

## **Music 1A: Fundamentals of Music (B00)**

University of California, San Diego Fall Quarter 2023

Instructor: Stephen de Filippo (he/him)

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Please put "MUS 1A" in the subject line and include your full name in the email body. Please allow up to 48 hours to receive a response; if you do not hear back from me within that window, please send me a friendly reminder.

Lectures: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00pm-1:20pm (cpmc 136) [week 10 will be online]

Office Hours: Friday 4:00pm (on zoom:  
<https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/96298457628?pwd=Qmg0dkxQNjV4YVdQcDNXcU8xcVZVQT09>)

Course site: [canvas.ucsd.edu](https://canvas.ucsd.edu)

### **Sections and Teaching Assistants (TAs)**

**Section B01:** W/F - 10:00am-10:50am  
**CPMC145**

Email:

Office Hours:

**Section B02:** W/F - 9:00am-9:50am  
**CPMC166**

Email:

Office Hours:

**Section B03:** M/W - 10:00am-10:50am  
**CPMC136**

Email:

Office Hours:

**Section B04:** M/W - 1:00pm-1:50pm  
**CPMC136**

Email:

Office Hours:

**Section B05:** M/W - 12:00pm-12:50pm  
**Warren 2154**

Email:

Office Hours:

**Section B06:** W/F 10:00am-10:50am  
**CPMC166**

Email:

Office Hours:

### **Course Overview**

This beginner-level music theory course provides students with a comprehensive introduction to the fundamental principles of music theory. Designed for individuals with little to no prior musical experience, the course aims to cultivate a solid foundation in understanding the language of music. Through a combination of theoretical concepts, practical exercises, and interactive discussions, students will develop the skills necessary to read and analyze musical notation, comprehend basic harmony, and grasp essential concepts in reading, writing, playing, and thinking about music.

### **Course materials/resources**

There is no required textbook for this course. New course content will be introduced primarily in the form of lectures; supplemental materials will also be posted to the Canvas course site.

You will want to have music paper (paper with a printed five-line musical staff) handy during lectures and sections. You may also find it useful for completing your homework. Music paper can be purchased inexpensively from various retailers. Alternatively, you can print your own: <http://blanksheetmusic.net>.

This course requires you to work independently with a piano. The music department's piano lab is located in CPMC 166 and will be available to Music 1A students for practice during the following times:

- Mondays, 2:00–4:00pm
- Tuesdays, 1:00–2:00pm
- Thursdays, 1:00–2:00pm
- Fridays, 4:00–6:00pm

The lab has 15 electronic keyboards with headphones that can be used on a first-come, first-served basis. You may work independently; on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you can also ask for instructor assistance if you need it.

Additionally, there are rooms with upright pianos on the third floor of CPMC which you can use for piano practice. They are open from 8:00am–10:00pm, Monday through Friday. Sign-up sheets are posted on Monday mornings for the entire week.

Students are expected to help maintain these facilities in a clean and orderly fashion. Sanitation materials will be provided; please wipe down all touched surfaces upon arrival and when leaving.

You may find a metronome useful for rhythm practice: <http://virtualsheetmusic.com/metronome>. There are also free metronome apps available for mobile devices.

### **Learning objectives**

Throughout this course, our goals are to support your growth in the following aspects:

- **Enhancing Listening Skills:** We will introduce and practice fundamental aural skills, enabling you to immerse yourself in music more comprehensively and profoundly.
- **Grasping Musical Notation and Vocabulary:** Our emphasis will be on fundamental tools derived from Western musical traditions from the 17th century onward. These tools will not only enhance your musical understanding and thinking but also aid in expressing musical ideas. They might also prepare you for further theory courses in the Music Department, such as Music 1B and 1C.
- **Enhancing Vocal Abilities:** We strive to boost your confidence and ease in using your natural musical instrument—your voice. This effort could set you on a path of lifelong musical enjoyment and fulfillment.
- **Developing Piano Keyboard Familiarity:** The piano will serve as a practical reference for a variety of theoretical concepts and hands-on exercises, providing a tangible aspect to our pursuit of the mentioned objectives.

