

Harmony, Counterpoint and Keyboard Skills I MUSIC 173 (Spring 2025)

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

09:00 – 09:50

Rm. 363

“Persevere, do not only practice your art, but endeavor also to fathom its inner meanings;
it deserves this effort.”

Beethoven, July 17, 1812; letter to Emilie M.

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Office hours: Thursdays, 11:00-12:00 and by appointment (in-person or via zoom)
Contingency: If need be, information will be sent to the class with a back-up Zoom link and password.

class open forum address: 173@lists.ursatz.com

Supplies (bring with you to all classes)

Textbook:

Harmony and Voice Leading (4th Edition). Edward Aldwell & Carl Schachter.
(ISBN: 0-4951-8975-8). 5th edition is also acceptable (ISBN: 978-1337560573). *Required*

Counterpoint in Composition. Felix Salzer & Carl Schachter. (ISBN-10: 023107039X) *Recommended*

The required textbook will be shown to the teacher in the second week of the class.

Other:

Music paper; pencil with eraser. You may not use writing implements other than pencils.
Homework, quizzes, or exams done in anything except pencil will not be marked and will receive a failing grade.

Grading

This course consists of two components: harmony and counterpoint, and keyboard skills. You will earn one grade for harmony and counterpoint and one grade for keyboard skills. The harmony and counterpoint component will count as 65%, and the keyboard component will count as 35%, of your final grade. Thus, if you earn an 85 in harmony and counterpoint, but a 75 in keyboard, your final grade would be $(85 \times .65) + (75 \times .35) = 55.25 + 26.25 = 81.5$.

Each component will be graded in the following manner:

Homework assignments, quizzes, participation (see below): 50%

Midterm exam: 20%

Final exam: 30%

Participation: [see Attendance Policy, below]

As a matter of policy, I drop the lowest harmony and voice leading quiz or homework grade.

Final letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 97-100	A = 93-96	A- = 90-92	D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	F = 0-59		
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72			

Weekly keyboard assignment grades convert letters to the highest associated number for calculation purposes (A+ = 100; A = 96; A- = 92; B+ = 89; etc.) except for F, which will convert to 0.

Theory course material is presented in three forms: textbook readings, handouts/downloads, and lectures. You are responsible for all material, regardless of the medium of presentation. It is of utmost importance that you bring music paper to class and *take notes*. In the event that you are absent for a lecture, be sure to get the notes for that class from a classmate.

Please note that homework assignments will be posted on my website in the "courses" section. I do not accept late homework if the assignment is available to the student (e.g., via download), even if the student was absent when the assignment was given. **Please see "Homework Policy," below, for additional information.**

FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR YOUR MIDTERM or FINAL EXAMINATIONS WILL RESULT IN A FAILURE OF MUS 173 (regardless of your average).

ACSM policy mandates that an overall grade of C- or better, as well as passing grades (minimum of D) in both written and keyboard work, is required in order to continue to the next course in the sequence.

Per this policy, a student whose final average is C- or higher, but who does not have at least a D in either written theory or keyboard will receive a final grade of F.

Calculations

All written work is graded mathematically. The following is a partial list of errors to be on the listen for in written work; more severe infractions are in *italics*.

COUNTERPOINT

DISSONANCE

Downbeat dissonance in 1, 2, 3 species
Non-passing dissonance in 2 species
Chromaticism in major
Direct chromaticism in minor
Skip from a dissonance
Skip to a dissonance
Melodic dissonance
Outlined dissonance
Dissonant climax

VOICE LEADING

Parallel perfect 1, 5, 8
Antiparallel 1, 5, 8
Disallowed direct 1, 5, 8 (e.g., beats 3-1 in 3spc)
Incorrect rhythm
Voice crossing (per instance)
Intrusive voice overlapping
Sequence (per ex. after first statement)
Intrusive simultaneous skips
Ottava battuta and the like
Melodic subdivision (3spc)
Multiple skips in a row (per incident after 2nd)
Intrusive skip in similar dir. as preceding motion
Trill; near-trill ("noodling")
Missing #7 at cadence
Excessive stepwise motion (no variety)
Excessive consecutive par 3rds, 6ths
Large leap not filled in sufficiently
Multiple ties/repeated tones (1spc)
Missing tie on repeated note (1spc)

INTERVALS

Incorrect opening interval
Incorrect closing interval
Non-allowed unisons
Excessive harmonic interval range

