

**San José State University**  
**School of Music and Dance**  
**MUSC 38B-E, MUSC 138B-E, Applied Instruction in Composition,**  
**Section (varies), Spring, 2020**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Brian Belet
<b>Office Location:</b>	Music 104
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924-4632
<b>Email:</b>	Brian.Belet@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Office Hours occur during my posted advising times: Monday & Tuesday afternoons (use sign-up sheet posted next to my office door)
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	(Arranged)
<b>Classroom:</b>	Music Building, Room 104
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	(see details below)
<b>Course Format:</b>	On campus, traditional classroom
<b>Final Exam:</b>	Applied Jury date: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 (Portfolio submission date TBA)

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging:**

Course materials (syllabus, assignment instructions, course handouts, etc.) are posted on my professional music web page at <http://www.beletmusic.com/sjsu-courses.html>. Students are responsible for regularly checking this web site for updates throughout the semester. Students are also responsible for checking your email regularly, as course updates are sent to the course enrollment email list.

**Course Fees:**

Music Use Fee: Music majors and minors must pay a music equipment use fee of \$30 each semester. The fee must be paid directly to the Cashier's Office, and you must bring the receipt to the Music Office before completing registration. **Applied music instruction will not be authorized until this fee is paid.** Music 10B students, or students enrolled in any sound recording course, must pay a fee of \$22 each semester that they are enrolled in one or more of these classes. The fees are included in the student's bill, with other registration fees.

## **Course Description:**

The course is an intensive study of the materials and techniques of art music composition. Pop, rock, jazz, electronica (as opposed to classical electro-acoustic) genres are not a part of this course. Works are created incorporating Classical common-practice and twentieth- /twenty-first-century procedures.

Instruction is set up as follows:

- 1) Weekly lessons with assigned composition Instructor. The day and time will be agreed upon by the student and the Instructor at the beginning of each semester.
- 2) Composers Forum: All composition students must attend the weekly Composition Forum. Time and place arranged at the beginning of the semester (the usual time is Tuesdays at 3:30 pm).
- 3) Concerts: Students are required to attend and participate in Composition Area concerts and related events. The calendar for these concerts will be announced at the beginning of the semester.
- 4) Assigned theoretical/aesthetic readings and supplementary score study. Any assignments in this area are just that, assignments, and completing these assignments is a part of the graded applied lessons.

## **Course Goals - LOWER DIVISION**

Students will learn how to construct motives and phrases of varied length. Students will learn how to develop harmony, texture, overall structure, and appropriate use of instruments. Lower Division students will be assigned compositional exercises of varying duration and degree of difficulty dealing with phrase construction and extension of musical material. Compositions will be assigned in imitation of period pieces such as chorales, piano sonatas, variation form, and works for small ensembles of diverse instrumentation. This will lead to the development of musical vocabulary, syntax, and typical stylistic practices of composition, including those from the twentieth century.

Students will analyze representative works from the literature including Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth century (modern), and may be required to produce weekly analysis assignments in preparation for the compositional work. The importance of familiarity with pieces from the music literature cannot be over emphasized. It is imperative that students conduct their own research and study of the literature every week of each semester. The best way to do this is to have a small notebook with you each time you listen to a recording or study a score. In the notebook, write any comment or thoughts concerning the pieces you listen to.

## **Course Goals - UPPER DIVISION**

A main goal of upper division studies is to develop a personal compositional style. Upper Division students will learn how to expand their musical vocabulary, syntax, and will develop skills necessary to handle compositional materials and techniques of contemporary music. Students will analyze representative works from the modern period in preparation of the compositional work.

## **Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

There is a teaching proverb that states: *'Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.'* Provided a student applies himself/herself to this course — including attending each week's lesson, studying the music examples, completing assignments on time, asking questions when the material is not yet understood, studying daily outside of class time, attending the weekly

Composers Forum, and attending all assigned concerts — the following outcomes can be expected:

### **LOWER DIVISION**

#### **Semester 1 – MUSC 038BX**

Co-requisite: MUSC 1A+B

Small-scale structures including design of motives and phrases, sections. Short compositions or movements. ½-hour lesson each week; 1.0 Unit credit.

