

Composition (MUS3207)

Fall 2018 Syllabus

Dr. Ben Johansen
McCrary Music Building, 233
B_Johansen (email)

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[Meeting Time/Place]

12:30-1:30pm Tue/Thur in Alinea (Marrs McLean Science Building, 330)

[Required Attendance Outside of Scheduled Class Time]

None.

As non-composition majors, you are **NOT** required, but *are* welcome, to attend Composition Forum. Here are the dates: 8/26, 9/30, 10/28 (all in Alinea @ 8pm)

[Course Objective]

To explore a variety of compositional techniques, repertoire, concepts, and aesthetics from the recent past, and to provide students interested in composition with the basic tools and experience needed to compose effectively in contemporary idioms.

[Grading]

Engage with others' work. Take risks. Search and be curious.

100 points TOTAL	A = 90-100	B = 83-86	C+ = 77-79	C- = 70-72
	B+ = 87-89	B- = 80-82	C = 73-76	F = 0-69

50 points = Composition Journal (0.5 points per day; 100 days = 50 points)

50 points = Class Attendance (5 points per class; 20 meetings = 50 points)

[Schedule]

Tue Aug21 Lesson 1

Thu Aug23 Project Share 1 - "Idea" (improvisation/inspiration)

Tue Aug28 Lesson 2

Thu Aug30 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Tue Sep04 Project Share 2

Thu Sep06 Lesson 3 = meet in the library (Moody 104)

Tue Sep11 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Thu Sep13 Project Share 3

Tue Sep18 Lesson 4

Thu Sep20 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Tue Sep25 Project Share 4

Thu Sep27 Lesson 5

Tue Oct02 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Thu Oct04 Project Share 5

**Tue Oct09 Latitude 49 will read your pieces during class
instrumentation:**

violin, cello, saxophone, clarinet, piano,
percussion (4.3 marimba, 3.0 vibraphone,
small drum set: snare, kick, tom, cymbals)

Thu Oct11 Discussion: What do you want out of the rest of the semester?

Tue Oct16 Score (with recording) study

Thu Oct18 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Tue Oct23 Daniel's Timbre Lecture (combining instruments)

Thu Oct25 Progress Check (and one-on-one help)

Tue Oct30 Score (with recording) study - !MPACT by Johansen

Thu Nov01

Tue Nov06

Thu Nov08

Tue Nov13

Thu Nov15

Tue Nov20

~~Thu Nov22~~ (no class) Thanksgiving

Tue Nov27

Thu Nov29

PROJECT 2

- **write a very short theme (~ 2 measures) and then write four variations using a different technique below for each variation (in what ever order you choose):**
 - aleatory (chance, indeterminacy, graphic or proportional notation, stochastic, etc.)
 - serialism OR pitch class sets
 - new complexity (Ferneyhaugh)
 - any technique of your choice
- you must use paper and pencil (no computer notation software)
- **TIP:** [This David Cope book](#) is on reserve for this class and may help with this project.

PROJECT 3 (in response to seeing non-linear artist books)

- **write a non-linear music score**
 - place emphasis on experimentation as well as a well crafted, presentable score
 - this score must stand alone without any verbal explanations from you
 - let your creativity go wild!: write for any combination of instruments (traditional or nontraditional instruments), large ensemble or small ensemble ... or solo

LAT49 PIECE

You only fail if you don't risk through experimenting.

RESOURCES

- **[Latitude49](#) instrumentation:**
 1. Timothy Steeves - Violin
 2. Max Geissler - Cello
 3. Andy Hall - Saxophone (Soprano, Alto, and Bari)
 4. Andy Hudson - Clarinet (Bb and Bass)
 5. Jani Parsons - Piano
 6. Chris Sies - Percussion:
 - Sizzle cymbal
 - 2 triangles
 - 2 antique cymbals
 - Tuned gong at F#4
 - drumkit: high tom, low tom, snare, crash cymbal, china cymbal, hihats
 - 4 high wood blocks
 - 1 low wood block
 - 1 wooden plank
 - 5 tin cans
 - large guiro
 - brake drum (or large metal pipe)
 - 4.3 marimba
 - 3.0 vibraphone
- [Cheat-sheet of instrumental/vocal ranges from Blatter's Instrumentation/Orchstration](#)
- [Music Preparation Guidelines compiled by the Major Orchestra Librarians' Association](#)
- [How to Write for Percussion](#) [on reserve for MUS3207 in Crouch]
- [Adler's Study of Orchestraion](#) [on reserve for MUS3207 in Crouch]

PROJECT 4 - Part I

- read the following from [Belkin's Musical Composition: Craft & Art](#)
 - Ch.1: Motives
 - Appendix A: Sketching

■ motive composing:

- 1. in concert pitch: compose a 3 motives**
- 2. in concert pitch: compose a transformation for each of the performers of LAT49 [for each of the 3 motives] so that each transformation is a different degree of similarity to the original motive (1-6 rather than 1-5 in the reading ... so that 1 is nearly a copy of the motive and 6 is unrecognizable as a transformation of the original motive**
- 3. transpose each of the transformations for the performers to read (18 total transformations)**

- ### ■ plan out the infrastructure (rough outline/form) of the 1 min piece for LAT49

PROJECT 5 - Part II

- **complete a 1 min linear or non-linear piece for Latitude49**
- read the following from [Belkin's Musical Composition: Craft & Art](#)
 - Ch.11: Contrasting
 - Appendix B: Preparing Your Piece to the World

SCORE STUDY:

Question:

- What has the composer done in the score to help the performer?

