

# Music Fundamentals I

Syllabus - MUST 1311

Online-Only Course

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The University of Texas at El Paso –Spring 2018

## 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 will be entirely online. There will be 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

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

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### Required materials for the course

- Internet-connected, laptop or desktop computer
- Google's Chrome browser (free)
- Audio recording device (typically your phone)
- Access a document scanner (typically your phone)
- Headphones or earbuds

### Optional textbook recommendations

- Straus, *Elements of Music*, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.**
- **Each of the three portions of the final exam must be passed with an 70% or higher in order to pass the course. (See section on Final Exam below for details)**

### Daily, Proficiency Quizzes

Most of the work in this course will be done at an internet-connected computer. Each “class day,” you will complete an assortment of “quizzes.” There will be approximately 3-5 proficiency quizzes each day and occasionally there are exercises that need to be completed using Teoria.com. These quizzes are pass/fail. In order to pass the quiz, the grade needs to be at or above the required minimum grade. All quizzes are to be completed before midnight mountain time (MST). As the semester goes by, you will take many of the same quizzes but the required minimum may be higher. 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 all the attempts you made. These quizzes will prepare you for the weekly skills quizzes. Always work to reduce your dependency on notes or other aids. **Memorization is the goal.**

## Weekly Skills Quizzes

Every few weeks, comprehensive quizzes are given that cover all the concepts you worked on throughout the week and are to be taken **without using notes and without other aids**. These exams are the same format as the daily proficiency quizzes but they are much shorter and there are many more of them (between 5-7). The theory and musicianship portions will be completed online through Blackboard though some of the quizzes involve Teoria.com. There are minimum grades that must be met before each portion counts for credit.

## Notation Assignments

Every few weeks, there will be one notation assignment. These assignments are on Blackboard and need to be printed out, completed in pencil, scanned and the completed assignment needs to be uploaded to Blackboard by the due date. They will be graded on correctness and legibility. If I consider an element to be illegible, it will be counted as wrong. Notation needs to be correct and easily readable by *other* musicians. I reserve the right to reject an assignment completely and possibly ask for a redo. In this situation, the original is no longer worth credit and only the revision will count if submitted before the date I request via email.

## Notation Assignment Format

The notation assignments need to be in the following format:

- Scanned
- PDF
- One Document (don't upload multiple files)
- Black and White (or grayscale)
- High Visual Quality (if it's illegible it will not be worth credit)
- Submit via Blackboard (do not email them to me)

While you are permitted to use a regular scanner, most of you will prefer to use your phones to scan the assignments. I have made videos that will walk you through this process so that you can use a recent iPhone or Android phone. See the link on Blackboard titled "Notation Assignment Upload Instructions" to see those videos.

## Singing Assignments

UTEP has four semesters of Aural Skills courses and each one of them involves a large amount of singing which is done with solfege. There is only a small amount of singing in this course but it functions as an introduction to your later course work. Every few weeks, there is one, very short recorded singing assignment. You will need to record yourself singing the exercise and upload it to Blackboard. The first singing assignment will just be a test of this procedure to make sure you can find a way to record yourself and upload it. Most students prefer to just record themselves using their phone or laptop. Suggestions for recording and uploading can be found on Blackboard with each assignment.

**DO NOT RECORD WHILE PLAYING AN INSTRUMENT.** The recordings need to be *a capella* to receive credit. If you are new to singing with solfege, there are links to videos on Blackboard that will help you learn.

## Final Exam (Exam 3)

The final exam is comprehensive and each portion must be passed in order to pass the course. The final exam is to be taken **without using notes and without other aids**. The three portions are: (1) pitch, (2) rhythm & meter, and (3) notation. **Each of these three portions must be passed with a 70% 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 and take note of the feedback you receive on returned notation assignments, you will do really well in this course. Additionally, each ONLINE portion can be taken as many times as necessary for you to pass them. **The notation portion can only be submitted one time.**

## Due dates

There is course work due three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). All work is due at midnight. You can however, work ahead as much as you want. As mentioned above in the Attendance section below, you will need approximately 50 minutes of concentrated effort every day to be successful so give yourself plenty of time during the day to work. My personal recommendation is that you strive to complete your work before noon on the day it's due. It is likely that you will be more awake and alert during this part of the day (assuming you're on a regular sleep schedule, of course). It will also save you from the stress that an impending deadline will add to your day.

## 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

Though this is an online course, regular "attendance" is required to be successful. This course is the online equivalent of an in-person course that met for 50 minutes, 3 days a week, for 16 weeks. Expect that you will need to dedicate approximately that much time every class day (Monday, Wednesday, Friday). Your actual time commitment will depend on your current, personal skill level with this material. Keep in mind, a regular 50-minute class period is focused work time. It doesn't involve working while eating lunch, texting/phone calls/Facebook/Twitter, or unexpected disruptions by friends, family, or children. On the other hand, the online format has great advantages because it allows you to work at your own pace throughout the day and you can work in a location that you prefer. However, it also requires that you develop self-discipline to complete the substantial, daily work load.

## **Exam Dates**

Final Exam (online)      Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> (due before midnight)

## **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.