Mus 339, Beginning Composition

Course Syllabus
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Office hours: by appointment

Mus 339, Beginning Composition

Pre- or Co-requisite: Mus 323

Course Description
Individual projects in composition are discussed and critique is given in this class. Enrollment limited to eight. May be repeated once.

Required:
Class participation and composing with sound (written scores or electronic/recorded works) are required. Student works are reviewed weekly, critique is given, and students participate in discussion, analysis and trouble-shooting. The course introduces diverse creative ideas, practical approaches to generate and expand ideas, notation concepts, traditional and invented structures, tonal and atonal writing, basic instrumentation, a multiplicity of style, exploring instruments, composing for voice, how to hear and analyze parameters of concrete/electronic/other recorded/interactive music. Students begin with melody writing, exercises using pitch patterns manipulation and exploring rhythm, expanding materials with variation techniques, designing degrees of contrast within all parameters is a work. Classes include a survey of styles, notation, genres, ideas and aesthetics using examples of works of various composers including Debussy, Dallapiccola, Crumb, Schiarrino, Saariaho, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Webern, Lutoslawski, Bartok, Berio, Britten, Takemitsu, Messiaen, Stephen Stuart-Smith, Andriessen, Lachenmann, Grisey, Scelsi, Stockhausen, Cage, Ligeti, Carter, Gubaidulina and others; popular music including Codex, Viridian, Radau, Whitacre, Aphex Twin, Freezepop, Plushgun, Porcupine Tree, Cabaret Voltaire and others.

Learning Outcomes:
Students completing this course should be able to demonstrate the following through their writing and discussion:

• Show that they can notate pitches and rhythms correctly and use chosen musical parameters with awareness and control
• Show an improved ability to analyze and critique their own creative work
• Progressed in writing practice, completed a composition or began a new composition
• Have acquired enough practical writing ability, technique and developed the inventiveness to search for creative solutions when they are composing or “stuck” during the composing process
• Demonstrate through their composition they made progress in developing an individual creative voice
• Demonstrate the ability to observe, think critically/analytically and be able to recognize and discuss the ingredients and structure in their own work and that of other composers
• Demonstrate their listening skills by writing well-observed and cogent interpretations
• Show that they have improved their awareness, inner ear and self-feedback in making convincing choices when they write
• Discuss various schools of thought and styles that developed in the twentieth century composition and give examples of representative composers in those styles

**Grading policy:**
A final grade will be based on the following:
• consistent weekly progress in their composition work
• participation in discussion of their music and that of other composers
• developing a listening list to share and discuss in class
• complete the writing practice, complete a composition or begin a new composition
• give a brief class presentation on 1-3 styles/musical languages which have influences their musical ideas or that particularly interest them

**Attendance and lateness policy**
All students are expected attend each class session to hear lectures, live performances and engage in discussions. Absence or lateness result in missed information that is vital to progress and success in this course.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**
If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room 128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students requiring emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information, go to the following web site.
http://www.ehs.sunysb.edu/fire/disabilities/asp

**Critical Incident Management:**
Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs for any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students’ ability to learn.

**Academic Integrity Statement:**
Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instance of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/policies.html

Plagiarism and cheating: Any form of plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade. University’s statement on academic dishonesty: “Plagiarism is the use of others’ words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source. When you incorporate those words and ideas into your own work, it is important that you give credit where it is due and use footnotes and citations. Intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. To avoid plagiarism, you must give the original author credit whenever you use another person’s ideas, opinions, drawings, or theories as well as any facts or any other pieces of information that are not common knowledge. Also, quotations of another person’s actual
spoken or written words; or a close paraphrasing of another person’s spoken or written words must also be referenced. Accurately citing all sources and putting direct quotations (of even a few key words) in quotation marks are required.

**Grades**: "A": work is superior; dramatically surpasses minimum requirements; "B" work is good; exceeds minimum requirements; "C" work is satisfactory; meets minimum requirements; "D" is poor; does not meet minimum requirement.