### **Summary of Assignments & Projects**

1) **Homework** (8 x 4% = 32% of final grade)

On most weeks, you will be given a short homework assignment (eight in total throughout the quarter). Each homework will engage with concepts covered that week by completing a series of exercises. You may also be asked to write a brief journal-style reflection. Homework will be submitted on canvas, either filled out by hand and scanned, or completed annotated digitally and uploaded. You may need to use music paper. Homework will be posted on Tuesday morning and due the following Tuesday (one week later).

**2) Final reflection** (8% of final grade)

During week 10, you will submit a brief concluding essay. You will be asked to reflect on what you have learned in this course, and if/how you feel your experience of music has changed. You will also write about a piece of music, placing your subjective reactions in dialogue with theoretical notions discussed in the course. More information about the final reflection will be made available in the second half of the quarter (after the midterm exam).

**3) Individual musicianship coaching** (4 + 6 + 10% = 20% of final grade)

During weeks 4, 7, and 10, you will have a 3-5 minute, one-on-one musicianship coaching with your TA instead of a regular section. During this coaching, you will be asked to sing one or more short melodies and demonstrate working familiarity with the piano keyboard. For the final coaching you will be asked to prepare and perform a song (or part of a song) that you have composed yourself. Your TA will give you on-the-spot feedback, and they may invite you to try something again in light of their comments.

Having a successful coaching doesn't necessarily mean avoiding the smallest errors, but it *does* mean practicing the material in advance and having a strong enough grasp of it such that your TA can give you meaningful feedback. This course does not require you to be a perfect singer, but to use your voice as a tool for learning. Specific musical materials/requirements for each coaching will be distributed to you in advance to practice.

**4) Midterm exam** (10% of final grade)

This is a written exam on theory/terminology covered in the first half of the quarter. The exam will have two components: a timed quiz, and a worksheet similar in format to your homework assignments. The exam will be administered asynchronously via Canvas. Both components will be published to the Canvas course site at the start of the exam day, and you will need to complete both of them by the following morning.

**5) Final exam** (15% of final grade)

This is a written exam on all theory/terminology covered throughout the quarter. The format and method of administering the exam will parallel that of the midterm exam.

**6) Attendance + Course participation** (15% of final grade)

Music is an often communal experience, and as such, we expect that you will be an active member of this course. **Attendance will be taken at all TA sections, and your active participation in section will be valued and appreciated. If you need to miss a section due to illness or other**

**such circumstances, please get in touch with your TA.** I encourage you to attend lectures in person as well, especially so that you can ask questions and participate in interactive activities.

### Course Policies & Campus Resources

>> We will use **Canvas & your UC San Diego email address** to disseminate important course materials and announcements throughout the quarter. Please check both of these regularly.

>> Please silence devices (phones, computers, tablets, etc.) during class, unless you are invited by your instructor or TA to use them for a particular activity. Please no recordings or photos of lecture slides; these will be made available to you on Canvas. QR codes or hyperlinks may be used in the lecture, so do have a device on hand to be able to interact with the lecture.

>> In general, **late work** will not be accepted. You are expected to submit assignments by the day and time they are due.

- An exception: you are entitled to *one* “free” deadline extension, up to 48 hours in length, on any *one homework assignment* during the quarter—no excuse necessary.

- To activate this extension, simply email your TA in advance of the deadline to say that you’d like to use it. You need not provide a rationale; only a heads-up is required.

- Please note that the “free” extension may be used only once, and only for homework assignments (it cannot be used for an exam, a musicianship coaching, or the final reflection).

- If you are facing health issues or other concerns which you believe will impact your ability to keep up with course deadlines beyond the scope of the “free” homework extension, please get in touch with your TA.

>> At the end of the quarter, numerical grades will be translated into **letter grades** as follows:

90% or above = A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

59% or below = F

For grades of A, B, and C:

Numerical grade within 3 points of next letter above → “+” added to letter grade

Numerical grade within 3 points of next letter below → “-” added to letter grade

For example: 92% = A-, 87% = B+, *etc.*

If taking the course P/NP: 70% or above = P

69% or below = NP

**Please note:** In order to receive a passing grade in the course, you must participate in all three musicianship coachings, submit a final reflection, and complete the midterm and

final exams. Failure to complete one of these requirements is grounds for receiving a failing grade in the course, regardless of your numerical percentage grade.

