TH 100: Fundamentals of Music Theory

This course is designed for students identified through placement examinations as needing additional work on theory basics. The course’s primary goal is to bolster the skills required for students to flourish in subsequent theory studies. Students undertake an in-depth exploration of the basic notated materials of music, developing fluency with the building blocks of many musical styles: rhythm and meter, major and minor scales, keys and key signatures, intervals, triads, and seventh chords. The course also introduces several methods of harmonic shorthand (Roman numerals, figured bass, and chord symbols), and it concludes with a brief introduction to principles of outer-voice counterpoint in the context of the Classical style.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. spell and recognize all major and minor scales, key signatures, intervals, triads, and seventh chords in treble and bass clefs, quickly and accurately; identify key centers in written, largely diatonic music.
2. provide harmonic analysis of simple diatonic progressions using Roman numerals, figured bass, and chord symbols.
3. given a short bass line and diatonic progression, write an artful, contrapuntally sound melody that incorporates passing and neighbor tones in syntactically accurate ways; recognize these non-harmonic tones in tonal music.

TH 105: Fundamentals of Aural Musicianship

This course is designed for students identified through placement examinations as needing additional work on the basics of aural musicianship. The course’s primary goal is to bolster the skills required for students to flourish in subsequent musicianship studies: training musicians to map sound to symbol, symbol to sound, to process what they are hearing in real time, and to remain oriented in musical space. The first course in the sequence will emphasize strategies for accurate and expressive reading, improvisation, singing, and dictation using elementary rhythms and diatonic pitch materials in treble and bass clefs.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. aurally capture, sing back, notate, and manipulate basic diatonic materials such as intervals, prolongational patterns, and simple tonal relationships.
2. realize two-voice counterpoint at the keyboard, or playing one voice and singing the other, given diatonic figures, and perform two-voice literature, singing one voice while playing the other.
3. perform major- and minor-key diatonic melodies, prepared or at sight, notated in treble and bass clefs with accuracy and appropriate musical expression.
TH 110: Music Analysis & Style Composition I

This course provides an introduction to harmony and counterpoint, with a primary focus on how these musical elements behave and interact in music of the European “common practice” period (ca. 1770–1900). The course begins with species counterpoint exercises in which students examine relationships between melodies, bass lines, and underlying harmonic progressions. After a brief overview of phrase-level forms, the bulk of the course explores the harmonic syntax of this music, primarily through the lens of harmonic function. The aim throughout is for students to hear, recognize, and reproduce the most idiomatic progressions that composers used within a single key—and to master the syntactic rules that undergird these progressions.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. spell and recognize all major and minor scales, key signatures, intervals, triads, and seventh chords in treble, bass, and alto clefs, quickly and accurately.
2. write artful outer-voice counterpoint that implies a diatonic progression and uses contrapuntal/harmonic paradigms and non-harmonic tones (passing tones, neighbor tones, suspensions, etc.) in syntactically accurate ways; readily identify these paradigms and non-harmonic tones in tonal music from the 18th-19th centuries.
3. compose idiomatic progressions, realize figured bass exercises, and harmonize diatonic, non-modulating melodies and bass lines, using a full battery of diatonic harmonies in a three- or four-voice texture.
4. provide Roman numeral analysis, identify cadences, and analyze harmonic sequences in diatonic, non-modulating music.
5. recognize common phrase-level forms (periods, sentences, 12-bar blues) in a variety of tonal music, both visually and aurally.
6. compose melodies in the form of periods and sentences with simple accompaniment in late 18th-century style.

TH 115: Aural Musicianship I

The primary goal of aural musicianship study at the Eastman School of Music is to know musical space as comfortably and intuitively as one knows the shapes and contours of a familiar room. Musicianship training enables musicians to map sound to symbol, symbol to sound, to process what they are hearing in real time, and to remain oriented in musical space. The first course in the sequence will emphasize strategies for accurate and expressive reading, improvisation, singing, and dictation using elementary rhythms and diatonic pitch materials in treble and bass clefs.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. aurally capture, sing back, notate, and analyze diatonic melodies and basslines.
2. realize two-voice counterpoint at the keyboard, or playing one voice and singing the other, given diatonic figures, and perform two-voice literature, singing one voice while playing the other.
3. demonstrate fluency in both fixed and moveable systems of solmization as presented in your section, as well as an ability to play the two off of one another in order to improve orientation in musical space.
4. sing major- and minor-key diatonic melodies, prepared or at sight, notated in treble, alto, and bass clefs with accuracy and appropriate musical expression.
5. perform one- and two-part rhythmic material in simple and compound meters with various beat definitions, including simple syncopation, with rhythmic and metric accuracy and appropriate gestural clarity and expression.
6. recognize, perform, and manipulate common contrapuntal models, particularly expansions of tonic, aurally, including all harmonic vocabulary taught in Theory 110.
7. recognize, identify, discuss, and improvise smaller formal structures involving one phrase or an interdependent group of phrases.
TH 120: Music Analysis & Style Composition II

In this course—the second semester of the undergraduate theory sequence—we will continue the study of tonal harmony and voice leading, both through written work and analysis. Building on the diatonic harmonic principles learned in TH 110, we will also begin to explore techniques of tonicization and modulation (moves to different keys), sequencing of harmonies, and borrowing chords from the parallel mode. We will also learn about some new forms: binary, ternary, rondo, and variation forms.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:
1. compose chord progressions using all diatonic harmonies, diatonic harmonic sequences, and/or pivot-chord modulations to the dominant or relative major; realize figured bass exercises in four voices; harmonize a chorale-style melody.
2. recognize the above-listed harmonic devices within compositions from the 18th and 19th centuries.
3. recognize small forms (binary, sectional variations, rondo, ternary) in tonal music, both visually and aurally.
4. compose a well-formed binary movement in Classical style using the harmonic, contrapuntal and formal devices described above.

