

# ROBERT E. THOMAS, Ph.D.

806 Rankin Avenue, Floor 2, Schenectady, NY 12308 • (518) 280-5065 • retmusic.com@gmail.com

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## Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

### Summary of Teaching Experience (By Semester, Fall 2006-present)

- Fall 2015**      **Adjunct Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (9 students)  
MUS 334-01 and -02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (25 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  
MTC 237-02, -03, and -04: *Ear Training III* (31 students)  
**Studio Instructor**, Union College, Schenectady, NY  
AMU-010-17: *Applied Piano Lessons* (2 students)
- Spring 2015**      **Adjunct Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 201-01: *Theory III* (10 students)  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (5 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (4 students)  
**Studio Instructor**, Union College, Schenectady, NY  
AMU-010-17: *Applied Piano Lessons* (14 students)
- Fall 2014**      **Adjunct Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 203-02: *Ear Training III* (6 students)  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (3 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (11 students)
- Spring 2014**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 202-01 and -05: *Form and Analysis* (18 students)  
MUS 204-02 and -03: *Ear Training IV* (17 students)  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (6 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (13 students)
- Fall 2013**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 103-02: *Ear Training I* (8 students)  
MUS 201-01 and -05: *Theory III* (21 students)  
MUS 203-02 and -03: *Ear Training III* (24 students)  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (7 students)  
MUS 334-02 and MED 634-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (12 students)
- Spring 2013**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 104-02: *Ear Training II* (5 students)  
MUS 202-01 and -05: *Form and Analysis* (24 students)  
MUS 204-02 and -03: *Ear Training IV* (24 students)  
MUS 241-01 and -02: *New Music Ensemble* (5 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (11 students)

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### Summary of Teaching Experience (Cont'd)

- Fall 2012**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 103-02: *Ear Training I* (7 students)  
MUS 201-01 and -05: *Theory III* (17 students)  
MUS 203-02 and -03: *Ear Training III* (24 students)  
MUS 334-02 and MED 634-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (10 students)  
MUS 499-0 and -02: *Independent Study* (2 students)
- Spring 2012**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 104-02: *Ear Training II* (11 students)  
MUS 202-01: *Form and Analysis* (6 students)  
MUS 204-02 and -03: *Ear Training IV* (13 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (7 students)
- Fall 2011**      **Visiting Assistant Professor**, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY  
MUS 103-02: *Ear Training I* (9 students)  
MUS 201-01 and -05: *Theory III* (17 students)  
MUS 203-02 and -03: *Ear Training III* (21 students)  
MUS 334-02: *Instrumentation and Orchestration* (11 students)
- Spring 2011**      **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 181-01 and -04: *Ear Training II* (27 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ  
MUS 101: *Introduction to Music* (26 students)
- Fall 2010**      **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 180-01, -02, and -03: *Ear Training I* (32 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ  
MUS 101-17 and -85: *Introduction to Music* (51 students) – distance learning and traditional course
- Summer 2010**      **Adjunct Professor**, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ  
MUS 101-17: *Introduction to Music* (35 students) – distance learning course
- Spring 2010**      **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 161-01: *Theory II* (18 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ  
MUS 101-86 and -87: *Introduction to Music* (15 students)
- Fall 2009**      **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 160-03: *Theory I* (20 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ  
MUS 101-65: *Introduction to Music* (40 students) – distance learning course

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### Summary of Teaching Experience (Cont'd)

- Spring 2009**    **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 181-02 and -04: *Ear Training II* (31 students)
- Fall 2008**    **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 180-01, -02, and -03: *Ear Training I* (44 students)  
**Adjunct Professor**, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ  
MUHI 1108-AA: *Music of America* (29 students)
- Spring 2008**    **Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg, NJ  
MUSC 165-01X: *Music Technology: Fundamentals and Applications* (6 students)  
MUSC 190-01X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI I* (3 students)  
MUSC 191-01X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI II* (2 students)
- Fall 2007**    **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 124: *Music Fundamentals* (18 students)  
MUSI: 260-03: *Theory III* (13 students)  
**Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg, NJ  
MUSC 190-52X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI I* (9 students)
- Spring 2007**    **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 181-04 and -05: *Ear Training II* (16 students)  
**Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, Princeton, NJ  
TH 342-01: *Contemporary Trends* (22 students)  
**Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg, NJ  
MUSC 102-89: *Introduction to Music* (10 students)  
MUSC 190-01X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI I* (5 students)  
MUSC 191-01X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI II* (4 students)
- Fall 2006**    **Adjunct Professor**, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
MUSI 180-04: *Ear Training I* (20 students)  
MUSI 280-02: *Ear Training III* (11 students)  
**Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, Princeton, NJ  
TH 241-01 and -02: *Musicianship III* (16 students)  
**Adjunct Assistant Professor**, Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg, NJ  
MUSC 102-89: *Introduction to Music* (14 students)  
MUSC 190-52X: *Music Synthesis, Composition, and MIDI I* (8 students)

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### Instructor Ratings By School (Core courses, Fall 2006-present)

*All data from end-of-semester evaluation forms*

#### The College of Saint Rose

All Courses, Fall 2011 - Spring 2015 (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)					
Question #	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Average
1	129	174	25	4	3.29
5*	165	151	13	2	3.45
8*	116	154	52	10	3.13
11	145	149	34	3	3.32
12	142	162	17	4	3.36
14	184	132	12	3	3.50
333 Responses					

#### Questions:

- 1) I gained an increased understanding of the subject through the course.
- 5) The instructor was prepared for class.
- 8) The instructor organized the subject matter well.
- 11) The instructor encouraged student participation.
- 12) The instructor was available outside class.
- 14) The instructor showed willingness to answer relevant questions in class.

\* Beginning Fall 2013 I have begun incorporating multi-media presentations into all my lectures which are later posted online for students to download and study at their leisure. I have also implemented changes to clarify grading policies in Form and Analysis and Instrumentation and Orchestration.

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### Instructor Ratings By School (Cont'd)

#### William Paterson University

All Courses, Fall 2006-Spring 2011 (scale of 1 to 3 with 3 being best)					
Question #	Yes	Neutral	No	No Answer	Average
1	187	7	3	3	2.93
2	153	25	16	6	2.71
3	154	13	16	17	2.75
4	184	7	3	6	2.93
<i>200 Responses</i>					

Questions:

- 1) Did the instructor have a positive attitude toward assisting all students in understanding course material?
- 2) Did instructional materials encourage student learning?
- 3) Was there an appropriate balance between theoretical concepts and concrete examples or illustrations?
- 4) Were quizzes and exams appropriately designed and instructive?

#### Westminster Choir College

All Courses, Fall 2006-Spring 2007 (scale of 1 to 3 with 3 being best)					
Question #	Yes	Neutral	No	No Answer	Average
1	29	0	0	2	3.00
2	18	8	2	3	2.57
3	15	4	6	6	2.36
4	23	4	0	4	2.85
<i>31 Responses</i>					

Questions:

- 1) Did the instructor have a positive attitude toward assisting all students in understanding course material?
- 2) Did instructional materials encourage student learning?
- 3) Was there an appropriate balance between theoretical concepts and concrete examples or illustrations?
- 4) Were quizzes and exams appropriately designed and instructive?

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Core courses, Fall 2006-present)

#### Ear Training I

MUS 103: Ear Training I (College of Saint Rose) (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)			
Question #	Fall 2011 Avg.	Fall 2012 Avg.	Fall 2013 Avg.
1	3.78	3.80	3.63
5	3.67	3.80	3.63
8	3.78	3.60	3.63
11	3.67	3.60	3.75
12	3.11	3.80	3.57
14	3.44	3.80	3.88
	<i>9 of 9 students</i>	<i>5 of 7 students</i>	<i>8 of 8 students</i>

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- [Professor Thomas] can be very calming. I have little experience, so I get nervous but he's a nice guy.
- Very willing to go over the new concepts slowly or more than once.
- Dr. Thomas is demanding, but very accepting. As nervous as I get, I enjoy class, and I HATE this stuff, but he approaches it in a manner that interests me and facilitates my learning.
- Dr. Thomas is a wonderful musician and a creative individual. I really enjoyed learning from him and I feel as though I gained a lot from his class.
- During intervals, he would work with each student when and if he/she needed help.

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## Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

### Ear Training I (Cont'd)

MUSI 180: Ear Training I (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)						
Question #	Fall 2006		Fall 2008		Fall 2010	
	Avg	StdDev.	Avg	StdDev	Avg	StdDev
1	2.87	0.3399	2.84	0.5068	2.97	0.1795
2	2.47	0.8055	2.61	0.7482	2.83	0.3727
3	2.38	0.8356	2.6	0.7572	2.83	0.4534
4	2.93	0.2494	2.91	0.3840	2.87	0.4269
	<i>15 of 20 students</i>		<i>32 of 44 students</i>		<i>30 of 32 students</i>	

### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- You explained things and you were understanding.
- Friendly environment to kinda fun
- My ability to hear intervals improved.
- It was helpful because we didn't go on until we understood that material.
- I learned a lot and developed my musical ear.
- He was very helpful to everyone.
- The way you presented the material was perfect.
- [This course] helped me grow as a musician in a very critical way. Being able to distinguish and sing intervals has helped me tremendously.
- I thought the course material was fun.
- The professor was really good and [I] enjoyed the class very much.
- The work was challenging and we worked at a good pace.
- The course was made bearable for someone who does not like Ear Training.
- Everything was made easy to understand and explained.
- I found that the course has helped me in other classes besides this one.

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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### **Ear Training I** (Cont'd)

- By being encouraging and keeping classes light, I was sight-reading/singing on my own, just for fun.
- I really enjoyed this class.
- [Professor Thomas] was always willing to help and give extra assistance.
- Dr. Thomas encouraged us to try again when we made a mistake, helping to build confidence.
- I liked/found everything helpful. The pacing was very [good], and the presentation was perfect.
- The teacher had a great sense of humor.
- The course was taught the best way it could have been taught.
- I liked how comfortable and laid back the class was but at the same time got what we need to, accomplished.
- Good pace. Presented in a good order. Thoroughly, clearly, slow enough to fully grasp.
- Helped me with my theory knowledge ... as well as training my ear.
- I feel more confident as a musician than at the beginning of the semester.
- The instructor gave many helpful tips pertaining to sight singing and melodic dictation.



