

**Ball State University College of Fine Arts/School of Music/Music Theory**

**MUST 722 – Course Syllabus**

**Seminar in the Principles of Music Theory**

**Meeting time: T & TH, 11:00–12:15, Room MU 103**

Instructor: Dr. Brett Clement

Phone: (513) 227-8478 (better to use email)

Office: MU 105B

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Office Hours: (by appointment)

**Required text**

Michael Rogers, *Teaching Approaches in Music Theory: An Overview of Pedagogical Philosophies*, second edition. Other assigned readings will be posted on Canvas.

**Course description**

Discursive study of theoretical principles from a historical and pedagogical point of view. Includes readings, research, writing, contemporary materials, and their applications in program organization, implementation, and administration.

**Objectives**

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the field of American music theory, focusing on pedagogy and research. We will discuss pedagogical strategies and materials for undergraduate music theory instruction, and apply these in classroom teaching. Additionally, this course provides an introduction to some of the topics that are the subject of contemporary research and publication in the field of music theory.

**Structure and Requirements**

This is a **seminar** course (not a lecture course). Therefore, it is essential that all students complete tasks on schedule and arrive to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. Students are required to attend each session, to participate fully in discussions, and to lead discussions on select topics (as per the instructor's advance instructions).

Pedagogy readings and tasks will be assigned for most sessions. Although some classes may be organized differently, for many sessions the format will be as follows. All texts should be read by all students; occasionally, specific tasks will be assigned to one or more students. These students will be the primary presenters of that particular text/topic.

The pedagogy aspect of this course will also require in-class teaching that will be assigned to individual students. This teaching will be constructively critiqued by the instructor and by the entire class.

Students are expected to mount a research project into a topic of contemporary music theory. Some current areas of study are listed on the syllabus. Students should be prepared to report on their current reading at various times in the semester. These reports should be in a "show-and-

## Ball State University College of Fine Arts/School of Music/Music Theory

### MUST 722 – Course Syllabus

tell” format. Students should keep a running bibliography of their readings, and take detailed notes on any aspects of the readings that may later prove useful for a final paper. The amount of reading done by each student over the course of the semester should be roughly equivalent to *eight* articles (books being equal to four or five articles). This final paper (6–10 double-spaced pages) should deal with a contemporary music theory topic (a theorist, a theory, a philosophical concept, etc.). The paper’s focus should be narrow enough that you are able to distill down the topic to a well-defined thesis. Though the paper should *not* be primarily analytical, you are welcome to include one or more sample analyses to illustrate your topic.

Some past paper topics include:

1. A summary of articles dealing with Neo-Riemannian theory.
2. A summary of theory articles on pop-rock music.
3. A comparison of books that discuss the form of the first movement of a concerto.
4. Incorporating pop-rock music into the theory classroom.
5. The theories of Dmitri Tymoczko, with an emphasis on his book *The Geometry of Music*.
6. The “sonata theory” of James Hepokofski and Warren Darcy.
7. The theories of Lawrence Zbikowski. The theories of Lori Burns. etc.
8. Topic theory/semiotics as discussed by Kofi Agawu and Robert Hatten.
9. Theories of rhythm and meter, with an emphasis on discussions of metrical dissonance.
10. Music perception articles dealing with rhythm and meter.

### Grading

Attendance, class participation, etc.: 40% (I will give you a weekly evaluation out of 10 points)

Teaching demonstrations: 30%

Final presentation and paper: 30%

Each unexcused absence from a session will result in a penalty of one grade increment.

### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism will result in a zero grade for that assignment. Continued instances of plagiarism may result in failure of the course.

### University Statement

*We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.*

### Disability Statement

*If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's **Disability Services** office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or [dsd@bsu.edu](mailto:dsd@bsu.edu).*

MUST 722 – Course Syllabus

A Sample of Topics in Music Theory

**Transformational theory**

A branch of theory that focuses on the “transformations” that connect musical objects.

Primary theorist(s): David Lewin (*Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations*, 1987); Joseph Straus, Henry Klumpenhouwer

**Neo-Riemannian theory**

An offshoot of transformational theory that focuses on the connections between harmonies.

Primary theorist(s): David Lewin, Bryan Hyer, Richard Cohn (*Audacious Euphony*). (see *Journal of Music Theory* 42/2, 1998); also see *Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories*

**Other theories related to transformational theory**

Geometrical music theory: see Dmitri Tymoczko (*A Geometry of Music* and related articles)

Tonal transformational theory: see Steven Rings (*Tonality and Transformation*)

Julian Hook (*Exploring Musical Spaces*)

**Rhythm/Meter**

Theorists: William Rothstein (*Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*); Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff (*A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*); Carl Schachter (Rhythm and Linear Analysis); Maury Yeston, Harald Krebs, and Richard Cohn (rhythmic/metrical dissonance); Christopher Hasty; Justin London (*The Time of Music*); Danuka Mirka (*Metric Manipulations in Haydn and Mozart*)

**Form**

Theorists: William Rothstein (*Phrase Rhythm . . .*); William Caplin (*Classical Form*); James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (*Elements of Sonata Theory*); Janet Schmalfeldt (*In the Process of Becoming*), Yoel Greenberg (*Why Sonata Forms*)

**Musical Semiotics**

A branch of theory dealing with the study of musical “signs.” Offshoots include “topic theory,” gesture, metaphors, and narrative.

