

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for MUS 34

MUSIC IN FILM

Effective: Fall 2017

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

MUS 34 — MUSIC IN FILM — 3.00 units

The class traces the history and development of film music through reading, lecture and film viewing. The class studies the process of film scoring and how music and its relationship to film have changed over the last century. Class includes discussion and evaluation of different compositional styles and learning to listen critically to film scores while viewing movies.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. evaluate the historical trends in movie music from the early twentieth century to the present.
- B. distinguish and analyze the styles of prominent film music composers.
- C. define in verbal and written formats the dramatic elements of music and evaluate how they are adapted to cinematic situations.
- D. assess and interpret film music terminology.
- E. Evaluate the effects music technology has had in the composition of music for film

V. CONTENT:

- Exploring Film and Music
 - A. Wagner's Prelude
 - B. Drama and Film
 - C. Elements of Music
 - D. Listening to Film Music
- The Silent Film Era 1895-1908
 - A. Birth of an Artform: 1895-1907
 - B. The Foundations of Modern Film: 1908
 - C. *The Birth of a Nation*
 - D. The Golden Age of Silent Film: 1920-1928
 - E. Transition to sound
- The Sound Era Begins 1928-1944
 - A. The Early Years of Sound: 1928-1933
 - B. Entering a New Golden Age: 1934-1938
 - C. Hollywood's Greatest Year: 1939
 - D. Modern Voices: 1936-1944
 - E. *Casablanca*
- Entering a Cold War 1944-1959
 - A. Postwar Trends: 1944-1949
 - B. Country, Rock, and All That Jazz: 1950-1956
 - C. Expanding Modern Styles: 1950-1956
 - D. The Close of the Decade: 1956-1959
 - E. *Ben-Hur*
- A New American Cinema 1960-1976
 - A. *Psycho*
 - B. Declining Traditions: 1960-1967
 - C. The Emerging New Era: 1960-1967
 - D. Crises Years: 1968-1972
 - E. Moving Forward: 1973-1976

- The Classic Revival 1977-1988
 - A. *Star Wars* and Postmodernism: 1977-1984
 - B. *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*
 - C. In the Shadows of *Star Wars*: 1977-1984
 - D. Settings Far and Near: 1982-1988
 - E. New Box Office Kings: 1984-1988
- *Fin de Siècle* and the New Millennium 1989-2004
 - A. Pax Americana: 1989-1995
 - B. Popular music and eclectic scores: 1989-1996
 - C. The Sinking *Titanic*: 1997-2000
 - D. *The Red Violin*
 - E. The New Millennium: 2001-2004

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Critique** -
- B. **Guest Lecturers** -
- C. **Demonstration** -
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Watching and discussion of important scenes which use film music.
- E. **Research** -
- F. **Written exercises and case studies** -
- G. **Lecture** -
- H. **Projects** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Assignments that Demonstrate Critical Thinking
 1. Evaluate specific film composers and their work in film.
 2. Compare and contrast the musical styles of different film composers
 3. Appraise a specific film composer giving specific examples of his/her film score and the contribution towards a particular film style.
- B. Writing Assignments and/or Proficiency Demonstration
 1. Deliver an oral presentation on either a film composer and his/her contribution to the genre, or a specific motion picture score, evaluating its dramatic impact on the film
 2. Assemble a scholarly research paper on some aspect of motion picture music or composer discussed in class
 3. Articulate the manner in which music enhances or inhibits the effect of dramatic film, and to understand its salient characteristics.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Research Projects
4. Papers
5. Projects
6. Group Projects
7. Class Participation

B. **Frequency**

Daily Lectures
 One group project
 One midterm
 One final
 Several Quizzes

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Buhler, James, and David Neumeyer. *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History*. 2nd e ed., Oxford University Press, 2015.
2. Timm, Larry . *Film Music - The Soul of Cinema*. 10th ed., Pearson, 2013.
3. Neumeyer, David. *Meaning and Interpretation of Music in Cinema (Musical Meaning and Interpretation)* . 1st e ed., Indiana University Press , 2015.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: