

**HUMA 2104 / CORE 2632: Music Theory I — Introduction to Tonal Music**  
SHSS, Division of Humanities, HKUST — Spring 2023

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Office hours:	Mon 1:00–3:00 PM, and by appointment
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Office:	CYT G004
Lectures:	Monday/Wednesday 11:00–11:50 AM
Location:	CYT LTL
Tutorials:	Tuesday 11:00–11:50 AM and 6:00–6:50 PM; Wednesday 12:00–12:50 PM and 6:00–6:50 PM.
Location:	CYT G005

### **Course description**

Music Theory I 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. 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, and so on) interact to create music. Examples used in class will be drawn mostly, but not exclusively, from 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).

**Attendance and participation** are crucial for assimilating the skills needed for reading music and developing your ear. *If you cannot commit to attending every class session and tutorial, you should not take this course.* We will be taking attendance at the beginning of the class; arriving late twice will be considered equivalent of being absent once.

### **Term paper and concert**

HKUST's flagship arts initiative, the Cosmopolis Festival, is curated to add value to our music courses, including Music Theory I. While the festival typically takes place in the fall semester, we are lucky to have an off-season Cosmopolis event on **Tuesday, February 21 at**

**7:30 PM:** Prof. Patrick Yim (United States), internationally noted violin virtuoso and pedagogue, will be giving a recital in which he performs and discusses contemporary solo repertoire. *The event is mandatory. If you are not able to attend, you should not enroll in this class.* More information and registration here:

<https://cosmopolisfestival.hkust.edu.hk/news/modern-monologues-violinist-patrick-yim>

Your term paper will be a “concert report”, an analytic writing assignment, based on music you hear at the event. The length is a minimum 350 words, which works out to about one page in Times New Roman 12-point font, double spaced. More details will be given in class.

### **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%

## HUMA 2104 / CORE 2632: Music Theory I — Introduction to Tonal Music

Class schedule — Spring 2023

### LECTURE:

### TOPIC:

#### Week 1

Mon, Feb 6 – Lec 1

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

Wed, Feb 8 – Lec 2

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

#### Week 2

Mon, Feb 13 – Lec 3

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

Wed, Feb 15 – Lec 4

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

Week 2 tutorials: Reading rhythms; simple rhythm dictations; recognizing meter; listening to half and whole steps

#### Week 3

Mon, Feb 20 – Lec 5

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

*Tuesday, Feb 21: Modern Monologues—Violinist Patrick Yim Off-season Cosmopolis Festival event. Attendance mandatory.*

Wed, Feb 22 – Lec 6

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

Week 3: tutorials: More rhythm work, including reading short parallel period phrases; simple singing exercises on half steps and whole steps, major scales

#### Week 4

Mon, Feb 27 – Lec 7

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

Wed, Mar 1 – Lec 8

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

Week 4 tutorials: Ear training with major and minor scales

#### Week 5

Mon, Mar 6 – Lec 9

Topic 5. Intervals: numbers and qualities

Wed, Mar 8 – Lec 10	<u>Topic 6</u> . Introducing major-key melody composition assignment; motives and themes; phrase structure
	<u>Week 5 tutorials</u> : Singing simple parallel period phrases in major.
<b>Week 6</b>	
Mon, Mar 13 – Lec 11	<u>Topic 6</u> . More on melodic writing in major
Wed, Mar 15 – Lec 12	<u>Topic 9</u> . Introducing triads and harmony; review for midterm
<b>Week 7</b>	
Mon, Mar 20 – Lec 13	<u>Topics 7 &amp; 8</u> . Introducing minor-key melody composition assignment; application of minor scales; analytic listening: texture, meter, and tonality
Wed, Mar 22 – Lec 14	<u>Topics 6 &amp; 11</u> . Discussion on students' phrases in major key; guidelines for concert report/term paper; HKUST's Cosmopolis Festivals begins
<b>Week 8</b>	
Mon, Mar 27 – Lec 15	<u>Topic 9</u> . Seventh chords; inversions of chords and figured bass
	<u>Week 9 tutorials</u> : Ear training with triads
Wed, Mar 29 – Lec 16	<u>Topic 10</u> . Harmonic analysis in major; ear training with seventh chords
<b>Week 9</b>	
Mon, Apr 3 – Lec 17	<b>MIDTERM EXAMINATION</b>
	<i>Mid-term break: No class on April 5 and April 10.</i>
Wed, Apr 12 – Lec 18	<u>Topic 10</u> . Introducing cadences; harmony creating form
<b>Week 10</b>	
Mon, Apr 17 – Lec 19	<u>Topic 10</u> . More on harmonic analysis; analyzing examples from repertoire
Wed, Apr 19 – Lec 20	<u>Topics 11 &amp; 12</u> . Introducing composition exercise (final project); more on term paper
	<u>Week 10 tutorials</u> : Ear training with cadences
<b>Week 11</b>	
Mon, Apr 24 – Lec 21	<u>Topic 12</u> . Working on sample final project together
Wed, Apr 26 – Lec 22	<u>Topics 9 &amp; 12</u> . Discussion on students' phrases in minor key; more work on sample final project: voice leading

**Week 12**

*Labor Day: No class on May 1.*

Wed, May 3 – Lec 23

More work on sample final project: voice leading and texture; analyzing music examples from repertoire

**Week 13**

Mon, May 8 – Lec 24

Wrapping up; review for final examination