HARMONY, VOICE LEADING, FIG. BASS REALIZATION, GENERAL

Incorrect notation
including, but not limited to:
Incorrect stemming
wrong note values
misplaced accidentals
Doubled 7th or leading tone
Use of chord not in directions
Parallel perfect 1, 5, 8
Contrapuntal ending
Not starting/ending on tonic
Incorrect diss leaps or
extended bass embellishment (e.g., trill)
Syntactic error (e.g., V⁷ – V)
Harmonic syncopation
Non-resolution of diss
Incorrect resolution of diss
Voice overlap
Voice crossing
Incorrect spacing
Misspelling
Intrusive similar motion to a 5th or 8ve
Intrusive antiparallel 8ves
Adding to the figure
Missing note required by figures
Note out of range
Missing a voice

Unless otherwise specified, all chords *must* be labeled with Roman Numerals and figures in chorale work.

Material Covered / Course Objectives

MUS 173 is an introductory course in Harmony, Counterpoint, and Keyboard Skills. Procedures of four-part writing are introduced, and students learn the basic elaborations of the tonic-dominant relationship. Work is done in un/figured bass realization, chorale settings, Roman numeral and formal analysis, species counterpoint, and keyboard exercises.

As this course is dependent on mastery of fundamentals of theory material (MUS 73), I reserve the right to give regular fundamentals quizzes. These quizzes are timed and cover basic material which should have been mastered previously. This material includes, but is not limited to, identifying and writing: key signatures, intervals, triads, 7th chords, and scale degrees.

Quiz Policy

A student who is absent when any quiz is given must schedule a time to take an *equivalent* quiz within one week of the original quiz date. *It is the student's responsibility to arrange the make-up quiz.* Failure to take a quiz will result in a grade of "0" being entered for the quiz.

Participation / Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected of all students.

Students are expected to show up to class on time. A 2-point reduction on the student's final grade will result for every 2 instances of tardiness.

Students will be allowed to make-up two class days' worth of in-class performance assignments (i.e., keyboard exercises) in total. Make-up work must be done within a week of the original due date. *It is the student's responsibility to arrange the make-up performance.* Any additional missed keyboard assignments will receive a grade of 0 (zero) and opportunity to make up the assignment will not be granted.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to adhere to the college's Academic Integrity policies. A copy of those policies may be found here:

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

Students may write in analysis, counting, fingering, etc. on prepared keyboard assignments. Students may *not* write in the names of notes *in any form* (e.g., letters, solfege syllables, etc.) on prepared keyboard assignments. Syllable writing-in may consist of any of the following: a full syllable (for example, "La"), an abbreviation (for example, "L"), a syllable written-in and then erased, or even a syllable using another alphabet (for example, Cyrillic (л), Greek (λ), Hebrew (ל), etc.) Students with note-identifying writing on their work will receive a zero (0) on the assignment.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Special Services Office, Kiely 171; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of classes. For more information about services available to Queens College students, contact: Mirian Detres-Hickey, Ph.D., Special Services Office; 171 Kiely Hall; 718-997-5870 (8:00am to 5:00pm); email: Mirian.detreshickey@qc.cuny.edu

If you are entitled to special services accommodations, you must request them with their office at least one week prior to the exam. If they don't hear from you (and, subsequently, I don't hear from them), you will have forfeited your accommodation for the exam and will need to take it during the scheduled time.

In-Class Technology Policy

Students are expected to have cell phones, digital cameras, laptops, etc. put away during class time (though they may be kept on). During quizzes and exams, these devices are to be put away and *turned off*.

NO so-called "wearable" computers (e.g., Apple Watch™) are allowed to be used in the classroom.

Audio recordings of the class are permitted. Please inform the instructor if you are doing this.

NO videos may be taken during class. Videos taken in class will result in failure on all work for that day (first offence) or failure of the course (second offence).

Photographs of the material on the board may be taken *with the permission of the instructor*. This permission must be acquired for each instance. The taking of photographs without permission will result in failure on all work for that day (first offence) or failure of the course (second offence).

Email

Students are *strongly* encouraged to enter my email address and the class open forum address into their email address book and/or on their "safe list." This is particularly true of those with AOL accounts. Notifications from ISPs that legitimate emails sent from me or the class open forum have been tagged as spam will result in the removal of the student's address from the open forum list. This could result in missing important class announcements, for which I take no responsibility. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO CHECK THEIR EMAIL REGULARLY.

Homework Policy

If the student is PRESENT when the assignment is due and fails to hand in the homework, it will NOT be accepted late.

If a student is ABSENT on the day the assignment is due, the student MAY hand in the assignment at the next class. If the student is absent at the next class, they must make arrangements to have the homework handed in (for example, give it to a friend to hand in; you may also scan it into a computer and send it, or make special arrangements with me).

