

HUMA 2104: Music Theory I — Introduction to Tonal Music

School of Humanities, HKUST — Fall 2022

Instructor:	Ilari KAILA (kaila@ust.hk)
Office hours:	Mon 1:00–3:00 PM, and by appointment
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Office:	CYT G004
Lectures:	Mon/Wed 12:00–12:50
Tutorials:	Tuesdays 12:00–12:50 PM; 1:00–1:50 PM; 2:00–2:50 PM; 3:00–3:50 PM.
Location:	Shaw Auditorium Rm. 103

Course description

HUMA 2104 is an introduction to the basics of Western music theory with an emphasis on analytical listening and rudimentary composing. Writing skills taught in the course include notation; operating with keys and scales; identifying and constructing intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions; and basic harmonic analysis. The course has a rigorous ear-training component which will be mostly practiced in tutorials. This will involve reading exercises (singing, clapping, talking), and writing down music by ear (rhythms, melodies, chords).

The course culminates with a final project in which students compose a simple piece of music for piano. This project will happen in clearly guided steps throughout the semester.

A broader objective of the course is to acquire listening skills that may be applied to various types of music. Students will develop an understanding of how different parameters (melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, and so on) interact to create music. Examples used in class will be drawn mostly, but not exclusively, from the western classical repertoire. Although prior musical training will be helpful, there are no prerequisites for the course.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

On successful completion of the course, you will have

- the ability to listen to music analytically, with an awareness of parameters such as meter, texture, modulation, instrumentation, and form;
- learned the rudiments of reading and writing music, as well as basic musicianship skills;
- developed a deeper appreciation and understanding of music, regardless of style, and of Western classical music in particular; and
- prepared yourself to pursue more advanced studies in music (including HUMA3104: Music Theory II).

Cosmopolis Festival at HKUST

This semester will have the second season of HKUST's new cross-cultural music and arts initiative, the Cosmopolis Festival. *Attending at least three events (two concerts, one educational event) is mandatory, and your term paper will be based on what you hear at the festival* (more below). For HUMA 2104, students need to choose two from the below list of concerts that are relevant to this class, and one workshop/talk of their own choosing. Some dates and details may still change; updated information will be made available regularly.

Concerts:

- (1) The Hong Kong Philharmonic: A Chamber Orchestra Concert
Sunday, September 25, 3:00 PM

- (2) The Art of the Harpsichord: Mahan Esfahani in Concert
Wednesday, September 28, 8:00 PM
- (3) Synesthesia: An Electroacoustic Music and Multimedia Concert
Thursday, October 6, 7:30 PM
- (4) Italian and French Masterpieces for Violin and Piano:
With Gian Paolo Peloso and Rachel Cheung
Wednesday, November 9, 7:30 PM

The festival will also feature Balinese Gamelan, traditional Cantonese music, jazz, and more. You can find the full season at:

https://cosmopolisfestival.hkust.edu.hk/upcoming_event

Talks, masterclasses, workshops:

- (1) The Modern Harpsichord: Talk by Mahan Esfahani
Tuesday, September 27, 1:00 PM (Institute for Advanced Study)
- (2) JUNK!VR: Virtual Reality Music Performance Workshop
Wednesday, October 10, 7:00 PM
- (3) Balinese Gamelan Workshop with I Wayan Sudirana
Monday, October 6, 7:30 PM (Online Event)
- (4) Meet the Artist: String Instrument Workshop with Gian Paolo Peloso
Thursday, November 10, 2:00 PM (Online Event)

There will also be a roundtable and Q&A with some of the composers featured at this year's festival, schedule to be determined later. Dates and times are still subject to change; check for the latest information at the website above.

Term paper

Your term paper will be an analytic, comparative writing assignment, based on two compositions of your choice from the Cosmopolis Festival (see above). The length is a minimum 700 words, which works out to ca. two pages in Times New Roman 12-point font, double spaced.

It is still possible, though not likely, that the festival gets postponed or restricted due to the current pandemic situation. This might mean that all or part of the concerts and educational events will be presented online. In the event that the festival is cancelled, the assignment will be adapted accordingly and based on recordings.

Attendance and participation are crucial for assimilating the skills needed for reading music and developing your ear. *If you cannot commit to attending every session, you should not take this course.* Also, if you are not able to attend *at least three Cosmopolis* events (two concerts, one educational event; see above), you cannot enroll in this class.

We will be taking attendance at the beginning of the class; arriving late twice will be considered equivalent of being absent once.

Study materials

No textbook is required for this class. You will be given digital handouts and assignments, and directed to various online resources for reference, review, and practice. For taking notes, you will need music staff paper, which you can print out from a file available on Canvas.