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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Ear Training II

<b>MUS 104: Ear Training II (College of Saint Rose)</b> (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)		
Question #	Spring 2012 Avg.	Spring 2013 Avg.
1	2.73	3.40
5	3.27	3.40
8	2.55	3.60
11	3.18	3.60
12	2.64	3.40
14	3.55	3.40
	<i>11 of 11 students</i>	<i>5 of 5 students</i>

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- Dr. Thomas approached Ear Training in a way I was somewhat unfamiliar with. While past teachers have danced around the dictations and eased into the material, Dr. Thomas went right into it and made it so that if you didn't know your stuff, you learned it. His style, while unfamiliar to me, worked very well and I look forward to having classes with him in the future.
- Awesome teacher, good class.
- Great teacher! Helpful class.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Ear Training II (Cont'd)

MUSI 181: Ear Training II (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)						
Question #	Spring 2007		Spring 2009		Spring 2011	
	Avg	StdDev.	Avg	StdDev	Avg	StdDev
1	3.00	0	3.00	0	2.80	.5416
2	3.00	0	3.00	0	2.85	.3608
3	2.80	0.4000	2.95	.2233	2.73	.6799
4	3.00	0	3.00	0	3.00	0
	<i>5 of 16 students</i>		<i>20 of 31 students</i>		<i>15 of 27 students</i>	

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- This course was a lot of fun. Dr. Thomas always knows how to cheer up the class when we are down. This class was a lot of help to me. I feel as if I have benefitted from this class this semester. Although not a lot of homework was given, Dr. Thomas always gave us material that was challenging. There is a great relationship between teacher and students.
- Ear training is one of my worst subjects but this semester I feel as if I have improved. One thing that Dr. Thomas does is he encourages you to do your best. He is not the type of guy to put down students.
- Despite how bad I did (or think I did) in the class, I still enjoyed it.
- [Professor Thomas] answered any kind of questions to try and help students learn the material better.
- My sightsinging has dramatically improved.
- Everyone was given as much time as needed for everything and [Professor Thomas was] always positive.
- [The course] was well balanced and went along with my theory class.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Ear Training III

MUS 203: Ear Training III (College of Saint Rose) (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)				
Question #	Fall 2011 Avg.	Fall 2012 Avg.	Fall 2013 Avg.	Fall 2014 Avg.
1	3.10	3.29	3.19	3.00
5	3.29	3.33	3.57	3.67
8	2.87	2.86	3.24	3.17
11	3.33	3.48	3.43	3.50
12	3.00	3.33	3.55	3.50
14	3.24	3.43	3.55	3.67
	<i>21 of 21 students</i>	<i>21 of 24 students</i>	<i>21 of 24 students</i>	<i>6 of 6 students</i>

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- [Professor Thomas] gave us several techniques to help with dictation skills involving logic more than ear.
- Dr. Thomas is very organized and definitely has the students' best interests.
- [Professor Thomas] played dictations until we were comfortable with what we had, and made sure we knew intervals.
- Dr. Thomas is very passionate and incredibly smart.
- [Dr. Thomas] showed us step-by-step procedures on how to listen to each section of a song and to hear melodies in our head to help us sing the parts better.
- [Dr. Thomas] explained multiple ways of doing harmonic dictation.
- [Professor Thomas] demonstrated himself the sight singing examples instead of just indicating what we did wrong.
- Doctor DiviThomasta is fun and [t]ear training was focused and enjoyable.
- Dr. Thomas is a great teacher. I have him for another class and I really love going because he's funny and knows the subject material.
- I really enjoy Dr. Thomas as a person and a teacher. I'm lucky to have him.

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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### **Ear Training III** (Cont'd)

- I enjoyed coming to this class and some of the techniques Dr. Thomas used helped me better understand some of the concepts.
- Dr. Thomas is a good instructor for this class. His enthusiasm for music theory and ear training has “rubbed off” onto many of us.
- A very interesting and funny professor. He jokes around here and there but he is very patient and tries to help students hear the difference between notes and chords.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Ear Training III (Cont'd)

MUSI 280: Ear Training III (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Fall 2006	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	3.00	0
2	2.50	0.8062
3	2.89	0.3143
4	3.00	0
	<i>10 of 11 students</i>	

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- I liked how we went at a slow steady pace. If there was something I didn't get, it was okay to stop and ask questions.
- The way Dr. Thomas ran this class created an environment where learning was easy. Many ear training teachers create a stressful environment that is grade-oriented, not learning oriented.
- My ear has improved so much this semester. My sight singing has improved.
- We went slow enough to learn the material without too much difficulty.
- Everything was presented in an orderly pattern.
- I found the quizzes difficult at times, but they really made me improve.
- [Professor Thomas] related material/subject matter to repertoire.
- Well paced and adjusted to students' comprehension/ability.
- It was not too fast, focused on a subject until it was understood.
- Dr. Thomas is a great instructor for this class. His enthusiasm for music theory and ear training has "rubbed off" onto many of us.
- A very interesting and funny professor ... he is very patient and tries to help students hear the difference between notes and chords.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Ear Training IV

MUS 204: Ear Training IV (College of Saint Rose) (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)			
Question #	Spring 2012 Avg.	Spring 2013 Avg.	Spring 2014 Avg.
1	3.45	3.29	3.43
5	3.45	3.33	3.62
8	3.27	2.86	3.50
11	3.64	3.48	3.43
12	3.55	3.33	3.54
14	3.45	3.43	3.69
	<i>11 of 13 students</i>	<i>21 of 24 students</i>	<i>14 of 17 students</i>

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- We went over many ways to double-check our dictations.
- Great teacher. Interested and committed to the class.
- [Dr. Thomas] helped us learn the material by going through things and playing them multiple times. If we didn't understand, he would go step-by-step.
- Great class. I learned a lot.
- The layout of the class is something a student can count on; I like that.
- [Dr. Thomas] is a great musician.
- Dr. Thomas is [a] very easy and understanding guy to learn from. He is respectful and explains everything as clearly as possible.
- [Dr. Thomas] is very accommodating to the needs and success of class and wouldn't go on and postponed test[s] if we felt we needed to go over more things which was nice and avoided failing or being unsuccessful.
- You're great. I've really enjoyed your class.
- Dr. Thomas is one of the brightest and best teachers.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Music Fundamentals

<b>MUSI 124: Music Fundamentals (William Paterson University)</b> (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Fall 2007	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	3.00	0
2	2.83	0.3727
3	2.83	0.5528
4	2.92	.2764
	<i>12 of 18 students</i>	

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- I learned a ton of music theory.
- I didn't know any theory before this course. Now I can analyze keys, progressions, and chords.
- [I liked the] in-class discussion.
- [The course] helped me get a solid foundation of basic music theory.
- [I gained] a greater knowledge and appreciation of music in general. A good way to tie what I already know with what I need for the future.