Regardless of absence or presence, no homework will be accepted three or more class days after the due date.

THIS HOMEWORK POLICY WILL BE *STRICTLY* ADHERED TO.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES

NO CLASS:

Feb 18 (Tue) Monday Schedule
Mar 06 (Thu) Wednesday Schedule
Apr 15 (Tue) Spring Break
Apr 17 (Thu) Spring Break
Apr 18 (Fri) Spring Break

LAST CLASS OF THE SEMESTER:

May 15 (Thu)

MIDTERM EXAM:

Mar 20 (Thu): Written Theory
Mar 21 (Fri): Keyboard

FINAL EXAM:

May 09 (Fri): Keyboard
May 16-22 (exact date/time TBA): Written Theory

THE POWER OF A ZERO

Many people don't realize the havoc a single zero can wreak on an average. Sure, they can figure out the basic math, but it still doesn't quite sink in what it all means. Let's have a look . . .

For simplicity, let's say we are looking at only one aspect of a grade (for example, your "homework" grade).

If you are given two homework assignments and you do a perfect job on the first one, but don't hand in the second one, your grade is cut in half:

from 100% (A+) to 50% (F).

Things don't get much better if you are given three assignments and you ace two, but don't hand in the third. The grade shift:

from 100% (A+) to 66.67% (D).

Indeed, to get that average back up to the "A" range, you would need:

9 *perfect* papers just to get a 90% (A-)

What do you need to get the full letter back?

28 *perfect* papers will get you to 96.55% (A+)

What do you need to statistically get the 100% average back?

198 *perfect* papers!!!!

And, Nota Bene, *all* of the papers to make up for the *single* zero need to be perfect (100%).

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

HOW IS COLLEGE DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

(<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/NeatStuffforNewStudents/HowIsCollegeDifferentfromHighSchool>)

FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL	CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE
* High school is <i>mandatory</i> and usually <i>free</i> .	* College is <i>voluntary</i> and <i>expensive</i> .
* Your time is structured by others.	* You manage your own time.
* You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities	* You must decide whether to participate in co-curricular activities.
* You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	* <i>You</i> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.
* Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day--30 hours a week--in class.	* You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class
* Most of your classes are arranged for you.	* You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
* You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.	* Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.
* Guiding principle: You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.	* Guiding principle: You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.
GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES	SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES
* The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.	* The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.
* Classes generally have no more than 35 students.	* Classes may number 100 students or more.
* You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.	* You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
* You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough.	* You need to review class notes and text material regularly.
* You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	* You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
* Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings.	* Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	COLLEGE PROFESSORS
* Teachers check your completed homework.	* Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.
* Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.	* Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.
* Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	* Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
* Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	* Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
* Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.	* Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
* Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	* Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.
* Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.	* Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect you to relate the classes to the textbook readings.
* Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.	* Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.
* Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.	* Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
* Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	* Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.
* Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.	* Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.
* Guiding principle: High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills.	* Guiding principle: College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.

TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL	TESTS IN COLLEGE
<p>* Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.</p>	<p>* Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.</p>
<p>* Makeup tests are often available.</p>	<p>* Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.</p>
<p>* Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.</p>	<p>* Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.</p>
<p>* Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.</p>	<p>* Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.</p>
<p>* Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.</p>	<p>* Guiding principle: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.</p>
GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL	GRADES IN COLLEGE
<p>* Grades are given for most assigned work.</p>	<p>* Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.</p>
<p>* Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.</p>	<p>* Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.</p>
<p>* Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.</p>	<p>* Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.</p>
<p>* Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.</p>	<p>* Watch out for your first tests. These are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected--but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.</p>
<p>* You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.</p>	<p>* You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard--typically a 2.0 or C.</p>
<p>* Guiding principle: "Effort counts." Courses are usually structured to reward a "good-faith effort."</p>	<p>* Guiding principle: "Results count." Though "good-faith effort" is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you achieve good results, it will not substitute for results in the grading process.</p>

HOW TO MAKE THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

- **Take control of your own education: think of yourself as a scholar.**
- **Get to know your professors; they are your single greatest resource.**
- **Be assertive. Create your own support systems, and seek help when you realize you may need it.**
- **Take control of your time. Plan ahead to satisfy academic obligations and make room for everything else.**
- **Stretch yourself: enroll in at least one course that really challenges you.**
- **Make thoughtful decisions: don't take a course just to satisfy a requirement, and don't drop any course too quickly.**
- **Think beyond the moment: set goals for the semester, the year, your college career.**