MUSIC 662 Syllabus

Introduction to Research in Music

Fall, 2018

3 graduate credits

Thursdays, 7:20—10 pm, August 30—December 13, 2017; MTB 1023 *
Prof. Steve Gerber, Fenwick 2604—email sgerber@gmu.edu (preferred)—phone 703-993-9051
(Office hours/student consultations by advance appointment)
Course materials will accumulate at: http://mason.gmu.edu/~sgerber/

* Some sessions will be held in Fenwick Library, as indicated on the class schedule below. Also note that an afternoon visit to the Library of Congress’s Music Division has been scheduled for Thursday, October 25, in lieu of an evening meeting. While not required, participation in this field trip is expected unless you have an unavoidable work, school, rehearsal/performance, or family conflict. (I can provide a request-for-excused-absence letter for your other professors if needed.)

Course Description

From the George Mason University Catalog: “Development of skills, attitudes, and understanding to do and report research in music, including philosophical bases, scope and organization, stylistic practices in writing research reports, study of materials and resources in music and music education, and proper use of library and other research services.”

Successful completion of this course is required for all master’s students and is encouraged for doctoral students who have not taken its equivalent at another university. The course presupposes a bachelor’s degree in music or equivalent familiarity with intermediate music theory, history, repertoire, and literature. Participation is recommended during a student’s first year in the graduate program and constitutes preparation for seminars which involve discovery and synthesis of scholarly research in music history, biography, literature, analysis, and education. Conducted in a hybrid lecture-seminar format with assignments due almost every week, MUSIC 662 requires timely preparation, active discussion, and articulate writing.

Objectives

Learning objectives in this seminar cluster into these four main areas:

- to discover and use local, regional, and electronic knowledge resources and tools appropriate for advanced reference and research by performers, teachers, composers, and scholars of music.
• to formulate and delimit an area of musical investigation, develop efficient research strategies, and apply discrimination in the description, evaluation, and selection of resources.

• to understand and use proper expository prose style, academic argumentation with evidential support, and footnote/bibliography formats to communicate persuasively and expressively about musical topics in written essays and oral presentations.

• to acquire and broaden a perspective on the relation of various historical, practical, and scholarly contributions to an ongoing, centuries-old discourse on music—thereby positioning oneself to adopt a reasoned and informed stance on musical issues of personal significance.

**Required and Recommended Texts**

The one **required** textbook for this course is:


This can be obtained at the campus bookstore or through various online sellers/resellers such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Half.com, etc. There will also be a copy on reserve in the library.

In addition, the following books are **recommended**; a copy of each has also been placed on reserve for MUSIC 662, and I may occasionally ask that you look at short sections in these:


**Assignments and Grades**

Written assignments will include various bibliographic exercises, descriptive, analytical, and/or evaluative essays, and two major semester projects, which are the completion of a research paper on a musical topic of personal interest (10-12 pages plus bibliography) and the
oral delivery of a presentation (duration, 20-25 minutes) related to the paper. Some assignments will also be reported in the seminar orally. Any in-class exercises or quizzes will be ungraded.

Participants are expected to complete relevant readings before class, and be prepared to summarize or comment if called upon. **Attendance and discussion at every meeting is expected** and factored into the grade. (In case of an unavoidable work or performance commitment, severe illness, or family necessity, notify me via email **as soon as possible**.)

Written assignments, unless otherwise directed, should be:

- word-processed, computer-printed, and stapled…
- with text double-spaced, using 12-point font for body text…
- on pages having 1-inch margins and consecutively numbered…
- clearly labeled with your name, date, the course number, and assignment number/name.

All assignments should feature collegiate-level vocabulary, correct grammar, and scholarly prose style, and should not generally include writing of a colloquial or casual nature. All quotations, references, examples, illustrations, tables, etc. must be properly and consistently formatted according to Turabian 7th style guidelines (or as otherwise directed by the instructor). Students whose first language is not English are encouraged to enlist the help of a proofreader or consult with an advisor in the University Writing Center. Oral presentations should be rehearsed beforehand for fluency and conformity to time limits!

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<tr>
<th>POINT VALUES - Fall 2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attendance/participation</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>#1 autobio &amp; topic proposal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 periodicals speed-dating</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3 website demonstration</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>#4 book reviews survey</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5 article critiques A</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>#6 article critiques B</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>#7 musical editions</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8 progress report</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>research presentation to class</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>final research paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>100</td>
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Written assignments submitted late will automatically lose ½ point if 1-3 days past due, 1 point if 4 days or more. Don’t get behind—it could be difficult to catch up.