Major theorists: Robert Hatten (*Musical Meaning in Beethoven*), Kofi Agawu (*Playing with Signs*), Wye Allanbrook, Raymond Monelle, Philip Tagg, (topics, gesture, meaning); Michael Klein, Byron Almén (narrative); Lawrence Zbikowski (metaphor)

**History of music theory**

Authors: Thomas Christensen (see *Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, articles); Joel Lester (*Compositional Theory in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*); Nicolas Cook; Ian Bent; Robert Gjerdingen (*Music in the Galant Style*); Megan Kaes Long (*Hearing Homophony: Tonal Expectation at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century*)

**MUST 722 – Course Syllabus**

**Schemata Theory/Partimenti:**

Robert Gjerdingen (*Music in the Galant Style*); Giorgio Sanguinetti (*The Art of Partimento*); Vasili Byros (various articles)

**Music Perception and Cognition**

Authors: Leonard Meyer; David Temperley; Carol Krumhansl; Justin London; David Huron

**Music Outside the Classical Canon:**

**Popular Music:** Walter Everett (*The Foundations of Rock*); Allan F. Moore (*Rock: The Primary Text*); Lori Burns; Ken Stephenson; Nicole Biamonte; John Covach; Mark Spicer; David Temperley; Kevin-Holm Hudson; Drew Nobile, Victoria Malawey

**Film Music:** Frank Lehman, Scott Murphy

**Gospel:** Braxton Shelley

**Jazz:** Henry Martin

**Hip-Hop:** Mitch Ohriner

**Names of some music theory journals:**

Journal of Music Theory, Music Theory Spectrum, Perspectives of New Music, Music Analysis, Music Theory Online, In Theory Only, Indiana Theory Review, Theory and Practice, Integral

**Locating Research Materials**

Although many sources will be found in the BSU music library, it is highly likely that you will need to make use of other resources to complete your research. The following resources are highly recommended. These can all be found within the music library website ([bsu.edu/libraries](http://bsu.edu/libraries)). Under “research,” select “databases,” then select “music.”

1. JSTOR: contains links to many articles (make sure you do an “advanced search,” narrow the options to “music,” and type in the name of theorist or topic).
2. RILM Abstracts of Music Literature: will allow you to do a broader search of a particular topic or author. If the book/article is available in the library, it will tell you so.
3. Dissertations and Theses: links to dissertations.
4. Interlibrary loan (ILL): If a book or article is not available on JSTOR or at the library, you may link to interlibrary loan through RILM. They will send you the book(s) from a nearby university and/or will send you pdfs of articles. Just make sure you type in the requested information. This is an excellent resource that you will almost certainly need to use.

**Ball State University College of Fine Arts/School of Music/Music Theory**

**MUST 722 – Course Syllabus**

**Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change)**

Week 1 (Jan 5)	Introduction; Overview of the field; Curriculum Readings: Berry (2012); Rogers (Ch. 1, 2); West Marvin (2012)
Week 2 (Jan 12)	Theory fundamentals; Textbook comparison Readings: Rogers (fundamentals: pgs. 33–43)
Week 3 (Jan 19)	Fundamentals teaching
Week 4 (Jan 26)	Solfege systems Reading: Smith (1991); Houlahan/Tacka (1992); Hoffman/Pelto/White (1996)
Week 5 (Feb 2)	Sightsinging textbook comparison; Reading: Rogers (Ch. 4, pgs. 124–38); Karpinski (1988, 1989); Marvin (2008)
Week 6 (Feb 9)	Ear training Reading: Rogers (Ch. 4); Karpinski (1990); Lake (1993);
Week 7 (Feb 16)	Aural skills teaching
Week 8 (Feb 23)	Aural skills teaching, etc.
March 2-6 (Spring break)	FINAL PAPER TOPIC DUE
Week 9 (Mar 9)	Research reports and grading issues  Tonal harmony and form; Textbook comparison Reading: Traut (2006); Rogers (Ch. 3)
Week 10 (Mar 16)	CAI (computer assisted instruction)
Week 11 (Mar 23)	Tonal harmony and form; Textbook comparison Reading: Traut (2006); Rogers (Ch. 3)
Week 12 (March 30)	Species counterpoint and the linear approach
Week 13 (Apr 6)	Analysis
Week 14 (Apr 13)	Theory teaching demonstrations
Week 15 (Apr 20)	Theory teaching
<b>Final presentations: Week 16, Tuesday 9:45–11:45 (Papers due Friday)</b>	

MUST 722 – Course Syllabus

Bibliography

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