

APPLIED COMPOSITION SYLLABUS

FALL 2012

DR. ERIC RICHARDS – UNL SCHOOL OF MUSIC



Dr. Eric Richards

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COURSE NO.: **MUCP 183 - 983**

SECTION: **001**

CREDITS: 2 - 6

CLASS TIME: arranged with professor

OFFICE HOURS: by appointment

TITLES:

**Composition I - VIII (Undergrad: MUCP 183 - 484)
Seminar in Music Composition (Graduate: MUCP 983)**

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Please see bulletin.

PREREQUISITES: Composition I – VIII (MUCP 183 – 484):
For MUCP 183 (PERMISSION/Meet with professor prior to reg.)
For MUCP 184 (PERMISSION/Meet with professor prior to reg.)
For MUCP 283 (need MUSC 184)
For MUCP 284 (need MUSC 184)
For MUCP 383 (need MUSC 284 or PERMISSION)
For MUCP 384 (need MUSC 284 or PERMISSION)
For MUCP 483 (need MUSC 384)
For MUCP 484 (need MUSC 384)
For MUCP 983 (Seminar in Music Composition):
(need MUSC 484 or evidence of adequate experience in composition)

SPECIAL FEE: **\$25.00**

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Selected readings to be individually assigned.

REQUIRED SCORES:

Score excerpts in the UNL Music Library as needed to complete all Score Study Synopses (S³)

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

All materials necessary for professional quality hand-copied or computer generated music notation hard copy: high quality pencil, high quality staff paper, ruler, inkjet or laser printed hard copy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Development of technical craft and aesthetic sensibilities appropriate to the student's level of composition study
- Development of analytical skills via score study as they relate to compositional techniques.
- Development of organizational and entrepreneurial skills by organizing, promoting, and presenting the student's work in the Student Composers Concerts (i.e., the "Wet Ink" concerts) each semester.
- Development of professional level music preparation competency.

COURSE PROCEDURES

Each student will meet individually for a weekly lesson with the professor or graduate teaching assistant.

- Newly composed material will be presented.
- Strategies for the possible improvement of existing material and development of new material will be discussed.
- Work on the current Score Study Synopsis will be discussed.
- The following week's compositional work plan and schedule will be set.
- Optional work may include development of competency with music notation/production software.

ATTENDANCE

Since regular intensive work is critical to progress and development as a composer, **attendance at all lessons is mandatory**. Any improperly documented absence will result in an F for that lesson. Acceptable documents are: medical notes, court notes, etc. Absence with less than 24 hours notice will result in an F for that lesson. Each student is permitted one undocumented absence per semester.

Any lesson missed by the professor will be made up at the professor's convenience prior to the end of the semester. If you choose to decline a make-up lesson, you must submit a written explanation due not later than the next lesson or the end of the semester, whichever comes first. Lessons missed by the student may be made up at the professor's discretion and availability. **Lessons missed as a result of calendar holidays, UNL Inclement Weather Events, or official UNL SOM events (e.g., Audition Days) will not be made up.**

PRODUCTIVITY EXPECTATIONS

- 2 hours **minimum** of compositional work each workday (ideally 6 days each week).
- Undergraduates: 10 – 12 minutes of new music each semester
- Graduate: a **minimum** of 15 minutes of new music each semester.
- Performance copies of all new pieces copied or typeset to a professional notation standard.

THE FOUR YEAR PLAN

In an effort to provide a long-range, comprehensive experience for all undergraduate composers, all students will work through a coordinated eight-semester schedule of pieces for specific media. These media are either central to the Western tradition of concert music or commonly encountered in modern educational environments. Each undergraduate composer will be working on a Four Year Plan piece (“4YP”) each semester in addition to other projects determined by the professor and student.

YEAR I (“Freshman”)	FALL Solo instrument with piano	SPRING Piano solo
YEAR II (“Sophomore”)	FALL Woodwind Quintet	SPRING Brass Quintet
YEAR III (“Junior”)	FALL Band/Wind Ensemble & a. Marching Band or b. Jazz Ensemble	SPRING Solo Voice with keyboard accompaniment & Choir
YEAR IV (“Senior”)	FALL String Quartet	SPRING Orchestra

SCORE STUDY SYNOPSES (“S³”)

A significant component in the growth and development of all composers is score study. By carefully examining works of previous masters, all composers can learn important compositional techniques that may be assimilated into one's own skill set. Therefore, each student will always be working on an S³. The student will select the source material for each S³ from the list below and work on each synopsis for two weeks. At the end of each two-week period, the current S³ will be turned in for a grade. **In an effort to enhance and enrich the work through the Four Year Plan, each Score Study Synopsis will examine an excerpt from the current Four Year Plan instrumentation.**

The appropriate standard of work will depend on the student's current level of study; a higher level of depth and competency will be expected from graduate students.

