

Virginia Commonwealth University - Department of Music
Syllabus – Fall, 2011
MHIS 145 Music Theory and Aural Skills I
Sections 001 002 003 004

Instructors: [Dr. Bruce Hammel](#) Time: M – F 9:00am – 9:50am - 001
[Mr. Steve Ashby](#) M – F 9:00am – 9:50am - 002
Dr. Alice Hammel M – F 10:00am – 10:50am – 003
Ms. Allyson Keyser M – F 12:00pm – 12:50pm - 004

Course Location: Section 001 and 003 [MC 3003](#) Section 002 and 004 [MC 2003](#)

Prerequisite: Placement through diagnostic exam.

Required Text:

The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis (textbook)
The Musician's Guide - Workbook
The Musician's Guide – Anthology
Progressive Sight Singing by Carol Krueger (Aural Skills)
MacGamut 6 (updated 2003 version)

Required material:

For this course, the students are required to provide staff paper (lots of staff paper), pencils (preferably Mechanic Pencils), erasers, and notepaper for notes. Written assignments will **not** be accepted in ink, only pencil. Although some of these assignments will be taken from The Musician's Guide - Workbook and will need to be turned in on the pages from the workbook, others will need to be submitted on staff paper.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is intended to create a foundation of knowledge and skill in musicianship as demonstrated in the following areas:

- written theory: through analysis and composition
- aural skills: sightsinging, dictation, and rhythmic reading
- basic keyboard awareness: improvising and performing basic harmonic progressions
- basic notation software: data entry, transposing parts and manuscript preparation
- computer assisted aural training: interval, scalar, and chord identification

Absence Policy:

Absences and tardiness will be recorded daily. Every person is allowed four absences per semester. There are no “excused” absences except when you are given departmental permission to miss class due to a Music Department event or function.

Tardiness, defined as more than 10 minutes late to class, will equal ¼ of an absence. In other words, 4 days of tardiness equals one full absence. If you receive an absence or combined tardies beyond four allowed, your final grade will be reduced by 4% per absence or four combined tardies. Once you have accumulated your total allowed four absences, you will be notified by the instructor that any additional absences will limit your overall grade. Upon reaching fourteen absences (ten absences beyond the four allowed or resulting from total absences and combined tardies) a final grade of “F” for the course will result.

If a student reaches the 14th absence prior to the end of the semester, they will not be allowed to take the written or aural final exam.

Class Participation

Class participation is an important part of your musicianship development. You may be asked to sing, perform rhythmic exercises, and/or provide answers.

Evaluation and Grading:

There will be no accepting of late work. Any work not submitted by the due date will be given a grade of “0”. Each written assignment, aural skills evaluation, quiz, and exam will be assigned a numerical grade either as a percentage or total points earned. The culmination of scores will be weighed based upon the following proportions:

Theory (50%)	
Theory competencies	20%
Theory exams/assignments	20%
Theory quizzes	10%
Aural Skills/Keyboard (50%)	
Rhythm reading/Sightsinging	30%
Dictation/MacGamut	15%
Keyboard Skills	5%

The determination of the letter grade will follow the University system of a 10% grade range reflected in the following:

100 – 90	=	A
89 – 80	=	B
79 – 70	=	C
69 – 60	=	D
59 and below	=	F

Although a current and update grade will be maintained through Blackboard this is not the official grade but rather the basis for assessing the final grade. Other factors that may contribute to the final grade include but may not be limited to attendance and class participation. For information on how these may factor into the official final grade please see Absence and Class Participation.

Aural Skills Evaluations:

There will be a “strike” policy for each aural skills proficiencies (aural and rhythmic) and quizzes. This means that a student will have a limited number of opportunities to complete the evaluation but will be

evaluated upon the entire assignment. For example, a typical assignment (which may include the performance of two melodies, two single-line rhythms, and one 2-part rhythmic exercise) will have a three "strike" policy. The student has three opportunities to complete the entire assignment for a grade. If a student stops and needs to begin again that will count as a "strike". If the student receives the total number of strikes before the evaluation is complete, then they would receive a 0 (zero) for all unperformed exercises. The number of strikes can range from 3, 2, 1 or even 0. The number of strikes will be announced with each assignment.

Rhythmic Exercises:

For all rhythmic exercises performed in class, students are required to use a rhythmic syllable system. The following system will be used for the study purposes of rhythm. Once a student can adequately demonstrate an understanding of rhythmic counting and pace, a neutral syllable approach to reading rhythm may be used for the rhythmic evaluations with permission of the instructor.

For the rhythmic syllables we will use the McHose and Tibbs Rhythm Syllables found in the Appendix A, pages 453 - 454 in the Progressive Sight Singing Text with one exception. For Simple Meter we will use a traditional 1-e-&-ah instead of the 1-ta-te-ta in order to differentiate between Simple and Compound meters. **All cardinal numbers** must be enunciated or "mouthed", if a rest appears on that beat, to indicate their position within the rhythm while conducting.

Course Requirements:

Students are required to attend class to obtain information and opportunities to increase their musical aptitude. Written assignments may be given out during the class session and the due date will be announced for each assignment. The assignments may require building skills through repetition and performing keyboard and aural skills. In addition to lecture information during class, the official university Blackboard and email system will be used for correspondence and distribution of documents. Everyone is required to obtain and maintain use of an official Virginia Commonwealth University email address.

