



Counterpoint

MUS 318.01 – Spring 2026

Dr. Julia Bozone

Email: julia.bozone@tamuc.edu

Office Hours MWF 9:00-10:00. (and by appointment, scheduled via email)

Concurrent Enrollment: none

Recommended Materials:

Counterpoint, Walter Piston, 1947

A Practical Approach to 18th Century Counterpoint, Robert Gauldin, 2013. Revised Edition.

Course Description: Counterpoint is a study of how voices relate to each other throughout a musical texture. Historically, there are contrapuntal rules that relate to different musical centuries – the 16th and 18th centuries, for example. We will be learning the counterpoint rules that are often employed in the works of Bach. Beginning to create our own counterpoints with the help of a cantus firmus, until becoming more and more contrapuntally free.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to accomplish the following in each category:

Melody

- Identify proper use of melodic contrapuntal lines
- Identify melodic properties: apex, sequences often found in melodic lines

Harmony

- Construct and identify properly resolved interval relationships between voices
- Construct and identify chord progression for contrapuntal voicing.
- Demonstrate, through composition and analysis, an understanding of diatonic sequences
- Demonstrate, through composition and analysis, an understanding of common-practice functional harmony

Rhythm

- Demonstrate, through composition and analysis, an understanding of rhythmic notation and of all common meters

Composition

- Compose original works utilizing two and three voice counterpoint

Course Requirements: There will be frequent homework assignments utilizing both analytical and compositional skills. All work should be done with either pencil or computer notation software. Homework is to be turned in during class on the day on which it is due.

Often it may be helpful for students to work on homework assignments with a partner, or in groups. When done correctly, this can serve as a proven method for success for students who may be struggling with a particular concept in class. However, take care that the completed assignment reflects your own understanding of the material, and is not merely a copy of a classmate or colleague's work. Doing so will help to ensure that your work efforts in the class are both fruitful (reflecting the very purpose of homework) and intellectually honest.

Three examinations will be given during the semester. Specific information as to exam content will be provided at least a week before the exam is administered. In addition, there will be frequent quizzes of varying scope and length, both announced and unannounced.

The Final Project for this course will consist of a short, original composition for SATB choir. The composition will make use of the contrapuntal principles discussed in class. Additional information regarding length and specific content will be provided during the semester.

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| Assessment: | Exams: | 30% (Exams I & II & III – 10% each) |
| | Homework: | 30% |
| | Quizzes: | 20% |
| | Final Project: | 10% |
| | Class Participation: | 10% |

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| A = 90-100 | C = 70-79 | F = 0-59 |
| B = 80-99 | D = 60-69 | |

Late Work Policy:

Work should be completed and turned in on time. Late Work, any work completed after the due date, will be accepted but receive a late penalty of the highest possible grade of a 70%. That said, I will only accept late work within 1 week of the original due date. Work completed after that one-week timeline will not be accepted at all and will receive a grade of zero. Due dates are listed in D2L and will also be discussed by your instructor during class meeting times.

Attendance Policy: The University Catalog states, “Students are expected to be present for all class meetings of any course for which they are enrolled.” Sporadic attendance is a waste of your intellectual and financial resources. Unless they are the result of a medical or family emergency, excused

absences (as defined by the Catalog) need to be arranged beforehand with the instructor. All excused absences will require documentation from the Doctor (or whomever) to become excused.

Each student is allowed up to three unexcused absences over the course of the semester. Additional unexcused absences may result in the lowering of the final grade, and, in rare and extreme cases, the student being dropped from the course.

Six unexcused absences will result in failing the course.

A student late to class may be marked absent. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor if their tardiness resulted in being marked absent.

Cell Phone/Laptop Policy:

The use of cell phones & laptops are not permitted during class time. During class all cell phones should be turned off or silenced and put away from the desk.

*If you use your cell phone as a medical device, exceptions will be made. (please notify the instructor)

Reading and/or responding to text messages or other social media, is both rude and distracting to both your instructor and your classmates. Repeated use of cell phones in class will result in a reduction in the student's Class Participation/Attendance grade.

Note Bene:

The study of music theory is an essential and important component of the developing musician's education. Far from being just another "required course," music theory forms the foundation of nearly all higher-ed courses in music, which is a reason for its placement at the very start of undergraduate music studies. Theory is also a subject where the concepts are presented sequentially, each leading to the next. As such, it is imperative that the student be proactive if they are having issues with a particular topic. Do not wait in frustration; ask a question in class, seek me out before or after class, or e-mail me to set up a time to meet individually.

The following statements are required by either University policy, state, or federal law:

University Mission Statement:

East Texas A&M University nurtures and educates for success through access to academic research, and service programs of high quality.

Music Department Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

Disability Resources Statement:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
East Texas A&M University
Waters Library, Room 132
908.886.5150, or 903.886.5835, phone
903.468.8148, fax
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Non-Discrimination Statement:

East Texas A&M will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Behavioral Statement: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

Concealed Carry Statement: Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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| Week I | Course Introduction, Single Melodic Lines | Chapter 2 |
| Week II | Two Voice Counterpoint, Independence, harmony No Class Monday – MLK day | Chapter 3 |
| Week III | Consonance and Dissonance 1:1 and 2:1 | Chapter 4 |
| Week IV | Chromaticism mel vs. harm., mod., cross relations NO CLASS on THURSDAY - TMEA | Chapter 5 |
| Week V | EXAM I on MONDAY Introduction to 2 voice exercises | |
| Week VI | wo Voice Exercises 3:1, 4:1, syncopation | Chapters 6 |
| Week VII | Form, varied repetition, voice control Canon | Chapter 7-8 |
| Week VIII | Invertible Counterpoint Exam II on Wednesday | Chapter 9 |
| Week IX Chapter 10 | Motivic Development | |
| Week X | Three Voice Counterpoint | Chapters 11-12 |
| Week XI | Imitation in Three Voices Real and Tonal Imitation, Answer | Chapter 13 |
| Week XII | FUGUE Episodes, middle entries, final portion | Chapter 15 |
| Week XIII | Fugue Continued fugue (and voice) types | Chapter 16 - 17 |
| Week XIV | Forms based on the Chorale | Chapter 18 |
| Week XV | Forms based on the Chorale | |
| Week XVI | Final Project Performances and Final Review COMPOSITION Due on MONDAY | |
| EXAM III | During the designated time in Finals Week (Schedule link below) | |

Final on MAY 6 at 10:30 AM – 12:30

https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/2025_Spring_Final_Exam_Schedule.pdf