

Music 200—Introduction to Music Theory

Fall 2015—West Los Angeles College

Instructor

Eric J. Wang, Ph.D.
ejwang@ucla.edu
Office: Fine Arts Building, Room 102
Availability: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30–10:00am

Class Meetings

Fine Arts Building, Room 203
Theory
Mondays & Wednesdays 8:00–9:25am
Musicianship
Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:00–9:25am

Required Course Texts and Materials

- Richard N. Kahn, *Fundamentals of Music: A Modern Approach* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 2011).
 - Available at the bookstore on the first floor of the Student Services Building.
- Edgar Crowe, Annie Lawton, and William Gillies Whittaker, eds., *The Folk Song Sight Singing Series*, vols. 1–4 (London: Oxford University Press, 1933–34).
 - I will provide you with a copy of these texts in class.
- Pencils with erasers and blank staff/manuscript paper.
 - Bring these, along with your textbook and sight singing music, to every class session.

Course Description

This course explores the elements of music and how musicians use them to create compositions. The topics covered during the semester will include musical notation, basic rhythms, scales, keys, sight singing, ear training, and an introduction to the keyboard.

Course Objectives

- Write and identify all major and minor scales and key signatures.
- Construct any interval up to an octave above and below a given note.
- Visually identify all intervals up to an octave.
- Write and identify any triad in root position and inversion.
- Identify simple and compound meters.
- Identify cadence types, including perfect authentic, imperfect authentic, half, plagal, and deceptive cadences.
- Sight read/sing in movable “do” and take dictation of simple melodies.
- Clap and take dictation of simple, compound, and syncopated rhythms.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have a beginning understanding of the language of music, including the major and minor scales in all sharps and flats; the circle of fifths; and tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords in all major and minor keys. Students will also be able to formulate common and complex rhythmic patterns, with written values of notes and rests, sight sing simple melodies, and take dictation of simple melodies, harmonies, and rhythms.

Divisional Learning Outcomes

- Secure technique.
- Practice and develop creative routine.
- Learn self-assessment for personal fulfillment and growth.

West Los Angeles College (WLAC) Learning Outcomes

- Communication: Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family, and community settings.
- Quantitative Reasoning: Identify, analyze, and solve problems that are quantitative in nature.
- Technical Competence: Utilize the appropriate technology effectively for informational, academic, personal, and professional needs. Use competent technique in a musical performance.

Grading

Your final grade will comprise the following components, each out of 100 points:

1) Two "Midterm" Theory Exams (Exams nos. 1 and 2)	30% (15% each)
2) Final Theory Exam (Exam no. 3)	15%
3) Two Musicianship Quizzes	20% (10% each)
4) Homework Assignments	20%
5) Participation and Professionalism	15%

At the end of the term, I will use the following percentage breakdowns to assign letter grades. I will not give any incompletes.

A: 90–100% B: 80–89% C: 70–79% D: 60–69% F: 59% and below

It is your responsibility to keep track of all important dates. Make-up exams and quizzes will be granted only at my discretion, and you must provide written proof (e.g. doctor's note, police report, etc.) of a significant emergency that prevented you from coming to class.

All homework assignments are due at the beginning of class (8:00am). Assignments received after this time will be subject to a penalty of 10 points per day late.

I reserve the right to administer pop quizzes and/or assign additional written homework, at my discretion, if I feel that students are not coming to class prepared.

Theory Exams

There will be three exams—two "midterm" and one final—each covering one third of the course's music theory component (i.e., material from the Monday and Wednesday class sessions). The final exam is *not* cumulative, but may require you to draw on concepts we have covered throughout the semester. You will be responsible for only the material covered in class and in the textbook.

Musicianship Quizzes

There will be two quizzes, each covering half of the course's musicianship component (i.e., material from the Tuesday and Thursday class sessions). You will be asked to identify such musical elements as major and minor scales, intervals, and triads; take dictation of simple melodies, harmonic patterns, and rhythms; and sight sing simple melodies in class. You will be responsible for only the material covered in class and in your course texts.

I will help you develop sight singing, dictation, and ear training skills through in-class exercises (see Participation and Professionalism below). But keep in mind that these skills are difficult to master, especially in the short span of 15 weeks, and will require you to practice outside the classroom every day on your own time.

