

# Music Theory I Course Syllabus 2009-2010

Greenville Fine Arts Center

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**Class Time: 10:10-11:05 AM**

## Required Textbook

Each student maintains a loose-leaf notebook of materials written and compiled specifically for this course by Dr. Grier. These include charts, examples, and worksheets. They are used in class every day, and are provided free of charge. The book will increase in size through the year as tests, quizzes, and other assignments are added (all are 3-hole punched for easy insertion).

## Course Description

**Oral skills:** Sight-singing is taught using solfege, movable "do" system. Melodies, very simple at first, are sung in class as a group and as solos; ancillary drills emphasizing specific problems in sight-singing (larger intervals, difficult rhythms, etc.) as also used.

**Aural skills:** Melodic dictation is begun using very simple 5-7 note fragments; these are notated without rhythm. Gradually, the fragments are lengthened and rhythm added. Later in the course, triads (major, minor, augmented, diminished) are introduced for identification by ear. These skills are reinforced by the singing of the same items.

**Analytical skills:** Basics of musical analysis are presented in lecture-demo format, with vocabulary introduced as necessary to the discussion. Illustration is provided on the piano and with recordings. Worksheets of practice problems dealing with current topics are assigned almost daily; these are discussed the next day in class. Whenever possible, singing is used to reinforce the concepts.

**Objectives** At the conclusion of this course, the student will:

- understand basic terminology relating to music theory;
- know major and minor scales and key signatures;
- demonstrate a knowledge of intervals and triads;
- demonstrate aural skills which include recognition of scales, intervals, triads, simple rhythms and melodies;
- sight-sing simple diatonic melodies;
- demonstrate a basic analytical understanding of diatonic 4-part writing
- identify the hallmarks of Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th century styles

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### Course Requirements

#### A. Attendance and Tardy Policy

**\*REFER TO FINE ARTS CENTER HANDBOOK\***

#### B. Classroom Rules and Expectations

- Students should be seated and ready for sight-singing drills at the scheduled beginning of class.
- All students will bring a pencil (NOT pen) and the theory notebook to class every day. Any worksheets assigned for homework will be finished and placed in their proper places in the notebook.
- As with any arts class emphasizing skill acquisition, regular attendance is vital. If you are absent, it is expected that you will ask for the make-up work.
- The instructor is available on *most* days for extra help from 8:45-9:15 and 11:05-11:30. It is expected that any student requiring extra help will ask for it. Appointments are recommended whenever possible.
- Mature behavior, respectful of colleagues and instructors, is expected at all times.

#### C. Supplies Necessary for Course

A 3-ring binder at least 1" thick. No other supplies are necessary, though access to a keyboard instrument is vital. The purchase of computer ear-training software is suggested.

### Assessment Information and Grading Scale

Student performance is graded using the mandated South Carolina state grading scale. Specifics of student evaluation:

**Oral skills:** Solo singing quizzes covering a previously announced selection of melodies; rhythm performance quizzes covering previously announced rhythm exercises.

**Aural skills:** Dictation quizzes similar in difficulty and identical in format to drills used in class, covering melody, intervals, triads, and rhythms.

**Analytical skills:** Generally 1 page quizzes identical in format to the worksheets.

### Major Assignments and Projects Required

A major (2-day) 9-weeks exam and midterm exam are given, and a comprehensive and cumulative final exam is given.

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### Plan for Routine Communication With Parents

- quarterly Fine Arts Center Newsletter is mailed to all parents of FAC students.
- parents are contacted promptly in the event of academic or disciplinary problems.
- a log of parent phone calls is maintained in teacher's office.

### Tentative Course Outline

The pace and content of this course are adjusted as much as possible to the aptitude and background of the class members; all topics and dates are variable.

This course is very cumulative: the majority of these topics are referenced repeatedly after they are introduced. Thus, this schedule lists the approximate points at which each topic is introduced, but not necessarily the points at which they are finished. The course incorporates numerous cursory analyses of pieces to illustrate current topics. Also sprinkled throughout the Theory I curriculum are various sight-singing and ear-training exercises; intensive drilling and testing of musical terminology also occurs throughout the year as new terms are introduced in support of new topics.

<b>WEEKS 1-3</b>	Vocabulary: fundamental elements of music; basics of musical notation; pitches on the keyboard; half & whole steps; major scales; key signatures
<b>WEEK 4</b>	Essential elements of Music: pitch, rhythm, melody, texture, etc.
<b>WEEK 5</b>	Rhythmic notation; rhythmic exercises, sight-singing
<b>WEEKS 6-7</b>	Intervals; acoustics
<b>WEEK 8</b>	Triads; distinguishing triad qualities by ear
<b>WEEK 9</b>	Review & 9-weeks exam
<b>WEEKS 10-12</b>	Functional harmonic analysis; 4-part harmony concepts and vocabulary.
<b>WEEKS 13-15</b>	Rhythmic dictation; Minor scales & harmony
<b>WEEK 16</b>	Music appreciation: music of India and the Middle East
<b>WEEKS 17-18</b>	Review, mop-up and semester exam.
<b>WEEKS 19-22</b>	Begin rhythm unit, terms, notation; meter identification.
<b>WEEK 23</b>	Musical texture
<b>WEEK 24</b>	Intro to music of the Baroque
<b>WEEKS 25-27</b>	4-part writing
<b>WEEK 28</b>	Intro to music of the Classical era
<b>WEEK 29</b>	Intro to music of the Romantic Era
<b>WEEKS 30-31</b>	Musical texture
<b>WEEKS 33-34</b>	Intro to music of th 20th Century
<b>WEEK 35</b>	Intro to Jazz
<b>WEEK 36</b>	Music appreciation: The Planets, by Gustav Holst
<b>WEEK 37</b>	Music appreciation: The Rite of Spring, by Igor Stravinsky
<b>WEEKS 37-38</b>	Review and final exam.