The S³ should examine an excerpt of the given piece that is long enough to provide substantial insight. A general rule of thumb for **minimum** excerpt length is approximately 32 measures or one page of material. Each S³ excerpt must be approved by the professor prior to analysis.

Each student will be responsible for SEVEN S³'s each semester.

What should a Score Study Synopsis look like?

It is merely an accurate, concise overview of the various musical parameters of a score excerpt from a composer's perspective. The use of short, accurate "bullet points" would be very effective. Thus, it is **not** a traditional academic paper. At a minimum, the following parameters and possible questions should be addressed in each S³:

MELODIC

- What is the general tonal/scalar framework of the melodic material? Tonal/Nontonal?
- What are the general contours? Climax tones?

HARMONIC

- Note the general harmonic language (e.g., Common Practice? Impressionistic? Quartal?)
- Cite specific examples of notable chords and/or voicings.

RHYTHMIC/METRIC

- How is meter used? Discuss beat, division of the beat, simple vs. compound meter, etc.
- How are the rhythms generally constructed? How do the rhythms affirm or work against the obvious perception of meter?
- Cite specific examples of notable rhythmic devices (e.g., syncopations, cross-rhythms, polyrhythms, etc.)

FORMAL

- What design scheme seems to be in play?
- How does this excerpt fit into the design?
- Can you identify material derived or modified from primary structural components? (E.g., *"this is a fragment of Theme 1 inverted and transposed to the parallel minor."*)

TEXTURE/DENSITY

- Is this excerpt monophonic, polyphonic, homophonic...something else?
- How many different parts/voices are in play? How do they interact?

ORCHESTRATION

- How do the specific timbral choices the composer has made work within the larger musical argument? What is attractive...or not?
- Cite specific examples of notable or unusual orchestrational devices.

The appropriate length for the S³ is 2 pages in outline form, primarily made up of bullet points. The S³ should be attached to a notated copy of the score excerpt. The student should bring a recording of the material in the S³ to each lesson for discussion or verify that the excerpt is available on the Naxos Music Library or the Classical Music Library.

Graduate and 2nd semester Fourth Year students: Graduate and 2nd semester Fourth Year students in the final phase of dissertation work may be excused from the S³ component of the course with the permission of the professor.

SCORE STUDY SYNOPSES Acceptable source material

UNDERGRADUATE	GRADUATE
#1 Baroque 4YP	#1 A work for solo instrument and keyboard
#2 Baroque 4YP	#2 A work for solo piano

#3 Classical 4YP	#3 A work for woodwind quintet
#4 Classical 4YP	#4 A work for brass quintet
#5 Romantic 4YP	#5 A work for band/wind ensemble
#6 Romantic 4YP	#6 A work for voices
#7 Contemporary 4YP	#7 Student's choice (e.g. electronica, etc.)



The “WET INK” Concerts

WET INK I (Undergraduate)

Wednesday, November 7, 2012 7.30p Westbrook Recital Hall (Room 119)

SOUND CHECK: 6.30p (To be scheduled and coordinated by Composition GTA TBD)

WET INK II (Graduate/Upper level)

Thursday, November 8, 2012 7.30p Westbrook Recital Hall (Room 119)

SOUND CHECK: 6.30p (To be scheduled and coordinated by Composition GTA TBD)

The “Wet Ink” concerts take place each semester and feature the new music of UNL student composers. ! It is expected that all composers *will* present a proposal for a new work to be performed at each “Wet Ink” Concert. **All works to be presented on the concert must be approved by the professor prior to the beginning of rehearsals** (see dates below).

Graduate students: Graduate students in the final phase of dissertation work may be excused from presenting at “Wet Ink” with the permission of the professor.

“Wet Ink” Student Composer Responsibilities

- a. Compose great music
- b. Arrange performers (or performance resources if an electronic piece)
- c. Organize rehearsal scheduled. Submit program notes **NLT Mon 8 Oct 12**
(Title, performers, ca. 1 paragraph of narrative on the piece, techniques used, programmatic issues, etc.)
- e. Introduce piece at the concert with a brief narrative.



COMPOSITION STUDIO SEMINARS

These meetings give us a chance to meet as a community of composers and accomplish the following:

- Deal with administrative and planning issues for the “common good”
- Present and discuss our own music with peers
- Present and discuss research into the music of other composers
- Discuss related issues (e.g., entrepreneurship, academic job search issues, intellectual property issues, et al.)

