San José State University  
School of Music and Dance  
MUSC 104, Counterpoint, Section 01, Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Brian Belet

Office Location: Music Building, Room 104

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Email: Brian.Belet@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Monday / 3:00 – 4:00 pm; Tuesday / 11:00 am – 12:00 n

Class Days/Time: Monday & Wednesday / 12:00 n – 1:15 pm

Classroom: Music Building, Room 210

Course Website: www.beletmusic.com/SJSU_Courses.html (see ‘MUSC 104’ course files)

Prerequisites: Upper-division undergraduate or graduate status in the Music Systems & Theory Area. For undergraduates, this is best demonstrated by successful completion of MUSC 4A, or placement by transfer articulation. Graduate students need to be admitted to the M.A. program with no lower-division course deficiencies in the Music Systems & Theory Area.

Final Exam: Thursday, 10 December 2015, 9:45 am - 12:00 noon.

Course Fees: Music Use Fee: Music majors and minors must pay a music equipment use fee of $30 each semester. The fee must be paid directly to the Cashier’s Office, and you must bring the receipt to the Music Office before completing registration. Applied music instruction will not be authorized until this fee is paid. Music 10B students, or students enrolled in any sound recording course, must pay a fee of $22 each semester that they are enrolled in one or more of these classes. The fees are included in the student’s bill, with other registration fees.

Course Description
Counterpoint is an upper-division course within the Music Systems & Theory Area. The course examines counterpoint as a compositional technique, separate from the constraints of any specific system or historical style. Through this study students gain a thorough understanding of contrapuntal practices throughout the Western art music tradition, with an
emphasis on the literature of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Supplementary study examines Medieval as well as Contemporary techniques.

**Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

**GOALS:** 1) Analyze contrapuntal music from the late Medieval through 21st-century. 2) Complete writing and analysis assignments. 3) Compose short examples following the styles and procedures studied in class. 4) Complete final portfolio, including a major fugal project, as described in class.

**Course Content Learning Outcomes**

There is a teaching proverb that states: ‘Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.’ Provided a student applies himself/herself to this course — including attending class, reading the text, studying the music examples, completing assignments on time, asking questions when the material is not yet understood, studying daily outside of class time, working with tutors as needed (tutors are provided by the music program at no charge to the student) — the following outcomes can be expected:

1) Students will understand the concepts and procedures of contrapuntal music.
2) Students will gain a deeper understanding of the music they hear and perform by understanding and recognizing counterpoint in the literature.
3) Students will be able to competently analyze contrapuntal music.
4) Students will be able to compose musical exercises and composition projects that utilize counterpoint.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbook**

(no text required)

**Recommended Resources**

*Modal and Tonal Counterpoint.* H. Owen (Schirmer).


*Well-Tempered Clavier.* Bk 1. J.S. Bach (Henle edition preferred; Kalmus or Alfred also good. Score not available in the SJSU Bookstore.)
Course Topics

See “Topic List” document, posted to the course website. This addendum is considered a part of this course syllabus. A summary topic list includes:

  Consonance & Dissonance; Control of Dissonance
  Renaissance concepts (2- and 3-voice counterpoint): modes, cadences, musica ficta, suspensions, other dissonances, imitation, invertible counterpoint, setting text (motet and Mass).
  Tonal concepts (2- and 3-voice counterpoint): continuo and figured bass, harmonic considerations, cadences, dissonances (non-chord tones), trio sonata, invention, & fugue.

Classroom Protocol

Complete assigned readings and homework on time. NOTE: No late homework will be accepted, and no make-up exams will be permitted unless cleared with the instructor. Possible reasons for late work include verifiable emergency illness and hospitalization, and family emergencies. Late / missed work will receive a grade of ‘F’ unless otherwise determined by the instructor.

Active class discussion is expected on all topics presented in class.

Course documents, including some assignments, will be posted to the course website. Students are responsible to regularly check the site for document updates, and all items posted on the site are considered regular course materials.

Written homework should be prepared and printed using standard music industry computer technology (e.g., Finale software).

All cell phones must be turned off while in class; plan personal communications for before or after class. Since most cell phones have photo, video, and text messaging capabilities, any student seen with a cell phone during class will be considered to be cheating and will automatically fail the course. Course lectures may not be recorded (audio or video) without Instructor’s permission. Larger tablet and laptop computers may be used when specific music score and/or audio examples are being referenced.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html. Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.
Assignments and Grading Policy

Assigned homework, quizzes, exams, and class participation will be graded. Assignments not submitted on time, unless excused in advance by the Instructor, will receive a grade of “F”. Absence does not grant special dispensations regarding written assignments and material covered in class. Students are responsible for all material discussed in class, whether present or not.

Course work weightings:
- Written Assignments (weekly): 70%
- Final Project / Portfolio: 20%
- Class Participation: 10%

Letter grades are assigned on a 10-point scale, with “+” and “-” used as appropriate. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are graded on a normalized 100-point basis, so that letter grades correspond to the following GPA and percentage points:

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University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of
Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

**Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

**Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

**Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/.
Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop-in basis, no reservation required. Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/