

History of Western Music, 1600–1800 (MUSC 222)

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Spring 2022, University of Rochester, Satz Dept. of Music

Links

- [Schedule](#)
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Course Information

Description

This course provides music majors the opportunity to build a conceptual framework for understanding how and why people in Europe and European colonies made music between about 1600 and 1800 and what it meant to them. It equips students to think historically about music (understanding change over time in forms, practices, and concepts of music), and to think musically about history (understanding lived experience in the past through music). The course highlights the interconnection between the sound of music and the social structures that music shapes and is shaped by.

The class emphasizes, on the one hand, how European people used music to build a “Western” world, which included developing a canon of musical “classics”; and on the other hand, their exchanges with and impacts on indigenous peoples in different global locations. The course highlights the musical creativity of women, people of color, and lower-class people.

Students will gain detailed knowledge of musical repertoire from this period through close engagement with the sources, including transcription and performance; while developing critical thinking skills through research, writing, and oral presentation.

Materials and Resources

- Music recordings and videos will be on YouTube playlists available through the schedule page.
- Scores for most selections will be available through Blackboard.

Required Texts

- Wendy Heller, *Music in the Baroque* (New York: Norton, 2014)
- John Rice, *Music in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Norton, 2013)
- Both books have accompanying anthologies, which will enrich your understanding of the books; but these are optional for this course. Scores for most of the music discussed in the books is freely available online through <www.imslp.org> and other sites.

Learning Goals

- Build knowledge of the most widespread and historically significant styles, genres, and formal patterns of music in Europe and European colonies during the period 1600–1800.
- Understand how social elements like venue, patrons, audience, and performers shaped the sonic dimensions of music and vice versa.
- Develop a critical awareness of different ways that we can determine historical significance, and the benefits and drawbacks of these approaches.
- Understand the role of music in the historical development of “Western civilization” as an ideology and a political and economic reality, and its impact on indigenous peoples and marginalized groups.

Assessments

For each of the five roundtable sessions:

- A briefing paper: part written before and part written after class (due at the start of the next class session following the roundtable)
- Turn in one short paper (due at the start of class on the day of the roundtable; see below)
- Participate in discussion as leader or speaker

Short papers

- Two analytical/interpretive papers (structure and meaning, focused on sound)
- Two historical/contextual papers (function and purpose, focused on society)

- Each paper should be about 1600 words in length.
- You may do these in any order.

Underrepresented Representative Presentation

- Present your research on an underrepresented musician who is nevertheless representative of their time
- One per student, given during a roundtable

Grading

15%	Participation including roundtables
25%	Roundtable briefings (5% each)
20%	Two analytical papers (10% each)
20%	Two historical papers (10% each)
20%	Presentation

Grade Scale

Percent	Letter
93–100	A
90–92	A-
87–89	B+
83–86	B
80–82	B-
77–79	C+
73–76	C
70–72	C-
67–69	D+
63–66	D
60–62	D-
0–59	E

Policies

Attendance, Participation, Teaching Modality

- This is an interactive class including discussion and music-making, so every student must participate actively in order to accomplish the course goals, and that means every student must be present.
- I define active participation to mean that a student was present, responded to questions, and contributed to discussions with both speaking and engaged listening.

- The class will be held on Zoom at least through the end of January, depending on the university's policy.
- All class sessions will be recorded. The recordings will be made available only on the university's private network (via Blackboard). The recordings are not a substitute for attendance.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

- The assignments are due at on the day and at the time listed on the schedule, via the relevant assignment portal on Blackboard.
- I am happy to grant assignment extensions or modifications as they are needed, but I must to do them in advance of the due date and in writing.
- Without an extension, I will accept late assignments for 50% credit at any time up until the beginning of the final class session.

Academic Honesty

- You must adhere to the university's policies for academic honesty. In short this means doing your own work, and not giving or receiving unfair or non-permitted help on your work.
- The university requires me to report every case of academic dishonesty to the Academic Honesty Board, and I will report every case.
- Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, which means using other people's ideas and words with giving them appropriate credit, including verbatim copying and missing, false, or misleading citations.

Disability Accommodations

If you need a disability accommodation, please contact the Disability Office and they will let me now how to accommodate you without specifying the nature of your disability.

Creating a Supportive Classroom Community

I need your help in creative a supportive community in our classroom. I want to build a space in which students feel safe enough to take the risks necessary to engage with new ideas and develop new skills. We must be careful to avoid any kind of bullying or harrassment; and we must cultivate respect, humility, and kindness. No point of view is out of bounds for discussion, as long as we can find a respectful and sensitive way to talk about it.

I will give you opportunities for feedback throughout the course and I would ask, please let me know if there is anything I can do (or anything I need to change) in order to accomplish these goals. Please be reflective about your own contributions to the classroom environment as well.