

# Music Fundamentals I

Syllabus - MUST 1311

Online-Only Course

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The University of Texas at El Paso –Summer I 2021

## 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. This is a skills-based course that is geared toward musicians. If you happen to not play an instrument, now is the time to start! This class is meant to coincide with learning to play a musical instrument, but it is not a course about playing instruments (you'll need to take private lessons for that). 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 basics 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, and this course is designed to get you there!

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 and asynchronous. There will be no in-person lectures nor required Zoom meetings. Many students enter music fundamentals with a wide variety of skills. Some are just starting, while others might have been playing an instrument for many years. So, this course takes an independent approach to learning about new material. If you feel you already know how to read treble and bass clef, then there's no need for you to learn about it again, but if you don't know then you can pursue the topic in the following 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 the recommend (but NOT required) textbook. I have compiled a list of at least 200 links to videos and readings on all of the topics in this course. Some are my own writings and videos, but most are not. Just because these are internet links, please don't assume that this list is the same thing as "googling" the topic. Music fundamentals topics are not always explained accurately, completely, or correctly, so I have already done extensive searching to compile resources that will present the information correctly. Please use this resource first before running to YouTube or Google. If you still struggle to understand a topic, just let me know by email and I'll be happy to help!

## Useful information

<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>	Contact by email. We can then schedule a virtual meeting via Zoom, please provide some availability options for me to facilitate finding a meeting time that works for both of us.

## Required materials for the course

- Internet-connected, Windows or Mac laptop or desktop computer
- Google's Chrome browser (free)
- Audio recording device (typically your laptop but phones work well too)
- Access to a document scanner (can be your phone)
- Headphones or earbuds

## Optional textbook recommendation (not required)

- 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 (final exam) 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 weekly 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 8-10 quizzes each day and occasionally there are exercises that need to be completed using Teoria.com. Quizzes labeled “Weekly Quiz” represent quizzes on topics that are relatively recent or new, and quizzes labeled “Proficiency Quiz” cover older topics and are geared toward maintaining or improving those skills. These quizzes are pass/fail. To pass the quiz, your grade needs to be at or above the required minimum grade. All quizzes are to be completed before 11pm 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 exams. Always work to reduce your dependency on notes or other aids. **Memorization is the goal.**

## Exam 1 & Exam 2

There two exams before the final exam. These involve a comprehensive selection of quizzes 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 & weekly quizzes but they are **much shorter** and there are many more of them (around 20). 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. Again, **all quizzes can be taken as many times as necessary for you to pass them.**

## Notation Assignments

Throughout the semester there are written notation assignments. These assignments are on Blackboard and I expect that you’ll need to print them out, completed them in pencil, scan it into your computer, and then the completed assignment needs to be uploaded to Blackboard before the due date. However, if you prefer to complete the assignment using a tablet (like a Microsoft Surface or iPad with an Apple pencil), that’s okay, too, but I can’t offer much guidance about that process so you’ll need to figure that out on your own. Assignments 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)

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 encouraged 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 an 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 so often, 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 so be very careful!**

## Due dates

There is course work due every day (Monday-Friday). All work is due before 11pm. You can however, work ahead as much as you want. As mentioned above in the Attendance section, you will need approximately 2 hours and 10 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. Email 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 2 hours and 10 minutes, 5 days a week, for 4 weeks. Expect that you will need to dedicate approximately that much time every class day (Monday-Friday). Your actual time commitment will depend on your current, personal skill level with this material. If you have a strong background in music fundamentals and you're a fast learner, then you will probably need less time, however, if you're brand new to music fundamentals and the topics are not clicking quickly, you will very likely need more time because you have essentially fallen behind. Keep in mind, the 2 hour and 10 minute class period was focused work time. It didn'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

Exam 1 (online)	Week 2, Tuesday
Exam 2 (online)	Week 3, Wednesday
Final Exam (online)	Monday, Finals Day (July 5th) (due before 11pm) (You can complete the exam as soon as it is available)

## 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 <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/student-conduct/academic-integrity.html>. In this course, all homework, quizzes, and exams are to be completed on your own. That means you should not discuss answers with anyone besides me, Dr. Jarvis. Do not work on notation assignments together. When working with tutors, you cannot work on answers to assignments or quizzes that count towards your grade. You are allowed and encouraged to work on anything from the "Practice Area" on blackboard with other people. You can practice concepts together when using non-assignment and non-quiz material. 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.

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

## Syllabus Change Policy

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