



MUSI 10300 2 - Introduction to Music: Materials and Design - Instructor(s) - Paul Novak

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Spring 2024**

Number Enrolled: **16**

Number of Responses: **9**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, July 11, 2024**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

Comments
Music, notation, composition, history, how to talk about music
I have a greater appreciation of all the different aspects that help not only make for an interesting music but also can also make for a great performance of the music.
Making music and communicate musical ideas effectively
The basics of composing in a variety of ways
How to compose different kinds of music.
Fundamentals of music theory and composition for a variety of styles (western notation: solo melody/solo piano/string quartet, graphic scores, and sound sampling).
Texture and timbre, harmony and some basic voice leading
I had no formal background in music before this class, so learning how to read music, how to create a melody and harmony, and being able to articulate whether or not I liked a song using precise musical terminology were all great.

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
Lectures were great, had a ton of demonstrations
The lectures were helpful in explaining the different elements of composing music and that make up a song. The workshops that were held every Thursday gave me a good idea on how feedback can be given and received on a creative project. The workshops allowed me to demonstrate to a class what I made and get good feedback on what I could improve on in composing.
Workshop, Creative Project
I think normal lectures could have been a bit more helpful – maybe lecture slides being posted (it was a little hard to keep up with some of the vocabulary or content in the slides). Workshops were very fun and helpful though; they pointed out things to watch out for in future assignments and were engaging.
Tuesday presentations and lectures. Thursday workshop listening to our compositions. One composition every two weeks.
Each week the first class is a lecture and the second class is a workshop where each student's piece is listened to and then discussed by the class. Compositional assignments are due every other week in addition to weekly listening responses, and two projects (one short paper and one presentation) throughout the quarter.
half the classes were lectures. The other half were workshops where you present and provide feedback on pieces.
We would have a lecture on a topic, listening assignments in which we would critique music that represented the topic, and then had to compose a 1 minute piece in MuseScore.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.44	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	55.56%	44.44%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
My work was evaluated fairly.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
I felt respected in this class.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Not trivial but fun and rewarding
Having some experience reading music would be helpful, but as stated on the syllabus, you can do fine without any previous experience. Paul was a great instructor: always had something positive to say about my assignments, even if they were bad. He's super knowledgeable but a pretty easy grader. Would highly recommend.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	12.50%	87.50%
Anyone interested in the topic	0.00%	100.00%

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
In class demonstration
The teacher was very supportive of the students' work and was available to help when I needed assistance in composing a piece.
Providing very useful feedback and encouragement
Demos of upcoming compositional assignments
Feedback on our compositions
Paul Novak is a phenomenal instructor! He is not only very knowledgeable about composition but he also went to great lengths to create a welcoming learning environment where all students, regardless of background with composition, felt respected and supported. I also really liked that Paul covered a range of compositional styles. It was particularly exciting that Paul arranged for a live string quartet to play our final pieces at the end of the quarter. All in all I really enjoyed being in Paul's class, definitely my favorite professor of the year.
Paul was really sweet and patient. He was also generous with his time and met if you had any questions.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Not much
I hope the instructor could post more reading materials on music theory to help those without much background in music
Posting the lecture slides or having some way to go over what we talked about in the lectures to solidify vocabulary/similar concepts
I wish there had been more instruction from Paul during the course as his insights were always the most valuable. I appreciate that he wanted to create an interactive learning environment, however since this is a relatively beginner class I do not think that a peer workshop was the best use of time. I often did not feel qualified to give advice to other students and much of the student feedback in the class took the form of "I really like this or that" which is nice to hear and all the students were super supportive of each other but it is not the constructive criticism that is needed to improve. The one lecture day a week would often only cover the most basic components of music theory which made the compositional projects feel a bit intimidating. I think getting more in depth compositional-strategy instruction, and not just base theory and form, would improve the class a lot. Nevertheless, this was still a phenomenal course!
The turnaround time between the lecture in which we would learn a new topic and the workshop for the coffee group was only two days so having lecture the week prior would be ideal to give coffee group more time to prepare.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%	88.89%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%

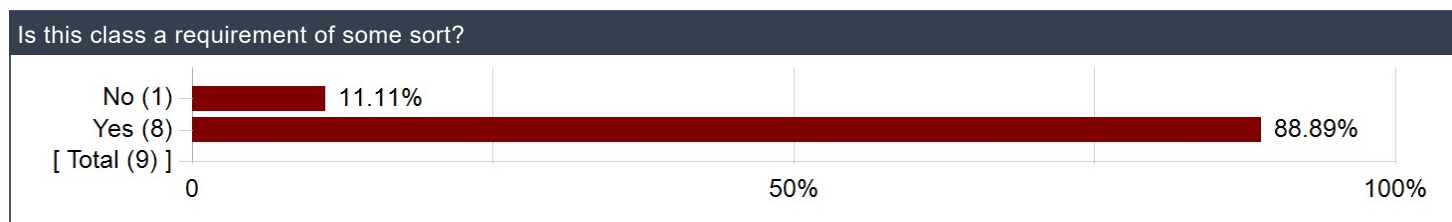
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	Mean	Median	No Gain	A Little Gain	Moderate Gain	Good Gain	Great Gain	N/A
Laboratory Experience	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Field Trips	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Library Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Review Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Writing Seminars	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