There are no tests and there is no final written examination; the last few class meetings are used for student presentations. The final grade will be based on accumulated points as follows:

- 96 to 100, **A**
- 91 to 95, **A-**
- 86 to 90, **B+**
- 81 to 85, **B**
- 76 to 80, **B-**
- 71 to 75, **C**
- 70 or less, **F**

I expect everyone to work hard and do well. No one has yet failed 662, and I hope no one ever will. Here’s how past students have fared (where will YOU fit?), and how I’ve fared:
Other Policies

All work submitted must be the original, exclusive work of the student, albeit it may synthesize or summarize, with proper citation and personal comment, knowledge presented elsewhere. Plagiarism (representing someone else’s expression as if it were one’s own), multiple submission (turning in essentially the same written work for different courses), and fraudulent omission (leaving out crucial elements in a citation to “spin” its meaning your way) are academically dishonest and will result in a grade of zero if detected. Studying together to share information is fine, but there are no group projects or peer reviews in this course.

Any student with a university-recognized disability that requires an accommodation should discuss this with me privately, and reasonable accommodations will be made.

Cell phones or messaging devices, as well as iPods or similar audio players, are distracting and should be turned OFF during class, of course. Laptops, netbooks, iPads, etc. are welcome, but inattentiveness due to surfing or texting is not.

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change if circumstances warrant)

Note: readings, written assignments, and virtual “handouts” will be posted online well in advance of due dates. I don’t use Blackboard for course management; instead, please bookmark my Mason home page, http://mason.gmu.edu/~sgerber/, for this purpose. In most cases you are expected to download and/or print your own copies of these posted materials.

August 30 in MTB 1023
LECTURE 1. Introduction to the course; syllabus; texts, readings, assignments. How to use the textbooks. Backgrounds of seminar participants. Types of musical research; life-cycle of information; nature of sources (primary, secondary, tertiary); requirements of scholarly writing; sampling of investigations by past students. How to access Grove Music Online; how to navigate to a particular electronic journal and drill down to a specific citation.
September 6 in MTB 1023
LECTURE 2. Catalog-searching in GMU Libraries; the WRLC (“Consortium”) and Library of Congress catalogs; the WorldCat union catalog; consortium lending and interlibrary request procedures. Concepts of truncation, grouping; Boolean operators; setting limits, sorting results. Bibliographic importance of authorized names, uniform titles, subject headings. Useful call number ranges. Basic Chicago-style for footnotes/bibliographies. Intro to Zotero citation-management software? In-class exercise: find the bibliography mistakes.

Assignment 1 due (musical autobiography and research proposal)

September 13 in Fenwick 1009 Staff Mtg Rm

Assignment 2 due (periodicals speed-dating marathon)

September 20 in MTB 1023

Assignment 3 due (music website demonstrations)

September 27 in Fenwick 1009 Staff Mtg Rm

Assignment 4 due (survey of book reviews)

October 4 in MTB 1023
LECTURE 6. Musical Editions, I: Bibliographies of printed music, indexes to scores; thematic catalogs; performing vs. critical editions; historical sets and composers’ collected-works series; common editorial concepts; selected terms in German.

Assignment 5 due (musicology article critiques)

[NO CLASS OCTOBER 11 – Prof. Gerber is on the road to a conference in Pittsburgh.]

October 18 in Fenwick 1009 Staff Mtg Rm

Assignment 6 due (critiques of empirical music studies)
**October 25** at LOC Music Division 1:30-4 pm.
**AFTERNOON VISIT** to the Music Division of the **Library of Congress** in Washington DC. Orientation to institutional history, music collections, finding aids, and research procedures. Travel on-your-own, and meet in the main lobby of the Madison Building. A detailed handout with instructions, addresses, travel advice, etc. will be forthcoming. **NO EVENING CLASS.**

**November 1** in MTB 1023
LECTURE 8. Citation formatting of source notes for tables, figures, and musical examples; special considerations when citing media or online sources. Origin and historical development of discipline of musicology; “the New Musicology.”

**Assignment 7 due** (musical editions)

**November 8** in Fenwick 2306 Special Collections Seminar Rm
LECTURE 9. Brief overview of the history of music printing and publishing. Inspection of selected items from Special Collections Research Center. (They are ordinarily closed at night and will graciously accommodate us until around 9 pm.)

**Assignment 8 due** (progress report)

**November 15** in MTB 1023
LECTURE 10. Discographies, iconographies, biographies. Overview of resources useful for beginning research in ethnomusicology and music sociology. Copyright, permissions, licensing. Search-engine showdown: A&H Citation Index vs. Google Scholar. Catch-up on miscellaneous additional, skipped, or requested topics as needed. Course evaluation.

**[NO CLASS NOVEMBER 22 – Thanksgiving Day holiday]**

**November 29** in MTB 1023
**RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS tba**

**December 6** in MTB 1023
*all RESEARCH PAPERS are due TONIGHT*
**RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS tba**

**December 13** in MTB 1023
**RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS tba**