>> Throughout our work together this quarter—including in lectures, TA sections, and all other course activities— I ask that we all strive to uphold the **UC San Diego Principles of Community** (<https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html>). Professional courtesy, respect, and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. By default, class rosters are provided to the instructor and TAs with each student’s legal name, but we will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name. I also welcome you to share your gender pronouns with us. Please feel free to advise us early in the quarter so that we may make appropriate changes to our records.

>> **Academic integrity** will be valued highly in this course. Assignments, projects, and exams are not collaborative unless otherwise noted. Instances of plagiarism and all other forms of cheating will be taken seriously and will lead to academic sanctions which may include receiving a failing grade in the course. If you are experiencing challenges with the course material, please do not plagiarize or otherwise cut corners with academic integrity; instead, reach out to the instructor or your TA for guidance.

>> Students registered with the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)** should provide copies of their AFA (Authorization for Accommodation) letters to both the course instructor and the OSD Liaison of the Music Department. If you have any questions about utilizing your OSD accommodation, you can contact the undergraduate advisor at [mus-ug@ucsd.edu](mailto:mus-ug@ucsd.edu), or you can reach the Office of Students with Disabilities directly at [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu). Please also feel free to contact me to discuss ways in which I can be of assistance.

>> **Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** offers many valuable resources for students. The course instructor and TAs stand ready to help and advise you on any matters related to this course; for other areas of concern, please reach out to CAPS. You can schedule an appointment to speak with someone, or if you need immediate support at any time, call the 24/7 crisis line at 858-534-3755. For more information, see <http://caps.ucsd.edu>.

>> The **Triton Food Pantry** works to ensure that every student has access to the nutritious meals they need to get through the day and achieve academic success. For more information, see <http://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/triton-food-pantry>.

### Weekly Schedule (subject to change)

	Course Topics	Assignments/to-dos
<b>Week 0</b> 9/28	Course overview Introduction to pitch/acoustics <b>First lecture will meet on 9/28</b> <b>Sections will meet week 1</b>	
<b>Week 1</b>	Pitch/acoustics, cont. The piano keyboard	Homework 1 assigned (due 10/10)

10/03 10/05	Basic pitch classes Clefs and the five-line staff	Optional placement exam open on CANVAS until X/X
<b>Week 2</b> 10/10 10/12	Stepwise intervals The C major scale Introduction to solfege and tonality Intervals between do and sol	Homework 2 assigned (due 10/17)
<b>Week 3</b> 10/17 10/19	Quarter, half, and whole notes/rests Barlines and simple meters Intervals between do, mi, and sol; the tonic triad in major The F and G major scales; accidentals	Homework 3 assigned (due 10/24)
<b>Week 4</b> 10/24 10/26	The circle of fifths Key signatures The dominant triad in major Eighth and sixteenth notes/rests	Homework 4 assigned (due 10/31) <b>Coaching # 1 instead of section</b> (sign up for a time with your TA)
<b>Week 5</b> 10/31 11/2	Dots and ties Tempo, dynamics, and interpretation markings Midterm review  <b>No lecture on 11/2 (midterm exam)</b>	<b>11/2: Midterm exam</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 11/7 11/9	Common chord progressions for song-writing Pre-dominant triads and vii <sup>0</sup> in major Natural minor scales	Homework 5 assigned (due 11/14)
<b>Week 7</b> 11/14 11/16	Relative and parallel keys Syncopation Harmonic and melodic minor scales	Homework 6 assigned (due 11/21) <b>Coaching #2 instead of section</b> (sign up for a time with your TA)
<b>Week 8</b> 11/21	Triplets in simple meters Compound and asymmetric meters  <b>No lecture on 11/23 for Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	Homework 7 assigned (due 11/28)
<b>Week 9</b> 11/28 11/30	Chromatic and whole-tone scales Augmented triads Intervals and their inversions	Homework 8 assigned (due 12/5)
<b>Week 10</b> 12/5 12/7	Catch-up, review, and/or special topics to be announced  <b>This week's lectures will be live on zoom:</b> <a href="https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/98579812225?pwd=cXZCWkp0M0lodEdKRHN5WkZQOUYvdz09">https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/98579812225?pwd=cXZCWkp0M0lodEdKRHN5WkZQOUYvdz09</a>  <b>(Both lectures will be over Zoom)</b>	<b>12/8: Final reflection due (by midnight)</b>  <b>Coaching #3 instead of section</b> (sign up for a time with your TA)
<b>Finals week</b>	N/A	<b>12/14: Final Exam</b>