



IS 398: The History of Music in the Western World

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Clarissa Biscardi

Credits: 3

Type of Course: History of Music: From the Medieval Age to the Baroque period

Prerequisites: Students are assigned paper material (sheet music, documents, articles) based on a progressive skills evaluation before the beginning of and during the semester.

Class Meetings: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

The course aims to convey the basics of the history of Western music in the period from the Middle Ages to the Baroque, deepening some of the most important figures in the musical field and analyzing in particular the scores that represent the evolution of musical notation, from ancient notation to the one we know today. The lessons will be integrated with music listening as well as practical activities such as a visit to the Exhibition of Ancient Musical Instruments of Perugia, participation in an ancient music concert and exercises at the recording studio of the La Maggiore School of Music.

At the end of the first part of the course there will be a mid-term exam to test the knowledge learned so far by students, while at the end of the course the student will have to take a complete exam and will have to present a brief monographic thesis about an author of the musical historical period addressed in class.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

- have become familiar with the main notions concerning the history of Western music until the Baroque period;
- have become familiar with ancient musical scores and notations;
- be able to recognize the timbre of different ancient musical instruments;
- be able to undertake an independent study in order to present a brief monographic thesis and
- be able to recognize the different musical styles of the three historical-musical periods examined: the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque.

Course Materials

Handouts will be provided by the instructor.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed two “free” absences, which they do not need to justify in any way. Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the student’s grade by one level (e.g., B+ becomes a B). If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting with the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

Participation

Students are required to participate actively in class and to demonstrate a consistent effort to develop their performance skills. Being on time to each appointment, adopting respectful behavior, and having a positive attitude towards the instructor are essential.

Homework

Students will be regularly assigned tasks if the teacher deems it necessary. They should prepare all assigned materials for each lesson with a demonstrated improvement over the previous lesson.

Mid-Term Exam

Students will have to answer some questions concerning the historical-musical period that has been analyzed up to that moment, recognize the historical period and the instruments of the piece chosen by the teacher and know how to analyze a score that will be provided during the exam.

Final Exam

During the final exam students will have to answer the questions related to the historical-musical period that has been analyzed up to that moment, recognize the historical period and the instruments of the piece chosen by a commission, know how to analyze some scores that will be provided during the exam and present a brief monographic thesis about a musician of the period analyzed in class.

Grading Rubric

Participation & Homework	35%	
Mid-Term Exam		30%
Final Recital	35%	

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Student Performance
Range	Equivalent	
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	
B	83% - 86%	Superior
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	
C	73% - 76%	Satisfactory
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	
D	63% - 66%	Low Pass
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Course Schedule

Week 1

First approach to the subject, testing the students' previous knowledge.

Introduction to the historical musical medieval period (11th – 15th century), introduction to ancient notation and *Gregorian chant*.

Week 2

Analysis of the first medieval Gregorian scores and music listening.

Profane monody, *Troubadours* and *Trouvères*, *Minnesinger* and *Meistersinger*.

Week 3

3rd century → Introduction to the polyphony, origin of the counterpoint.

Analysis of three different musical form: madrigal, ballad and caccia.

Week 4

The historical musical period of 14th century, the Flemish music.

Analysis and music listening of Matteo da Perugia.

Week 5

Introduction to the historical-musical period of the Renaissance (15th - 17th century)

The Roman School: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, the Venetian School: Philippe Verdelot, Cipriano deRore.

Week 6

Deepening on the musical form of the madrigal: Luca Marenzio, Alessandro Striggio.

Analysis and music listenings: Orlando di Lasso and Orazio Vecchi.

Week 7

MID-TERM EXAM

Visit to the Exhibition of Ancient Musical Instruments in Perugia.

SEMESTER BREAK

Week 8

Exercise at the recording studio of La Maggiore Music School.

Introduction to the instrumental music of 16th and 17th century: Girolamo Frescobaldi.

Syllabi available for download from the Umbra Institute website only with the purpose of informing students and advisers about course content. **All rights are reserved.**

Week 9

17th century and origin of melodrama musical form.

Introduction of opera musical form.

Week 10

Introduction of the Baroque period (17th - 18th century).

Baroque period, analysis and music listening: Claudio Monteverdi.

Week 11

The 18th century and the development of the opera throughout Europe.

Analysis and music listening.

Week 12

Deepening on the Italian Baroque music: Arcangelo Corelli, Antonio Vivaldi and Domenico Scarlatti.

Analysis and music listenings.

Week 13

Conclusion of the Baroque period, review of the course program.

WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS AND SPECIAL ACADEMIC EVENTS

Appointments will be announced later in the term.

→ The date of the ancient music concert will be announced as soon as the dates of the autumn season concerts in Perugia are fixed.