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## Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

### Theory I

MUSI 160: Theory I (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Fall 2009	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	3.00	0
2	2.80	0.5735
3	2.95	0.2494
4	2.90	.4989
	20 of 20 students	

### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- [I liked] that everything was thoroughly covered. You made sure everyone understood all the material before moving on. Had some fun along the way.
- I like to be able to take things slower and get extra help from the teacher.
- I learned about stuff that helps me out in other music classes I'm taking.
- [Professor Thomas] was always willing to help students with any misunderstandings we had.
- [[Dr. Thomas] was always available for extra help.
- Having a theory teacher skilled at piano was quite enjoyable.
- There were many approaches to the material and not just one ... way.
- We started very basically, which ensured that we had a complete knowledge and understanding of the material before we moved on.
- Professor [Thomas] took time to discuss musical theories outside of text and gave us examples of interesting composers/pieces.
- Dr. Thomas believes that everyone can learn and do well and it encouraged me to do my best not to let him down.
- [I liked] the flexible and forgiving teaching method and the organization of Prof. Thomas.



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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### Theory I (Cont'd)

- I learned more in this class than in high school and community college combined.
- I liked how much I learned. A lot of material was covered throughout the semester. At times it was a bit overwhelming, but it was well explained.
- I understood Dr. Thomas and wasn't afraid to ask questions.
- This is the most lively class I had this semester. Everyone was excited about theory.
- [This is my] second time taking this course and everything I didn't understand I now do.
- The teacher was able to answer questions in several ways until a student understood.
- I understood all of the material taught and you gave a lot of examples of everything we learned.
- You always gave help when students needed it and went over the material until it was understood.
- The course was well taught and the communication between instructor and students was excellent.
- It was an awesome class; well taught and paced.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Theory II

MUSI 161: Theory II (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Spring 2010	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	2.93	0.2575
2	2.80	0.5579
3	3.00	0
4	3.00	0
	<i>16 of 18 students</i>	

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- [The course] was paced well for all students to grasp the concepts. Didn't push ahead if half the class understood and half didn't.
- Dr. Thomas [was available] to meet with students after class to help with any problems in class.
- I've learned so much about music from this course.
- I like that all of us are involved in asking questions about things we've learned, and also the professor is ... very clear about explaining material we've already [done] and about new stuff. Also the Prof. Is understanding about homework and he seems like he really wants to make sure we learn whatever we went over.
- I had the feeling that I could ask you anything at any time.
- You are really helpful and always answer questions.
- For each subject presented, the instructor provided varied examples.
- These last two semesters in Theory were great, and I definitely enjoyed the class and the environment. I can only hope that my future theory teachers will be as helpful and excited about teaching theory as you are!
- I've only had three theory teachers, but your class was always the most educational and least dull. Thanks for a great two semesters!

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Theory III/IV

MUS 201: Theory III (College of Saint Rose) (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)				
Question #	Fall 2011 Avg.	Fall 2012 Avg.	Fall 2013 Avg.	Spring 2015 Avg.
1	3.21	3.71	3.47	3.14
5	3.36	4.00	3.74	3.29
8	2.92	3.21	3.32	3.14
11	3.00	3.57	3.39	3.43
12	3.00	3.36	3.44	3.14
14	3.29	3.93	3.47	3.71
	14 of 17 students	14 of 17 students	19 of 21 students	7 of 9 students

*At The College of Saint Rose, Theory III begins with chromatic harmony and ends with contemporary music. It also includes a module on popular music.*

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- [Dr. Thomas] gave extra help when it came to homework [and] stopped to go over things.
- [Dr. Thomas] was always available to answer any questions and proved to be extremely knowledgeable on many other topics.
- [Professor Thomas] is a great theory teacher. He really knows his stuff and is able to clearly explain it with relevant examples.
- [Dr. Thomas] described each section very well and when it came to tests, I was very prepared and able to do my best.
- [Dr. Thomas was] always willing to answer questions [and had an] extremely positive attitude.
- Great teacher with a great passion for music!
- Dr. Thomas is a very knowledgeable professor in music theory.
- Dr. Thomas is a great teacher, that's why I signed up for him next semester. I understand him well and when I am having issues, he is ALWAYS willing to spend his own time to explain it. Dr. Thomas is wonderful and I would love to take more classes with him.