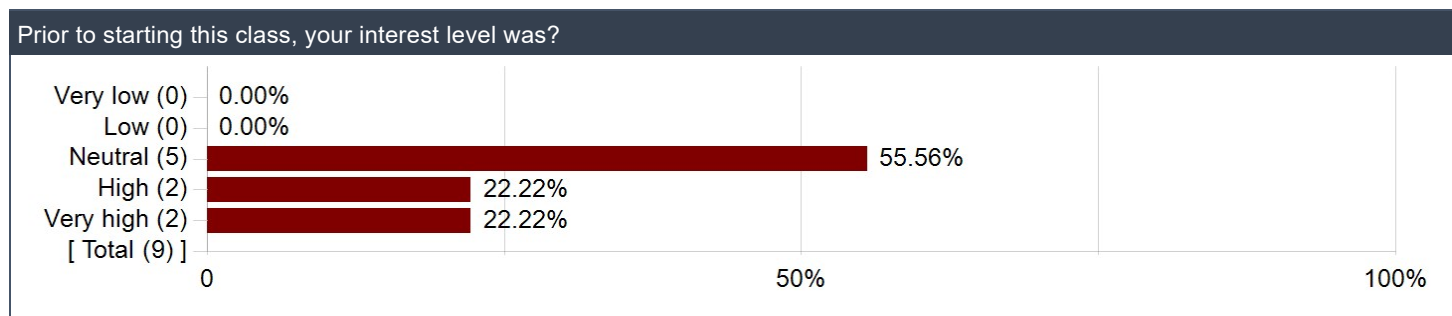
Other course elements not mentioned above:

Comments
Final Workshop & Performance: Very great gain and a very special experience to have your music played by musicians

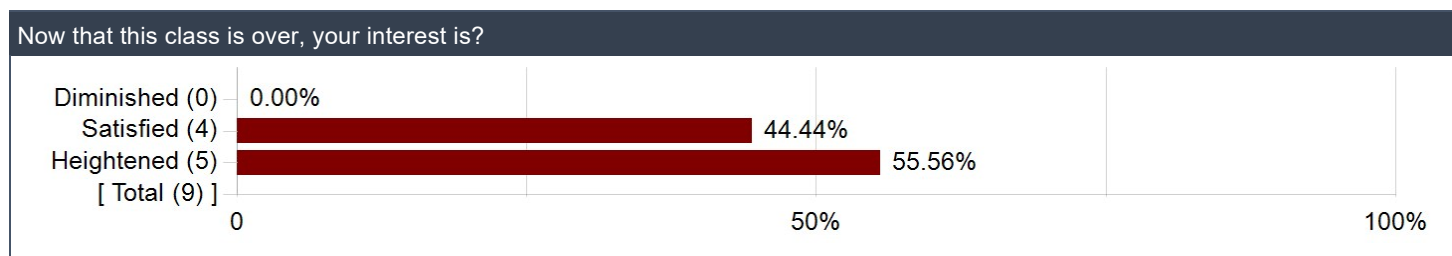
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



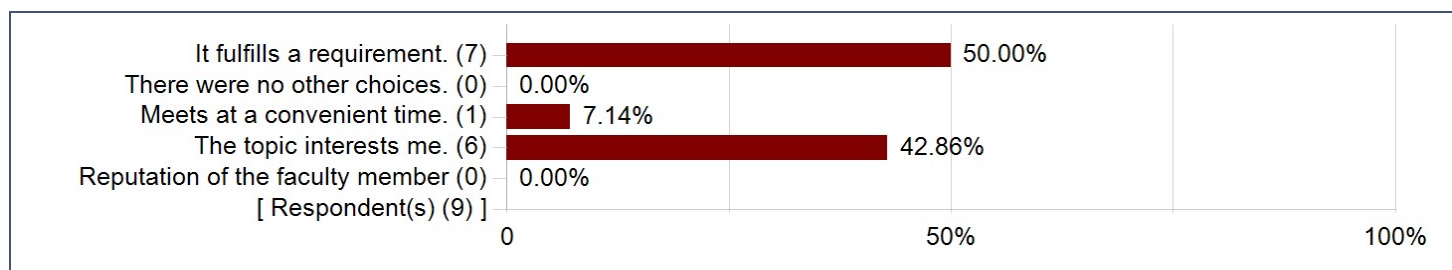
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



