RUTGERS
Arts Online

Introduction to Music Theory Online

Course Number: 07:700:131

Music, in all its many forms and styles, is an integral part of human nature, culture, and society, and plays a significant role in the expressive and creative development of the individual. In this course, students will develop an appreciation of music as a means of personal communication through an intensive introductory study of music theory. Students will be able to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of music: pitch, rhythm and meter, notation, keyboard layout, scales and keys, intervals, chords and chord progressions, and basic musical form. Knowledge of these principles will equip students with the practical and cognitive skills to engage directly in the reading and composing of music.

Detailed online lessons with extensive audio and visual components are supplemented with regular practice via assignments and examinations. All course materials, coursework, and interaction with the professor take place online.

School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum Learning Goal:

1. Areas of Inquiry

C. Arts and the Humanities

Students will be able to engage critically in the process of creative expression

Course Learning Objectives:

- To demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of standard pitch and rhythm notation, keyboard layout, meter and time signatures, scales and keys, intervals, consonance and dissonance, chords and chord progressions, and basic musical phrase structure.
- To develop the ability to perceive, analyze, describe, and transcribe simple musical passages.
- To identify and define the elements of musical composition.
- To articulate musical terminology and concepts effectively.
- To analyze a short musical composition, thus demonstrating a critical understanding of the principles and concepts of music theory.

New Jersey Visual and Performing Arts Standards

Creating: Imagine and Develop

1. Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
2. Organizing and developing ideas.
3. Refining and completing products.

Students complete two Creative Project assignments, each a significant portion of their course grade. The first project, which follows the units on rhythm and scales/keys, asks them to compose, notate by hand, and perform a short melody; the second project, which follows the units on musical intervals and chords, adds a chord progression accompaniment. Students are first given a poem and asked to respond to it musically, using elements of music theory such as major or minor keys, rising or falling notes, stepwise motion or leaps, etc. to express their understanding of the meaning and emotion in the poem. The poem provides a shared basis for the melody and chords across all students. Students are given a detailed rubric to follow which asks for specific music theory elements from the course material that they must include, and notation standards to follow which they have practiced in previous handwritten assignments.

Performing: Refine and Present

4. Selecting, analyzing and interpreting work.
5. Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
6. Conveying meaning through art.

After composing and notating their melody and chords, students record themselves performing what they wrote. Students determine how their notated music will be recorded, choosing any instrument or voice (including an in-course on-screen piano for those without access to a physical instrument). They must perform it themselves; automatic playback using software is not allowed. Since no prior musical training is required for the course, only accuracy to the notation is expected, rather than skilled or polished performance.

Responding: Analyze and Interpret

7. Perceiving and analyzing products.
8. Interpreting intent and meaning.
9. Applying criteria to evaluate products.

The bulk of the points for the Creative Project assignment are for an 800-word essay analysis of the melody/chords and the student's process of conception and creation of the music. The essay asks how the student thought about realized the meaning and intent of the poem, and the precise reasoning behind each of their creative choices, on both personal and technical levels. The essay also asks about challenges they faced in the compositional process, and whether their composition achieved its intended effect.

Connecting: Synthesize and Relate

10. Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
11. Relating artistic ideas and works within societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.

Several discussion post assignments, placed throughout the course, ask the students to find audio examples from their personal lives and relate them directly to specific music theory concepts in the course. For example, one discussion asks them to find an example of dissonance and another of consonance, from sources such as sounds they hear in their daily lives or songs and videos they find online, and then discuss the meaning and how the different sounds relate to their musical understanding of the course material. Students consistently cite songs and sounds with personal and cultural meaning and resonance.

RUTGERS
Arts Online

NEW JERSEY OPTION 2

ONLINE COURSES THAT MEET NJ VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS STANDARDS

• WHAT IS IT?

Rutgers Arts Online, a division of Mason Gross School of the Arts, offers courses in music, visual arts & design, theater, dance, and filmmaking that are aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in the Visual and Performing Arts. These courses are available to students who want or need to earn high school credits outside of the traditional classroom.

• WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

New Jersey high school juniors and seniors can enroll in Rutgers as non–matriculated students. Scan the QR code below to learn more.

• WHY CHOOSE RUTGERS ARTS ONLINE?

- Courses meet NJ Student Learning Standards in Visual & Performing Arts
- 7-week (2 credit) or 14-week (3 credit) courses
- Courses are 100% online & asynchronous
- A wide variety of rigorous & engaging courses
- Courses employ anti-cheating software
- All teaching faculty hold PhD, MFA, MusEd, or EdD degrees
- Access to one-on-one feedback, course support, and office hours
- Students can earn high school and college credits*

• WANT TO LEARN MORE?

go.rutgers.edu/option2

Call us now 848-932-5198

*College credit is earned in all courses. Ability to transfer credits is determined by the accepting institution.