MMED701/PMED701 The Art of Songwriting for the Music Educator

Summer 2015

Instructor

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Required Texts/Materials

- If you have a laptop, please bring it to class
- If you play guitar, or similar, please bring your instrument to class
- Staff paper, pencils, earphones/earbuds
- Notebook

Program Objectives

Students completing graduate music education coursework through The University of the Arts...

- Demonstrate the application of pedagogical and methodological means to teach music and employ effective teaching methods
- Utilize technology in diverse ways as a teacher and in support of student learning
- Communicate and collaborate with peers in diverse musical environments and school communities
- Are creative and innovative musicians who share these musical strengths with their learners through teaching
- Understand the diverse cultural, communal, and learning needs of 21st century students

Course Description

This course provides music educators at all levels the opportunity to learn about the art of songwriting and how to teach songwriting to students. Students will gain an understanding of the basic elements of a well-crafted song, and the essential elements of melody and lyrics. Strategies for writing and teaching song writing through traditional methods, current methods in the use of technology, and creating through beats will be explored. Music educators will experience an in-depth understanding of the many facets of songwriting and how to bring this art form into the classroom.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this graduate music education course, students will:

- Understand the foundations of songwriting and various methods for songwriting
- Understand and use basic skills in songwriting to create and write songs, and strategies for teaching students about songwriting
- Understand and explore both traditional and more current technological methods of writing songs
- Understand and connect the foundations of songwriting to the K-12 music education classroom

Grading Criteria and Assessment Methods

Course assessment, evaluation and grading is based upon three factors: (1) the completion of the pre-assignment, (2) active engagement in daily course studies and (3) in the completion of the final assignment/post-assignment.

Below is the rubric that will be utilized by faculty to assess and evaluate students in these three categories of learning and understanding.

*Please note that pre-assignment and final/post assignments should be included in the course outline at the end of this syllabus.*
The Grading Policy can be found in the Course Catalogue.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

A primary tenet of this course is to prepare students for professional responsibilities as teachers. The timely arrival to class as well as the daily preparation and engagement in course studies is essential.

University policy on [Academic Integrity](#) may be found in the UArts catalog.

If students are not clear about what constitutes plagiarism, you might recommend *Introduction to Research and Documentation* available on the University Libraries website.

**Absences**

Due to the compressed nature of the five-day intensive course structure, absences from class will not be accepted. Students who arrive late to class or leave early will be held accountable for missed time through additional assignments to be completed outside of course hours.

**Technology**

Policies on Technology may be found in the Course Catalogue.

**Class Format**

All summer music studies courses that meet in-person are five-day intensive courses typically running for 8 hours per day. Students are responsible for preparation of materials, for engaging in course content as per the course description, and in being responsive to completion of pre and post coursework as detailed in the course outline.

Courses offered online may be in a different format and may run for a longer amount of time, specific to the needs and intents of the course content.

**Educational Accessibility**

Students who believe they are eligible for course accommodations under the ADA or Section 504 or have had accommodations or modifications in the past, should contact the Office of Educational Accessibility at 215-717-6616 or access@uarts.edu to arrange for appropriate accommodations and to obtain an accommodations letter, if applicable. Faculty can provide course accommodations/modifications only after receipt of an approved accommodations letter from the Office of Educational Accessibility. Accommodation letters can be provided to qualified students at any time during the semester, but grades earned before the letter is received by the faculty cannot be changed.
Course Outline
All syllabus are subject to change.

This week-long course will explore the craft of songwriting through the listening, analysis, and writing of songs. Each day of class will include discussions of a few selected songs, based on their form/structure. These songs will vary greatly in mood, groove, and lyrical content. Components of each featured song will include:
~ Song Form
~ Feel/Groove
~ Melody
~ Chord Progressions
~ Lyrics: Content, Rhythm, and Rhyme Schemes
~ Mood/Vibe

Each class will also focus on:
~ A Featured Songwriter
~ Real-Time In-Class Songwriting Students’ Songs Discussion

Day 1: AB Form
Somebody That I Used To Know (Gotye)
The Race Is On (George Jones)
Tango Till They’re Sore, In The Neighborhood (Tom Waits)
Tangled Up In Blue (Bob Dylan)
Hotel California (Eagles)
Gin and juice (Snoop Dog)
Lyrics: Basic Rhythm Schemes and Sensory Image Writing
Let’s Write A Song: Parameters are your friend. Choose a groove, mood, rhythm, topic, etc.

Day 2: Blues Form
8 bar blues
Key To The Highway (Freddie King) Heartbreak Hotel (Elvis) Ain’t Nobody’s Business (Porter Grainger and Everett Rogers) Video with Chaka, Etta, Gladys https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoBlmp9cOL4
Trouble In Mind (Nina Simone)
12 Bar Blues
HoundDog (Big Mama Thornton)
RedHouse (Jimi Hendrix) The Word, Why Don’t We Do It In The Road (Beatles)
Blue Monk (Thelonius monk)
Twisted (Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross)
16 Bar Blues
Hoochie Coochie Man (Muddy Waters) https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=AFxrLOVwsEE
Let’s Dance (The Ramones) https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=7f1uWMC7i9k
Ballad Of John And Yoko (Beatles)
Lyrics: Rhythm and Meter in Poetry and Lyrics (see attachments)
Let’s Write A Song: Rhythmic schemes help get your juices flowing. “If music be the food of love, play on” is an example of iambic Pentameter.

Day 3: Songs That End With A Refrain
This Land Is Your Land (Woody Guthrie)
Tumblin Dice (Rolling Stones)
I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry (Hank Williams)
Polly Wanna Cracka (Public Enemy)

Lyrics: Imagery “Town without Cheer” by Tom Waits. Let’s Write A Song: “Just sit there a play a few chords till a melody shows up”

Day 4: AABA Song Form
Somewhere Over The Rainbow — Arlen/Harburg (not the Hawaiian guy)
Anything Goes — Cole Porter
Crazy — Willie Nelson
Surfer Girl — The Beach Boys
I’m Getting Sentimental Over You —
Washington/ Bassman
Yesterday — The Beatles

Lyrics: Metaphor/Allegory
Let’s Write A Song: “What’s another way to say that?” Using metaphors, archetypes. Replace the mundane with something that resonates universally.

Day 5: Extended Song Forms and Modern Verse- Chorus Structures
Treasure - Bruno Mars
Me, Myself, And I – Beyonce
Ashes To Ashes — David Bowie
Aja — Steely Dan
Over The Hills and Far Away — Led Zeppelin

Lyrics: Always have your thesaurus and rhyming dictionary on hand. How many words do you know that mean “beautiful”?
Let’s Write A Song: From whence comes inspiration? Getting over writer’s block immediately.