TH 125: Aural Musicianship II

In this second course in the aural musicianship sequence, students will complete an aural understanding of diatonic harmony, expand improvisatory capabilities, learn to apprehend local chromaticism and simple modulations, and master most of the rhythmic gestures necessary for performance of Renaissance and common-practice European art music. Alto clef will be introduced with emphasis on rapid and accurate reading and associated transpositions. All harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, and formal procedures build on concepts and methods established in TH 115.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:
1. aurally capture, sing back, notate, and analyze diatonic melodies and basslines employing tonicization, modulation, and modal mixture.
2. perform two-voice exercises and literature, singing one voice while playing the other, that involves the harmonic structures described in 1. above.
3. sing major- and minor-key melodies, prepared or at sight, notated in treble, alto, tenor, and bass clefs with accuracy and appropriate musical expression that involves the harmonic structures described in 1. above.
4. perform one- and two-part rhythmic material in simple and compound meters with various beat definitions, including various polyrhythmic devices, with rhythmic and metric accuracy and appropriate gestural clarity and expression.
5. recognize, perform, and manipulate common contrapuntal models, particularly expansions of tonic, aurally, including all harmonic vocabulary taught in Theory 120.
6. recognize, identify, and discuss musical forms as studied in Theory 120.
TH 210: Music Analysis & Style Composition III

This course in harmony, analysis and composition completes our study of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century tonal music. Students will explore the significance of tonicization and mixture as sources of chromaticism in tonal music and will examine the ways in which composers use these techniques to modulate from one local key to another in large-scale monotonal compositions. In particular, the course will focus on sonata-form movements by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven: it will consider a broad range of pieces from piano and chamber music to symphonies, concerti, oratorios, and operas. The course will culminate in a two-part composition assignment in which the student will complete the first movement of a string quartet in the style of early Beethoven.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. compose chord progressions using all diatonic and common chromatic harmonies.
2. compose and perform representative pieces in classical style.
3. recognize and negotiate both small (binary) and large (sonata) forms, including formal areas, harmonic language, tonal procedures, and motivic structure.
4. graphically represent, speak, and write articulately about any of the above.

TH 215: Aural Musicianship III

In this, the third course in the aural musicianship curriculum, students will continue to build on skills acquired in the earlier courses. New material in this course emphasizes tenor clef and its associated transpositions, a systematic introduction to chromatic processes in tonal music, various problems associated with changing meter signatures and polyrhythms, and perception of tonal processes in complete movements composed in larger forms.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. sing selected songs from Schubert song cycles with or without accompaniment, with appropriate musical expression and accuracy. Students will prepare some material, and sight-read additional works.
2. demonstrate fluency in both fixed do solfège syllables and movable scale degree numbers.
3. read and write music in treble, alto, tenor, and bass clefs fluently, along with associated transpositions.
4. improvise continuous variations above a ground bass or a circular harmonic sequential passage.
5. conduct and perform music with changing meter (division or beat constant), tempo modulation, and simple polyrhythms (2:3, 3:4) accurately and expressively.
6. recognize all harmonic vocabulary and devices taught in TH210 aurally.
7. process larger formal units aurally. Specifically, students will be able to identify fugal devices in the first module and sonata procedure in the second module.
8. notate music with all of the above characteristics accurately and efficiently through dictation and transcription assignments. For example, students will be able to notate the opening subject/answer/countersubject statements of a fugue from dictation in open score using two clefs.
TH 220: Musicianship and Analysis IV: From 1890-Present

This course introduces students to Western art music from 1890 to the present and teaches them skills and techniques for analyzing this repertoire and composing music in this style. Unlike other courses in the core curriculum, TH 220 combines written theory and aural skills into a single course. In addition to studying analysis and composition, students will learn strategies for the successful performance and aural apprehension of music in late Romantic, post-tonal, and extended tonal languages. The course is not a survey of every trend since 1890. Instead, it focuses on selected topics including impressionism, twentieth-century tonality, novel use of scales, symmetrical approaches to pitch organization, atonality and pitch-class set theory, twelve-tone theory, extended serialism, and contemporary compositional techniques.

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:
1. understand contemporary compositional techniques
2. recognize symmetrical sets and inversive pitch relationships.
3. describe motives and their development with the tools of pitch-class set theory.
4. analyze music based on twelve-tone theory and its extensions in music after Schoenberg
5. explore forms of tonality that are not based on the harmonic practice of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
6. compose representative short pieces using a variety of twentieth-century compositional techniques, including pitch symmetry, the motivic use of set classes, and twelve-tone theory
7. sing representative Western art music after 1890 by composers such as Babbitt, Bartók, Berg, Carter, Copland, Crawford, Debussy, Ives, Saariaho, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Varèse, and Webern
8. read, notate, and recognize melodies based on whole-tone, diatonically modal, octatonic, and chromatic collections.

TH 230: Music Theory Special Topics

This is an elective course — descriptions and learning outcomes vary.