflections (e.g., fi, ri, etc.)
  - Observe modulations (if the tonic changes, you should change your tonic to reflect the modulation)
- If the excerpt is rhythm only, use rhythm syllables as follows:
  - Simple meters (2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, etc.): 1-e-&a, 2-e-&a
  - Compound meters (6/8, 9/8, 12/8, 6/4, etc.): 1-guh-da-guh-di-guh, 2-guh-da-guh-di-guh
- Don't play along while you sing
  - You can establish the key **before** you start and/or provide yourself with the starting note **before** you sing but the recording needs to be your voice only
  - Using a fixed-pitch instrument or computer aid more than once in the singing of exercises will receive no credit.
  - No other aids should be used while making the recording you are submitting.
- At any time, I may request that a student re-sing a melody outside of class and any significant disparity in performance will be perused as cheating.
- All recordings need to be submitted before class time on the due date.
- Recordings are due on Tuesdays (every other week) unless otherwise noted.

- Any change of due date will be mentioned in class the class day before recordings are due.
- Recordings can be in any standard format (MP3 preferred but not required)
- Record all prepared items for the week in individual files
- File names should include your name and the example number
  - LastName\_Firstname-ExampleNumber
    - For example: Jarvis\_Brian-16.1
- Submission process
  - Record your examples
  - Save them to your computer, online storage (Dropbox, OneDrive, etc.), or a flash drive so that you have a backup.
  - Submit them online via Blackboard (see handout “PreparedSingingSubmissionInstructions” if you need help)
- Grading guidelines for recorded homework singing:

Excellent (95% correct pitches, rhythms, and solfege)	100%
Good with a few glitches that don't impair “flow” (90% correct pitches, rhythms, and solfege)	90%
Errors impair flow but student fixes (85% correct pitches, rhythms, and solfege)	80%
Many errors to flow/solfege (75% correct pitches, rhythms, and solfege) <b>NOTE:</b> This is the highest score possible for a student who doesn't use solfege or sings solfege in the wrong key	70%
Generally poor, but tune still recognizable (65% correct pitches, rhythms, and solfege)	50%
Tune no longer recognizable, but some pitches, rhythms, and solfege are still correct	30%
Submitted, but no pitches, rhythms, or solfege are correct	10%

## No late homework

Late homework is **NOT** accepted. Unless you have made prior arrangements with the instructor, any missed homework, quizzes, and exams will receive a grade of a zero. Exceptions can be made in the case of a genuine emergency or significant illness if written documentation (e.g., a note from a health care provider, an accident report, etc.) is shown to the instructor within one week of the due date. See the instructor if you are unsure about whether your absence will be counted as excused or unexcused.

## Dropped grades

Your lowest In-Class Quiz grade and lowest Contextual Listening grade will be dropped when calculating your final overall average. Exam grades, however, will **NOT** be dropped.

## Attendance policy

- Plan to attend every class and to show up on time.
- Two unexcused absences are allowed.
  - Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a **3% DEDUCTION FROM THE FINAL GRADE.**

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These

absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. This does not mean that any note from a medical professional will excuse students from absences. Notes from medical providers should state that the student was unable, in their professional opinion, to be in class on the day or days in question. Voluntary appointments like teeth cleanings or physicals will not be excused. In accordance with the university policy the authority for deciding whether the student is excused for medical reasons rests with the instructor. Please feel free to check with the instructor if you are unsure whether or not an excuse counts as excused.

## Being prepared for class

In order to be prepared for class, you need to do following:

- Arrive before the scheduled start of class
- Stay for the duration of the class
- Not use cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class (see policy below)
- Complete the Proficiency Quizzes before the due date and at the required level
- Complete the Online Skills Quizzes before the due date and at the required level
- Not distract others or the classroom environment in the opinion of the instructor
- Bring the required materials to each class (see Required Materials section above)

If any of the above requirements are not met, the student will be marked as being unprepared for class. The first three instances of being unprepared for class will be recorded by the instructor but do not impact your grade. Starting with the fourth instance and all instances after that, **1% WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM THE STUDENT'S FINAL GRADE** for each instance.

If you are late (tardy or not tardy) tell the instructor **AFTER** class so that you can be counted as present. The instructor takes attendance at the very beginning of class and will not be updating attendance with late arrivals. This is done to ensure that class time is maximized for course content.

## Cell phones or other electronic devices

There is no need for students to use electronic devices during class. Audio recording, video recording, and photography are not allowed without prior authorization from the instructor. Before the scheduled start of class, students are expected to silence their electronic devices and put away all cell phones, laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices inside a closed bag or purse where they are not audible or visible to you or anyone else. Smartwatches (e.g., Apple Watch) can be worn but not used other than to look at the time. Any student whose technology item is visible or used during class will be marked as unprepared for class. See the section on being prepared for class to learn how this impacts your grade.

The instructor will not inform students if they violate the electronic device policy during class, and will instead discretely mark offending students as unprepared for class without disrupting class. This syllabus serves as the official warning for such violations. This is done to ensure that class time is maximized for course content.

## Exam Dates

Barrier dictation exam:	March 29 <sup>th</sup> and March 31 <sup>st</sup> (in class)
Midterm sight-singing exam:	Week 9 (individual appointments)
Final dictation exam:	Thursday, May 5 <sup>th</sup> (in class)
Final sight-singing exam:	Finals week (individual appointments): 8:00 AM Section – May 12 <sup>th</sup> , 7am-9:45am 9:00 AM Section – May 10 <sup>th</sup> , 10am-12:45am

Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar and let the instructor know about conflicts within the first week of class. The university policy regarding final exams will be strictly adhered to.

## Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

Information about The University of Texas at El Paso's definitions and expectations regarding academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty can be found at <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>. In this course, all homework, quizzes, exams, and projects are to be completed on your own. Actual or attempted cheating, plagiarism, and collusion will not be tolerated. Suspected violations will go directly to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for consideration.

## Accommodations and Support Services:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Center for Accommodations and Support Services and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to UTEP students with disabilities, see the following website <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/studentsresources/>.

## Syllabus Change Policy

The information on this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and/or via email.