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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### Theory III (Cont'd)

- Dr. Thomas is friendly and fun while being knowledgeable and efficient in his teaching.
- Dr. Thomas is a fun teacher whose personality kept me interested in something I've never been overly fond of.
- He took the time to explain each subject matter in it's most simple terms and connected topics very well. He is an awesome teacher who made learning theory very interesting.
- [Dr. Thomas'] method of teaching gives us what we need to know while also giving us extra tips and information for future lessons and classes.
- If you didn't understand, [Dr. Thomas] tried his best to help you.
- Dr. Thomas is a great guy. I enjoyed learning from him and found his methods unique. He was very willing to help explain things and give a better understanding after class or outside of class. Overall what helped me was just how approachable he is and how friendly he is ... hopefully I can study with him again.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Theory III/IV (Cont'd)

MUSI 260: Theory III (William Paterson University) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Fall 2007	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	2.88	0.3307
2	2.25	0.8292
3	3.00	0
4	2.88	0.3307
8 of 13 students		

*At William Paterson University, Theory III is part of a four-semester theory sequence. It focuses on chromatic harmony and includes discussion of large-scale formal structures (e.g., Sonata form and Rondo form)*

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- I learned concepts to help me musically outside of theory class.
- There were lots of exercises.
- [I liked] the class discussion.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Theory III/IV (Cont'd)

TH241: Musicianship III (Westminster Choir College) (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Fall 2006	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	3.00	0
2	2.85	0.3608
3	2.54	0.7458
4	2.79	0.4103
	14 of 16 students	

*At Westminster Choir College, Musicianship III is the final course in a three-semester sequence. It focuses on chromatic harmony and includes discussion of large-scale formal structures (e.g., Sonata form and Rondo form) and Counterpoint. It is an integrated course, including Theory, Aural Skills, and Keyboard Harmony.*

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- Dr. Thomas was [a] fun professor and very nice. The mood was very relaxed and enjoyable.
- Dr. Thomas took his time introducing the material and was very good about going slowly enough for us to absorb what he was teaching.
- I felt like the instructor was very understanding and responsive to the students' needs.
- Course instructor is willing to explain most unfamiliar terminology. Although class is paced quickly, things are gone over more than once.
- Teacher adapted the structure of the class to the needs of the students (spent more time on things we had difficulty on).
- There was a very open atmosphere to ask questions/express difficulties.
- [Keyboard] labs were great.
- Dr. Thomas was always enthusiastic about the music we were learning about.
- [Dr. Thomas] was happy to meet with people after class if they needed extra help, and he made sure to teach at our pace!
- I really liked the lab. I found the ear training very useful.
- [Dr. Thomas] was very detailed. He was thorough about answering questions.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Contemporary Theory

<b>TH342: Contemporary Trends (Westminster Choir College)</b> (scale of 1-3 with 3 being best)		
Question #	Spring 2007	
	Avg	StdDev.
1	3.00	0
2	2.33	0.6992
3	2.17	0.8975
4	2.92	0.2665
	<i>17 of 22 students</i>	

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- I liked this class – understanding of the material is encouraged more than grading. The instructor is always available for extra help.
- [Dr. Thomas] is extremely willing to help us anyway necessary and make accommodations for students.
- [The] teacher worked hard until we understood.
- Dr. Thomas is a nice teacher.
- Dr. Thomas is flexible with his work. If you have trouble with assignments he tells what else to look at to reconsider your work.
- I've become more interested in writing atonal music.
- I love the way Dr. Thomas is understanding. He even joined one of our study sessions at night which was helpful.
- [Dr. Thomas was] always willing to put extra work in and go the extra mile – literally driving here when we were free.
- Now I'm quite interested in 20<sup>th</sup> century music.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Form and Analysis

MUS 202: Form and Analysis (College of Saint Rose)			
(scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)			
Question #	Spring 2012 Avg.	Spring 2013 Avg.	Spring 2014 Avg.
1	3.45	3.39	3.50
5	3.45	3.43	3.25
8	3.27	3.17	3.31
11	3.64	3.22	3.06
12	3.55	3.48	2.94
14	3.45	3.57	3.38
	4 of 6 students	23 of 24 students	16 of 18 students

*Form and Analysis at The College of Saint Rose is a writing-intensive course. It covers structures from the small scale (e.g., phrases and periods) to large scale (e.g., Fugue, Sonata form, Minuet and Trio, Rondo form) and styles from the Baroque to Contemporary. There is also a module on non-western music.*

#### **Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:**

- Dr. Thomas is clearly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject.
- [Dr. Thomas] made sure we understood everything we needed to for all the papers we had to write.
- Good energy, enthusiastic about music.
- Dr. Thomas is very intelligent and knows so much about theory. He always tried to extend his vast knowledge to us.
- [Dr. Thomas] show[s] real appreciation for each composition we learn and applies it to his teachings.
- I genuinely like the way you teach the class. You always provided help for me after class when I asked.
- I busted my ass in this course and feel rewarded because of it. Dr. Thomas is a very cool guy.
- Dr. Thomas is a very nice person and wishes us to be well educated.



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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### **Form and Analysis** (Cont'd)

- Dr. Thomas is a genuine man, passionate about theory.
- Dr. Thomas makes class fun, while staying informative, even teaching more than what's required.
- Dr. Thomas posed a lot of questions, forced us to really work and discover rather than spoonfeed us, really made us retain information.
- [Dr. Thomas] is demanding, but also understanding; really pushes you to strive. He is the most knowledgeable professor ... and is always available for help or advice.
- ... I have gained from this class ... a deeper knowledge of different types of classical and world music and a better ability to write technical analysis.

