

MUS 120C

Notes on exam format

Exams are not multiple choice. You will not need a blue book, but can write your responses directly on the exam.

A word of advice: don't try to cram for the listening IDs! This kind of learning does not reward cramming. If you make a playlist and listen continually throughout the term, you should be just fine.

Each exam has three sections. Below I give an example of each, with examples of what I'm looking for in the short answer.

1) listening IDs

Identify the artist (composer, singer, or whoever is identified alongside this piece on the course page) and the name of the work:

- [write the artist here]
- [write the name of the work here]

2) short answer (1 sentence or less)

What composer wrote andante emasculata on the score, and what does it tell us about him or her?

[Charles Ives. It's an example of his macho sense of humor and insistence that challenging music can't be effeminate.]

3) short essay

In this course, we have examined many composers' relationship to politics. Pick three such composers and explain how they differ in how their music relates to their political environment.

[A good response would mention three composers whose music we had discussed in terms of politics – for example, Verdi, Brahms, and Ruth Crawford – and show 1) a confident understanding of how each was political and 2) the ability to think flexibly and critically about the relationship of music to politics. Exam essays can be short – three good paragraphs would be plenty.]