

Music Fundamentals I

Syllabus - MUST 1311

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The University of Texas at El Paso –Spring 2017

Course description

Music Fundamentals I serves to establish a foundation with essential topics in music theory and has a special emphasis on major keys/scales, simple meters, and triads. You will learn to read and write musical notation and you will learn to work with core musical materials like scales, intervals, chords, and rhythm & meter. You will also have an introduction to singing with solfege and the dictation of musical materials like simple rhythms, intervals, chord qualities, and scale degrees. When you complete this course, you will have a solid foundation with the necessities of music fundamentals. To continue with college-level studies of music, it is not sufficient to simply know the basics with this material. In order to be successful in pursuing a music degree here at UTEP, you need to be able to use the basic elements of music theory in a practical way. So, it is the focus of this course (and the next course, Music Fundamentals II) to make sure that you are fast, accurate, and consistent with the materials of music fundamentals.

We will cover the following topics:

- Pitch (note reading, key signatures, intervals, chords, and scales)
- Rhythm & Meter (simple & compound meters, rhythmic patterns, dots & ties, etc.)
- Notation (clefs, beaming, accidentals, key signatures, time signatures, stems, etc.)
- Musicianship (rhythmic dictation, rhythmic performance, aural identification of scale degrees, singing, chord quality, and intervals)

Unlike most of your music courses here at UTEP, this course is a “hybrid” course and much of it will be online. There will be almost no in-person lectures. In place of in-person lectures, you will be able to learn current concepts in one of three ways: (1) watching video lectures online with links that will be provided for you, (2) reading about them online with links that will be provided for you, and/or (3) through reading from one of the recommend (but not required) textbooks.

Useful information

Course website	The course website (Blackboard) has course documents, the daily schedule, quizzes, notation homework, printable staff paper, and helpful links.
Office hours:	Fox Fine Arts Center 431 11:30 – 12:30 PM on Monday and either Wednesday or Friday 10:00 – 11:00 AM on Tuesday and by appointment (just email me to set up a meeting).

Optional textbook recommendations

- Straus, *Elements of Music*, 3rd edition
- Duckworth, *A Creative Approach to Music Fundamentals*, 11th edition

Grading

- Your overall grade for the semester will be calculated as outlined below:
 - Daily, proficiency quizzes 20%
 - Notation Assignments 20%
 - Weekly Skills Quizzes 20%
 - Exams (3) (10%, 10%, 20%) 40%
(Exam 1 is worth 10%, Exam 2 is worth 10%, and Exam 3 is worth 20%)

- 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 many times throughout the semester. Please feel free to inquire about your current average at any time.
- In order to take Music Fundamentals II, you need to get at least a C in this course.

Proficiency Quizzes

Most of the work in this course will be done at an internet-connected computer. Each class day, you will complete a selection of quizzes. All quizzes are pass/fail. In order to pass the quiz, you need to complete it before the due date **and** it needs to be at or above the required minimum grade. As the semester goes by, you will take many of the same quizzes in order to keep all of the topics fresh. Before the due date, all quizzes can be taken as many times as necessary for you to pass them. For the quizzes within Blackboard, the computer will simply take the highest grade of the all the attempts you made. Proficiency quizzes are simply practice with the concepts we've already covered. They will help prepare you for the exams.

Notation Assignments

Every other week, there will be a notation assignment that is to be completed as homework. These assignments are on the Blackboard site and need to be printed out, completed in **pencil**, and a physical copy needs to be handed in at the start of class on the due date. They will be graded on correctness and legibility. Typically, these are graded pass/fail so the entire assignment needs to be correct to receive credit. After submitting the assignment at the start of the hour, it will be graded and given back to you in the same class period. If something is incorrect, it needs to be corrected before you leave class. If I consider an element to be illegible, it will be counted wrong. Notation needs to be correct and easily readable by other musicians.

Weekly Skills Quizzes

The new content for the week will be contained in “Weekly Skills Quizzes.” These are the same format as the proficiency quizzes but they will cover only material from the current week.

Final Exam (Exam 3)

The final exam is comprehensive, timed, and each portion must be passed in order to pass the course. The three portions are: (1) pitch, (2) rhythm & meter, and (3) notation. Each of these three portions must be passed with an 80% or higher in order to pass the course. For example, even if you scored a 100% on portions 1 and 2, scoring a 60% on portion 3 would mean you fail the course. Luckily, if you complete all of the daily quizzes with the required minimum grades, you will do really well in this course.

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.

Attendance policy

Because this is a hybrid course, we will have a reduced number of face-to-face class meetings so it is essential that you plan to attend each in-class day and to show up on time.

- One unexcused absence is allowed.
 - Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a **3% DEDUCTION FROM THE STUDENT’S 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 me if you are unsure whether or not an absence 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 (on in-class days)
- Stay for the duration of the class (or until I excuse you)
- Not use unapproved cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class (see policy below).
- Complete all proficiency quizzes before the due date and at the required level
- Not distract others or the classroom environment in the opinion of the instructor

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.

Exam Dates

Exam 1	Friday, February 24 th (Prospect 308)
Exam 2	Wednesday, March 29 th (Prospect 308)
Exam 3 (Final Exam)	Monday, May 8 th 10:00 am – 12:45 pm (Prospect 308)

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.

Cell phones or other electronic devices

There is no need for students to use unapproved 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 unapproved 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.

If you have a question about whether or not your technology item is approved for class, just ask and I'd be more than happy to consider your request.

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.