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### Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)

#### Orchestration

MUS 334: Instrumentation and Orchestration (College of Saint Rose) (scale of 1-4 with 4 being best)								
Question #	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015
1	3.00	Data	3.11	2.90	3.08	3.31	3.33	3.25
5	2.73	Not	3.22	3.00	3.42	3.25	3.44	3.50
8	2.45	Available	3.00	2.70	2.75	2.77	3.44	3.25
11	2.73		3.08	3.10	3.08	2.75	3.22	3.50
12	3.45		3.13	3.40	3.27	3.00	3.56	3.75
14	3.27		3.56	3.60	3.42	3.00	3.44	3.50
	<i>11 of 11 students</i>		<i>9 of 10 students</i>	<i>10 of 11 students</i>	<i>12 of 12 students</i>	<i>13 of 13 students</i>	<i>9 of 11 students</i>	<i>4 of 4 students</i>

#### Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations:

- [Dr. Thomas] was open to answering whatever questions we had.
- I learned a lot from Dr. Thomas, because it's clear he knows a lot about orchestration.
- [Dr. Thomas] explained things more than once if needed.
- [Dr. Thomas] did his best to show examples and answer questions which was helpful and I learned a lot.
- At the end of the semester we all have an understanding of orchestration. The beginning was an adjustment for students and Dr. Thomas but we all grew as musicians by the end.
- Dr. Thomas is a great person who really, really know[s] his stuff when it comes to orchestration.
- [The] class was very engaging and interactive.
- This class was quite enjoyable.
- He was always willing to go back to answer questions. The class moved quickly, but he would always clarify.
- Dr. Thomas is one of the best teachers I have had at this school.

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### **Instructor Ratings By Course (Cont'd)**

#### **Orchestration** (Cont'd)

- Dr. Thomas is very qualified to teach this course. The man is an encyclopedia of orchestration and music science.
- Awesome teacher, extremely intelligent. Any student is lucky to be in this teacher's class. Time well spent.

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### Peer Evaluations

#### MUS 180: Ear Training I (William Paterson University), Fall 2008

Topics covered in class: Sight singing, Solfège practice, Interval recognition

<u>Knowledge of Subject</u>	<u>Rating (scale of 1-6, with 6 being best)</u>
Preparation and Organization	6
Deals with subject matter	6
Responds to questions	5
Deals with the development of the thinking and thought processes involved	5
Knowledge and command of subject matter	6
Interest and enthusiasm	6
Deals with topic(s) in an interesting and effective manner	5
Handling of discussion and questions	4
Degree of rapport between students and faculty member	6
Overall rating	5.5

#### MUSC 121 & 122: Keyboard Skills I and II (Raritan Valley Community College), Spring 2006

<u>Content Presentation and Approach</u>	<u>Observed</u>	<u>Not Relevant</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>
Well-prepared and organized	X		
Discussed subject in logical manner	X		
Helped students understand importance and relevance of course material	X		
Asked questions that stimulated critical thinking	X		
Encouraged questions and active debate	X		
Explained concepts clearly	X		
Gave examples to illustrate concepts	X		
Approached material from varied perspectives	X		
Moved from broad concepts to specific aspects	X		
Clarified ambiguous or incomplete information in the textbook	X		
Used techniques that aroused and maintained student interest	X		
Projected enthusiasm	X		

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### MUSC 121 & 122: Keyboard Skills I and II (Raritan Valley Community College), Spring 2006 (Cont'd)

<u>Classroom Management</u>	<u>Observed</u>	<u>Not Relevant</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>
Employed varied teaching techniques	X		
Maintained classroom control and order	X		
Elicited information from students	X		
Provided sufficient time for student responses	X		
Used the physical environment to support student learning	X		
Started and ended class on time	X		

#### Additional Comments

The students all arrived on time and they were well behaved for the duration of the lecture. Robert never had to encourage silence or focus. When the second group (Keyboard Skills II) arrived the students wasted no time and sat at their keyboards and began working almost immediately. Rob did not have to tell them what to do. They knew to come in and begin their technique exercises. This illustration of organization was impressive.

<u>Student Involvement and Participation</u>	<u>Observed</u>	<u>Not Relevant</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>
Provided opportunities for students to express themselves	X		
Asked for feedback validation of student understanding of material	X		
Students responded freely to questions	X		
Students offered examples and information that were relevant	X		

#### Additional Comments

The class did not hesitate to ask questions. There was an informal element to the class, but all the while there was respect shown on both sides (students and faculty). The students seemed intent on succeeding at the exercises. Rob would encourage students to "focus" and "concentrate" if they were struggling. This was done with sensitivity.

#### Summation

I enjoyed the maturity and focus in Robert's classroom. The students all appeared to be putting forth their best effort. Rob would work individually with each student and correct posture or hand placement. He was gentle in his approach and this made his criticisms more valuable. He was also quick to point out strengths and encouraged the students when they were successful. His upfront questions like "Where do you need the most work?" were never asked to make his job easier, but to force the student to answer some tough questions about their ability. I found this very valuable. Overall, it was a pleasant illustration of college students being treated like adults.

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### Messages From Former Students

- I wanted to let you know I understood and learned more in your one semester than two of my previous. Thank you very much! (From a student who took Form and Analysis at The College of Saint Rose)
- I want to thank you for teaching the course. I clearly had some issues staying on top of things in class, and I was absent more than I meant to be, but I want to say that it was fun to have you teaching and being loose enough in class to deal with some of the shenanigans that I generate. It was nice to be able to cut loose a little bit in a classroom and have the teacher not try and shut me down for once. Most of all, thank you for sharing your broad depth of knowledge with us, it was clear that you were passionate about what you were teaching. (From a student who took Form and Analysis at The College of Saint Rose)
- My partner in crime for Ear training 1+2, Connor, posted this today: Just aced my first ear training test ... my initial response was Prof. Thomas would be proud. (From a student who took Ear Training I and II at William Paterson University)
- I wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed your classes, and couldn't have made it through my bachelor's degree without them. Thank you so much for your help. I've never met a teacher so willing to show up to student study groups and go out of his way to help before. I really find that admirable. (From a student who took Musicianship III and Contemporary Trends at Westminster Choir College)
- Since the grades are in and this is not going to have an effect on my final grade, I just wanted to let you know that I truly enjoyed your class and the whole experience was a big eye opened to classical music. (From a student who took Introduction to Music at Burlington County College)

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## Sample Syllabus

*This Syllabus was used Spring Semester, 2015, at The College of Saint Rose*

### Theory III MUS 201

Instructor: Robert E. Thomas, Ph.D.