Week 3

- Monday (September 14) & Wednesday (September 16)—Rhythm and Duration: Beats and Accents, Notes and Rests, Dots and Slurs, Rests and Time Signatures
 - Textbook: Chapter 1 “Notating Rhythm”
- Tuesday (September 15) & Thursday (September 17)—Listening to Rhythmic Patterns; Clapping Exercises; Begin Dictation of Simple Rhythms

Week 4

- Monday (September 21) & Wednesday (September 23)—Qualities of Motion: Tempo; Simple, Compound, and Unequal Meters
 - Textbook: review Chapter 1
- Tuesday (September 22) & Thursday (September 24)—Continue with Dictation of Rhythms; Begin Sight Singing Simple Melodies on “La”

Week 5

- Monday (September 28) & Wednesday (September 30)—Major Scales and Key Signatures; Circle of Fifths; Transposition; Introduction to Solfège
 - Textbook: Chapter 5 “Major Scales and Key Centers”; Preface, especially the section “Solfeggio, Movable ‘Do,’ and the Numerics of Music”
- Tuesday (September 29) & Thursday (October 1)—Continue with Sight Singing Simple Melodies on “La”

Week 6

- Monday (October 5)—**Theory Exam no. 1**
- Wednesday (October 7)—Names of the Scale Degrees
 - Textbook: review Chapter 5
- Tuesday (October 6) & Thursday (October 8)—Begin Sight Singing Simple Melodies Using Solfège Syllables in Movable “Do”

Week 7

- Monday (October 12) & Wednesday (October 14)—Intervals: Unisons and Octaves, Major, Minor, Perfect, Diminished, and Augmented
 - Textbook: Chapter 7 “Intervals”
- Tuesday (October 13)—Review for Musicianship Quiz no. 1
- Thursday (October 15)—**Musicianship Quiz no. 1**

Week 8

- Monday (October 19) & Wednesday (October 21)—Intervals (continued)
 - Textbook: review Chapter 7
- Tuesday (October 20) & Thursday (October 22)—Listening to Intervals; Ear Training Exercises to Identify Intervals

Week 9

- Monday (October 26) & Wednesday (October 28)—Building Triads: Major, Minor, Diminished, and Augmented
 - Textbook: Chapter 8 “Triads”
- Tuesday (October 27) & Thursday (October 29)—Listening to Triads; Continue with Sight Singing and Dictation of Melodies and Rhythms

Week 10

- Monday (November 2) & Wednesday (November 4)—Building Triads (continued)
 - Textbook: review Chapter 8
- Tuesday (November 3) & Thursday (November 5)—Continue with Listening to Triads, Sight Singing, and Dictation of Melodies and Rhythms

Week 11

- Monday (November 9)—**Theory Exam no. 2**
- Wednesday (November 11)—**NO CLASS: Veterans Day**
- Tuesday (November 10) & Thursday (November 12)—Continue with Sight Singing and Dictation of Melodies and Rhythms

Week 12

- Monday (November 16) & Wednesday (November 18)—Applying Triads: Tonic, Subdominant, Dominant; Cadences; Inversions
 - Textbook: review Chapter 8
- Tuesday (November 17) & Thursday (November 19)—Listening to Cadences; Begin Dictation of Simple Harmonic Progressions

Week 13

- Monday (November 23)—Minor Scales and Key Signatures; Relative vs. Parallel Keys
 - Textbook: Chapter 9 “Minor Scales and Key Centers”
- Tuesday (November 24)—Continue with Listening to Cadences and Dictation of Simple Harmonic Progressions
- Wednesday (November 25)—**NO CLASS: Enjoy your holiday!**
- Thursday (November 26)—**NO CLASS: Thanksgiving**

Week 14

- Monday (November 30) & Wednesday (December 2)—Minor Scales and Key Signatures (continued): Natural, Harmonic, and Melodic
 - Textbook: review Chapter 9
- Tuesday (December 1) & Thursday (December 3)—Continue with Sight Singing and Dictation of Melodies, Rhythms, and Harmonies

Week 15

- Monday (December 7) & Wednesday (December 9)—Dominant Seventh Chords; Review for Final Exam
 - Textbook: Chapter 10 “Seventh Chords”
- Tuesday (December 8)—Review for Musicianship Quiz no. 2
- Thursday (December 10)—**Musicianship Quiz no. 2**

Week 16 (Finals Week)

- Wednesday (December 16)—**Final Exam/Theory Exam no. 3 (8:00–10:00am)**

Homework Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will have regular homework assignments in the form of worksheets taken from your textbook. I will announce due dates *in class*. You must submit *original copies only*; photocopies of the worksheets will not be accepted.