#### **Semester 2 – MUSC 038CX**

Pre-requisite: MUSC 1A+B (grade of C or higher; B or higher highly recommended).

Co-requisite: MUSC 2A+B

Small-scale structure design with more complex harmonic elements. Imitation of simple models from the literature. ½-hour lesson each week; 1.0 Unit credit.

#### **Semester 3 – MUSC 038DX**

Pre-requisite: MUSC 2A+B (grade of C or higher; B or higher highly recommended).

Co-requisite: MUSC 3A+B

Medium-length structure design. Simple chromatic harmonic elements. Imitation of models from the literature. ½-hour lesson each week; 1.0 Unit credit.

#### **Semester 4 – MUSC 038EX**

Pre-requisite: MUSC 3A+B (grade of C or higher; B or higher highly recommended).

Co-requisite: MUSC 4A+B

Medium- to large-scale structure design. Chromatic and modal harmony. Imitation of models from the literature. ½-hour lesson each week; 1.0 Unit credit.

**Must pass the Junior Qualifying jury Exam at the end of Semester 4.**

### **UPPER DIVISION**

#### **Semester 5 – MUSC 138B**

Prerequisite: MUSC 4A+B (grade of B or higher). Must have passed Piano Proficiency.

Co-requisites: MUSC 103, MUSC 104, and/or MUSC 102 (grade of B or higher must be earned in all of these courses).

Large-scale structure compositions or movements, including multi movement pieces. Chromatic and modal harmonies of higher complexity than in lower division. One-hour lesson each week; 2.0 Units credit.

#### **Semester 6 – MUSC 138C**

Pre-/Co-requisites: MUSC 103, MUSC 104, and/or MUSC 102 (grade of B or higher must be earned in all of these courses).

Large-scale structure compositions or movements, including multi movement pieces. Chromatic and modal harmonies of higher complexity than in lower division. One-hour lesson each week; 2.0 Units credit.

**Junior Recital:** Must have performed about 30 minutes of original music (pieces from levels 1-5). Program must be approved by Instructor and area coordinator. A hearing one month before recital is required.

### **Semester 7 – MUSC 138D**

Prerequisite: Successful Junior Recital.

Pre-/Co-requisites: See Level 6 list.

Development or original style but based on materials learned in lessons and models from the literature. Compose a large or multi-movement piece for small chamber ensemble in chromatic or modal harmonic style, or synthetic scales or modes. One-hour lesson each week; 2.0 Units credit.

### **Semester 8 – MUSC 138E**

Pre-/Co-requisites: See Level 6 list.

Large or multi-movement piece of high harmonic and structural complexity for large ensemble. One-hour lesson each week; 2.0 Units credit.

**Senior Recital:** 1 hour of original music (pieces from levels 5-8). Program must be approved by Instructor and/or area coordinator. A hearing one month before the recital is required (see recitals guidelines).

### **Texts/Readings:**

#### **Textbook**

(No formal text required for this course.)

Students must have their own personal copy of Adobe InDesign (part of the larger Adobe Creative Cloud suite, provided through SJSU)

#### **Textbook – Recommended resources**

*Anthology for Musical Analysis*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. C. Burkhart (Wadsworth).

#### **Other Readings**

Additional music scores and/or reading will be assigned by the Instructor as needed.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

Primary course activities include composing original music as assigned by the Instructor. Only work specifically assigned by the Instructor counts as completed work in this course; any outside arranging/composing projects are extra and do not count as course work unless approved in advance by the Instructor. Students will be guided in the elements of traditional and modern procedures including electronic media. Graded components of this course include weekly lessons, Composers Forum (attendance and participation), assigned area concert/event attendance, and the Jury grade (percentage breakdown listed below).

During the course of the semester the following may be assigned on a weekly basis:

- A. Lower Division: Short exercises in two and four parts for diverse media including electronic music.
- B. Upper Division: Medium length exercises for diverse media including electronic music.
- C. Studies in traditional and modern counterpoint and rhythm.
- D. Concerts (TBA)

Required each semester: Two compositions (completed by the end of the semester) of substantial duration, for small and large ensembles whose forces and style will be determined by the Instructor.

