



MUS455: Teaching Instrumental Music

<https://www.mitchellrobinson.net/mus455-teaching-instrumental-music/>

MUS455, S17

Course Overview

- Class sessions, lab band rehearsals, and field experience placements
- Assignments
- Field Experience guidelines
- Secondary instruments
- Recorders
- Guest presenters



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Assignments

- Rote Song Treasure Hunt—due 1.18.17
- Method Book Review—due 1.23.17
- Pedagogical Analysis Project—due 2.6.17
- Arrangement Assignment—due 2.8.17
- Repertoire Project—due 3.1.17
- Warm up Assignment—due 3.27.17
- Cover Tune Assignment—performed in class, 4.5.17



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Rote Song Treasure Hunt

1. Find a rote song that you can teach to the class.
2. The song must have an interesting tonal or rhythmic aspect (i.e., minor or modal tonality, unusual meter), or be from another culture, and must be an actual folk or children's song. Look on the web or in song collections, especially multicultural collections and anthologies.
3. Learn the song on the recorder and be able to sing it on a neutral syllable (no words).
4. Teach the song to the class following good rote song teaching procedures (see handout, provided in class).
5. Hand in a notated copy of the song, including text and harmonic changes if appropriate, and a brief sketch about the song's background (where it comes from, any interesting historical info, "provenance," etc.). Make enough copies for the class ($n = 28$).
6. Extra credit if you learn and teach an appropriate partner song, accompaniment or bass line!



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Method Book Review

Choose one of the beginning instrumental music methods in the Music Education resource Room (Rm. 3). Consider: content, lay-out, charts, pictures, features, starting notes, how special problems are handled, the teacher's book, sequencing, underlying philosophy. Organize your review in either narrative or table form, and include your comments on the approach taken in the book compared to what you know about how children learn music. Include a photocopy of a sample page of the method book in your report.



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Pedagogical Analysis Project

You will be assigned a band composition to analyze. Develop a pedagogical analysis for the composition that includes the following 4 components:

- a general harmonic/thematic analysis
- record yourself singing and playing keyboard accompaniment on selected portions from the score
- draft a webbed organizational structure for the composition
- create a set of non-verbal teaching strategies to use in rehearsing the piece



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Cover Tune

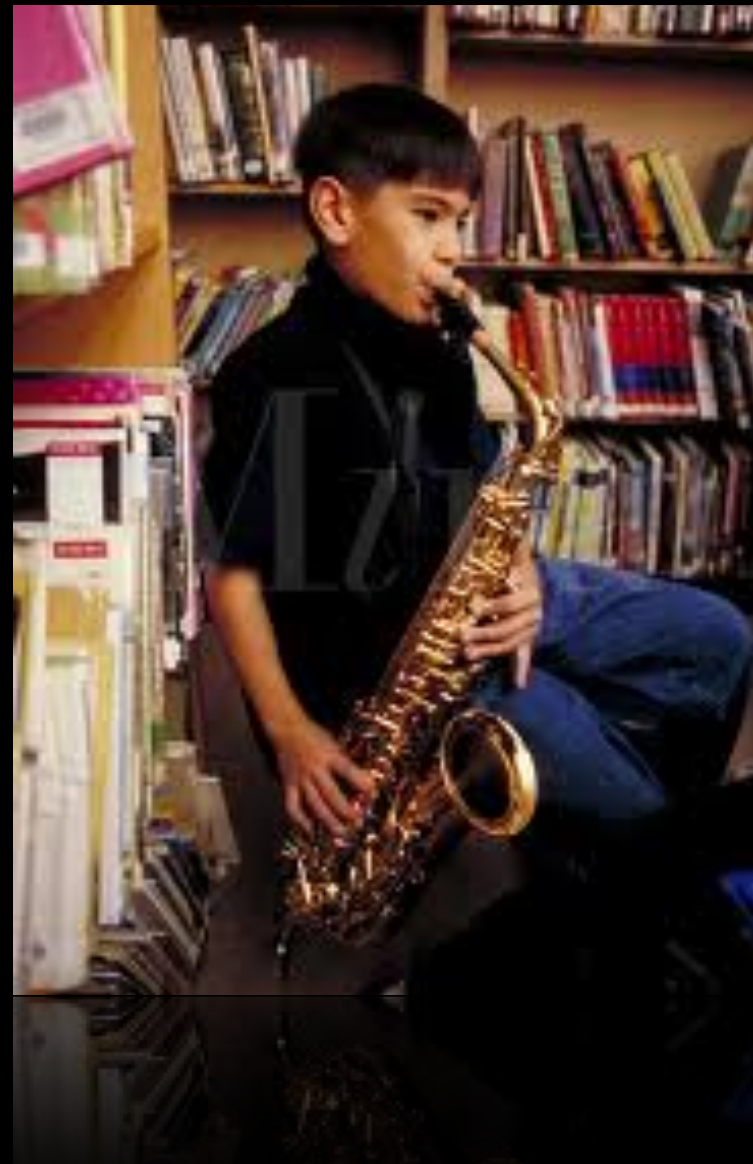
1. Find a song that you and a small group of class members can produce a replica of for performance on primarily band instruments (additional instruments not common to the band setting are also encouraged if you feel that they add to what you are trying to do with the song cover).
2. The song must be one that you could hear on the radio, one that would appeal to a musically well-rounded adolescent student—not necessarily the typical band student. ;)
3. Learn the song by listening and aurally copying all of the musical parts from the recording; no traditional music notation is allowed.
4. Perform the piece for the class. Audio and video recordings may be made for later reference.



