

## Composition Project

**Due Date:**  
Fri., Dec. 12, 11:59 pm

**Option 1:** Transcription/Arrangement

Create a transcription/arrangement<sup>1</sup> of a short contrapuntal composition by J.S. Bach; e.g., you could transcribe a canon, chorale, minuet (or other baroque dance form), song, invention, sinfonia, fugue, etc. by J.S. Bach. Then analyze your work using the *On-Score Analysis* guidelines below.

**Option 2:** Composition

Compose an original contrapuntal passage in the style of J.S. Bach. Then analyze your work using the On-Score Analysis guidelines below.

**Option 3:**

Another type of counterpoint project (permission of instructor required).

### On-Score Analysis

Analyze the work's *modulation scheme*. As appropriate for the type of work you have chosen, label the *main sections* of the work and identify *important motives*. For the beginning of the work (only), analyze the counterpoint in full detail. Discuss your analytical approach in your PDF reflection paper.

Deliverables	Checklist
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Clean <i>PDF score</i> with required title, instrumentation, composer name, and tempo.</li><li>2. <i>MP3 file</i> of the transcription.</li><li>3. <i>PDF on-score analysis</i></li><li>4. <i>PDF reflection paper</i> (typed, double-spaced, 2-3 pages) explaining what you transcribed or composed and how you went about transcribing/composing it. Be sure to discuss your <i>creative process</i>. Personal reflections about what you learned along the way are highly encouraged.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> – Score<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> – Title</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> – Composer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> – Tempo</li></ul></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> – On-Score Analysis</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> – Paper</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> – MP3 file (optional)</li></ul>

### Grading

- This project is worth 15% of your MUSC 312 grade.
- Your grade will primarily be based on how well you followed the instructions above.
- Creativity, hard work, depth of composition/analytical ideas, length of paper, and passion for the project will also be factored in.

### Submission:

Upload your pdf score, mp3 file, pdf on-score analysis pdf, pdf reflection paper into the *Composition Project* Blackboard assignment by the deadline.

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<sup>1</sup> According to [Britannica.com](http://Britannica.com), "A transcription is essentially the adaptation of a composition for an instrument or instruments other than those for which it was originally written. An arrangement is a similar procedure, although the arranger often feels free to take musical liberties with elements of the original score."

### Elements of Notation

- Use the free music notation program MuseScore to create your score, mp3 file, and on-score analysis.
- PDF scans of hand-written will also be accepted. If your work is hand written you do NOT need to submit an mp3 file.
- As applicable to your transcription/composition, be sure to use an appropriate key signature, time signature, *instrumental/vocal ranges*, etc.
- Your MuseScore notation should be legibly laid out on the page(s)
- Your composition *must* have a **tempo marking**.
- Your score *must* have title, instrumentation, composer's name, and transcriber's name, as appropriate for your project; e.g.,

### Invention No. 13 in A minor for banjo and marimba

J.S. Bach  
Transcribed by Béla Fleck

### If you are using traditional manuscript paper

- Take great care in your *music calligraphy*. Be sure to correctly notate the clefs, key signature(s), time signature(s), noteheads, stems, beams, ledger lines, and so forth, as appropriate.<sup>2</sup>
- The notes should be well-spaced within the bar so that the music is easy for the performer to sight read.
- If there are multiple parts in your score, they *must* be vertically aligned so that the beats line up correctly.
- If you can't figure out how to notate something, consult a music notation reference source,<sup>3</sup> check out a score from the Music Library that has a similar instrumentation, or ask me for help.

### Downloading MuseScore

You can download MuseScore for free at:

<https://musescore.org>

You can quickly learn how to use MuseScore via the video tutorials available at:

<https://musescore.org/en/tutorials>

### References

Dzubay, David, Don Freund, et al. 2025. Music Notation Style Guide. Bloomington, IN:  
Available online at: <<https://blogs.iu.edu/jsomcomposition/music-notation-style-guide/>>.  
Gould, Elaine. 2011. *Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*. London: Faber Music Ltd.

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<sup>2</sup> For basic notational issues, see LearnMusicTheory.net, *Summary of Notation Guidelines*. Available online at: <<http://learnmusictheory.net/PDFs/pdf/files/01-01-10-SummaryofNotation.pdf>>.

<sup>3</sup> For advanced notational issues, consult Dzubay and Freund 2025, Gould 2011, or ask me for help.