Assigned work from one lesson is expected to be completed in time for the next lesson. Work not completed will result in a lesson grade of 'F' for that week.

Students are expected to invest several hours of work on their assignments every week in order to achieve the expected level of mastery by the end of the term. In lieu of a Final Exam, students assemble and submit a portfolio of their work completed during the semester for review by the Composition faculty at the end of the semester. Details of the portfolio, and submission date for the portfolio, are discussed throughout the semester.

### **JURY EXAM**

Students are required to present their completed works and exercises to a composition jury at the end of each semester. The jury grade is your final exam grade, and is based on work done in lessons and approved by your Instructor. Only works and assignments worked on during lessons are accepted, unless the Instructor has approved them to be part of this course. The jury will assess, grade the student's work and recommend his/her placement for the next academic term.

Students need to provide recordings of presented works along with legible, "clean," and presentable scores. Score reading at the piano of representative excerpts may substitute a recording in case the latter may not be obtained. Compositions for electronic media will be in digital media, with the addition of parts if traditional instruments are used.

### **JUNIOR QUALIFYING JURY EXAM**

At the end of the fourth semester of lessons students must pass a Junior Qualifying Exam, which will determine their readiness for upper division studies. In composition, this exam entails the presentation of several works, two of which must be from the last semester of applied studies. These works must demonstrate the student's understanding of larger structures and complex harmonic vocabulary commensurate with four semesters of private studies. There should be a solid grasp of chromatic harmony and principles of technology as it applies to music composition.

### **JUNIOR AND SENIOR RECITALS**

Permission to fulfill the recital requirements will be given at the appropriate Jury meeting the semester before the recital is planned for. All music for these recitals requires advance approval by the Instructor. Required forms are in the main Music office and must be completed and turned in advance. Both the Junior and Senior Recital require a formal concert hearing one month in advance of the recital. A recital procedure and checklist is added at the end of this syllabus.

Effective Spring 2018, Junior Recitals must be scheduled for either a Listening Hour (T / Th at 12:30pm) or Composers Forum (T at 3:30pm) time slot.

### **PERFORMING ENSEMBLE REQUIREMENT**

Composition and electro-acoustic music students are required to enroll in a major ensemble each semester.

## **CONCERT ATTENDANCE**

All music majors must fulfill the concert attendance requirement. Make sure you familiarize yourself with this requirement and document each attended concert as specified by the Music Office.

## **Grading Information**

Weekly lesson grades will be assessed on participation, completed assignments and projects including compositions, exercises, Reading Session music (when applicable), and score analyses. Compositions will be graded on structural, melodic, harmonic, textural parameters, and how well instruments are utilized. Only work assigned by the Instructor will count towards a grade. In other words, projects done in other classes or for extracurricular activities will not count for a grade in this class (unless provision for this have been made with the Instructor). Each week's assignment is graded. If a student fails to bring an assignment as required by the Instructor an "F" grade will be recorded. The Jury examination, at the end of the semester will serve as the final exam grade for applied lessons and overall program participation. All assignments must be completed as required by the Instructor and be presentable (computer notated when required and bound unless the Instructor states otherwise).

Composers Forum participation is part of this applied lesson course and will be factored into the overall grade. Unexcused absences will result in an "F" for that week. If a student misses his or her Forum presentation, an "F" will be recorded.

Required Event Participation. There are several required events for all composition students each semester: faculty composer concerts, student concerts organized by the Composition area faculty (e.g., group recitals), Junior and Senior recitals of fellow composition students, reading sessions, guest artist master classes and recitals, and others. The events will be announced at the beginning of each term, usually two or three per semester. All students are required to participate unless explicitly excused by the composition area faculty because of compelling reasons. Failure to participate fully in any required event will earn an "F" for that week (arriving at the start of a required event, or leaving immediately after, is not participating fully and an "F" will be recorded). Attending other events, going out of town, forgetting about a required activities and scheduling others in its place, etc., are not compelling reasons.