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Repertoire Assignment

Develop a concert program for both a high school and a junior high/middle school concert band. Each of the two concerts may be a themed program (*March On!, Folk Songs for Band, American Music, Something Old-Something New-Something Borrowed-Something Blue, etc.*), or a “normal” concert type (Fall Concert, Winter or Holiday Program, Spring Concert, Festival Program). A paper accompanying the programs will explain additional details (see assignment sheet).



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Warm-Up Assignment

Develop a short (really short!) warm up or tune up activity for use with a middle or high school instrumental ensemble (band or orchestra). The activity may be done without notation, but you must submit a written “score” that would allow someone else to replicate the activity. See assignment sheet for additional details.



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Seating Chart Assignment

Submit seating plans for at least 3 of the following groups. Each seating plan should include a key (denoting stands, chairs, equipment, etc.), and a 1 page written rationale that explains the form and function of the ensemble set-up. (You may decide the number of instruments in each section. Consider balance and blend, instrument families, directionality of sound, ensemble precision, etc.)

100 piece concert band
40 piece wind ensemble
24 piece jazz ensemble
80 piece symphony orchestra



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Field Experience (PDP) Guidelines

- The schedule for PDP visitation days will be as follows:
- 7:55am: arrive at PDP site
- 8:00am: meet in class room for planning, discussions, etc.
- 8:30-8:55am: sectionals and lessons, as assigned
- 9:00-9:45am: large group rehearsal; conducting, teaching, playing secondary instruments, as assigned
- 9:45am: return to campus



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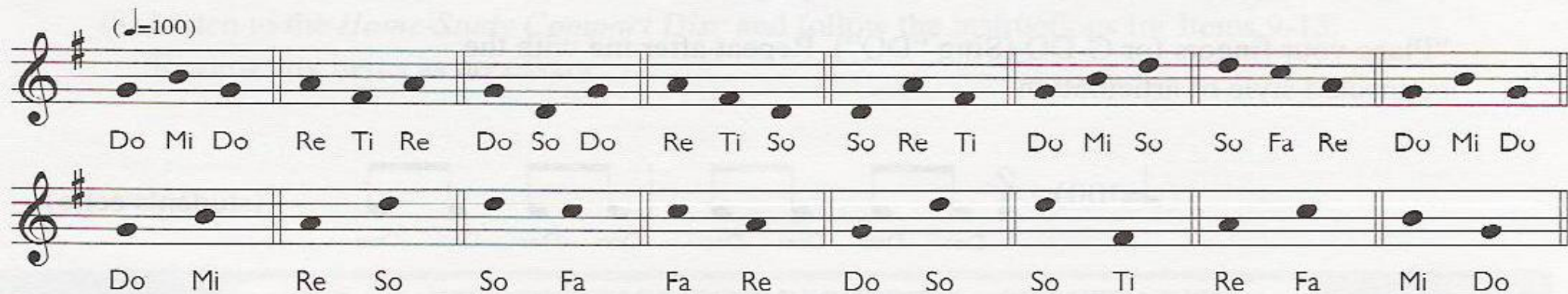
Secondary Instruments

- Each student will be required to play secondary instruments in class and field experience placements
- We will have 2 rotations, brass and woodwind: the first may be on a secondary instrument in “your” family; the other in the opposite family
- Each student is encouraged to play percussion for one or 2 class or field experience sessions
- I will provide recorders for use the first few weeks of class



Break

Major Tonal Patterns, Familiar Order



(♩=100)

Do Mi Do Re Ti Re Do So Do Re Ti So So Re Ti Do Mi So So Fa Re Do Mi Do

Do Mi Re So So Fa Fa Re Do So So Ti Re Fa Mi Do

The image displays two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The top staff features a vocal line with lyrics: "Do Mi Do Re Ti Re Do So Do Re Ti So So Re Ti Do Mi So So Fa Re Do Mi Do". The bottom staff features a piano accompaniment line with lyrics: "Do Mi Re So So Fa Fa Re Do So So Ti Re Fa Mi Do". A tempo marking "(♩=100)" is present at the beginning of the top staff. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the key signature is indicated by a sharp sign on the F line of the treble clef.

Instruments & Recorders for Wednesday

Foundation Readings

- Good Rhythm and Intonation from Day One in Instrumental Music
- Are Students Learning Music in Band?



Philosophical Foundations & Issues in Instrumental Music

- What are our goals as music/band teachers?
- What are the tensions between the needs of the individual student and the needs of the ensemble?
- What are the advantages and limitations of our current model?
- What should be the role of competition in instrumental music learning?
- Whose music should we teach?



“Real World” Issues in Instrumental Music

- Scheduling concerts: how far In advance?
- How soon you should pick repertoire?
- Hiring helpers or student roles in a music program (librarian, president, vice pres.)
- Who should you get to know in your school district?



“Real World” Issues in Instrumental Music

- Ordering music from large publishing/rental companies
- Copyright laws, arranging and protecting yourself
- Buying and replacing school instruments
- Encouraging out of school musical activities (honor bands, All-State)



“Real World” Issues in Instrumental Music

- Preparing for festival, hosting a music festival
- Starting a band booster program
- Budgeting
- Charging admissions to concerts
- Providing guest clinicians, hiring guest clinicians
- Other?

