

The Psychology of Music

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Class Times and Locations:
M: 3-5 PM, H-214

Course Description:

This course studies the perceptual and cognitive processing involved in the psychology of music. The general idea is to acquaint students with the basic concepts and issues involved in the understanding of musical passages. The focus of this course is on the perception and cognition of musical materials, taking as its starting point the music listener as a gatherer and interpreter of information from the environment. Topics will include aspects such as the basic physical and psychological properties of sound, pitch perception and melodic organization, the perception of rhythm and time, musical correlates of psychological structure, musical performance, emotion and meaning in music, musical development, and so on.

Text:

Butler, David. (1992). *The Musician's Guide to Perception and Cognition*. New York, NY: Macmillan, Inc.

Course Requirements and Grading:

There will be two exams during the semester and a final exam. Each test will cover only material discussed since the last test, and will contribute 27% to your final grade. Along with these exams, there will be three take-home assignments, worth between 6 - 7% of your grade. These assignments are intended to insure that you are understanding the reading; if you are keeping up with the class material, there will be no problem in getting full marks on these assignments.

Tentative Syllabus

<i>Week of</i>	<i>Topic(s)</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Jan. 5	Introduction to class Traditions in the psychology of music		
Jan. 12	Basic dimensions of sound	Ch. 1, Ch. 2	
Jan. 19	Audition and pitch	Ch. 3	
Jan. 26	Loudness and localization	Ch. 5, Ch.6	Assignment #1 (6%)
Feb. 2	----- Exam # 1, in class (27%) -----		
Feb. 9	Auditory, perceptual, and musical aspects of timbre	Ch. 4, Ch. 8	
Feb. 16	Reading Week		
Feb. 23	Musical and tonal hierarchies Melodic organization	Ch. 7	
Mar. 2	Harmony and musical key Key-finding in music	Reading: TBA	Assignment #2 (7%)
Mar. 9	Rhythm and time Coordinating pitch and rhythm	Ch. 9	
Mar. 16	----- Exam # 2, in class (27%) -----		
Mar. 23	Emotion and meaning in music	Reading: TBA	
Mar. 30	Musical performance	Reading: TBA	
Apr. 6	Musical development	Ch. 10	Assignment #3 (6%)

Exam # 3 (27%) to be scheduled during final exam period. The percentages of your final mark for all of the exams and assignments are given in parentheses.