

BAIN MUSC 312
Counterpoint

SYLLABUS

Instructor

Dr. Reginald Bain, Professor
Composition and Theory

Contact Information

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Office: Music Building, R227
Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Information

Term: Fall 2025
Format: MW: 10:50-11:40 pm, B3WEB¹
Location: Music Building, R213
Website: <<https://reginaldbain.com/vc/musc312/>>
Blackboard: <<https://blackboard.sc.edu>>

COURSE MODULES

1. Introduction
 2. Two-Voice
Species Counterpoint
 3. Imitation
 4. Three & Four-Voice
Counterpoint
 5. Invention & Variation
 6. Fugue
 7. Composition Project
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Prerequisite: C or better in MUSC 215

Course Description

Analysis and writing in contrapuntal forms.

Required Open Access Textbook

Gotham, Mark, et al. 2023. *Open Music Theory*, Version 2 (OMT2). Available online at:
<<https://viva.pressbooks.pub/openmusictheory/>>.

Other readings, scores, and recordings will be made available via Blackboard.

Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Read musical scores in a wide variety of formats
- Analyze tonal counterpoint and harmony
- Write tonal counterpoint
- Compare/contrast contrapuntal forms including canon, chorale, invention, and fugue

Course Requirements

Weekly reading, listening/analysis, and assignments/activities as listed in the *Daily Schedule* and *Listening/Analysis*. There will be two 50 min. exams: Exam 1 (*Two-Voice Species Counterpoint*) and Exam 2 (*Four-Part Writing*); and a 2.5-hour online Final Exam. There will also be an instructor-mentored final composition project.

Technology Requirements

A computer, Web access, and a university-provided Blackboard account are required to access the digital course materials and submit work via Blackboard. Microsoft Word (.docx), Excel (.xlsx), and PowerPoint (.pptx) are the preferred document creation formats. These programs are available for free to all USC students. For complete information, see *Links for Students > Blended Course Information* on the course website. The free music notation program MuseScore (Win/Mac/Linux) is recommended for the final composition project. MuseScore is available for download at: <<https://musescore.org/en/download>>.

¹ Blended/Hybrid Up to 49% web. Course that is taught both face-to-face and online with 49% or less of the course offered online. Course meets in-person on Monday/Wednesday and assignments/activities are completed asynchronously online by students in lieu of a Friday meeting.

In-Class Exercises & Weekly Worksheets

The daily in-class exercises and weekly worksheets must be done in *pencil*. Pen is not acceptable. Please be sure to bring a pencil to class each day.

Instructional Methods, Course Format & Policies

This course will be taught using multiple instructional methods that include lecture, group discussion, and student-centered learning approaches; e.g., active-learning exercises, flipping, and online activities. Students will complete weekly listening/analysis assignments and activities that focus on major works and illustrate the main topics of the course. This course is being offered as a blended course. The course meets face-to-face (f2f) twice per week (Mondays and Wednesdays). Typical activities in the f2f classroom include lecture, interacting with your instructor and classmates, analytical discussions, group listening exercises, open Q & A sessions, review sessions, and exams. Assignments/activities are completed asynchronously by students in lieu of a Friday meeting. Most of the work for the course will occur online in Blackboard. The learning modules in Blackboard are organized into weekly assignments/activities that include links to videos, readings, scores, recordings, analyses, quizzes, software, etc. Online activities and in-class activities are designed to build on each other. Weekly assignments/activities will be posted on Wednesday and are due the following Monday at class time (unless otherwise stated). Completion of the online assignments/activities in a timely manner and active participation in class are critical to success in this course. Late work cannot be accepted – except in the case of an *excused absence*. Work that is not submitted is averaged into the student's grade using a score of zero. For more information, see *Links for Students > Blended Course Information* on the course website.

University Policies

As described on the university's *Carolinian Creed*, *Honor Code* and *Center for Teaching Excellence* websites, students are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity and classroom etiquette. For detailed information, see *Links for Students* on the course website.

Student Services

Information about *Graduate Student Opportunities and Support*, *Wellness at the School of Music*, and other student services is available on the course website under *Links for Students*.

Student Disability Resource Center

If you are registered with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), please make sure I receive a copy of your accommodation letter by the first day of class so I may work with you (and with SDRC, as necessary) to make sure your accommodations are met. The SDRC is located in Close-Hipp, Suite 102. You may reach the SDRC via e-mail sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu, or phone (803) 777-6142.

Attendance Policy

This course will follow the university's *Attendance Policy* which is available online at:

<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/undergraduate/policies-regulations/undergraduate-academic-regulations/>

Attendance will be taken at every meeting and the record posted in Blackboard on a daily basis. It is the student's responsibility to sign the daily *attendance sheet*. Attendance is subject to the university's "5% Rule." If the student exceeds this unexcused absence threshold, the instructor may exact a one letter-grade penalty.

Classroom Policies

I am committed to making each day we meet a safe, active, focused, positive, and distraction-free learning environment for everyone in the class. I expect all students to follow the university guidelines for classroom *safety* and *acceptable conduct*, as well as the guidelines for *classroom etiquette* and conduct below:

- Please do not enter the classroom while music is playing. You may enter the classroom (as quietly as possible) when the when the instructor indicates that the current group listening exercise has ended.
- Cell phones should be put in silent mode before the class begins and should typically be out of plain sight.
- The use of laptops, tablets and other electronic devices can be a significant distraction to others. Please be sensitive to this fact and limit their potential for distraction by using your electronic devices only for class-related activities.

Grading Scale

100-90 A	89-85 B+	84-80 B	79-75 C+	74-70 C	69-65 D+	64-60 D	59-0 F
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Grade Distribution

25%	-	Assignments/Activities	10%	-	Final Exam
25%	-	Exam 1	15%	-	Final Project
25%	-	Exam 2			