Faculty concerts. All composition students must help in set up, stage organization, and break down including electronic/audio equipment. Students who fail to show up or arrive late will receive an "F" for that event unless excused by area faculty. Therefore, be ready to help in set-up and teardown – don't wait to be told what to do. Think of the essential things we always need when producing a concert: stage hands such as moving chairs, stands, pianos, before, during, and after concerts. Put up and fold back background panels. If you are authorized: set-up, operate and teardown electronic equipment, and anything else that needs to be done before an event and after, until the hall is completely cleared. If you don't know what to do, ask. Your job is not over until everything is finished. So don't leave the venue, chat with friends, or otherwise be idle until the concert hall is closed, regardless of whether you performed, conducted, or did anything else during the concert: Composition Area faculty define what is or is not "participation."

Student concerts. (Same criteria as for Faculty concerts.)

Junior and Senior recitals. (Same criteria as for Faculty concerts.) In addition, the student(s) producing the recital will be responsible for all the planning and organization. All other students will assist in any capacity as requested.

Concert attendance. All music majors must fulfill the School of Music & Dance concert attendance requirement. Make sure you familiarize yourself with this requirement and document your attendance using the current School policy and procedure. This requirement will be verified at Juries. A partial letter grade will be deducted from the final course grade for two or more missed concerts.

**Grading Weights:**

The course final grade is calculated with the following weighted sub-grades:

Weekly lessons	60%
Composers Forum, assigned Concerts (etc.)	15%
Jury grade	25%

**Grading System:**

Letter grades are assigned on a 10-point scale, with “+” and “-” used as appropriate. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are graded on a normalized 100-point basis, so that letter grades correspond to the following GPA and percentage points:

Letter Grade	GPA	%
A+	4.0	99 - 100
A	4.0	93 - 98
A-	3.7	90 - 92
B+	3.3	88 - 89
B	3.0	84 - 87
B-	2.7	80 - 83
C+	2.3	78 - 79
C	2.0	74 - 77
C-	1.7	70 - 73
D+	1.3	69 - 69
D	1.0	64 - 67
D-	0.7	60 - 63
F	0.0	0 - 59

NOTE: Effective Fall 2017, all MUSC courses carry a final course grade requirement of C or better (not C-) to be considered a passing grade within the School of Music and Dance.

**Classroom Protocol**

Attendance is required for all weekly meetings, each Composers Forum meeting, and all assigned concerts and other special events.

All cell phones must be turned off while in class; plan personal communications for before or after class. Since most cell phones have photo, video, and text messaging capabilities, any

student seen with a cell phone during class will be considered to be cheating and will automatically fail the course. Larger tablet and laptop computers may be used when specific music score and/or audio examples are being referenced.

### **University Policies:**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at [www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/)

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **Required Concerts**

Specific concerts (including, but not limited to, guest artists, faculty concerts, and student recitals) will be assigned as required attendance events. While every attempt will be made to announce these very early in the semester, some events may be announced as they become available. Known concerts are listed below, and updates will be sent to students via email notification. (concerts will be announced in Composers Forum.)

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### **COMPOSITION AREA RECITALS PROCEDURE & CHECK LIST**

Planning, organizing and producing a successful recital involves several steps.

#### **STEP-1**

When the time approaches to fulfill the recital requirement, discuss with your instructor your intention to do the recital and the pieces that will be performed. Your instructor has to review and approve the repertory. Only works composed in the course of applied lessons and/or approved by your instructor may be included.

#### **STEP-2**

a. Select performers (if this has not been done already). You may need approval from their respective applied instructors, so be proactive and seek this early so there are no surprises later.

#### **STEP-3**

Get the **recitals form** package from the Music Office. Fill it out the recital form and have it **signed** by your composition instructor and composition area coordinator, approving the recital hearing and the recital date (after the recital, you need instructor signatures approving the recital).

#### **STEP-4**

Email your professors to get confirmation they are free to attend on the proposed dates. Check with all your performers and get written (email) confirmations.

#### **STEP-5**

Schedule a date, time for the recital: Monday – Friday.



NOTE: Evenings are very busy so for Junior recitals, especially, consider the noon-time or afternoon. The Tuesday/Thursday 'Listening Hour' and the Tuesday afternoon Composers Forum are excellent and preferred venues. Also, consider sharing a recital with another composition Junior Recital. Do not schedule an evening concert for only a ½-length Junior Recital.

