

Music 438: Designing Musical Experiences

Fall 2011

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Surprise Imagination Celebration Wonder Magic Invention

Primary Aims

Designing Musical Experiences has three related goals: one, to cultivate a playful sense of musicianship; two, to understand the rich variety of methodologies and approaches in the general music landscape; three, to explore and become familiar with literature and repertoire for the general music classroom across the age spectrum. Put another way, this course rests on the belief that a music teacher can do her best work when she herself enjoys making and sharing music, can envision multiple ways to create musical experiences for students, and can meaningfully choose what musical materials best suit learning within a given group of students.

A playful sense of musicianship is not the standard aim of a music school education. The standard product of a music school is the musical specialist, most often a performer who specializes in a single instrument, often with aspirations to win an audition to an elite ensemble such as an orchestra. By contrast, the playful generalist aspires to play multiple instruments, to improvise and compose, to sing, and to know music from several musical cultures, and possesses a broad curiosity for all music. This course will provide a venue for the development of your playful generalist side.

Beginning with the singing school movement of the 1700s, the United States has always had some form of general music; music learning that was not directly oriented toward staging a performance. The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw rich traditions emerge around music educators such as Sarah Ann Glover, John Curwen, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Carl Orff, and Zoltan Kodály. Contemporary movements include addressing musical cultures, informal music learning, and pedagogic content knowledge.

Finally, most music educators think of literature and repertoire courses as only existing for band, orchestra, piano, and voice, but the music generalist also has a repertoire, and this course will present several versions of “best” musical materials, from rich examples of folk music, to popular music and even “music teacher music”. The goal is to have each student familiar enough with sources to find music that not only educational aims and goals, but is real music that touches the soul for all participants.

Driving Questions

What music should be included or excluded in musical experiences?

How should music be presented to, or shared with, young children?

What kinds of activities ought to be included in the educational environment?

Are there commonly found aspects of elementary music programs that we should question, or that do not belong there?

To what extent should technology play a role in musical learning?

How can the individual differences and special needs of students be taken into account?

General Class Expectations

- Be on time every day.
- Read and respond to all assignments.
- Homework: you will receive assignments that require you to work outside of class. Plan on three or four hours per week outside of class for readings or assignments. All assignments will be submitted electronically and are due before class on the day they are due.

Grading

Your grade breaks down as follows:

40%= projects/homework

30%= in-class presentations

30%= attendance and in class participation

Course Requirements

Texts

You must purchase three books for this course, all available at the bookstore:

Barry, L. (2002). *The good times are killing me*. Seattle: Sasquatch Books.

Dewey, J. (1998). *Experience and education* (Vol. 60th anniversary). West Lafayette, Ind.: Kappa Delta Pi. Original work published 1938

Wiggins, Jackie. (2009). *Teaching for musical understanding* (2nd ed.). Rochester MI: CARMU Center for Applied Research in Musical Understanding Oakland University.

Ukulele

We'll be building our own ukuleles from kits, about \$50 total (good strings, stain, etc.).

Excursions

In addition to your normal commitment to attend class, you'll have 3-4 outside of class excursions, and you must attend 2 of them. These will include such things as: Leading students in MUS241 in a musical experience, a night of Contra Dance, a performance at the Urbana Farmer's Market (Market in the Square), a Sunday visit to the Blind Pig Pub to witness the Irish Music session.

Online repository and course DVD

Professional recording tools are in the hands of us amateurs, and we'll work informally with many devices and technologies throughout the course. We'll record many of our improvisations and performances, and you will also compose and improvise pieces to be distributed via pdf. As we begin to create recordings and song charts, I'll post our creations to a password-protected folder. Items will be up for two weeks on average, so download what you'd like to keep. At the end of the course, I'll assemble everything you'd like to share and burn a DVD for your future use.

Calendar

All assignments will be discussed on the day listed (i.e. they are homework for that day)!

September 30

Dewey Ch 1 & 2

The Good Times are Killing Me (GTAKM) up to and including "My Imagination"

With your group, start to plan where you'd like to play, have preliminary permission before class from location.

October 7 (No class—CIC)

This week: visit the place with your group, determine songs and schedule, and send to Matt w/brief explanation.

Nachmanovitch's "The Power of Mistakes" and "The Power of Limits"

GTAKM up to and including "Mrs. Hosey"

October 14

Dewey Chapter 3

Finish GTAKM

October 21

Dewey Chapter 4 and 5

Wiggins Chapter 1

October 28

Dewey Chapter 6 and 7

Wiggins Chapter 2

November 1 or 2 (depending on you) at 7 p.m.

Sing-along at the Blind Pig

November 4

Dewey Chapter 8

Wiggins Chapter 3

November 11 (Veteren's Day)

Wiggins group lesson

Alfred North Whitehead's essay "The Aims of Education"

November 18

Tom Turino visit! Read sections from *Music as Social Life* (distributed via email)

That evening: you should plan to come to the Phillips Recreation Center in Urbana for a contradance with Tom's band! Cover charge is about \$5.

Thanksgiving break, no class

December 2

Final celebration, big ideas

References and further readings

- Boardman, E. (2001). Generating a theory of music instruction. *Music Educators Journal*, 88(2), 45–53.
- Choksy, L. (1974/1988). *The Kodály method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
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- Dewey, J. (1901/1976). The educational situation. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), *The middle works, 1899-1924: volume 1: 1899-1901*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Gee, J. P. (2007). *Good video games and good learning: Collected essays on video games, learning, and literacy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Glover, S. A. (1835). *Scheme for rendering psalmody congregational; comprising a key to the Sol-Fa notation of music*. London: Jarrold and Sons.
- Goodkin, D. (2002). *Play, sing, and dance: An introduction to Orff-Schulwerk*. Miami, FL: Schott.
- Green, L. (2004). What can music educators learn from popular musicians? In C. X. Rodriguez (Ed.), *Bridging the gap: Popular music and music education* (pp. 225-240). Reston, VA: MENC.
- Jaques-Dalcroze, E. (1930/1980). The piano and musicianship (1925). In C. Cox (Ed.), *Eurhythmics, art, and education* (pp. 118-144). Salem, NH: Ayer.
- Keetman, G. (1974). *Elementaria: First acquaintance with Orff-Schulwerk*. New York: Boosey and Hawkes.
- Kodály, Z. (1964/1974). *The selected writings of Zoltán Kodály* (L. Halápy & F. Macnicol, Trans.). London: Boosey and Hawkes.
- Nachmanovitch, S. (1991). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art*. Jeremy P. Tarcher.
- Sedaris, D. (2000). Giant Dreams, Midget Abilities. In *Me Talk Pretty One Day*. New York: Little, Brown.
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- Suzuki, S., Weitsman, M., & Wenger, M. (1999). *Branching streams flow in the darkness: Zen talks on the Sandokai*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Thibeault, M. D. (2005). Artistry in eurhythmics teaching: lasting impressions of fleeting moments. *Journal of the Dalcroze Society of America*.
- Thibeault, M. D. (2006). Pedagogic intuition, improvisation, and teaching. *The Orffion (NCAOSA Newsletter)*, 30(1), 6–7.
- Thibeault, M. D. (2007). Letting high school children ‘be their own composers’: the Schulwerk and popular music. *The Orff Echo*, XIV(4), 23–27.