Participation and Professionalism

The best way to learn music is not only through study but application (“doing”). It is very important that you are an active participant in this course. In addition to the usual lectures, we will engage with music through various “hands-on” activities, such as sight singing, rhythmic exercises, dictation, and other in-class assignments.

Naturally, this starts with your attendance; simply put, you cannot master the course material if you are not present to learn about it. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate and complete homework assignments on time. I adhere strictly to the attendance policies set forth in Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Administrative Regulation E-13, and *reserve the right to exclude* any student who has not been coming to class.

I expect students to display a professional attitude at all times. Remember that leaving early or arriving late is considered both unprofessional and an absence. Please be courteous towards your classmates and instructor. Do not carry on private conversations while someone else is speaking, read newspapers, take a nap, surf the internet, send text messages, eat smelly or crunchy foods, etc. You will be asked to leave if your behavior is disruptive and this will negatively affect your grade.

Most important, come to class ready to share your thoughts, opinions, criticisms, and reactions! Do not be afraid to ask questions if you are unsure about anything. The classroom is a safe zone.

Other Class Administrative Policies

- Cellular phones, computers, and other electronic devices: All phones, texting devices, and electronics must be *silenced or turned off and put away* while you are in class. You are welcome, however, to use a laptop or tablet computer *for note-taking purposes only*. I reserve the right to restrict use of all electronic devices if I feel that students are abusing this policy.
- E-mail etiquette: In our age of seemingly limitless technology, it is all too easy to write an e-mail as if it were a glorified text message. Please treat your communications with me as seriously as you would writing a letter to a parent, teacher, or any other authority figure. In other words, be sure to use complete sentences, appropriate language, and proper punctuation. Also, do not forget to sign your messages with your name; I cannot tell who you are from only a username or e-mail address. I will do my best to respond to you within 24 hours. But remember that, like you, I need to sleep, so please do not bombard me with last-minute messages before assignment due dates and exams.

Disability Statement

If you are a student with a disability who requires special classroom accommodations, please contact Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) as soon as possible. DSPS is located in the Student Services Building, Room 320. They can also be reached by phone: (310) 287-4450 or e-mail: dsp@wlaac.edu. All information remains confidential. For more information, see the

DSPS website: <http://www.wlac.edu/dsps/index.aspx>. It is also important that you speak to me as soon as possible in order to ensure that I make the proper provisions.

Financial Aid

If you need financial assistance for books and other college expenses, please contact the Financial Aid Office. They are located in the Student Services Building, Room 210. The office can also be reached by phone: (310) 287-4532. For more information, see their website: <http://www.wlac.edu/financial-aid/index.aspx>. You may also text “WLAC” to (310) 740-7906 to get your number in line for the Admissions, Financial Aid, or Business Offices.

Academic Honesty

Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating (failure to observe the rules of an academic exercise, such as looking at your neighbor’s paper during a test); multiple submissions (submitting the same assignment for different classes); and plagiarism (taking someone else’s words or ideas and passing them off as your own). If you use someone else’s work as a reference, you must cite the original author properly.

Anyone found committing an act of academic dishonesty will: 1) receive an Incomplete on the assignment in question; and 2) be referred to the Vice President of the Academic Senate for further disciplinary action, following due process. For more information, see the documents “Academic Integrity” and “Plagiarism” at the WLAC Academic Senate website: <http://www.wlac.edu/committees/academic-senate/Index.aspx>.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change, at my discretion.

Class Schedule

Note: Please read the assigned chapter from your textbook *before* each class session.

Week 1

- Monday (August 31) & Wednesday (September 2)—Syllabus and Class Policies; Introduction to Music Notation: Staves, Clefs, and Notes/Pitches; Qualities of Sound: Dynamics and Timbre
 - Textbook: Chapter 2 “Notating Pitch”; Appendix B “Music Performance Terms”
- Tuesday (September 1) & Thursday (September 3)—Skills Assessment; Introduction to Ear Training: Things to Listen For

Week 2

- Monday (September 7)—**NO CLASS**: Labor Day
- Wednesday (September 9)—Introduction to the Keyboard: Piano Basics; Half Steps vs. Whole Steps; Sharps, Flats, and Naturals; Chromatic vs. Enharmonic
 - Textbook: Chapter 3 “The Keyboard”
- Tuesday (September 8) & Thursday (September 10)—Preparation for Dictation: Listening to, Remembering, and Singing Back Simple Melodies