NOTE: Do not schedule your recital too early in the semester: you must have a **hearing** at least one month before the recital and it has to be at performance level (only minor adjustments allowed. Intonation, rhythm, wrong notes, etc., are not acceptable otherwise the recital will be cancelled). In other words, you should have been rehearsing your pieces for a long time before the hearing, which precludes a recital date early in the semester.

### **STEP-6**

For Senior Recital: Reserve hall space -- Concert Hall, Room 150, Spartan Memorial, or other large rooms. The Music Office controls the Concert Hall schedule, and the Student Union controls the Spartan Memorial schedule.

### **STEP-7**

**Instrument parts:** Extract from completed and approved scores and distribute to all players (changes are not allowed such as new sections, different harmony, etc.).

**Rehearsals:** schedule and start practicing the music.

### **STEP-8**

One month before: recital **hearing** is due.

Your music must be well rehearsed and at performance level. The hearing is a time to check interpretation and make minor adjustments. If performers are still learning notes, have intonation problems, and other problems that indicate a lack of practice, the recital will be cancelled.

### **STEP-9**

Recital

### **STEP-10**

Your instructors sign your recital form (approved or not) and you turn it in the Music office with a copy of the program.

### **STEP-11**

Conference with your applied instructor: review and receive feedback about your recital. Also, a presentation at Forum may be scheduled for all to discuss your recital.

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## HOW TO PLAN AND ORGANIZE YOUR RECITAL

Junior recitals occur on the 6<sup>th</sup> semester of composition studies.

Senior recitals must be done in the 8<sup>th</sup> semester.

Based on the above, you should:

- Start planning the Junior recital in the **5<sup>th</sup> semester**, right after passing the JQE (Junior Qualifying [jury] Exam).
- Start planning the Senior recital in the **7<sup>th</sup> semester**.

Tip: work back from the proposed recital date (recital ← hearing ← rehearsals ← publicity and program notes ← room scheduling ← commitment from performers ← filing signed recital form, room reservation & cleaning fee, etc. ← have parts ready and MIDI recordings for players for their own practice, etc.).

### EXAMPLE 1

If you give a recital in the Spring semester, say **April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Fall Semester**, preceding the semester of your recital

- In **the Fall** semester discuss with your instructor your proposed recital and get tentative approval of compositions to be performed
- Performers: identify musicians and ask them to play your pieces
- Get approval in writing (email) from their applied instructors, if necessary
- From completed and approved scores: produce all parts and distribute (changes are not allowed)
- Schedule rehearsals and start practicing
- Recital form is signed by two instructors
- Hall is reserved including cleaning deposit (Music office)

**Spring Semester**

- Rehearsals are ongoing
- Complete program notes. Instructor must approve. Turn in to Music office for duplicating.
- **Four weeks before recital: March 1<sup>st</sup>**: hearing takes place. The pieces must be at performance level otherwise the recital will be cancelled. Only minor adjustments can be made.
- Continue to rehearse and make adjustments
- April 1<sup>st</sup>: Recital takes place
- Approved and signed recital form is filed in the Music office with a copy of the program
- Cleaning deposit is refunded to you if everything is left in order

## EXAMPLE 2

If you want to give a recital in the Fall semester, say **October 15<sup>st</sup>**

In **the Spring** semester, preceding the semester of your recital

- Discuss with your instructor your proposed recital and get tentative approval of compositions to be performed
- Performers: identify musicians and ask them to play your pieces
- Get approval in writing (email) from their applied instructors, if necessary
- From completed and approved scores: produce all parts and distribute (changes are not allowed)
- Schedule rehearsals and start practicing
- Recital form is signed by two instructors
- Hall is reserved (Music office)

**Fall Semester**, when the recital takes place

- Rehearsals are ongoing
  - Complete program notes. Instructor must approve. Turn to Music office for duplicating.
  - **Four weeks before recital (September 15)**: hearing takes place. The pieces must be at performance level otherwise the recital will be cancelled. Only minor adjustments can be made.
  - Continue to rehearse and make adjustments
  - October 15: Recital takes place
  - Approved and signed recital form is filed in the Music office with a copy of the program
  - Cleaning deposit is refunded to you if everything is left in order
-