FALL 2012 COMPOSITION STUDIO SEMINARS

Comp. Seminar 1 Topics: Introductions, presentation planning, open discussion	Tuesday, Aug. 28, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 2	Tuesday, Sep. 11, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 3	Tuesday, Sep. 25, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 4	Tuesday, Oct. 9, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 5	Tuesday, Oct. 30, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 6	Tuesday, Nov. 13, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)
Comp. Seminar 7 (Final seminar for Fall 2012)	Tuesday, Nov. 27, 3.30p – 4.20p	Room 1.1 (Music Tech Lab)

Attendance at Composition Departmentals is mandatory and is part of the grade.

FALL 2012 COMPOSITION Master Classes

Gilad Cohen & Lincoln Hanks
Monday, Sep. 10, 12.30 – 2.00p, WMB 107
<http://www.giladcohen.com/live/>
<http://www.lincolnhanks.com/page/Home.html>

Robert Sirota
<http://www.robertsirota.com/>
Friday, Sep. 21, 1.30p – 3.00p, WMB 107

Please make every effort to attend these master classes and arrive prepared with relevant questions and a short excerpt of your own music for possible discussion.

Recitals

Your recital is a great opportunity to share your music (and demonstrate your organizational and planning skills!) to the UNL School of Music community. It is in everyone's best interest (i.e., you, your musicians, and your professor) to attend to the scheduling of recitals as soon as possible.

**N.B., PLEASE DO NOT SCHEDULE YOUR RECITAL ON A SATURDAY OR SUNDAY .
I am normally unavailable and would thus be unable to attend.**

Attendance at UNL Composition recitals is mandatory for all composers.

COURSE CALENDAR
BOLD = mandatory attendance

WEEK	NOTES
Week 1 M 20 Aug – 24 Aug 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First lesson meetings; review syllabus • Arrange schedule and discuss semester goals.
Week 2 M 27 Aug – F 31 Aug 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue composing • Start S₃ #1 • Tues. 28 Aug: COMP SEMINAR 1, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1
Week 3 M 3 Sep – F 7 Sep 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mon. 5 Sep: No Classes – Labour Day • S₃ #1 Due • Select S₃ #2 • Continue composing
Week 4 M 10 Sep – F 14 Sep 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun. 9 Sep, 3.00p, KRH: Dr. Paul Barnes – Premieres • Mon. 10 Sep, 12.30p-2.00p, WMB 107 • Masterclass with composers Gilad Cohen and Lincoln Hanks • Tues. 11 Sep.: COMP SEMINAR 2, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1 • Continue composing • Start S₃ #2
Week 5 M 17 Sep – F 21 Sep 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S₃ #2 Due • Fri. 21 Sep, 1.30p-3.00p, WMB 107 • Masterclass with composer Robert Sirota • Select S₃ #3 • Continue composing
Week 6 M 24 Sep – F 28 Sep 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues. 25 Sep.: COMP SEMINAR 3, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1 • Continue composing • Start S₃ #3
Week 7 M 1 Oct – F 5 Oct 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S₃ #3 Due • Select S₃ #4 • Continue composing
Week 8 M 8 Oct – F 12 Oct 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIDTERM EVALUATION • Mon. 8 Oct: WET INK Program Notes Due • Tues. 9 Oct: COMP SEMINAR 4, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1 • Start S₃ #4 • Continue composing
Week 9 M 15 Oct 12 – F 19 Oct 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! 3 weeks to WET INK! • UNL FALL BREAK: Mon. 22 Oct-Tues. 23 Oct: • No classes or lessons • Continue S₃ #4 • Continue composing
Week 10 M 22 Oct – F 26 Oct 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! 2 weeks to WET INK! • S₃ #4 Due • Select S₃ #5
Week 11 M 29 Oct – F 2 Nov 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! 1 week to WET INK! • Tues. 30 Oct: COMP SEMINAR 5, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1 • Continue S₃ #5
Week 12 M 5 Nov – F 9 Nov 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ! WET INK I: Wed. 7 Nov 12, 7.30p, KRH! • ! WET INK II: Th. 8 Nov 12, 7.30p, KRH! • S₃#5 Due • Select S₃ #6 • Continue composing
Week 13 M 12 Nov – F 15 Nov 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues. 13 Nov: COMP SEMINAR 6, 3.30 – 4.20p, WMB 1.1 • Continue S₃ # 6 • Continue composing

