

BAIN MUSC 726
Topics in Music Theory

Debussy & Ravel

SYLLABUS

Instructor

Dr. Reginald Bain, Professor
Composition and Theory

Contact Information

E-mail: rbain@mozart.sc.edu
Phone/Voice mail: (803) 777-8183
Office: Music Building, R227
Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Information

Term: Spring 2027
Format: MW: 12:00-12:50 pm, B3WEB¹
Location: Music Building, R213
Website: <<https://reginaldbain.com/vc/musc726d/>>
Blackboard: <<https://blackboard.sc.edu/>>

COURSE MODULES

1. Introduction
 2. Piano Music
 3. Music for Ballet
 4. String Quartets
 5. Other Chamber Music
 6. Vocal Music
 7. Comparative Analysis
 8. Orchestration Analysis
-

Description

Analysis of melody, harmony, rhythm & meter, form, style, and orchestration in the music of Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel.

Course Materials

Reading assignments, digital scores, recordings, and analytical media will be made available in electronic format via Blackboard and the course website.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze pitch organization, harmony, and voice leading in the music of Debussy & Ravel
- Analyze rhythm & meter, form, and orchestration in the music of Debussy & Ravel
- Apply advanced analytical frameworks that scholars have used to shed light on the innovations of Debussy, Ravel, and related early 20th-century composers
- Evaluate modern interpretations of the music of Debussy & Ravel
- Evaluate online resources for Debussy & Ravel scholarship
- Plan, research, develop, and deliver an instructor-mentored analytical oral presentation on a Debussy & Ravel research topic

Course Requirements

Weekly reading, score study, listening/analysis, and assignments/activities as listed in the *Daily Schedule* and *Listening/Analysis* pages on the course website. Daily participation in class. Daily use of the course Blackboard page and website. There will be an online midterm and final exam. There will also be a *Midterm Research Project* and *Final Presentation* on an instructor-approach research topic.

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.

Technical 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 more information, see *Links for Students > Blended Course Information* on the course website.

Course Format & Policies

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, open Q & A sessions, review sessions, workshop sessions, and student presentations. 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 modules that include links to videos, scores, recordings, analyses, quizzes, software, exercises, 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 and activities in a timely manner and active participation in class are critical to success in this course. For more information, see *Links for Students > Blended Course Information*. Late work cannot be accepted – except in the case of a documented excused absence. Work that is not submitted is averaged into the student's grade using a score of zero.

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 more information, see *Links for Students* on the course website.

Attendance Policy

This course will follow the university's attendance policy which is available online at:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/student-services/academic_success/ombuds_services/our_services/class_absences/

Attendance will be taken at every face-to-face meeting and the attendance record posted in Blackboard. 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 threshold, the instructor may exact a one-letter grade penalty.

GenAI Policy

This course will follow the CTE's *Guiding Principles for AI Use in Teaching* which are available online at:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/generative_ai/genai_teaching_guidelines/index.php

Student Services

Information about *Graduate Student Opportunities and Support*, *Wellness at the School of Music*, and other **student services** is also 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.

Grading Scale

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

Grade Distribution

20%	-	Assignments/Activities	30%	-	Final Presentation
15%	-	Midterm Exam	15%	-	Final Exam
20%	-	Midterm Research Project			