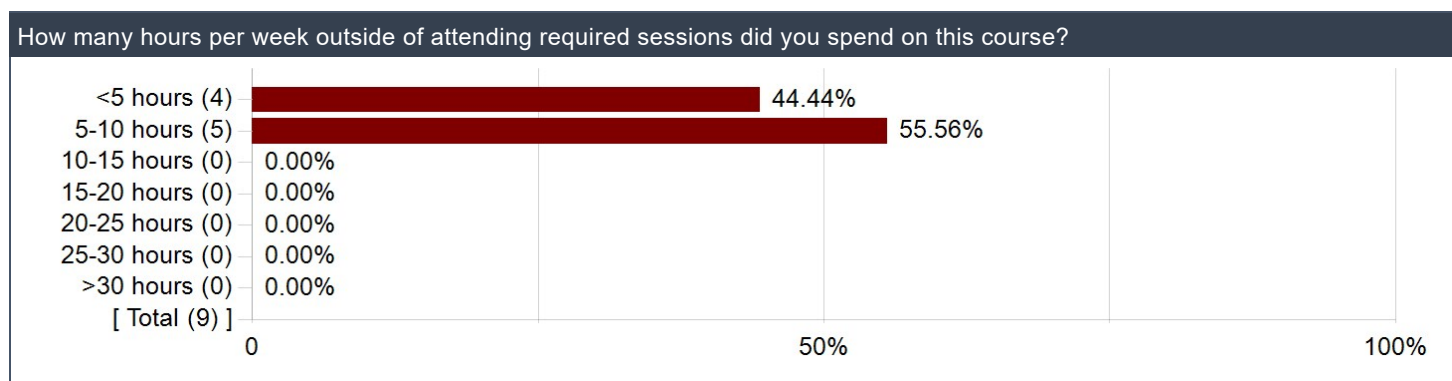
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



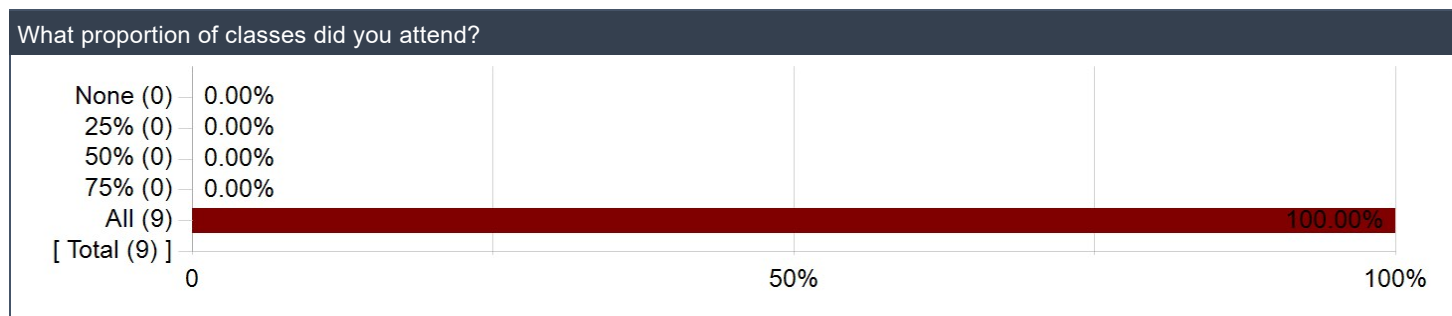
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
Not difficult at all.
Without experience in music theory and composing, this course is quite challenging.
It was a bit challenging for me, but not extremely. I have a music background and had some understanding of notation, though no experience with composition. I think this was very helpful for me coming into the class, and I feel someone with no music background at all might struggle a little – though it would not be impossible to succeed at all.
No background required, but I would rethink taking the class if you don't have any background. The music theory isn't presented in depth and a it would take a lot more work to catch up.
The main work of the class is the 5 compositional assignments. The difficulty of these is kind of what you make of them. They are very open ended, only the form (ie instrument and notation style) is specified so you can make it as complex or simple as your interest/skill level requires. I would recommend having some musical background before taking this course, without it the use of western notation and music theory for the assignments might feel a bit overwhelming. That said Paul very much adapts his feedback to fit the background and skill level of each student so I think someone with no musical background could excel in the course as long as they are interested in learning.
Took harmony and voice leading in the fall and play piano and guitar. You could get by with no experience as long as you complete everything.
composing musical pieces without any background can be pretty difficult and time consuming but paul is generous with grading and just wants to see effort.