Stefano Scobanibbio (1956-2012) - Humboldt for viola and double bass (1997)

- [streaming recording](#)
- paper score = [M287 .S43 H8 1997](#)

Kate Soper (b. 1981) - Voices from the Killing Jar (2010-12)

- [video of performance](#)
- [video of score+audio](#)

Saad Haddad (b. 1992) - Kaman Fantasy for violin and piano (2014)

- [video of score+audio](#)

Question:

- What has the composer added to the score that is unnecessary?

Ben Johansen (b. 1980) - **IMPACT** (2007)

- [video of score+audio](#)

Question:

- How does what you see play into what you experience aurally?
- How does the composer move from one idea to another? (transitions)
- What emotions are evoked?

Mark Applebaum (b. 1967) - Aphasia (2010)

- [video \(Applebaum\)](#)
- [video \(Compitello\)](#)
- [video with score \(Applebaum\)](#)

Mark Applebaum (b. 1967) - Straight Jacket (2009)

- [video](#)

David Bithell (b.) and Ali Moment (b.) - Table Setting (2008)

- [video](#)

David Bithell - Windward (2018)

- [video](#)

QUOTES:

[David Ward-Steinman](#)[On Composing: Doing It, Teaching It, Living It](#)

Boulanger would say, for example, “Why do you write F-sharp here; are you sure it is the best note?” Darius Milhaud, by comparison, would say, “That page is useless; it goes nowhere. Throw it out!” This was followed by, “A good idea is worth repeating; a bad idea is worth nothing.” So I repeated a passage he had called a “good idea” and he said, “A composer should never do work a copyist can do. If you wish to repeat something, vary it or develop it further.” He also applied this injunction to my orchestration. (He himself composed and orchestrated in ink directly on master sheets as I often observed, with nary a pencil or preliminary sketch in sight.)

Boulanger said, in effect, “Every note in the music must be necessary and pull its own weight, every part should be able to stand alone; if you can remove any- thing without harming the passage then it doesn’t belong there.” W. H. Auden expressed the same idea more elliptically in the context of a long poem: “Before the Positive could manifest Itself specifically, it was necessary that nothing should be left that negation could remove.”² Or more simply, remove what is negative and then only the positive will be left. (Easier said than done when the negative is not initially apparent. It is easier to be objective about your own work after you have put it aside for six months or so. It is never a good idea to publish something while the “ink” is still wet.)

[Attendance]

The following is straight from the School of Music Undergraduate Handbook (I made the last sentence red):

School of Music policy requires that to earn credit in a course a student must be officially enrolled by the end of the second full week of the semester and attend at least 75% of all class meetings. Faculty members may establish additional attendance requirements as outlined in course syllabi. Any student who is not present for at least 75% of the scheduled class sessions for any course will automatically receive a grade of "F" in the course. **Any University-related activity necessitating an absence from class will count as an absence when determining whether a student has attended the required 75% of class meetings.**

[Academic Success]

We as faculty members have high academic expectations of you and believe every student who has been admitted to Baylor can be successful. I am a vigilant professor and will notice if you are struggling in my course. If your academic performance in this class is substandard, I will submit an Academic Progress Report to the Success Center during the sixth week of the semester. I will work to help you get the help you need to learn more fully, and I can assist you in finding the resources you need beyond my course. Familiarize yourself with the culture of success we have at Baylor by stopping by the Paul L. Foster Success Center in Sid Richardson or by going to: <http://www.baylor.edu/successcenter/>. Even if you don't need help, you can get involved by tutoring other students in the future or by telling a hall mate how and where to get help.

[Academic Integrity]

Plagiarism or any form of cheating involves a breach of student-teacher trust. This means that any work submitted under your name is expected to be your own, neither composed by anyone else as a whole or in part, nor handed over to another person for complete or partial revision. Be sure to document all ideas that are not your own. Instances of plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council and may result in failure of the course. Not understanding plagiarism is not an excuse. As a Baylor student, I expect you to be intimately familiar with the Honor Code at: <http://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/>

[Students Needing Accommodations]

Any student who needs academic accommodations related to a documented disability should inform me immediately at the beginning of the semester. You are required to obtain appropriate documentation and information regarding accommodations from the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation (OALA). Contact Information: (254) 710-3605 - Paul L. Foster Success Center, 1st floor on the East Wing of Sid Richardson.

[Baylor University Title IX]*Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Interpersonal Violence Policy*

Baylor University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities, and it does not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender. This policy prohibits sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, and retaliation (collectively referred to as prohibited conduct). For more information on how to report or to learn more about our policy and process, please visit www.baylor.edu/titleix. You may also contact the Title IX Office directly by phone, (254) 710-8454, or email, TitleIX_Coordinator@baylor.edu.

The Title IX office understands the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on- and off-campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, university housing, and other forms of assistance that may be available. Staff members at the office can also explain your rights and procedural options if you contact the Title IX Office. You will not be required to share your experience. **If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the Baylor Police Department (254-710-2222) or Waco Police Department (9-1-1) immediately.**

[Military Student Advisory]

Veterans and active duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, any special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the VETS Program Office with any questions at (254) 710-7264.