Course/Classroom Policies:

1. Headphones should remain on the music stand of the keyboard when not in use. In the past many students have placed the headphone on the floor and this is how they break.
2. Absolutely no drinks or food in the keyboard rooms for students or instructors. If a student would like to eat prior to class or enjoy a beverage, they are welcome to have it outside the room in the hall.

The following topics pertain to University policy and apply to all students:

- I. VCU Statement on Safety
- II. VCU Honor System
- III. VCU Guidelines for Student Conduct
- IV. Statement on Military Short-Term Training or Deployment
- V. Statement on Americans with Disabilities Act
- VI. Important Dates for Spring 2011
- VII. Religious Observations
- VIII. Cell Phone use
- IX. Release of Student Information

I. VCU Statement on Safety

What to know and do to be prepared for emergencies at VCU:

- Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts (www.vcu.edu/alert/notify). Keep your information up-to-date.
- Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are

- posted in on-campus classrooms.
- Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
 - Know where to go for additional emergency information (www.vcu.edu/alert).
 - Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234). Report suspicious activities and objects.

II. VCU Honor System

Virginia Commonwealth University recognizes that honesty, truth, and integrity are values central to its mission as an institution of higher education. The Honor System is built on the idea that a person's honor is his/her most cherished attribute. A foundation of honor is essential to a community devoted to learning. Within this community, respect and harmony must coexist. The Honor System is the policy of VCU that defines the highest standards of conduct in academic affairs.

The Honor System states that faculty members are responsible for:

- Understanding the procedures whereby faculty handles suspected instances of academic dishonesty. Faculty are to report any infraction of the VCU Honor System according to the procedures outlined in our policy.
- Developing an instructional environment that reflects a commitment to maintaining and enforcing academic integrity. Faculty should discuss the VCU Honor System at the onset of each course and mention it in course syllabi.
- Handling every suspected or admitted instance of violation of the provisions of this policy in accordance with procedures set forth in the policy.

The Honor System in its entirety can be reviewed on the Web at

http://www.provost.vcu.edu/pdfs/Honor_system_policy.pdf or it can be found in the 2010-11 VCU Insider at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/insider.html>.

The Honor System must be upheld and enforced by each member of the Virginia Commonwealth University community. The fundamental attributes of our community are honor and integrity. We are privileged to operate with this Honor System.

III. VCU Guidelines for Student Conduct

VCU faculty play a critical role in helping to build an environment that is conducive to the academic success of our students. As you know, VCU has policies and procedures designed to create an environment conducive to academic excellence. One of these policies and procedures can be found in a document entitled "Guidelines for Faculty Members Regarding Student Conduct in the Instructional Settings." This document is available on the VCU Web at

<http://www.provost.vcu.edu/pdfs/FacultyGuideToStudentConductInInstructionalSettings.pdf> or it can be found in the 2010-11 VCU Insider.

Understanding these guidelines will help you to encourage classroom behavior that does not detract from the quality of each student's educational experience. Please read the document and think about your role in promoting a University culture based on mutual respect and civility.

IV. Statement on Military Short-Term Training or Deployment

Military students may receive orders for short-term training or deployment. These students are asked to inform and present their orders to their professor(s). For further information on policies and procedures contact Military Services at 828-5993 or access the corresponding policies at

<http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/about/?Default.aspx?uid=10096&iid=30704> and <http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/BULLETINS/undergraduate/?uid=10096&iid=30773>.

V. Statement on Americans with Disabilities Act

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require Virginia Commonwealth University to provide an 'academic adjustment' and/or a 'reasonable accommodation' to any qualified individual with a physical or mental disability who self-identifies as having such. Students should contact the Disability Support Services office on the Monroe Park Campus (828-2253) or on the MCV Campus (828-9782) for appropriate academic adjustments or accommodations.

As a reminder, both faculty and students are encouraged to turn off cell phones and pagers while in the classroom.

VI. Important Dates

Important dates for the Spring 2010 semester are available

at:http://www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/calendar/ac_fullViewNew.asp?aYear=2011&aSemester=2

VII. Religious observations:

It is the policy of VCU to accord students, on an individual basis, the opportunity to observe their traditional religious holidays. **Students desiring to observe a religious holiday of special importance must provide advance written notification to each instructor by the end of the second week of classes.**

VIII. Cell phones, texting, and other uses of personal technology :

Students are required to keep their cell phones on vibrate or no ringer during call time. You may elect to receive a phone calls or message texting during class, if you feel it is an emergency. You will be asked to step out of the class room for your conversation.

IX. Release of Student Information

The University may not release to third parties any educational records or personally identifiable information without the written consent of the affected student except as is consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/privacy.htm>).

Note to student:

By choosing to remain in this class, you agree to abide by the standards set forth in this syllabus. Additionally, your signature on your VCU application signifies that you agree to abide by all rules and policies, including the Honor System, of Virginia Commonwealth University. For more information refer to the Student Resource Guide, at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/> and the Student Bulletin, at <http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/>.

Signed Confirmation:

After you have read this document, you are required to email the instructor of your course and this will serve as confirmation that you have read this document and you understand the policies for this course.

You may ask the instructor additional questions to clarify the policies and procedures after signing, but no grades will be assigned to a student until a signed copy is on file with the instructor.

Use one of the following links for your signed confirmation:

[Dr. Bruce Hammel](#) [Mr. Steve Ashby](#)

Dr. Alice Hammel Ms. Allyson Keyser