Homework

Each homework assignment will be given as a PDF file. It should be printed out by the student, completed in pencil, scanned (or photographed), and uploaded on Canvas before the start time of the class it is due. Alternatively, the homework can be done on a tablet computer or other device that allows marking up a PDF file. We do not accept late homework unless

there are extenuating circumstances; even so, missing the deadline will lower your homework grade. If we have already gone through assigned material in detail in the class after the deadline, it cannot be turned in late, regardless of the reasons. Under extenuating circumstances, you may be assigned a make-up homework exercise.

Composition exercise

The course will provide you an opportunity to try your hands on writing a short, simple composition, following the rules of traditional tonal music, as your final project. This is the most challenging component of HUMA 2104. You don't need to worry about your project being a flawless work of art—the purpose of this project is to give you insights into the craft composition by trying it out yourself, and learning music theory through “reverse engineering”. This will be done gradually over the course of the semester, with ample opportunity for revisions at every stage of the process.

Examinations

The midterm will cover the material of the first half of the course and the final exam will cover mostly the material of the second half, with some material from the first. Exams may not be made up unless you have a verifiable illness or emergency. You must notify us in advance if you must miss an exam.

Grading

Final Exam	25%
Midterm	20%
Homework	15%
Concert report	15%
Final Project	10%
Attendance/participation	15%

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Class schedule — Fall 2022

LECTURE:

TOPIC:

Week 1

Mon, Sep 5 – Lec 1

Introduction to the course; musical perception: music and time, overtone series

Wed, Sep 7 – Lec 2

Topic 1. Rhythmic notation; note and rest durations; meter; bar lines; tempo; upbeats and downbeats; simple triple and duple meter

Week 2

Mid-Autum Festival: No class on Monday, September 12.

Wed, Sep 14 – Lec 3

Topic 1. Dotted and tied rhythms; tuplets; compound meters; pick-up bars

Week 3

Mon, Sep 19 – Lec 4

Topic 2. Pitch notation: staves and the grand staff, clefs; accidentals, enharmonics; diatonic and chromatic half steps and whole steps

Week 3 tutorials: Reading rhythms; simple rhythm dictations; recognizing meter; listening to half and whole steps

Wed, Sep 21 – Lec 5

Topics 3 & 4. Introducing rhythm composition assignment; introducing keys and scales

HKUST's Cosmopolis Festival begins

Week 4

Mon, Sep 26 – Lec 6

Topic 4. Circle of fifths and keys, placement of accidentals

Week 4: tutorials: More rhythm work, including reading short parallel period phrases; simple singing exercises on half steps and whole steps, major scales

Wed, Sep 28 – Lec 7

Topic 4. Devices for determining keys; circle of fifths in minor; minor scale forms (natural, harmonic, melodic); relative and parallel keys

Week 5

Mon, Oct 3 – Lec 8

Topics 3 & 5. Discussion on students' rhythm composition assignments; introducing intervals

Week 5 tutorials: Ear training with major and minor scales

Wed, Oct 5 – Lec 9

Topic 5. Intervals: numbers and qualities

Week 6

Mon, Oct 10 – Lec 10

Topic 6. Introducing major-key melody composition assignment; motives and themes; phrase structureWeek 6 tutorials: Singing simple parallel period phrases in major.

Wed, Oct 12 – Lec 11

Topic 6. More on melodic writing in major**Week 7**

Mon, Oct 17 – Lec 12

Topic 9. Introducing triads and harmony; review for midterm

Wed, Oct 19 – Lec 13

MIDTERM EXAMINATION**Week 8**

Mon, Oct 24 – Lec 14

Topics 7 & 8. Introducing minor-key melody composition assignment; application of minor scales; analytic listening: texture, meter, and tonality

Wed, Oct 26 – Lec 15

Topics 6 & 11. Discussion on students' phrases in major key; guidelines for concert report/term paper; HKUST's Cosmopolis Festivals begins**Week 9**

Mon, Oct 31 – Lec 16

Topic 9. Seventh chords; inversions of chords and figured bassWeek 9 tutorials: Ear training with triads

Wed, Nov 2 – Lec 17

Topic 10. Harmonic analysis in major; ear training with seventh chords**Week 10**

Mon, Nov 7 – Lec 18

Topic 10. Introducing cadences; harmony creating form

Wed, Nov 9 – Lec 19

Topic 10. More on harmonic analysis; analyzing examples from repertoire**Week 11**

Mon, Nov 14 – Lec 20

Topics 11 & 12. Introducing composition exercise (final project); more on term paperWeek 11 tutorials: Ear training with cadences

Wed, Nov 16 – Lec 21

Topic 12. Working on sample final project together**Week 12**

Mon, Nov 21 – Lec 22

Topics 9 & 12. Discussion on students' phrases in minor key; more work on sample final project: voice leading

Wed, Nov 23 – Lec 23

Analyzing music examples from repertoire

Week 13

Mon, Nov 28 – Lec 24

More work on sample final project: voice leading and texture

Wed, Nov 30 – Lec 25

Wrapping up; review for final examination