MUS 591 S–Post Tonal Theory
Spring 2016
Tuesdays Rm. 155, 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Professor: Christopher White
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Office Hours: M/W, 10:00-11:30 AM or by appointment

Class Description: Introduction to the theory and analysis of post-tonal music, drawn from the work of Forte, Perle, Cohn and others. Basic concepts including pitch class, integer notation, pitch-class sets, normal form, set class relatedness, symmetry, and interval cycles. Analytic applications to compositions of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Bartok, Debussy and others.

Required Course Materials:

- Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory (3rd Edition), Author: Joseph N. Straus,
  Publisher: Pearson, Edition: 3
- Print-offs of music and articles from course website

Grading Components:

1. Presentations/leading discussions: 20%
2. Model Composition: 25%
3. Analysis papers (ca. 3): 20%
4. Final Presentation/Paper: 25%
5. "Thinking Numerically" assignments: 5%
6. Short responses: 5%

1. Presentations/discussions: Throughout the semester, you will be assigned pieces or readings on which to lead discussions. This will involve presenting an analysis, explaining a compositional device, or teasing apart a music theory. You will be in charge of about 20 minutes of our classroom time, and will be graded both on how well you understand the material, and how well and clearly you present it. Initially, I will ask you to grade yourself (with specific rationales) for these assignments.

2. Model Composition: At regular intervals in the class, you'll be asked to write a movement to a theme and variations using some post-tonal compositional technique for your instrument. At the end of the semester, you will have a complete variation set to be performed during our final meeting.

3. <u>Analysis papers</u>: Throughout the semester, you will write short analysis papers (circa 5 pages) to demonstrate your ability to engage with a compositional style.

4. <u>Final Paper</u>: In place of a final exam, you will give a presentation and write a paper on a piece of your choosing. The presentation will be given in the final several weeks of the semester, and your write-up of the presentation will be due at the time of our final.

5. <u>"Thinking Numerically" assignments:</u> A hallmark of the 20th century has been to conceive of music numerically. To acclimate to this way of thinking, you will complete short assignments for each meeting that builds skills that bridge music and math.

6. <u>Short Responses</u>: To prove that you've engaged with the reading, I'll ask you to write short (circa 200-300 word) summaries to the readings. They will be due by Tuesday 8:00 am before class.

<u>Grading Scale:</u> All grades will be calculated according to the following scale

        A: 92.5 – 100
        A-: 90 – 92.5
        B+: 87.5 – 90
        B: 82.5 – 87.5
        B-: 80 – 82.5
        C+: 77.5 - 80
        C: 72.5 – 77. 5
        C-: 70 – 72.5
        D: 60-70
        F: 59.5 and below

<u>Academic Honesty / Collaboration:</u> All work submitted in this class in the form of homeworks, quizzes, exams, and essays are to be composed entirely through your own efforts. Unless an announcement is made allowing collaboration on a particular assignment, sets of identical answers (where statistically implausible) will be considered the result of cheating and will be dealt with severely.

<u>e-mail and Moodle:</u> All mass e-mails to the class will go to students' university mail accounts. If you do not frequently check this account, you are advised to forward your e-mails so as not to miss last-minute announcements about assignments or changes of schedule.

This course will be supported by Umass's Moodle program. Students are responsible for opening and maintaining a Moodle account, on which they may access their grades, weekly assignments, and additional materials such as handouts, review sheets, and practice dictations. The web address for Moodle is:. https://moodle.umass.edu/ The login username and password are typically identical to e-mail.

An important caveat: Moodle is offered as a service to students, but there is no obligation that it be kept up to date. If an assignment is given in class but fails to appear on Moodle, it is still due at the assigned time. Students who cannot find the material they need on Moodle should request help from each other or from me (by e-mail with sufficient time for response).

Chris White and his e-mail: I sometimes keep up with email outside of business hours, but I don't always. In other words, you can expect timely responses to timely emails! **Please don't hesitate to repeat email if you don't get a response within 24 hours.**

Disabilities: Students who require special accommodations due to a learning or physical disability need to register with Learning Disabilities Student Services (LDSS), located at 123 Berkshire House (545-4602). If you have a disability that affects your ability to complete assignments or examinations in a timely manner, please notify me at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Information is available online at http://www.umass.edu/ldss/.

Respect for Diversity: Within this classroom, we will respect all manifestations of student diversity. This includes – but is not limited to – expressions of cultural, gender, personal background, and ability level. Language or actions that explicitly or implicitly marginalize another student in any way will not be tolerated.

Tentative Course Schedule
Subject to revision as needed!

Jan 19: Functional Extravagance, Whole tone, Pentatonicism
Stravinsky: Pulcinella overture
Desbussy Preludes
Berg: Early Songs

Jan 26: Bitonality, the introduction of noise, basic octatonicism
Stravinsky: Petrushka's Room
Ives: "General Booth Enters Heaven," "The Cage"
Rimsky-Korsakov, Scene II of *Sadko*
Burkholder: Critique of Tonality – Charles Ives
Rings: Time and Transformation in Debussy
"Octatonicism" in Straus
Draft of Variation 1 due

Feb 2
Messiaen's Tonal Language
Messiaen: Dieu Parmi Nous
Selections from Messiaen's Tonal Language
"Set Class Theory" in Straus
Variation 1 due

Feb 9: Scriabin, Octatonicism, Interval Cycles
Scriabin's last 5
Callendar: On Scriabin's Collections
Cohn: Properties and Generability of Transpositionally Invariant Sets
Variation 2 draft, Analysis Paper 1 Due

Feb 16
Beat Class – Reich
Pitch Stream: Pierot
Cohn: Beat Class
Roeder: Pulse Streams
Variation 2 due

Feb 23
Schoenberg: "Nacht" from *Pierrot Lunaire*
Webern 5 Pieces
Read about Set Classes from Straus

March 1
Wozzeck, Selected Scenes
Perle: Selections from Operas of Berg
Variation 3 due
Analysis Paper 2 due

March 22
Bartòk, *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, mvt. i, ii

March 29
Selections from Lulu
Webern Piano Variations
Perle: First Four Notes of Lulu
Variation 4 due

April 5
Cage, Glass? Penderecki?
Analysis 3 due
Variation 5 due

April 12
Cardew, Rzewski: Political Music
Variation 6

April 19
Student Presentations