Email:

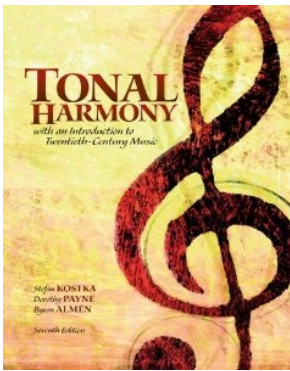
Office Hours By Appointment

There is also a box in the Faculty Lounge ( 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor) where messages can be left.

### Prerequisite:

Minimum grade of C in MUS 102 (Theory II)

### Required Course Materials



Tonal Harmony Text and Workbook with CD, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (Kostka/Payne)  
ISBN: 978-0077658236

Manuscript Paper

Pencils

Ruler

### Supplementary Materials

- [musictheory.net](http://musictheory.net)
- [micrologus.retmusic.com](http://micrologus.retmusic.com)
- notation software (e.g., Finale, Sibelius, MuseScore [available for free download at [musescore.org](http://musescore.org)])

### General Goals

- Secondary Functions
- Modulation
- Chromatic Harmony
- Part-writing
- Post-Tonal Harmony

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## Sample Syllabus (Cont'd)

### Listening List

The Music Department Listening List for this semester:

- Beethoven: *Symphony No. 3 "Eroica"*
- Brahms: *Symphony No. 2*
- Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde (Prelude and Liebestod)*
- Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*
- Duke Ellington: *Diminuendo in Blue*

*all works are available via the College Library's website at <http://>*

### Attendance

Attendance is very important and will alter your final percentage grade. Promptness and attendance is expected as a demonstration of your commitment. Excused absences must be documented with a physician's note or a letter from your academic advisor. You are entitled to one unexcused absence, after which three points will be deducted from your final grade for each subsequent unexcused absence.

**You must bring your textbook and workbook to every class.** Failure to do so will initially result in a warning; continued failure to do so may result in a lowering of your final grade, at the instructor's discretion.

### Homework, Tests, and Exams

- Homework will be assigned frequently. It will be review in class, and most will be graded. You will be expected to compete each homework assignment.
- There will be four tests over the course of the semester.
- There will be a mid-term and a final exam.
- Tests and exams will not be made up unless **pre**-approved.
- The final exam will be given during finals week according to the Final Exam schedule.

### Grading Scale

A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	75-79%
C	70-74%
D	65-69%
F	0-64%



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### Sample Syllabus (Cont'd)

#### Grading Percentage Breakdown

Grades will be given for all homework, tests, and major exams as follows:

<b>Homework</b>	10%
<b>Tests</b>	30%
<b>Mid Term</b>	20%
<b>Final Exam</b>	40%

#### Use of Electronic Devices in Class is Prohibited

#### Email and Blackboard

- Blackboard will be used to disseminate course materials like handouts and non-workbook exercises. Other course materials (e.g., the syllabus) will also be posted there.
- The school provides all students with an email address. Please note that non-school email addresses *cannot* be used for correspondence. Students should check their email regularly.

#### Disability Statement

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations please register with \_\_\_\_\_, the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities. The office is located in the Academic Support Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of \_\_\_\_\_ (campus extension \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_) for disability verification and determination of recommended reasonable academic accommodations. After you have made arrangements with that office, please see me to discuss your accommodations. Please remember that timely notice will help avoid delay in your receipt of accommodations.

#### Academic Integrity

Students at \_\_\_\_\_ are expected to be honest in every aspect of their academic work. All work presented as a student's own must be the product of her or his own efforts. Plagiarism, cheating, academic misconduct, or any other submission of another's work as one's own are unacceptable. Students working in groups are each individually responsible for the academic integrity of the entire group project. The College's *Policy on Plagiarism and Other Infringements of Academic Honesty*, which includes definition, detailed explications of plagiarism and academic misconduct, and procedures, is found at [http://www.\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](http://www._____).

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## Sample Syllabus (Cont'd)

### Tentative Course Outline

<u>Week #</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading and Workbook Exercises</u>
Week 1 (Jan. 12, 14, 16)	Orientation and Review Levels of Harmony / Tonal Areas	Chapter 16 16-1A & 16-2E #1; 16-2A #5 & 16-2E #2
Week 2 (Jan. 21 & 23)	Secondary Functions	Chapters 16 & 17 16-1B
Week 3 (Jan. 26, 28, 30)	Secondary Functions Phrase Relationships Diatonic Common-Chord Modulations Test #1: Secondary Functions	Chapters 17 & 18 17-1A; 17-2C #1
Week 4 (Feb. 2, 4, 6)	Common-Chord Modulations Other Modulatory Techniques Mode Mixture	Chapters 18, 19, & 21 18-1B & C, 18-2A #7, 18-2F; 19-1A #'s 2-4; 21-1A, 21-1C #7
Week 5 (Feb. 9, 11, 13)	Neapolitan Chord Augmented Sixth Chords Test #2: Modulation, Mode Mixture, N Chord	Chapters 21 & 22 21-1G; 22-1B & C, 22-1D #3
Week 6 (Feb. 16, 18, 20)	Enharmonic Spelling, Reinterpretation, and Modulation Chords with Altered 5ths Mid Term: Secondary Functions, Modulation, Mode Mixture, N Chords, +6 Chords	Chapters 23 & 24 23-1A, 23-1B #1, 23-1E #2, 24-1C #'s 2 & 3
Week 7 (Feb. 23, 25, 27)	Chord Extensions ct <sup>o7</sup> and other ct embellishing chords Mediant relationships Simultaneities Coloristic Chord Successions Linear Chromaticism Post-Romantic Harmony Introduction to New-Riemannian Theory	Chapters 24 & 25 24-1C #7, Handout; 25-1C, 25-1E, Handout
Week 8 (Mar. 2, 4, 6)	MID-WINTER BREAK	

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## Sample Syllabus (Cont'd)

### Tentative Course Outline (Cont'd)

Week 9 (Mar. 9, 11, 13)	Chords & Simultaneities Test #3: Enharmonics, Chords with Altered 5ths, Chord Extensions, Embellishing Chords, Mediant Relationships, Color- istic Chord Successions, Linear Chromaticism	Chapter 26 26-1D, E, F, G, & H
Week 10 (Mar. 16, 18, 20)	Chords & Simultaneities Parallelism Pandiaticism Polytonality Rhythm	Chapter 26 26-2A, B, & C; 26-2G #'s 2-5
Week 11 (Mar. 23, 25, 27)	Rhythm Nonserial Atonality	Chapters 26 & 27 26-3A, B, & C; Handout
Week 12 (Mar. 30, Apr. 1)	Nonserial Atonality Serial Composition 12-Tone Rows	Chapter 27 27-1B, C, D, & E; 27-1H; 27-2A & B
Week 13 (Apr. 8, 10)	12-Tone Rows Integral Serialism New Directions Test #4: 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Topics	Chapters 27 & 28
Weeks 14 (Apr. 13, 15, 17)	New Directions The Musical Language of Vernacular Styles	Chapter 28 28-1A
Week 15 (Apr. 20, 22, 24)	The Musical Language of Vernacular Styles	
Week 16 (Apr. 27, 29)	Review for Final Exam	
FINALS WEEK (May 1 – May 6)	<b>Friday, May 1, 8:00am – 10:30am</b>	

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### Statement of Teaching Philosophy

A teacher of music is presented with both a tremendous opportunity and a weighty obligation. One is given the chance to broaden students' horizons and expose them to entirely new worlds. At the same time, it is necessary both to instill a respect for inherited traditions and to present material in a such a way that each student can take their newly acquired knowledge and apply it outside the classroom. All subjects must be addressed in a manner which balances theory and practice, enhances students' musicianship, and illuminates the repertoire they study in order to create more informed and, ultimately, better musicians.

Teachers must be adaptable to the abilities of their students, and must respond to their unique requirements. In my own teaching, I strive to create an environment that provides a challenge to all students while at the same time being sensitive to their individual needs. Students have often mentioned how much they appreciate that I make the effort to readily make myself available to meet with them outside of class. I consistently encourage them to ask any questions they may have, whether in the classroom, in an office hour, via email, or even in the hallway.

I make it clear that I hold students to a high standard, and I have found they respect and respond to the combination of an encouraging atmosphere paired with strong, clearly defined requirements. I assign work nearly every class period, in addition to regular tests and exams. I grade these assignments thoroughly and return them promptly, which provides another avenue for feedback both for the students to measure their progress and for me to gauge their understanding.

Many of the courses that I have been privileged to teach have been comprised of students with widely varied musical backgrounds. As a result, I have been faced with the situation of challenging more advanced students while providing an environment which is conducive to learning for the rest. To accomplish this task, I have made it a practice to actively engage students in the process of learning by generating response through the instigation of class discussions, board work, and displaying and performing students' work to ensure a thorough understanding of all material and concepts. I also incorporate multi-media presentations into my lectures, which are later posted online for students to download and study at their leisure, and maintain Soundcloud sites for supplementary aural skills exercises. I have found a sense of humor and a somewhat less formal atmosphere contributes to fostering a positive learning environment. If any difficulties arise, I stop to work through the material as many times as necessary until there is full comprehension. I often present multiple ways to solve problems while telling the class to use the method that works best for them; it is less important to me how students learn material than that they do eventually understand the topic.

In my teaching I strive to present all topics in as straightforward a manner as possible in order to effectively communicate the material while always stressing the practical application of the subject under discussion. Information is presented through explanation, example, and with models, with assignments tailored to engage the students with what has just been presented. For example, in orchestration courses I assign projects for each choir of the orchestra and then generate audio files from the scores so students can hear the result of their work. In addition to the immediate classroom objective, these projects allow students to gain skills that are applicable outside the classroom.

I remain an active member of the music theory community outside the classroom attending theory conferences and researching notation practices and layered musical structures. I am presently at work on a book, intended for undergraduate music majors, that explains standard notation practices – a project inspired by observing students' difficulties properly applying notation principles. I regularly use portions of this work in the classroom, particularly in theory and orchestration courses.

Ultimately, my principal goal as a teacher is to communicate the subject matter clearly, understandably, meaningfully, and effectively. I work constantly and diligently to achieve that end.